

Penitential Rite : We often use the 'Lord, have mercy/ Christ have mercy/ Lord, have mercy' option of the Penitential Rite at the beginning of mass. Might we try Option B for a few weeks until we get to know it?

PRIEST : Have mercy on us, O Lord.

PEOPLE : **For we have sinned against you.**

PRIEST : Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

PEOPLE : **And grant us your salvation.** [page 8 in mass books]

Foodbank: Thank you for what you feel able to bring in for our food bank, week after week. If you are able to bring anything at all, it is always much appreciated. As the weather gets cooler it really can be a choice between food or heating. **This week we are hoping for tinned tomatoes and tinned vegetables .** A big thank you!

Advent services : Thank you very much to those who organized our lovely reflective Advent services, and to those who came along.

Laudato Si Group : Would you like to help to reduce the waste we create at Christmas? In December a large Christmas card will be placed in both St Mary's and St Wilfrid's churches. If you want to share Christmas greetings with friends in our parish, please add your name and wishes to the card instead of sending individual cards. A donation can be made to the SVP at the same time if you wish. Hopefully this will help to reduce some of the waste this year.

Christmas essentials : Please remember when buying wrapping paper and cards: avoid foil/ plastic wrap. If it scrunches, it is paper and can be recycled. Avoid cards with glitter, foil and decorations. In both cases, remove ribbons, bows, tags, Sellotape or any decorations before recycling. Check out this excellent special festive waste site at [durham.gov.uk/christmas recycling](http://durham.gov.uk/christmas_recycling)

Advent reflections : Reflections for each day of Advent have been prepared by people from across our diocese. You can access these on-line: <https://bit.ly/DHNAdvent2024>.

Northern Cross: The December edition of the 'Northern Cross' is still available at the back of church at £1.50 with news from around the diocese. Please take a copy if you can.

Please pray for the health of:

Mrs Aitken
Joan Lightfoot
Michael Nicholson
Adam Hudspeth
Christopher Browne
Tyler Quinn
Robin Davis
Angela Graham
Frank Ridley
Jacob Thomas
Charlotte Thomas
Teresa Brown
Christina Marsh
Kathy Lloyd
Roman Banks
Jane Hardy (Kirby)
Mary Curry
Adam Quarmby
Eileen Kelly
John Green
Lynette Stott
Brenda Dawes
Jayne Littlefair



Bible Alive: Decembers copies of Bible Alive are now available at the back of church for those on the list. Price £1.50.

Gift Aid : A parishioner who puts £5 on the plate each week can contribute an additional £65 to the parish if that parishioner signs a simple Gift Aid form. A GAD. All that is needed are a few pieces of info on one simple form AND of course the person must be paying tax. In this example £65 tax over the tax year, ie., £1.25 per week. In return, the parish gives you a nice shiny box of numbered envelopes, one per week, to put your donation in. No name on the envelope, just your unique number. We use the envelope to support the Gift Aid claim. If interested - talk to John Stockton (St Wilfrid) or Tony Murphy (St Mary).

Non-cash offerings : Did you know that more than 35 parishioners don't have to bother with cash to make their offerings to the parish. They sign up to pay (usually monthly) by bank transfer from their bank account to the parish account. A good system, saves a lot of cash handling. If interested see the usual suspects, John Stockton or Tony Murphy.

SVP 200 Club : December winning numbers are 63 and 81. We have a winner this month - congratulations. Many thanks to all for your continuing support.

St Mary's Piety Shop: now have some Christmas cards and small items for sale. Pop in and have a look.

Christmas Memory Tree : There is a tree at the back of St Wilfrid's church if you should want to hang a note with the name of some loved one, or any other intention. Ask Linda Gabriele.

Two requests : 1. If you are wanting a mass intention for a particular day, perhaps you could let us know a couple of weeks in advance, and in which church you want the mass. 2. If possible, could you let us know as soon as you can in the week if you want an item included in our parish bulletin. If items arrive when we are about to print then it often means we need to take out some other item so as to squeeze it in.

Christmas masses : Christmas Eve, 5.30pm at St Mary's; Christmas Eve, 7.30pm at St Wilfrid's; Christmas Day 10.00am at St Mary's.

Jubilee 2025: Pope Francis has announced that 2025 will be a year of Jubilee, and the theme is "Pilgrims of Hope". It will be a year of pilgrimage and prayer, celebration and reconciliation and we'll be opening the Jubilee Year in our Diocese with celebrations at our 2 Jubilee Hub Churches on Sunday 29th December. Bishop Stephen will be celebrating Mass and opening the Holy Door at St. Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle at 11.30am and at St. Joseph's Hartlepool at 4.00pm. Everyone is welcome. There's more information about the Jubilee Year on the Diocesan website at <https://www.bit.ly/DHNjubilee2025>.

Craft group : Next meeting in St. Mary's meeting room will be on **Monday 6th January.**

'Northern Catholic Calendar 2025': This book offers up-to-date information about parishes, schools, convents and clergy across our diocese. Available today for £3.50

WISHING YOU A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS



This week

	Services & meetings
Saturday 21 December	10.00am Mass : <i>Wilson & Welch families</i> *in meeting room followed by an opportunity for confession. 5.30pm : <i>For everyone in our parish.</i>
Sunday 22 December <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year C)</i>	9.30 am Mass at St Wilfrid's: <i>Arnold Smith; Lina & Luigi Quagliari</i> 11.00 am Mass at St Mary's: <i>Holy Souls</i>
Monday 23 December	No Mass today 10.00 am <u>No Eucharistic Service at St Wilfrid's</u>
Tuesday 24 December <i>Christmas Eve</i>	* No morning mass today 5.30pm : St Mary's : <i>For everyone in our parish</i> 7.30pm : St Wilfrid's : <i>For everyone in our parish</i>
Wednesday 25 December <i>Christmas Day</i>	10.00 am Mass: St Mary's : <i>For everyone in our parish</i>
Thursday 26 December <i>St Stephen, first martyr</i>	10.00am mass: <i>John Watson & Margery Harrop</i>
Friday 27 December <i>St John, evangelist</i>	10.00 am mass : <i>Elaine Miller</i>
Saturday 28 December	10.00am Mass : <i>Tony Crump, Mary McLeod & family</i> 5.30pm Vigil mass: <i>For everyone in our parish</i>
Sunday 29 December <i>Feast of the Holy Family (Year C)</i>	9.30 am Mass at St Wilfrid's: <i>Stockton & Cruddace families</i> 11.00 am Mass at St Mary's: <i>For grandchildren</i>

The Parish of St Mary + St Wilfrid

In the Escomb Partnership of the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle

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To access streamed Masses: St Mary's Bishop Auckland YouTube [22 December 2024](#)

Fourth Sunday of Advent (C)

Mary

During the first part of Advent we heard a lot about John the Baptist. He was the one who urged us to change the focus of our lives, to change our priorities and the general direction in which we might find ourselves going in our lives.

Now, the young girl Mary is brought into the picture. I wonder how, deep down, she handled the news of her pregnancy. Pregnant and unmarried and not even betrothed. According to the law, she could have been stoned to death. The man, Joseph, saved Mary from such an end by agreeing to take her to be his wife. In the gospels, Mary can come across as quiet and perhaps quite serious. Joseph is virtually silent. Yet, think about how these two people handled this situation and others. The gossip from neighbours, the arduous journey to Bethlehem, the murderous anger of Herod, the escape to Egypt to seek asylum. Quite a lot to handle!

Mary is offered to us as an example of one who trusts completely in what God has promised: 'Do not be afraid', 'I will be with you'. It is easy to trust God's promises when things are going well, but when things go pear-shaped...?? Trusting is suddenly a whole lot more difficult.

Today we find Mary carrying the unborn child, Jesus. But she is carrying Jesus into the home and into the life of Elizabeth. Mary is a model for all of us. We too are called upon to carry Jesus into the lives of people we meet.

David Coxon

Safeguarding

The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) and the Diocese's policies and procedures at all times.

Our Parish Safeguarding Representatives are Jeannie Hardy for St Mary's and Fiona Ottewell for St Wilfrid's or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 0191 2433305 or at safeguarding@diocesehn.org.uk

Confession Times

St Mary's

Saturdays at 10.30-11.00 and by request.

St Wilfrid's before Sunday Mass