

**17 December 2023**  
**Third Sunday of Advent,**  
**Gaudete Sunday, Year B**  
Holy Mass  
9.00am, 11.00am & 4.30pm

Readings begin **page 87**

**1st Reading:**

Isaiah 61: 1 - 2, 10 - 11

**Responsorial Psalm:**

Luke 1: 46 – 50, 53 - 54  
My soul rejoices in my God.

**2nd Reading:**

1 Thessalonians 5: 16 - 24

**Gospel Acclamation:**

Isaiah 61: 1 (Luke 4: 18)

Alleluia, alleluia!

The spirit of the Lord  
has been given to me,  
He has sent me to bring good news to  
the poor.

Alleluia!

**Gospel:**

John 1: 6 – 8. 19 - 28

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

Church open 8.00am - 7.00pm daily,  
Monday - Saturday

**Monday 18 December**

Holy Mass 5.45pm  
with Devotions to St Philip Neri

**Tuesday 19 December**

Holy Mass 12.30pm  
with prayers to Venerable Margaret  
Sinclair for her cause

**Wednesday 20 December**

Exposition 11.30am : 12.15pm  
Confessions 11.40am : 12.10pm  
Holy Mass 12.30 pm

**Thursday 21 December**

*St Peter Canisius*

Holy Mass 12.30 pm

**Friday 22 December**

Holy Mass 12.30pm

**Saturday 23 December**

*St John of Kanty*

Rorate Mass 7.30am  
followed by refreshments

Exposition 11.30am : 12.15pm  
Confessions 11.40am : 12.10pm  
Holy Mass 12.30pm

**One-off Vigil Mass**

5.45pm

**Sunday 24 December**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent, Year B**

Holy Mass

9.00am & 11.00am

**There will be no evening Mass at  
4.30pm**

First Mass of Christmas  
7.00pm

Blessing of Crib & Midnight Mass  
11.45

The Archdiocese of St Andrews &  
Edinburgh **Catholic Directory 2024**  
priced £3, now available at the shop

**St Patrick's RC Church Edinburgh**  
National Shrine of Venerable Margaret Sinclair

**Served by**

Fr Gerard Hatton, Administrator  
Fr Ninian Doohan, Assistant Priest

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Dear Friends,

The Christmas tree as we know it today is all thanks to St Boniface born in England, who went to proclaim the Gospel in Germany during the 8th century. He encountered pagan sacrifices in front of a mighty oak tree to their god Thor. St Boniface seized his axe and felled the tree in order to stop some of his people worshiping a false idol. The pagans thought their god would respond by striking him down by lightning, but it didn't happen!

Through this action they found the Holy Trinity and then the miracle of a fir tree which grew from the fallen oak. From that day the Fir Tree became a symbol of Christ, and his presence among and a way to teach the faith. The triangular shape of the tree explains the Holy trinity, it's height takes us to God and it's lasting greenery shows our new life in Jesus. St Boniface knew it was a miracle, of the Christ Child. He requested the people to take evergreens from the forest and bring them into their homes as a means to decorate them and see in the evergreen leaves the promises of everlasting life. That is why the Christmas tree continues today.

As the years passed the fir tree was decorated including apples as a reminder of the tree of knowledge. The apples later became glass baubles. Also small white wafers were placed on it that represented the Holy Eucharist. Decorations were also made from hay, also small pieces of pastry were cut into the shapes of stars, angels, hearts, flowers, bells, small candles, stars and even later Electric light. (The domestic blessing of the tree will be available at the back of church).

Pope Benedict who died last December says 'The Christmas tree with its journey from a dark forest to the brilliance of decorative lights represents every Christian, called to share the message that the Light of the world has become man. In the forest, the trees are close together and each one of them contributes to making the forest a shadowy, sometimes dark place, but here chosen from among this multitude, the tree that you offered (at the Vatican) us today is lit up and covered with brilliant decorations that are like so many marvellous fruits.



Leaving aside its dark garments for a brilliant explosion, it has been transfigured, becoming a beacon of light that is not its own, but rather gives testimony to the true Light that comes to this world,"

He also compared the tree's destiny with that of the shepherds, who "keeping watch in the darkness of the night, are illumined by the message of the angels.

The destiny of this tree is also comparable to our own, we who are called to give good fruits to manifest that the world has

Yours in Jesus and Mary  
Fr Gerard

The SSVP thank everyone who donated to their recent appeal to support local foodbanks & provide gifts for families in need. At the last count over 80 Christmas parcels have been collected, these will be dropped off with the Missionaries of Charity. Over 200 items of tinned and dry foods will be delivered to the local foodbank. Your generosity is much appreciated.

Today is **Bambinelli Sunday**, Baby Jesus from your home Nativity scene will be blessed today.

There is a **sale of Catholic books** after all Masses today, an excellent opportunity to buy Christmas gifts, and to support the Oratory Project.

**Finance:****Sunday 10 December collection**

GA £ 157.00

NGA £ 399.10

Special collection

Christmas Flowers

£ 168.75



Donate online by scanning the QR code.  
Thank you for your support.

**Making a donation:**

You may wish to consider taking out a standing order for your weekly / monthly contribution, in this case, the parish account details are:

St Patricks Church

Bank of Scotland

Sort code: 80-02-29

Account No: 00687306

During Advent **Confessions** will be available half an hour before each Holy Mass as well as during and after Holy Mass whenever there is a priest available.

The **Advent Pro-Life Rosary** continues on Monday 18 December) at 7:45pm. Join people from across the Archdiocese to pray for the unborn, mothers and all pro-life intentions. Register at [bit.ly/archprolifeevents](http://bit.ly/archprolifeevents)

Explore the richness & depth of our Catholic faith with the **Diploma in Catechetics** from the Archdiocese, led by Sr Miriam Ruth Ryan RSM. Tune in each Thursday at 7:30pm for an expert-led Zoom Webinar. Includes guided readings, one-to-one support & a retreat. Course begins Thursday 25 January 2024. Visit [bit.ly/archdiploma2024](http://bit.ly/archdiploma2024). Questions? [srmiriam.ruth@staned.org.uk](mailto:srmiriam.ruth@staned.org.uk)

Canon Hugh White continues his **Advent talk series** 'Time with God' each Monday. Visit [bit.ly/ArchYouTube](http://bit.ly/ArchYouTube)

Archbishop Cushley is encouraging us to consider making a donation to **Friends of the Holy Land** in Advent. He said: "It is a non-political Christian charity & the donations will be used to provide aid & support for our Christian brothers and sisters in the Holy Land at this difficult time." A Diocesan donation page has been set up at [bit.ly/archhollyland](http://bit.ly/archhollyland) More information at [www.friendsofthehollyland.org.uk/about-us](http://www.friendsofthehollyland.org.uk/about-us)

A new bill proposes criminalising prayer and offers of help to women in designated '**buffer zones**' around abortion centres in Scotland, including inside private homes within a 200m zone. Please respond to the government consultation which ends December 20 at [bit.ly/f2pshortsurvey](http://bit.ly/f2pshortsurvey). Please also write to your MSP to express your concerns. Visit <https://rcpolitics.org/buffer-zones> for more information on what you can do to stop this disproportionate and intolerant law being introduced, including help with responding to the consultation and writing to your MSP.

Visit **St Paul's Bookshop** at **St Mary's Cathedral** 10am to 5:00 daily for a wide range of Christmas gift ideas

Thinking about a vocation to the religious life? Join other young Catholic women to chat and **explore God's will** in monthly get-togethers in Edinburgh. Led by Sr Mirjam Hugens FSO, the first one takes place on Sunday 28 January, 4-7pm at St Columba's, 9 Upper Gray Street. It is a chance to pray, share and discuss in a relaxed environment, and refreshments will be served. The series continues each month at the same time/venue: 25 Feb, 17 Mar, 21 Apr, 12 May and 22 June. To register or find out more, please email [religiousvocations@staned.org.uk](mailto:religiousvocations@staned.org.uk) Please save the date - details to be confirmed soon.

**Mass Intentions**

17 December	9.00am	Rufina L Cabornida	Anniversary, 13 December
17 December	11.00am	Frederick Arthur Comerford	Anniversary, 21 December
17 December	4.30pm	People of the Parish	
18 December	5.45pm	Martin, Margaret & Anthony Kane	Repose of the souls
19 December	12.30pm	Mary Law	Special Intention
20 December	12.30pm	Brigid Davidson	20th Anniversary, 19 December
21 December	12.30pm	Campbell Family	
22 December	12.30pm	Gerard Law	Special Intention
23 December	7.30am	Anonymous	Special Intention
23 December	12.30pm	Thomas Holland	RIP
23 December	5.45pm	For peace in Sierra Leone	

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