



St Martin de Porres Catholic Church, Luton

Fr Simon Penhalagan • 366 Leagrave High Street • Luton • LU4 0NG
01582 663706 • priest.stmartindeporres@northamptondiocese.org
admin.stmartindeporres@northamptondiocese.org
www.stmartindeporreschurch.org.uk
@StMartinsLuton

THE HOLY FAMILY - YEAR OF MARK (B)

Welcome to St Martin's

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who served our parish community over this Christmas, both in the preparation of the Church and in the celebration of the liturgy.

My sincere gratitude for your greetings, and the many cards, thoughtful gifts and very generous Christmas offering. Your kindness is greatly appreciated. May the peace, joy and love of the Holy Family be present in your lives each day over Christmas and the New Year

Fr Simon

ATTENDANCE AT MASS - The obligation to attend Mass on Sunday is still suspended. Fr Simon will continue to offer Mass privately for the whole parish each day. He will endeavour to **live stream Masses on Tuesday at 9.30am, Thursday at 6.30pm and Sunday at 11.00am**, via Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/StMartinsLuton/>. Please note that you do not need to have the Facebook App or an account in order to view these videos, as our account is public. We now also have a YouTube account. Search for 'St Martin de Porres Catholic Church Luton' and subscribe to receive alerts for future videos of streamed Masses.

LIVE STREAMING - I'm afraid that Mass probably won't be able to be livestreamed on our Facebook page or our YouTube Channel on **Tuesday 29th December or Thursday 31st December**. However, they will continue as normal at all other times, technology permitting. The links are: <https://www.facebook.com/StMartinsLuton>
<https://youtube.com/channel/UCGeNjCAVvzg52aqq5AHBcoQ>
Please note that you don't have to have a Facebook account to access the parish or CCR page and that Mass is streamed live from Northampton Cathedral each day at <https://northamptoncathedral.org/live/>

WELCOME - As of 2nd January we welcome back Liam Castle, a student for the priesthood who was with us at this time last year. He has been ordained a deacon since last we saw him!

EPIPHINAY OF THE LORD - Wednesday 6th January - There will be a public Mass at 9.30am on this day. There will NOT be a public Mass on Tuesday 5th January.

PARISH OFFICE - The parish office will be closed from Wednesday 23rd December 2020 to Tuesday 5th January 2021.

CERTIFICATES - If your child had their First Holy Communion or Confirmation this year, please ask a steward to get their certificate from the Sacristy.

PARISH PRAYER:

*Loving Father, "You so loved the world that you sent us your only Son, that we might believe in him and have eternal life".
May we, the parish of St Martin de Porres, encounter Jesus Christ anew this day and live the good news with joy.
Through the power of your Holy Spirit, help us to "go out to the whole world and proclaim" our faith with confidence.
Give us the courage to witness to the 'Joy of the Gospel' by our words and actions. Help us to become more welcoming and missionary, so that you may be known and loved by all people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen*

The Holy Family - 27 th December 2020	
No Public Mass	Catherine & Patrick Browne (Anniversary)RIP
11.00am	Fr Joe Williams RIP
Monday - THE HOLY INNOCENTS	
No Public Mass	Kochuthresia Pappachan RIP
Tuesday - ST THOMAS BECKET	
9.30am	Lesley O'Connor RIP
Thursday - Seventh Day of Christmas Octave	
6.30pm	Holy Souls
Friday - MARY, MOTHER OF GOD	
No Public Mass	Helen Hogan RIP
Saturday - SS Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen	
1.00-2.00pm	ADORATION
No Public Mass	Jane & Peter Fielding RIP
NEXT SUNDAY - SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS	
11.00am	Robert Ward RIP

LOOKING FOR EMPLOYMENT - For parishioners who may be job hunting or going self-employed due to the pandemic, Sacred Heart Parish, Luton has set up a free online career coaching programme <https://www.vitaeopus.co.uk> providing a wealth of information, tools, practical advice and activities to help anyone wanting to find new employment opportunities or back to work support.

EU SETTLEMENT SCHEME: 30th June 2021 is the deadline for EEA and Swiss citizens to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme. You are encouraged to apply now to protect your rights in the UK. Visit: www.gov.uk/eusettlementscheme Citizens Advice Luton can assist EU citizens to make their application for settled or pre-settled status. Contact 01582 544778 or email: eussadvice@lutoncab.org.uk

UPCOMING EVENTS!

The God Who Speaks - Our Liturgy of The Word - A series of 3 online Zoom sessions exploring the upcoming Lectionary Readings and Seasons of the Liturgical Year. Led by Mgr Kevin McGinnell & Alex Heath.

- **Tuesday 19th January (7.30-8.30pm)** - 'He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures' (Lk24:45) The importance of God's Word for Christian identity & everyday living
- **Tuesday 16th February (7.30-8.30pm)** - 'Many more began to believe in him because of his Word' (Jn4:41) John's Gospel & The Season of Lent

Please register in advance to secure a place. email: admin@nores.org.uk or phone 01582 723312 (ext 1)

LUX.Valour Online (For Young People aged 11-18yrs) - Saturday 30th & Sunday 31st January 2021, During our LUX.Valour weekend, we will be exploring what it means to be a young person of great bravery. There will be amazing talks, fun small groups, moving times of prayer, ridiculous games and a theme night and all completely free!
To book please click on the link below and complete the form on the website. <https://nymo.org/lux-valour/>

THE WORD OF GOD

First Reading - Genesis 15:1-6,21:1-3

Your heir shall be your own flesh and blood.

The word of the Lord was spoken to Abram in a vision, 'Have no fear, Abram, I am your shield; your reward will be very great.'

'My Lord,' Abram replied 'what do you intend to give me? I go childless...' Then Abram said, 'See, you have given me no descendants; some man of my household will be my heir.' And then this word of the Lord was spoken to him, 'He shall not be your heir; your heir shall be of your own flesh and blood.' Then taking him outside he said, 'Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants' he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.

The Lord dealt kindly with Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised. Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

Responsorial Psalm - 104(105):1-6,8-9

HE, THE LORD, IS OUR GOD. HE REMEMBERS HIS COVENANT FOR EVER.

Second Reading - Hebrews 11:8,11-12,17-19

The faith of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac.

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going. It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore.

It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He offered to sacrifice his only son even though the promises had been made to him and he had been told: *It is through Isaac that your name will be carried on.* He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead; and so, figuratively speaking, he was given back Isaac from the dead.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel - Luke 2:22-40

The child grew, filled with wisdom.

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, - observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: *Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord* - and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see

death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see, a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel.'

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected - and a sword will pierce your own soul too - so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

The Word of this week

As an example for us to follow, the Holy Family can seem a little too perfect: when we consider the more 'dramatic' events of the Christmas and Easter story, it can seem so far removed from us. And yet, as today's Gospel reminds us (especially in the shorter version), there were also the so-called 'hidden years' - the many years of family life in Nazareth, spent in ordinary things. During that time, we hear how Jesus grew and matured, and in the glimpse of that family life we see our example. The family is a basic unit of our Christian society, despite coming under threat nowadays. Our celebration of this feast, and the Word of God we proclaim, announces that there is a lasting value in the ideals of family life, and the relationship between husband, wife, parents and children. Whatever the changing details of each age, honour, understanding and love always remain the recipe for the perfect, and holy, human family. It is love that we put on over all the other clothes of changing cultures and places, to guarantee the life of the family in imitation of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

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Elaine Goodship: Parish Administrator

admin.stmartindepordes@northamptondiocese.org

Charlotte Seery: Parish Finances

finance.stmartindepordes@northamptondiocese.org

Maura Byers: Parish Safeguarding Representative

Tel: 07796712868