



Welcome to the Catholic Parish of Stamford

Saint Mary and Saint Augustine

The Presbytery, 13 Broad Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 1PG Tel: (01780) 762010

Parish Website: www.catholicstamford.com

Parish Priest: Canon Peter Vellacott (Email: priest.catholicstamford@dioceseofnottingham.uk)

Deacon: Reverend Charles West-Sadler (retired)

Parish Secretary: Carrie Ann Gates (Email: office.catholicstamford@dioceseofnottingham.uk)

Parish Safeguarding Rep: Carrie Ann Gates (Email: carriann.gatespsr@dioceseofnottingham.uk)

Parish Director of Music: Ruth Proctor (Mobile: 07826 017487 / Email: ruthproctor73@gmail.com)

Hall Bookings: Parish Office (Tel: 01780 762010 / Email: office.catholicstamford@dioceseofnottingham.uk)

Parish Primary School: Saint Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy, Stamford (Tel: 01780 762094)

Part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Nottingham Diocesan Website: www.dioceseofnottingham.uk

Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees Company Number: 7151646 Charity Number: 1134449

The Parish Office is open Mondays 10:30am – 3:30pm / Fridays 10:30am – 3:30pm

20th / 21st December 2025: Fourth Sunday of Advent (A)

Psalm Response: *Let the Lord enter; he is the king of glory*

Reflection

The mystery kept secret for long ages, promised through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, is this weekend revealed. This is the “gospel of God” that Paul celebrates in his Epistle—the good news that “God is with us” in Jesus Christ. The sign promised to the House of David in the First Reading is given in this weekend’s Gospel. In the virgin found with child, God Himself has brought to Israel a saviour from David’s royal line.

Son of David according to the flesh, Jesus is the Son of God, born of the Spirit. He will be anointed with the Spirit, and by the power of Spirit will be raised from the dead and established at God’s right hand in the heavens. He is the “king of glory” we proclaim in the Psalm. The earth in its fullness has been given to Him. And as God swore long ago to David, His Kingdom will have no end (cf. Psalm 89:4–5).

In Jesus Christ we have a new creation. Like the creation of the world, it is a work of the Spirit, a blessing from the Lord. In Him, we are saved from our sins, are called now “the beloved of God.”

All nations now are called to belong to Jesus Christ, to enter into the House of David and kingdom of God, the Church. Together, through the obedience of faith, we have been made a new race—a royal people that seeks for the face of the God of Jacob.

He has made our hearts clean; He has made us worthy to enter His holy place, to stand in His presence and serve Him. In the Eucharist, the everlasting covenant is renewed, the Advent promise of virgin with child—God with us—continues until the end of the age.

Tea & Coffee: Takes place after the 9:00a.m. and 11:00a.m. Masses. Do come through to the Parish Hall and take up the opportunity to catch up with fellow parishioners.

Children's Liturgy: Has taken a break now for Christmas and will return in the New Year.

Christmas Carol Singing - all welcome: On Saturday 20th December, our church choir will be singing much-loved Christmas music on the High Street to raise funds for the church and to share the joy of the season with our community. Everyone is warmly invited to come along, join in the singing, and support us with a donation if they are able. Light refreshments will be available afterwards in the church hall, and all are most welcome.

Christmas Mass Times: For your information, if you are at home this Christmas or hosting family in Stamford, Mass times at St. Mary & St. Augustine Church over Christmas will be:

Wednesday 24th December	6:00p.m Vigil Mass
(Christmas Eve)	11:30p.m Office of Readings followed by Midnight Mass
Thursday 25th December	9:00a.m Dawn Mass of Christmas
(Christmas Day)	11:00a.m Day Mass of Christmas

Christmas Offering: The Christmas Offering traditionally goes to the Priest of the Parish and forms the major part of his income for the year, along with the Easter offering. Priests do not receive any income from any other source outside of the Parish. So, whatever you give in your Christmas Offering will express your personal and financial support. Should you wish to provide a Christmas Offering, please mark your envelope as 'Christmas Offering' or use one of the envelopes provided at the back of Church and place it in the usual bag as the Offertory Collection is taken up. Alternatively, you can make your offering via bank transfer (please e-mail the Parish Office for account details) in the usual way marking your donation 'Christmas Offering'. Thank you.

Donations of Holly: If anyone is able to donate holly with berries and / or variegated holly to decorate the Church this Christmas, then please could you drop your donation off and leave it in the area to the side of the Presbytery front door, near the wheelie bins. Thank you.

Christmas Cards: There is a selection of Christmas cards available to buy in the hall. Please place money in the box provided.

Annual Catholic Diaries: We have a number of 2026 catholic diaries available in differing colours at the cost of £5. Please place your £5 in the basket provided at the back of Church.

Polishing / Cleaning Rota: If you currently volunteer to help polish / clean the Church, please will you get in touch with Carrie Ann (Parish Secretary) on 01780 762 010 or office.catholicstamford@dioceseofnottingham.uk so that we can ensure all areas of our beautiful Church are being covered. New volunteers to join the rota are most welcome. Thank you very much in advance.

Foodbank: Thank you to everyone who has generously donated to the foodbank recently, helping to provide Christmas parcels for those in need. Your kindness has made a real difference this Christmas, and we are deeply grateful for all donations given throughout 2025 as well. This continued support truly reflects the spirit of compassion and community.

Coffee Morning- Save the date: Get the New Year off to a friendly start and catch up at the next coffee morning on Thursday 15th January in the Parish Hall. Enjoy hot drinks, refreshments and chat. All ages welcome. Stay for the duration or just drop in. We look forward to seeing you then. Time to be confirmed - please see future newsletters for details.

CTS - New Missals: In addition to Sunday Missals, People's Editions are now available as Daily and Weekday Missals from the Catholic Truth Society (CTS) based on the new ESV-CE Lectionary, including Order of Mass in Latin and English. Carrie Ann (Parish Secretary) is able to order any CTS Missals at a special discount, so please contact her via email on office.catholicstamford@dioceseofnottingham.uk or phone the Parish office on 01780 762 010 for more information and to place an order.

School admissions to Catholic Primary Academies (Reception Year) - Children born between 01/09/2021 and 31/08/2022: The deadline for submitting an application for a school place is 15th January 2026. Application forms are available on your 'home' Local Authority (LA) website. For every Catholic school you apply for if you wish your child to be considered and ranked under a faith criterion you should also complete a supplementary information form and return this form to the school by the deadline (forms are available from the LA and the school). You must also include the supporting evidence as required with this form, i.e. a baptism certificate (photocopies are acceptable; contact the parish of baptism if you don't have a copy). Failure to supply the required supporting evidence will mean your child is ranked in a lower criterion which may affect your chance of a place.

Deanery Catholic Young Adults Group: Following this year's World Youth Sunday, our deanery is launching a new Catholic Young Adults Group for those aged 18-35. The group will bring together young adults from across the deanery for monthly gatherings that include prayer, faith formation, and social occasions. The first meeting will take place in the new year, and all are warmly welcome - whether you're new to the area, returning to the Church, or looking to deepen your faith alongside other young Catholics. More details will be shared in the coming weeks; in the meantime, please register your interest by emailing edward.kendall@dioceseofnottingham.uk.

Petition to urge the Nigerian government to protect Nigerian Christians: Please consider signing the petition through the link given below to call on the UK Government to strongly urge the Nigerian authorities to protect Christian communities facing violence. It's been reported that over 7,000 Christians were killed in Nigeria this year. The link for the Petition can be found at <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/743829>

Aid to the Church in Need: According to Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) 5.4 billion people (2/3 of the world's population) live in countries where individuals and entire communities suffer violations of religious freedom. More than 220 million Christians are at direct risk of persecution. In response, ACN has initiated a petition calling on governments around the world to implement in full Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the gold standard of religious liberty - the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the right to change religion and the right to manifest religion in teaching, practice, worship and observance. Parishioners are invited to stand with persecuted Christians and all those who suffer for their beliefs by signing the ACN Article 18 petition, which is available by visiting: <https://acnuk.org/article-18-petition-religious-freedom-human-right-not-privilege>. Please continue to pray for all those who suffer for their faith.

CAFOD World Gifts: Celebrate someone special with CAFOD World Gifts - Christmas gifts that bring us together, building a better world for all of us, one gift at a time. To order and discover the full range of gifts, please visit: cafod.org.uk/worldgifts and also pick up a brochure with more information at the back of the Church.

Mass Schedule and Intentions

Weekend 20 th December / 21 st December Fourth Sunday of Advent	5:00p.m. - 5:40p.m. Confessions 6:00p.m. Vigil Mass <i>Anne Leckie (RIP)</i> 9:00a.m. Mass <i>Christopher & Alistair Connell (RIP)</i> 11:00a.m. Mass <i>Pro Populo</i>
Monday 22 nd December (<i>Advent Feria</i>)	No Mass in the Parish
Tuesday 23 rd December (<i>Advent Feria</i>)	10:00a.m. Mass <i>The Bullimore Family in Memory of Jake</i>
Wednesday 24 th December (<i>Christmas Eve</i>)	6:00p.m. Vigil Mass of Christmas <i>Pro Populo</i> 11:30p.m. Office of Readings and Midnight Mass <i>Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion</i>
Thursday 25 th December (<i>Christmas Day</i>)	9:00a.m. Dawn Mass of Christmas <i>Deceased Members of Harvey & Vinter Families (RIP)</i> 11:00a.m. Day Mass of Christmas <i>Irena Dudek (RIP)</i>
Friday 26 th December (<i>St Stephen</i>)	10:00a.m. Mass <i>St Mary & St Augustine Altar Servers</i>
Weekend 27 th December / 28 th December Feast of the Holy Family	5:00p.m. - 5:40p.m. Confessions 6:00p.m. Vigil Mass <i>Pro Populo</i> 9:00a.m. Mass <i>Ronald Almeida (RIP)</i> 11:00a.m. Mass <i>Sean Kelly (RIP)</i>

Readings for this Sunday and next Sunday

	<i>This week</i>	<i>Next week</i>
Celebration	Fourth Sunday of Advent	Feast of the Holy Family
Cycle & Psalter	Year A, Week 4	Year A, Week 1
First Reading	Isaiah 7:10-14	Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14
Psalms	Psalm 24	Psalm 128
Second Reading	Romans 1:1-7	Colossians 3:12-21
Gospel	Matthew 1:18-24	Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23
Preface	II of Advent	Preface of the Nativity of the Lord
Eucharistic Prayer	II	Priest's Choice

Cycle of Prayer during Advent and Christmastide

During Advent and Christmastide, we are asked to pray for the following intentions in our own private prayer: Migrants and Refugees; Expectant Mothers.

Thank you for your generosity

Standing Orders: £685

Weekly Offertory Collection Basket: £534.50

I am very grateful to all who continue to contribute to the Church by whatever means. Thank you.