

AMPLEFORTH ABBEY

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) 18.12.2011

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and his kingdom will have no end." And Mary said: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel left her. (*Luke 1:26-28*)

MASS TIMES IN THE ABBEY CHURCH

Sun.	18 December	4th SUNDAY ADVENT (B)	10.00
Mon.	19 December	Feria	09:00
Tues.	20 December	Feria	09:00
Weds	21 December	Feria	09:00
Thurs	22 December	Feria	09:00
Fri.	23 December	Feria	09:00
Sat	24 December	Start of Christmastide	09:00

ANGELIC INTRUDERS



During Advent, St. Luke's account of the Annunciation to Mary features several times. As with so many pivotal moments in the history of salvation, our very familiarity with the episode as recounted by *Luke* can blunt our deeper grasp of the mystery. A moment's reflection, however, should help us see just how awe-inspiring the Annunciation is and was: a wholly unanticipated encounter with God's messenger; an undreamt of prophecy and challenge; a 'trumping' of all the special births of heroes such as Moses and Samuel in history of Israel – and a glance into the unfathomable void of a future promising only insecurity (at least on a human level) a large measure of misunderstanding, hostility and lonely mourning of the One to whom Mary was to give birth. In the unpredictable turnings of our own individual futures, we can perhaps aim to grow in a more whole-hearted 'yes' to our own calling – and similarly see beyond the shadows to a hope of future glory.

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RIGHTLY CENTRED

Since opening on July 16, the Abbey Visitor Centre has welcomed almost 5,500 guests. This has largely been made possible through the generosity of a team of volunteers assembled by the Warden, Fr Kentigern Hagan. They have provided an invaluable bridge between the Monastery and those coming for the first time – often perhaps without much detailed background information, but keen



to know more. As term ended, the time was right for a sign of grateful appreciation from the monastic Community for the volunteers' contribution towards making the Centre such a positive and sought-after feature of the campus. A buffet supper in the Main Hall gave all a chance to reflect on progress so far, and to look forward to the next 5000 visitors. After a break from December 24 – January 1, the Visitor Centre reopens as usual:

Monday-Saturday 10:00-16:00

Sundays 11:00-16:00

ADVENT – THEN FAREWELL



The end of the school term saw carol concerts in the Abbey Church for both the children of St. Martin's Ampleforth (pictured) and their parents, and for the College. Once again, this year the College carol concert featured colour and images projected onto the domes to accompany the readings and anthems. The service ended with a reflection on 'light in the darkness' and a time of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, ending with Benediction.

WEEKDAY MONASTIC OFFICE IN

THE ABBEY CHURCH

6.00 a.m. Matins

7.30 a.m. Lauds

8.45 a.m. Little Hour

6.00 p.m. Vespers

8:15 p.m. Compline