

Parish News

Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church

27 Jermyn Street, Sleaford, NG34 7RU.

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www.our-lady-of-good-counsel.org.uk

Parish priest: Father Michael J. Bell,
Deacon: Rev. Tony Weldon

School: Our Lady of Good Counsel
Catholic Primary School
The Drove, Sleaford, NG34 7AT.
Tel. 01529 304373

Head Teacher: Mrs. Michelle Parker
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The First Week of Christmas 25th December, 2016

Prayer of St. John Paul II for vocations

Lord Jesus, as you once called the first disciples to make them fishers of men, let your sweet invitation continue to resound: "Come follow Me!" Give young men and women the grace of responding quickly to your voice. Support our bishops, priests, deacons and consecrated people in their apostolic labour. Grant perseverance to our seminarians and to all those who are carrying out the idea of a life totally consecrated to your service. Awaken in our community a missionary eagerness. Lord, send workers to your harvest and do not allow humanity to be lost for the lack of pastors, missionaries and people dedicated to the cause of the Gospel. Mary, Mother of the Church, the model of every vocation, help us to say "yes" to the Lord who calls us to cooperate in the divine plan of salvation. Amen.

Responsorial psalm

1. Today a saviour has been born to us; he is Christ the Lord
2. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

1. I bring you news of great joy: today a saviour has been born to us; Christ the Lord
2. A hallowed day has dawned upon us. Come, you nations, worship the Lord for today a great light has shone down upon the earth. Alleluia!

Sunday and weekday services

Christmas Eve for Christmas Day
The Nativity of the Lord
Mass: 5.00 pm
Children's Christmas Mass
(Anne and Leslie Bell)
Carol service: 7.30 pm

First Mass of Christmas:
8.00 pm
(our parish family)

Sunday
The Nativity of the Lord
Mass: 10.00 am
(Susan Calcagno [Val, Sue and Jane])

Monday
St. Stephen, the first martyr
Mass: 10.15 am
(Living and dead family and friends [Anthony Browne])

Tuesday
St. John, apostle and evangelist
Eucharistic service: 10.15 am
No exposition of the Blessed Sacrament today

Wednesday
The Holy Innocents, martyrs
Eucharistic service: 10.15 am

Thursday
St. Thomas of Canterbury, bishop and martyr
Eucharistic service: 10.15 am

Friday
The Holy Family: Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Mass: 11.30 am
(Pat and Peter Fitzgerald)

Saturday
St. Sylvester
No Sacrament of Reconciliation this morning

Saturday for Sunday
Mary, the Holy Mother of God
Mass: 10.00 am
(Charles Grant [Pauline])

Sunday
Mary, the Holy Mother of God
Mass: 10.00 am
(our parish family)

The piety shop will be open after the 6.00 pm Mass this Saturday and the 10 am Mass this Sunday.

25th December

Car park Eamonn Greene
A. N. Other

Welcoming June Ellis
Richard Hannah

Altar linen Kath Cole

Church cleaning group 1 Anne Hobbs
Anne McGrath
Jane McGovern

Flowers Trish Brocklebank
and others

Offertory collection Colin Faria
Richard Hannah

Offertory procession Michael Browning
and
A. N. Other

Little Church No Little Church

Readers Saturday for Sunday Marion Smith
Ben Hanwell

Sunday Barbara Swaby
Pat Blakeman

1st January, 2017

Car park Philip Hunt
Jane McGovern

Welcoming Barbara Browning
Jim Ryan

Altar linen Marjorie Fitzgibbons

Church cleaning group 2 Barbara and
Michael Swaby

Flowers Liz Peto

Offertory collection Ben Hanwell
Jane McGovern

Offertory procession Ann Mear and
Marion Smith

Offertory procession Kath Duthie and
Veronica Dilcock

Readers Saturday for Sunday Denice Middlebrook
Liz Peto

Sunday Jane McGovern
Nick Spolton

Please pray also for the sick of the parish:

Theresa Abram, Martin Bell, Eric Blakeman, Christopher and Catherine Brown, Tony Brown, Marcello Calcagno, Pat Clement, Paul Croker. Peter Doyle, Mark Eddington, Vivienne Field, Christopher Fordham, Patricia Gainey, John Garratt, Muriel Gourlay, Michael Griffith, Mimi Gunn, Alan Hanley, Peggy and Stan Hart, Bob Hill, Jennifer Holdsworth, Dianne Keaton, Tom and Brenda McLaughlin, Sheila Morse, Eileen Mulrooney, Richard Neill, Roger Peto, Winifred Phillips, Gladys Powell, Maureen Renfrew, Mrs. Slattery, Jacob Taylor, Della Teszkowska, Teresa Todd, Jane Walker, Heniek Waszczuk and Anne and Ken Woods.

Congratulations!

A big welcome to Eric Blakeman, who was received into full membership of the Church recently. Congratulations to Eric, Pat and the family!

School car park

The school car park will be available, as usual, for the Masses over the Christmas weekend; also for Boxing Day and the following days.

Christmas gifts and cards

Thank you all very much indeed for all your cards and gifts. I do appreciate them very much: your wonderful kindness and generosity make me feel very humble.

A happy, blessed and peaceful Christmas to you all, and thank you for all your help, support and co-operation over the past year.

Christmas Masses collection

The collection taken at the Christmas Masses is your Christmas gift to your priest.

If you are a taxpayer, please Gift Aid your donation, as this means each £1 will become £1.25 with what we shall get back from the Inland Revenue. (I don't take this refund: it goes into the parish funds.)

Thank you, in anticipation, for your generosity.

Christmas Day lunch

As I write, we are expecting 38 guests for the Christmas Day lunch in the parish hall. I am so looking forward to welcoming them: some are regulars and for some it is their first time. I hope they will enjoy themselves. A big thank you to those who have volunteered to give up their time to help –

some regulars and some for the first time.

Your generosity and love will most certainly be blessed by God.

Community larder

The Community Larder was thrilled and grateful to you all for the donations of "Christmassy" food items last weekend. They were making up 40 hampers for needy families in the Sleaford area and our contribution was a great help.

As you read this, the hampers will have been distributed, and much appreciated, I am sure. If you have brought a gift for the Larder this weekend, please bring it up with the offertory gifts and make it a part of your offering for the Mass.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Please note that there will be **no adoration** on 27th December nor on 3rd January. Adoration resumes on **10th January, 2017**.

Instruction in the Faith

Please note that instruction in the Catholic faith has ended for the Christmas holidays. It will resume on **Tuesday, 10th January, at 6.30 pm in the sacristy**.

CAFOD

We shall be organising the Christmas card scheme again this year. Instead of sending cards to every parishioner, donate a small amount to CAFOD and the proceeds will buy a goat or some chickens for a vulnerable family. If you wish to be involved, please speak to Barbara Swaby (tel. 01529 305038)

The Advent wreath

The Advent wreath is a custom which brings home to us the meaning of the Advent season. The light of the candles reminds us that Christ is the Light of the World.

The circular shape of the wreath reminds us that God is eternal, which means that he has no beginning and will last for ever.

The evergreens remind us that God never changes. These are the only trees that do not lose their leaves in winter.

There are three purple candles which are lit on the first, second and fourth Sundays of Advent. They remind us of penance, of preparing the way for Jesus, and they also remind us of the years the world waited for Him.

The pink candle is lit on the third Sunday of Advent (Joyful, or *Gaudete*, Sunday). It reminds us of the joy that will be ours at

Christmas morning. It represents our joy at the birth of Jesus, the Light of the World.

Finally, the white candle in the centre of the wreath is lit on Christmas morning. It represents our joy at the birth of Jesus.

Each week we light one more candle. The gathering light of the wreath, growing brighter as the weeks go by, announces that the celebration of Christ's coming draws steadily near.

Offertory giving – November 2016

Gift Aided standing orders	£1,873.50
Gift Aided envelopes	£166.50
Gift Aided other	£0.00
Total Gift Aided	£2,040.00
Non-Gift Aided standing orders	£152.00
Loose plate	£619.90
Total non-Gift Aided	£771.90
Total offertory giving	£2,811.90

One Hundred Club winners

The winners for December are:
£75 – Jane McGovern and Margaret Wiseman: £50 – Jacqueline Fordham and Eric and Sue Norbury: and £25 – David Hockmeyer and Helen Reilly.

Congratulations to the winners! For everybody else: don't give up it could be your turn next month!

Christmas programme

24th December	5.00 pm - Children's "Midnight Mass"
	7.30 pm – carol service
	8.00 pm – First Mass of Christmas
25th December	10.00 am – Christmas Morning Mass
	12.30 pm – Lunch in the parish hall for those who would otherwise be alone today, or who are unable to cook for themselves.
26th December	11.00 am – Mass for the feast of St. Stephen
	For the rest of this week: our usual programme.
31st December	6.00 pm – Mass
1st January 2017	10.00 am – Mass for the feast of the Mary the Holy Mother of God



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