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## *Parish Notice Board*

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### **Message from Fr. Ferdinand:**

Dear Friends and Parishioners at St Vincent's,

I wish you the Peace, Joy and Light of Christmas and God's Blessings for 2024!

It is already six months that I left St Vincent's and came to Brussels. Though I do miss you, I am in good health and by now I am used to my new surroundings. We have a good community. I live with two Belgian missionaries. My new apostolate is very different from Parish apostolate. I spend more time in the office, but I also have the chance to visit our missionaries and see their activities in the different countries in Europe, which I enjoy. In October I was in Paris, where I also visited the church of St Vincent de Paul. I saw his body and remembered you all. In November I was in Poland and Berlin.

Many greetings, Keep the light shining,

Ferdinand

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### **Fourth Sunday of Advent 2023. Homily Notes**

This Gospel passage never fails to amaze. First, that God should choose a young girl, Mary, for his purpose of the redemption of humankind. Secondly, that God should treat her with such respect, sending an angel to bring her the message that she has been prepared for this task of giving birth to the Saviour. She is "highly favoured". Thirdly, that God would depend on the acceptance of a young girl for the fulfilment of the plan of salvation.

Mary, not overawed by the angel, asks for an explanation. She receives this with encouragement: "Mary, do not be afraid." Mary accepts, not with resignation but with energy, putting herself at the service of the God she loves: "I am the handmaid of the Lord". Let what you (the angel) have said be done to me."

But notice the last words of this gospel passage: 'And the angel left her.' As if the angel were saying to her: "Get on with it, lass." She has to find her own way.

In the Jewish and Christian way of understanding, God does not dictate. God invites people to a certain task, gives them a mission, but lets them discover the way to fulfil this mission.

Let us remember that this same rule applies to each one of us. God does not dictate to us as to what we must do. He wants us to discover it and carry it out ourselves with help of the Holy Spirit. We can ask Mary, our mother, to help us in this.

*Michael*

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### **Mass Times and Intentions**

Sat 23	18.00	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent	Deceased Priests & Parishioners (Flowers)
Sun 24	10.00	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent	William Flatley
	20.00	Christmas Vigil Mass	For Peace in the World
Mon 25	10.00	Christmas Day Mass	Parishioners and SVP School
Tues 26	09.00	St. Stephen, the first martyr	Margaret & John O'Gorman
Wed 27	09.00	St. John, apostle	Joan Wilcock
Thur 28	09.00	the Holy Innocents	Chris Thomas RIP
Fri 29	09.00	St. Thomas Becket	Fletcher Family
Sat 30	18.00	The Holy Family	Birch Family
Sun 31	10.00	The Holy Family	Paul Nicholson RIP
Mon 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2024			
	09.00am	Mary Holy Mother of God	
Tue 2 <sup>nd</sup>	07.30	St Basile & St Gregory	

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**Many thanks and many Congratulations to all involved in the great effort for the CHRISTMAS RAFFLE.** You raised the record sum of **£725.00**. WOW. This will almost complete the financing of the Tuesday Café for the whole of 2024. The TC is an essential part of our Christian Witness and the Mission of the Parish here in the city centre.

Our group of dedicated volunteers receive between 100 and 150 people (local people who are in difficulty and refugees and asylum seekers) every Tuesday morning between 10am and noon. The MICAHA organisation – the 2 Cathedrals – shares with them emergency rations of food. Our Tuesday Café volunteers welcome them with warm drinks, toasties and donated biscuits and cakes. They also collect, and prepare clothing, goods and cases to help them regain some little human dignity and relief from their destitution. Above all, they offer them a smile and a word of welcome. How more Christ-like can you be?

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Thanks are due, too, to the anonymous person who contributed to the offertory plate an envelope containing £500.00. May God reward their generosity a hundredfold!

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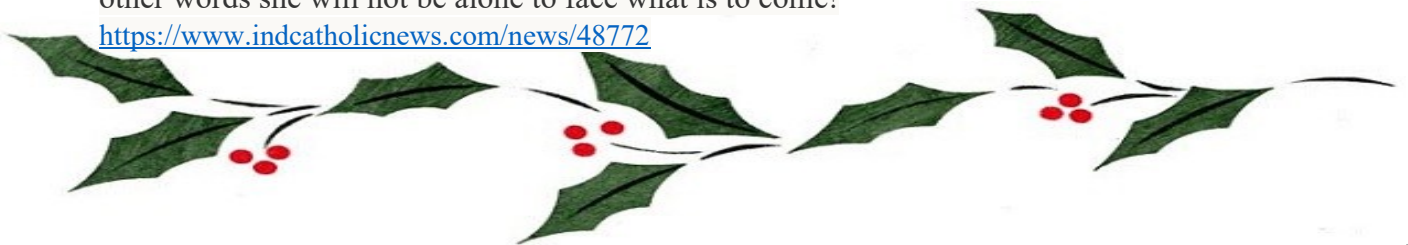
**Last Week's Finances:** We received £20.00 in the envelopes £251.92 in the offertory plate,

The **Lottery** winning number was: 01 02 05 06 07 10. No winner.

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**The coming of Jesus into human life**, hangs on a simple sentence that we find in the story of the Annunciation. It is this: '... Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.'" (Lk 1:38) In those few words something extraordinary is taking place., and it can happen to us to! For Mary the encounter with the desire of the Holy One comes through the message of the angel, and encounter that happens in human life, but is often not understood, mainly because we have a rather faulty image of what these messengers of God look like. I prefer to think that they come upon us when we are unaware of their real presence, in Mary's case it is a simple, direct dialogue of need. Can she, would she accept to be the Mother of her Lord? We can read the emotions going through her very easily, Luke's brilliance is in the swift brush stroke of his words painting a complete picture, it's all there, firstly a sketch of place, lineage, and relationship with Joseph, set between the visit of a heavenly messenger, his message, and his departing, giving her hope not only in what she has accepted to do, but that her cousin Elizabeth will also be part of the sign of God's favour. In other words she will not be alone to face what is to come!

<https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/48772>



#### **PRAYER INTENTIONS**

**Our Prayers are asked for the following who are sick:** Lorraine ALLEN, Stefan ASHTON, Natasha BAKER, Christopher BROWNE, Eileen DOLAN, Daisy Marcia DUNN, Chelsie CAMPBELL, Joe EDIE, Bobby ENWRIGHT, Baby Phoebe FENNELL, Baby FRANKIE, Lenny GINLEY, Mary HOWARD, Edie JONES, Maria JUDGE, Maureen MAGUIRE, Jane MANN, May McGARRY, Eddie McKENNA, Elizabeth MORRIS, Peter O'BRIEN, Ava RUDZINSKI, Martina STEWARD, SWEENEY, Jean TAYLOR, Mary TUIE, Pauline WALSH, Joanne WILCOCK, Camila WILD

**Also, for the intentions of:** Anne BAXTER, Ryan EDWARDS, Rita & Jimmy FLATLEY, Beverley HARPER, Joan HART, Theresa HASTIE, Ann MOORE, Joan MOORE, Susan MORSELLINO, MURRAY & STEVENSON Family, Skyla REID, Maureen RICE, David ROSE, Teresa SWIFT, Martha TAGUE, Cath WILSON