

Weekly Message from Fr William for Third Sunday of Advent 2022

Dear People of St Mary's

Throughout the Christmas Octave this year there will be an opportunity to support Friends of the Holy Land. FHL is a non-political Christian Charity. The focus of its work is providing practical help directly to the most needy and vulnerable Christians living in the West Bank, in Gaza, in Israel and in Jordan – the part of the world that Christians call the Holy Land. The charity funds emergency needs and practical small projects to help create a sustainable future for Christians in the Holy Land. It has a team of locally based lay and clerical professionals who identify and verify immediate and longer term needs. The beneficiaries of their work come from all Christian communities in the Holy Land, and their supporters in the UK come from all Christian denominations. Friends of the Holy Land has the backing and blessing of church leaders in England, Wales and Scotland.

In the meantime we continue to promote a number of other charitable outreach projects especially as we head into winter and people become even more vulnerable. The Homes for Ukraine project provides a matching, training and support programme for those who want to look into whether they could offer accommodation or share their home with Ukrainian families exiled in the UK. Ukrainians have actually been encouraged to find temporary refuge in safe countries like the UK as the Kremlin continue to strike Ukrainian power supplies during a freezing winter. Or there's the Ukraine Emergency Winter Appeal we've been promoting these last few weeks. See noticeboard or bulletin for more information on these two distinct Ukrainian projects. And don't forget our own parish International Outreach – click Donate on the website home page, then click International Outreach to learn more about it.

Closer to home we're still promoting the Catholic Care Christmas Appeal as it works to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the Leeds diocese, especially through the current cost of living crisis. There's more information on this in the Atrium. St Joseph's Table is our own parish project supporting the homeless, refugees and needy families in our area. See bulletin for more information, or just drop tins, packets of food and toiletries in the St Joseph's Table box in the atrium. Baby nappies and baby formula are especially welcome. And we're looking to start our own Warm Welcome service, in collaboration with the other Christian communities in the town. Thank you those who have come forward to volunteer for this. We have five volunteers so far.

For Christmas Masses throughout the Octave, see last Sunday's weekly message.

God bless you.



Third Sunday of Advent, 11 december 2022