



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: carrieann.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

13th / 14th December 2025: Third Sunday of Advent (A)

Psalm Response: *Come, Lord, and save us.*

Reflection

John questions Jesus from prison in this weekend's Gospel – for his disciples' sake and for ours. He knows that Jesus is doing the works of the Messiah, foretold in the First Reading and Psalm but John wants his disciples – and us – to know that the Judge is at the gate, that in Jesus our God has come to save us.

The Liturgy of Advent takes us out into the desert to see and hear the marvellous works and words of God – the lame leaping like a stag, the dead raised, the good news preached to the poor. The Liturgy does this to give us courage, to strengthen our feeble hands and make firm our weak knees. Our hearts can easily become frightened and weighed down by the hardships we face. We can lose patience in our sufferings as we await the coming of the Lord.

As James advises in his Epistle, we should take as our example the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Jesus also points us to a prophet – holding up John as a model. John knew that life was more than food, the body more than clothing. He sought the kingdom of God first, confident that God would provide. John did not complain. He did not lose faith. Even in chains in his prison cell, he was still sending his disciples – and us – to our Saviour.

We come to Him again now in the Eucharist. Already He has caused the desert to bloom, the burning sands to become springs of living water. He has opened our ears to hear the words of the sacred book, freed our tongue to fill the air with songs of thanksgiving.

Once bowed down, captives to sin and death, we have been ransomed and returned to His Kingdom, crowned with everlasting joy. Raised up, we now stand before His altar to meet the One who is to come: "Here is your God."

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: Is celebrated at the 9:00a.m. Mass. We welcome all children to share in this opportunity to participate in their own Liturgy of the Word at Mass at an appropriate level for them.

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.

'Walk with me' Advent Booklets: These booklets are a great resource for the season of Advent with reflections for each day, helping us to enter more deeply into this time of preparation for the great feast of Christmas. They cost just £1.50. Please place your £1.50 in the separate 'Walk with me' basket at the back of Church.

Retiring Collection for Flowers: This weekend there will be the usual retiring collection for flowers to decorate our beautiful church throughout the year.

Bambinelli Sunday: This weekend you are invited to bring your cribs or figure of Baby Jesus to whichever Mass you attend for blessing at the end of Mass. This tradition was begun in Rome by Pope St John Paul II.

Decorating the Crib: We are looking for volunteers to help decorate the Crib this coming week. If you are available to help, please stay after Mass on Friday 19th December. Thank you in advance.

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.

200 Club: The draw for December took place last Sunday and the first prize of £200 went to Mavis deBono; the second prize of £100 to Ann Cox and the final prize of £50 went to Sophie Fegan. Congratulations to our winners.

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

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.

Parish Reconciliation Service: Part of our preparation during Advent is making a good Confession in readiness to celebrate the Feast of Our Lord's Birth and be able to welcome him anew into our lives. There will be a Reconciliation Service here at St Mary & St Augustine's with local priests available to hear confessions this coming **Monday 15th December at 7:00p.m.**

Christmas Carol Singing - all welcome: The Choir will be singing on Stamford High Street on Saturday 20th December at 3:00p.m. to spread Christmas cheer in aid of church funds. They will entertain you with a seasonal selection of traditional music and all donations will be gratefully received. As a community Choir, we welcome any interested new members to join us. If you would like to learn to sing some Christmas music with us, please contact our Director of Music, Ruth Proctor (ruthproctor73@gmail.com), or come along and join us for Choir Practice in church, 7:00p.m. Fridays, anytime throughout the rest of November and December.

Foodbank: In particular need at present are: Christmas fare - Christmas cakes, mince pies, Christmas puddings, tins (or packages) of biscuits, boxes of chocolates, tins of salmon, ham and crisps. Many thanks to everyone for the massive response for Christmas at Foodbank. We will be putting the parcels together on Tuesday and Wednesday next week so any last-minute contributions would be welcome this weekend.

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.

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.

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.

Printable Advent Prayer Journal: Journey through Advent with the Nottingham Diocesan Catholic Youth Service as we await the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, with a printable Advent prayer journal produced by the Team. To download your free copy visit www.ndcys.com/advent2025/.

Vacancy: The Parish of Saint Mary, Louth is seeking to appoint a part-time Cleaner (Church, Hall, and Facilities) who will be reliable and conscientious in cleaning the church, parish hall, and associated facilities. The role will be for 4 hours per week (preferably worked over two days) at £12.60 per hour (real living wage). To request an application form, email office@dioceseofnottingham.uk. The closing date is Monday 29th December 2025.

Mass Schedule and Intentions

Weekend 13 th December / 14 th December Third Sunday of Advent - Gaudete Sunday	5:00p.m. - 5:40p.m. Confessions 6:00p.m. Vigil Mass <i>Christine Doherty (RIP)</i> 9:00a.m. Mass <i>Martin & Phyllis Connell (RIP)</i> 11:00a.m. Mass <i>Pro Populo</i>
Monday 15 th December (<i>Advent Feria</i>)	No Mass in the Parish 7:00p.m. Reconciliation Service
Tuesday 16 th December (<i>Advent Feria</i>)	10:00a.m. Mass <i>Mauro Di Molfetta (RIP)</i> 1:30p.m. Funeral Service <i>Rosemary Vines (RIP)</i>
Wednesday 17 th December (<i>Advent Feria</i>)	No Mass in the Parish
Thursday 18 th December (<i>Advent Feria</i>)	No Mass in the Parish
Friday 19 th December (<i>Advent Feria</i>)	9:00a.m. Exposition & Benediction 10:00a.m. Mass <i>Thomas Thornton (RIP)</i>
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>

Readings for this Sunday and next Sunday

	<i>This week</i>	<i>Next week</i>
Celebration	Third Sunday of Advent	Fourth Sunday of Advent
Cycle & Psalter	Year A, Week 3	Year A, Week 4
First Reading	Isaiah 35:1-6, 10	Isaiah 7:10-14
Psalms	Psalm 146	Psalm 24
Second Reading	James 5:7-10	Romans 1:1-7
Gospel	Matthew 11:2-11	Matthew 1:18-24
Preface	I of Advent	II of Advent
Eucharistic Prayer	III	II

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: £577.50

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

Prayers for those who have died

In your charity, please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have recently died, especially:

Rosemary Ann Vines (RIP) – whose funeral service will take place on Tuesday 16th December at 1:30p.m

‘Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her.
May she rest in peace. Amen.’