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# Parish of Saint Anthony of Padua

Our Parish Newsletter

24th December 2023



**God is love: he who dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him. In Jesus Christ we see how God loves us.**  
A warm welcome to everyone from  
Fr. Maximillian McKeown, OFM Conv, Parish Priest  
Rev. Simon South, Deacon

## Times of Mass This Week

24 Dec. Sunday		8:00 AM
24 Dec. Sunday		10:45 AM
24 Dec. Sunday	Christmas Vigil Mass	6.00 PM
25 Dec. Monday	CHRISTMAS DAY	9:00 AM
26 Dec. Tuesday		9:00 AM
27 Dec. Wed		9.00 AM
28 Dec. Thurs		9.00 AM
29 Dec. Friday		9:00 AM
30 Dec. Saturday		9:00 AM
30 Dec. Saturday	(SUNDAY VIGIL)	6.00 PM



Thank you for your generous donations last week, towards to running of our Parish .



**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR DECEASED, ESPECIALLY**, Ron Peters, Guy Horton, Mary Byrne, Catherine Bowles, Richard Carey, John Kilroy, Ann Hamilton, Marcella Duckworth, Penny Setterfield, Dominique Chapious, Roy Godwin, Dorothy and Peter Van Heuven. Patricia Swain, Veronica Pragnell, Elsie Palmer, Peter McKenzie-Smith, Tom Healey, John Russell, Timothy O'Sullivan, Tim Hodge and members of our parish, families, friends, and acquaintances.

**PLEASE ALSO PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF OUR PARISH FAMILY:** Sheila Miller, Audrey Hatter, Kathleen Sherwood, Monica Flint, Richard Horner, Coleen, Louis Carnell, Isabella Rose, Judith (Angela's sister), Michael, Sr Loretta Dooley and all those confined to their homes or care homes along with Mass intentions this week.

## The Salvation of Humanity revealed.

On behalf of Father Max and I we wish you a truly blessed and joy filled Christmas and Christmastide.

Today we celebrate the coming of the Christ, God's chosen one who comes for all mankind to show us the way to our true joy and hope, that of eternity in union with our Creator.

The Gospel reading, the prologue from John, is probably one of the most poetic and beautiful pieces of divinely inspired writing within Sacred Scripture. And in its poetic beauty it captures the fullness and completeness of God's love and desire for each and every one of us to be with Him, to reunite that which was separated through original sin.

John brings us the story of creation, the gift of Scripture to Moses, the wrong choices mankind made and the correction that God makes to our path through the incarnation of His only begotten Son and Word, and all this in just a few lines of prose.

As we look on the baby in the crib this and every Christmas we are reminded that God continues to call us to Him despite the mistakes we make, the wrong choices we choose, because as every loving parent knows, children need to learn from their mistakes, with the parents waiting to catch us when you trip. And as we know, we are His children.



## Just a thought ....

In mid December 1223, 800 years ago this year—Francis of Assisi travelled to a hermitage located in Greccio, some fifty kilometres from Assisi. While he was there, he sent a message to a devout nobleman in the town, asking him for help to organise a Christmas ceremony.

Luke tells us that Jesus was born in a rustic setting, within the setting of a stable. Francis assumed that animals must be present and arranged for an ox, and an ass to be borrowed and he asked a local husband and wife to bring their baby to represent the Holy Family.

Candles and torches lit the Christmas eve sky, and the tableau turned Greccio into a new Bethlehem. During midnight Mass, St Francis preached about God's humble arrival into the world and the poverty of Jesus. He spoke of the mercy and the goodness of God and after the service, St Francis helped serve a feast for the guest and asked that the animals also receive double rations of hay and oats, and that seed be scattered outside for the birds.

For St Francis, the celebration was not a sentimental play, but a symbolic representation of an everyday event: the birth of Christ in the hearts of all those who wanted and accepted it. Consequently, the banquet that night was a mystical representation of what the Eucharist offers us all : the presence of Emmanuel—"God with us".



## AN IMPORTANT DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Bishop Richard has written a new Pastoral Plan for the Diocese which will be released in the New Year: 'The Word Who is Life: The Call to Mission'. As society becomes more secular our parishes must be ever-clearer beacons of light guiding people to Christ. The new Plan highlights how our community of faith can embrace this important time of renewal, forging diocesan parishes into communities of saints and strong, lively, and welcoming schools of discipleship. The Pastoral Plan will be released on the diocesan website on Tuesday 2 January: [www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/pastoral-plan](http://www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/pastoral-plan)

The Bishop met with members of Clergy earlier this week and will be hosting a Pastoral Plan Webinar for people across our diocesan community on Wednesday 10 January at 7.30pm. Please use the following the link to join the webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86457734895>.

To understand what this means for our faith journey and the impact on our Parish here in Rye, we will be holding a meeting on Saturday 6th January at St Mary's Hall 10.30a.m.– 1.00p.m. (by the Kino). **Do come along to hear the plans and to share your thoughts and ideas for our community.**

**OUR SCRITURE GROUP IS NOT MEETING AGAIN UNTIL 8th JANUARY**