

Attending Mass for Christmas Mass

As we are now in the Season of Advent, we need to plan what will happen for Christmas in our two parishes, particularly with regards to Christmas Masses.

Every year our Churches are packed for Christmas! This is a very special time and people naturally want to come to Church and celebrate Christmas properly. However, due to the virus, we will not be allowed to have packed churches - it is just not safe at the moment.

With this in mind there are two ways forward in order to try and accommodate as many people as possible being able to attend Mass for Christmas

- Extra Masses
- Octave of Christmas

1 - Extra Masses

It is my hope to celebrate the following Masses for Christmas in St Mary's and St Patrick's

MASSES FOR CHRISTMAS			
DATE:	DAY:	TIME:	CHURCH:
24 th December	Christmas Eve (Vigil)	04.30pm	St Mary's
24 th December	Christmas Eve (Vigil)	06.00pm	St Patrick's
24 th December	Christmas Eve (Vigil)	08.00pm	St Mary's
25 th December	Christmas Day (Midnight)	12.00 Midnight	St Patrick's
25 th December	Christmas Day	09.00am	St Patrick's
25 th December	Christmas Day	10.30am	St Mary's
ATTENDANCE AT THESE MASSES IS BY BOOKING ONLY			

I have tried to be as fair to both parishes as possible and make available a number of Masses at different times in order to help people to plan what is best for them.

2 - Coming to Mass during the Octave of Christmas

Like Easter, the Nativity of the Lord is one of the two solemnities in the Ordinary Form of the Church's liturgical calendar which has its own Octave. The Church regards each day in an Octave as if it were the solemnity itself. So, for example, the prayers for Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours during the Christmas Octave refer to each day as if it were still Christmas Day. Despite having days within the Octave that are feasts: St Stephen, St John the Evangelist, the Holy Innocents and the Holy Family, and the concluding Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God, each of these days is, as the Roman Missal states, a "day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord." *Please see the table opposite for a list of the Masses which will be celebrated in our parishes for the Octave of Christmas.*

This means that, liturgically, each of the days from 25th December to the 1st January is 'Christmas Day'. Although an additional Mass or Masses on Christmas Eve and/or on Christmas Day might enable more people to attend Mass, ***it would be good to remind the faithful that they can come and celebrate the mystery of Christmas at any of the Masses during the Octave days.*** This would allow the faithful to plan for a day within the Octave when they would like to come to our churches to celebrate their Christmas Mass this year. The arrangements which each parish can make for the Octave will be determined, however, by the availability and willingness of stewards to assist with the cleansing and supervising of the churches; this too, therefore will require planning ahead. (*Bishop Marcus - from the Ad Clerum - November 2020*)

MASSES WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS AT ST MARY'S & ST PATRICK'S					
DAY:	DATE:	TIME:	FEAST:	CHURCH	BOOKING REQUIRED?
Thursday	24 th December	04.30pm	Christmas Eve	St Mary's	Yes
Thursday	24 th December	06.00pm	Christmas Eve	St Patrick's	Yes
Thursday	24 th December	08.00pm	Christmas Eve	St Mary's	Yes
Friday	25 th December	12midnight	Christmas Day	St Patrick's	Yes
Friday	25 th December	09.00am	Christmas Day	St Patrick's	Yes
Friday	25 th December	10.30am	Christmas Day	St Mary's	Yes
Saturday	26 th December	04.30pm	Holy Family	St Mary's	Yes
Saturday	26 th December	06.00pm	Holy Family	St Patrick's	Yes
Sunday	27 th December	09.00am	Holy Family	St Patrick's	Yes
Sunday	27 th December	10.30am	Holy Family	St Mary's	Yes
Monday	28 th December	09.30am	Holy Innocents	St Patrick's	No
Monday	28 th December	07.00pm	Holy Innocents	St Mary's	No
Tuesday	29 th December	09.30am	St Thomas Becket	St Mary's	No
Wednesday	30 th December				
Thursday	31 st December	09.30am	Octave of Christmas	St Patrick's	No
Thursday	31 st December	12.00noon	Octave of Christmas	St Mary's	No
Friday	1 st January	10.00am	Mary, Mother of God	St Patrick's	Yes
Friday	1 st January	12.00noon	Mary, Mother of God	St Mary's	Yes

A person may attend any of the above Masses which are in the Octave of Christmas which will fulfil the (usual) obligation of attending Mass for Christmas.

Booking a place at Christmas Masses

Due to the ongoing situation of the global pandemic, ***in order to attend any of these Masses people must book a place either through the online booking system or by telephone.***

CHRISTMAS MASSES BOOKING SYSTEM	
Online Booking	Telephone Booking
St. Mary's, Batley - www.stmarybatley.co.uk	(01924) 474650
St. Patrick's, Birstall - https://stpatricksbirstall.org.uk	(01924) 474650

The booking system for Christmas Masses will be available as follows;

The Booking Office will **Open** **Monday 7th December** **10.00am**

The Booking Office will **Close** **Tuesday 22nd December** **9.00pm**

Due to the increased numbers who attend Mass for Christmas, booking will be essential this year for a place at Mass. If you do intend on coming to Mass for Christmas please do try to book in good time. The last thing I want to do is turn people away. But as a parish, we must abide by the Government guidelines. Our health and safety is paramount in this situation.

Volunteers for Mass

Please may I ask for your help? In order for the Masses to go ahead safely and to help me to be able to celebrate the Masses, would people please be willing to help with;

- Readers for Mass
- Track & Trace recording
- Stewards at the entrance & exit doors
- Cleaning after Mass is over

If you are willing and able to offer your help with these Masses please sign your name on the forms available at the back of Church so I know I have the personnel in place in order for the Mass to go ahead.