

GAUDETE SUNDAY
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR A

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The word "Gaudete" is an imperative, which means it is a word that gives a command, makes a request, offers instruction or even issues a warning. It is a Latin word meaning "rejoice" or "be joyful." And it is with good reason, firstly, we are over halfway through Advent and getting close to the Incarnation when Jesus is God born into humanity. It is a wonder to savour; it is a wonder to behold in the Christmas Celebration.

Just another ten days to Christmas Eve, a beautiful time to celebrate the Liturgy, the Mass of the Lord's arrival. Please pick up your Parish Christmas Card as you leave Mass. It contains all the Christmas Services including the Penitential Service, a very special moment in the time of Advent, a chance to go to confession, a chance to deepen one's faith through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In it we reconcile our inner selves, we reconcile to one another, we reconcile to the Church and above all we reconcile ourselves to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

On Wednesday we begin the Octave, the final eight days running up to Christmas. Each day marks the glory of Jesus as we prepare for his birth. His titles for the first seven of these days up to the Eve are: O Adonai, O Radix Jess, O Claris David, O Oriens, O Rex Gentium, O Emmanuel. Why not look then up with the children on the internet. Make of it a little prayer thought!

This is the last week of the school term, let not our children forget the wonder of the Birth of Jesus. A reminder also that at the Christmas Eve 5 p.m. Mass we invite any of the children to come along as Mary, Joseph, an Angel or Shepherd or one of the animals that lay in the manger.

See you there and hopefully we will have avoided the worst of the flu that seems so rampant.

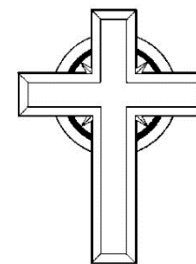
God bless,

Father Anton s.c.j.

***Our Lady & Saint John the Baptist, Ashley
and
Our Lady & Saint Werburgh, Clayton***
*The parishes are part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered
Charity No 234216*
Parish Priest: Father Anton Madej, SCJ
Clayton and Ashley: 01782 613023
Email: olstwerburgh.clayton@rcaob.org.uk

[Parishes Office Hours: Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat 10.00 am – 1 pm]

Chaplain's Office for inpatients at the Royal Stoke: 01782 67640



**Sunday 14th December 2025
Third Sunday of Advent
Sunday Readings Year A
Weekday Readings Year 1**

We are Pilgrims of Hope
Hope is a virtue, given through the presence and action of the Holy Spirit, creating within us an ardent desire for the kingdom of heaven and eternal life.

Hope creates a thirst within for eternal life and the happiness of heaven.

Hope teaches us to trust in the promises of Christ and rely not on our own strength but on the help and grace of the Holy Spirit.

	Ashley	Clayton	
Saturday 13th December Vigil Mass 3rd Sunday of Advent	6.00 pm		People of the Parishes
Sunday 14th December 3rd Sunday of Advent		8.15 am 10.00 am	Anna Jones Frank McClellan
Tuesday 16th December		7.15 pm	Penitential Service
Wednesday 17th December	6.45 pm 7.15 pm	10.00 am	Intentions of Margaret Aston and family Adoration Holy Souls
Thursday 18th December		9.15 am	Kathleen Nugent and Margaret Walker
Friday 19th December		10.00am	Alan, Rita and Mike Brabazon family and friends
Saturday 20th December Vigil Mass Fourth Sunday of Advent	6.00 pm	10.00 am	Repose of the soul of Sarasamma James Mass followed by Adoration People of the Parishes
Sunday 21st December Fourth Sunday of Advent		8.15 am 10.00 am	Christine McKenna Brigid Hulse

Confessions on Saturdays: At Clayton – 10.30 – 11.30 am. **At Ashley** before 6 pm Mass.

Please pray for the sick and elderly of our parishes and all those who have asked for prayers. May the healing touch of the Lord be with them all.

Christmas Carol Concert: In Ashley Catholic Church Hall (Oddfellows Hall) on December 14th 7pm. Proceeds from donations on entry will go to Ashley Catholic Church funds.

Advent Penitential Service at St. Werburgh's: On Tuesday 16th December 7.15 pm.

Christmas Eve 5pm Mass at Clayton: Children are invited to come to the 5pm Christmas Eve Mass in nativity costumes. We will have some spare costumes available in the porch before Mass.

CAFOD World Gifts: Give a life-changing gift this Christmas. This year, share the joy of Christmas with a CAFOD World Gift - from safe water to school supplies! A meaningful way to bless loved ones and help families overseas. **See worldgifts.cafod.org.uk** and the cards and brochures available in the porch.

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes: Could you be a Healthcare Volunteer in Lourdes? Are you a doctor, nurse or carer? Would you consider donating your time and expertise on next year's Lourdes Pilgrimage? If you are a healthcare professional and would like to try something new please consider joining us. You will make a real difference. For more information, and to access the Volunteer Pilgrimage Pack and an application form, please visit <https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/lourdes-pilgrimage>

Readers Saturday	6.00pm	13.12.25 S. McKenna	20.12.25 J. Bester	27.12.25 B. Bromfield
Readers	Sunday 8.15 am	14.12.25 D. Mason	21.12.25 K. Lycett	28.12.25 J. Mason
Readers	Sunday 10 am	14.12.25 S. Sony/ M. Tierney	21.12.25 A. Hagan/ M. Hughes	28.12.25 B. Walker/J. Somers
Counting	Clayton	14.12.25 Hagan	21.12.25 Hughes	28.12.25 Walker
Cleaning	Clayton	14.12.25 Group 3	21.12.25 Group 4	28.12.25 Group 5
Cleaning Ashley	Ashley	December A & J. Capper	January: A. Wilson & S. Urquhart	
Offertory Collections – thank you			The retiring collection on 13 th December at Ashley is for the Building Fund	The collections at all Christmas Masses are for your Parish Priest (envelopes available in the porch)
Gift Aid	Clayton	£136.15	Ashley	£80.00
Cash	Clayton	£272.05	Ashley	£19.80
Standing Orders	Clayton	£430.00	Ashley	£92.00
Total	Clayton	£838.20	Ashley	£191.80
Poor Parishes	Clayton	£155.00	Ashley	£37.00
Tap & Go November	Clayton	£185.00		

Safeguarding: The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdioceses policies & procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Kate Hagan She can be contacted at: sg.olstwerburgh.clayton@rcaob.org.uk or 01782 613023 or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240/ safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk if you have any concerns.

Counting Team Clayton: A couple of people urgently needed to join one of our counting teams. Please contact the parish office for further information.

Missio Red Boxes: Please return boxes over the next few weeks. Please write your name on the brown envelopes provided.

Walsingham Pilgrimage 2026: From Saturday 29th – Monday 31st August (Bank Holiday Weekend) please see poster on noticeboard with further details or contact Mary Shirley to book a place on 07910 605984 or maryroseshirley@gmail.com.

Our Lady and St Werburgh New Year's Eve Party – 31st December 7.30pm – 12.30 am: Celebrate New Year's Eve with us! Enjoy great music from DJ Archie. Children's activity area with games and painting. A perfect night for families and friends. Bring your own food and drink. £2 per person (adult and children) For tickets contact Simon Talbot 07515013953 or Peter Plumb 07522524060 by 21st December or contact school reception.

Newcastle Staffs Foodbank: Please see current list of shortages on the noticeboard.