

CATHOLIC CHURCH OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

192, Nags Head Road, Ponders End, Enfield EN3 7AR

Tel: 020 8804 2149 Email: pondersend@rcdow.org.uk Parish Priest – Fr John Shewring

Parish Admin – Dorothy Eribankya Catechetical Coordinator – Arianne Phagoo 020 8443 4069
or 07784186406 Live streaming: <https://www.churchservices.tv/enfield>



The
Immaculate
Conception



December



SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

A voice cries in the wilderness; Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley will be filled in and rough roads made smooth.
Let us not miss the point. Today's Gospel speaks firstly of John the Baptist, that herald of an extraordinary happening. The Gospel records his cry uttered in the desert and describes his mission to prepare the way, to make the rough roads smooth. His role has become a part of mankind's history. But the name of John fades at the coming of the Word of God himself.....After a long silence during which there were neither signs nor prophets, God spoke once again, and his voice echoed in the desert proclaiming a decisive turning point in the history of mankind. In one final initiative which fulfilled and surpassed the former preparations, God was about to appear. But how? Would he manifest himself like a meteor blazing a trail across the heavens before losing itself once again in the infinite galaxies? Would men perhaps glimpse him only for an instant before darkness closed in upon our world once again? No, for this Word who has invaded our time speaks to all men. 'Every one shall see the salvation of God.' Luke will demonstrate the universal impact of this Word when, in the Acts of the Apostles, he goes on to demonstrate the astonishing progress of the gospel message from Jerusalem even to Rome itself (Acts 28:28). By then a name can be given to this Word – Jesus Christ Risen.

Weekend Mass Intentions

Sat: - 7.00am – Church opens for Quiet Prayer
8.15am – Morning Prayer

Followed by 1st Saturday Confessions until 10.00a

9.30am – Rosary & 15 mins Quiet Rosary Prayer

10.15am – First Saturday Devotions

10.30am – For the Conversion of Sinners

5.00pm - Alfie Greene - Unwell

Sun – The church opens at 7.00pm

8.00am – Intentions of Faustina Smiley

9.30am – For the Intentions of Parishioners

11.00am – Nwando Okechukwu – Birthday Int

5.00pm – RIP Members of the Legion of Mary

Mon – 8.15am - Church opens for Quiet Prayer

8.30am – Morning Prayer & Rosary

9.30am – Intentions of St Mary's School

6.00pm – Church opens with Adoration

6.30pm – Evening Prayer & Rosary

7.30pm – Theresa Ragbir – 13th Anniversary

Tues – 8.15am – Church opens for Quiet Prayer

8.30am – Morning Prayer & Rosary

9.30am – Vivian Onofua – Birthday Intention

No Adoration this Morning

Wed - 8.15am – Church Opens for Quiet Prayer

8.30am – Morning Prayer & Rosary

9.30am – For the Holy Father's Intentions

No Adoration this Morning

Thu – 8.15am – Church opens for Quiet Prayer

8.30am – Morning Prayer & Rosary

9.30am – Intentions of Susan & Martin Attwood

Followed by Exposition until 11.00am

Fri 5.00pm – Church Opens with Exposition

5.30pm – Advent Confessions until 7.15pm

6.30pm – Evening Prayer & Rosary

7.30pm – Daphne Sullivan - RIP

Followed by Chaplet of Divine Mercy

Sat – 7.00am – Church opens for Quiet Prayer

8.15am – Morning Prayer & Rosary

9.30am – Intentions of Faustina Smiley –

Followed by Confessions until 11.00am

5.00pm – For the Intentions of Parishioners

Sun – Church opens at 7.00am

8.00am – Intentions of Faustina Smiley

9.30am – Intentions of Parishioners

11.00am – John William & Alice Shewring - RIP

5.00pm – Eva & Luigi Visocchi - Anniversary

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION CONFESSION

Friday 13th December from
5.30pm to 7.15pm

Saturday 14th December from
8.30am to 10.00am

Please do take advantage of these times. Always a very special time of the year and so good for us to put things right with God and with ourselves. Face to face or private confessions in the sacristy.

SEASON OF ADVENT

Advent continues this weekend
with the theme of Peace

For Christians around the world, Advent refers to the four weeks leading up to Christmas, where communities remember and celebrate the arrival of Jesus and join together in the hope of his ultimate return
Four Themes of Advent:

Hope: The first theme of Advent is hope.

Peace: The second theme is on peace.

Love: Week three celebrates love

Joy: The last week focuses on joy

how fitting is that!

Advent, like Lent, is a Penitential Season, and a time when we think about changing our lives for the better so that our hearts are open to welcome Jesus at Christmas.

Prepare yourself well – be faithful to your prayers and regular attendance at Mass and make an effort to get to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



Holy Father's Prayer Intentions

December 2024 – For Pilgrims of Hope

Let us pray that this Jubilee strengthen us in our faith, helping us to recognise the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

ALTAR SERVERS TRAINING AND PRACTICE.

Sunday 15th December 2024

Just so that we are ready for our Advent and Christmas Services, there will be a training session for ALL servers in the hall after the 11.00am on above date. No show then no serving!

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Monday 9th December 2024

8.30am – Morning Prayer & Rosary

9.30am – Mass (with School)

6.30pm – Evening Prayer & Rosary

7.30pm – Mass with singing

AN ADVENT EVENING WITH FOOD & CAROLS

Saturday 14th December 2024

As we prepare for Christmas, please join us in the parish hall after the 5.00pm parish Mass for an Advent Supper – with Christmas Carols, music and entertainment. There will also be a raffle with prizes. All are welcome – donations are welcome.

**A NOVENA TO PREPARE FOR THE
BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST
OUR SAVIOUR**

Monday 16th – after 9.30am Mass
Tuesday 17th – after 9.30am Mass
Wednesday 18th – after 9.30am Mass
Thursday 19th – after 9.30am Mass
Friday 20th – after 7.30pm Mass
Saturday 21st – after 9.30am Mass
Sunday 22nd – at 4.00pm with
Evening Prayer
Monday 23rd – after 9.30am Mass
Tuesday 24th – after 9.30am Mass
There will be Novena booklets available in the church – please join us as we say the prayers together – if you would like to follow the Novena privately please take a copy home with you. **Lets prepare well**

**MARY'S MEALS
An appeal**

Mary's Meals can make money for their work by collecting any unwanted mobiles/ipads/jewellery/watches/cameras. If you have any of these and would be willing to donate them, pop them in a bag. Mark the bag Mary's Meals and hand it in next time you are at Mass. David Chapman will pick them up and deliver them to the Mary's Meals office. Thank you for your support.

FRIDAY LUNCH

Our Friday Lunch Club is very popular but we are in desperate need of help for a short time to move heavy tables and to help unload food off the van when it is delivered – for about an hour and half from about 9.00am.

MAGNIFICAT

Because of the change of translation the cost of Magnificat has increased for this month only from £4.99 to £6.50. Sorry!

YOUNG ADULTS DEANERY MEETINGS

Ages 18 – 35

The idea is for young adults (ages 18-35) to meet up once a month at one of the parishes in the Enfield deanery on a weekday evening for a time of prayer, worship (with a talk) and a social. This will allow young adults to grow and develop in their faith with mutual support and friendship. The next meeting will be on Friday 13th December (7-9pm) at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, New Southgate. For further details please contact: annamcmullan@rcdow.org.uk

THE PRICE OF VOTIVE CANDLES

For quite some time we have been subsidising the price of votive candles in our church. The cost of these candles has increased and so we going to have to raise the price of the candles. We cannot afford to lose income any more so the cost of these candles will increase to £1 each.

**LEGION OF MARY
Our Lady Seat of Wisdom**

**Meeting on Sunday 12th January 2025
at 2.45pm in parish hall**

An opportunity to meet together and say our Legion prayers together and to give our reports on the work we have achieved over the past week or so.

CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

The CCS are a charity providing young people and children with counselling and therapy, emergency grants for families and carers and adoption and aftercare. Check out their Christmas Card brochure in porch.

Parish Shop – Cribs, Christmas Cards, Cane Calendars, Statues, Rosaries and gifts.

ADVENT QUIET TIMES

Advent is a serious time of preparation and so we really need times of peacefulness and quiet to come before God in prayer. These are times when the church is open for quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament:
Tues 10th: 7.00pm - 8.15pm – night prayer
Tues 17th: 6.30pm – 8.15pm – night prayer
In addition to those mentioned below.

**EXPOSITION OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT**



Friday Evenings
from 5.00 – 7.15pm
Saturday Mornings
from 7.00 – 8.30am
*As we approach the Jubilee
Year do try and give a
little more time to Our Lord*

MASS INTENTIONS

Wanting a Mass said for a person or occasion is good but a reminder that if you wish a special date then you must hand in your request well in advance if you do not want to be disappointed. Thanks

Introductory Sessions for Parishioners

Anna Dupelycz from the Agency will be visiting the parish talking on 3 subjects
5th Dec – A look at Liturgy
Understanding the Liturgical year
16th Jan – Reflecting on the Eucharist
Understanding the Sacrament of the Eucharist
13th Feb – Reflecting on Reconciliation
Understanding the Sacrament of Reconciliation
Evenings will run from 7.00pm to 9.00pm

Prayers please:

Sick: Fergal Sherry, Mehill Ftoni, Agnes Robinson, Peter Thorpe, Joe Harper, Mary Conway. Suzi Modi, Agnes Guveya, Liz Freeman, Adreina Sifari, Margaret Felgate, Mark Keighrey, Marilyn Theodore. Sara Malaki, John Keighrey, Dan Heath, Geoffry Nwachukwu. Maureen Walker, Eamon Fitzpatrick. Eileen Lacey,

Recently Dead: Agatha Durowaa, Angelo D'Vito, Daphne Sullivan. Thomas Lawlor. Brid McGonagle, Kathleen Fitzsimmons, Phyllis Robinson, Jennifer Browne, Liam Sullivan, Fr David Williamson. Rose Tonkin, Frank Sebagala, Rosemarie Warnesuriya, Elvera Nardone, Victor Saldhana, Fr Damien Crimes, Patrick Mukasa. Philomena Gomes, Peter Thorpe, Fernando Iannelli, John Charlery.

Anniversaries: Dennis Swanton, Solomis & Eleni Djerkallis, Surujnath Ragbir, Sheila Saldhana, Theresa Ragbir, Marie Mendy, Vermeil Josen, Anscarina Dinha, Margaret Paul, Diane Bunker. Peggy Power.

Morning Prayer & Rosary – is said before all weekday Masses. Monday to Thursday and Saturday mornings at 8.30am and Friday evening at 6.30pm before Mass.

Legion of Mary – the next meeting of the Legion of Mary is on Sunday 12th January at 2.45pm in the hall.

Friday Lunch – is served every Friday in the hall from 11.30am onwards – open to all comers – no cost!

Contactless Offerings to the Parish – you can find the Dona Contactless Terminal in the porch of the church for any donations you may wish to make to the parish and for payment for any purchases from the parish Repository. Not for special collections
Junior Carol Concert
The Junior Classes from St Mary's School will be presenting their Carol Concert in the church on Tuesday 10th December at 5.00pm. You are very welcome to come along.

Altar Servers Training

There will be training for all Altar Servers in preparation for Christmas on Sunday 15th December straight after 11.00am Mass – all Servers!

Please remember: Please take advantage of the times of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in our church. So important as a help to building a relationship with Jesus.

SUNDAY PLUS

Hope, and spread hope

What is hope?

By Paul Higginson

It has been said that people are often motivated by either fear or hope. In the Church of the past, fear was often a primary driver of faith: "believe this, do that and you will be saved". However, since Vatican II, this has been replaced by a theology of hope, involving relationship and "metanoia" (a transformative change of heart).

This Christmas Pope Francis will inaugurate Jubilee 2025 with the theme "Pilgrims of Hope". What exactly is hope? In a sense it's a vision for better days, and in today's Gospel we hear about the Lord filling in valleys and making crooked roads straight.

On our pilgrimage through life God makes "the rough ways smooth". Sharing our sorrows and joys, he is our constant guide and encourager, picking us up when we fall and loving us unconditionally. John the Baptist proclaims a God who comes to heal us, not to punish us. However, hope is not just a vision for the future - it needs repentance and a change of heart in the present. And if hope is to thrive, it must be spread and shared. In the words of Pope Francis, "hope is meant for everyone... it grows by being given away".

When so much of our world is beset with fear, may our journey through Advent be a journey of hope, echoing St Paul's prayer: "May the God of hope bring you such joy and peace in your faith that the power of the Holy Spirit will remove all bounds to hope."

Paul Higginson is a retired teacher and author of *Doing Christianity: How religion is about what you do, not what you believe.*

Your New Sunday Missal is available from Redemptorist Publications. Visit www.rpbooks.co.uk
Code: 1979 ISBN: 9780852316436 Price: £19.95



Hope into reality

By Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

Many years ago, when visiting the spinal unit in an Australian hospital, I walked past the gym. "Bluey", a young man with a severe spinal cord injury, had been told he would never walk again following his motorbike accident. However, he'd recently been selected to try experimental equipment which, predating today's computerised technology, was heavy, bulky and unsightly. Scientists hoped that, strapped to Bluey's legs, the apparatus might

transform immobility into mobility. He'd had to train hard to build up sufficient physical strength and this was the great day. Dripping with perspiration from the effort and leaning heavily on crutches, Bluey was walking! He managed about twenty paces whilst staff - and I - watched in amazement and joy. It was an incredible moment in which hopes and dreams came true. For sure, the scientists are still working on and refining their project, but Bluey showed that hope can become reality.

Sr Janet Fearn is a Franciscan Missionary of the Divine Motherhood.

Jubilee 2025:
Pilgrims of Hope



The Jubilee logo

Whoever you are, whatever you do and wherever you live, life isn't always easy and straightforward. That's why we need each other. Isolation isn't good for anyone, especially when the going is rough. For Christians, our anchor is the cross, holding out the hope of safety as we travel together on life's stormy waters. Jesus isn't distant. He doesn't leave us alone but comes towards us with his arms wide open to give us the hug that we so often need. We are all pilgrims, pilgrims of hope, travelling in hope towards Jesus, whom we know loves us more than we can possibly imagine.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos, in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

The Jubilee Prayer

Today:
Baruch 5:1-9
Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11
Luke 3:1-6

Monday:
Genesis 3:9-15, 20
Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12
Luke 1:26-38

Tuesday:
Isaiah 40:1-11
Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday:
Isaiah 40:25-31
Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday:
Isaiah 41:13-20
Matthew 11:11-15

Friday:
Isaiah 48:17-19
Matthew 11:16-19

Saturday:
Ecclesiasticus 48:1-4, 9-11
Matthew 17:10-13

Next Sunday:
Zephaniah 3:14-18
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:10-18

THE *Wednesday* WORD



Encountering Christ The Wednesday Prayer Custom for Homes, Schools & Parishes

Prayerfully preparing for Sunday Mass with special prayers for our school families



Set aside 10-15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross and remain still for a minute of settling silence.



Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present. Read the Gospel, aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.

1

Read

The Gospel for Sunday 8th December 2024

THE BAPTIST'S MESSAGE

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah: "A voice cries in the wilderness; prepare a way for the Lord; make his paths straight. Every valley will be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low; winding ways will be straightened and rough roads made smooth. And all mankind shall see the salvation of God."

Taken from Luke 3:1-6 The Second Sunday of Advent, Year C

2

Reflect

After reading the Gospel, did any words stand out? If they did, ponder or discuss them before proceeding with the reflection.

Each year the two middle Sundays of Advent centre on John the Baptist, preparing the way for Jesus. John came to prepare a community of repentance, of those who would be ready for the Messiah. This was to be a community not of those who went around moping about their sinfulness, but a community of those who had changed their ways, that is, their whole system of values and priorities. The Hebrew concept of repentance which John proclaimed was a matter of turning round and going in the opposite direction. To be ready for the Messiah meant – and still means – just such a radical change of attitude. John himself had prepared by going out into the desert, for the Messiah was to come striding across the desert, as did Israel at the Exodus from Egypt. John's clothing and his whole way of life showed his rejection of current materialism and his single-minded dedication. His is not primarily a negative point of view, for his quotation of Isaiah (reflected also in today's first reading from Baruch), shows that the flattening of the hills and the filling of the valleys is a preparation for the Kingdom of peace and justice. A good deal of positive planning and of spade-work is needed if we are to be ready to welcome that Kingdom.

What sort of change did John the Baptist ask from his listeners? Think of one change you need to make in your life to welcome Jesus.

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

3

Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Thank God for any insight you may have received.

Then ask God to bless you with a spiritual gift to help you act on any resolution you have made. Perhaps: love, hope, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, patience, humility, joy, forgiveness, self-control, courage, generosity, faith or something else.

4

Pray for Families

This Wednesday's word for our school families is PREPARATION !

After praying for your loved ones, please remember to pray for our present and future Church, particularly for the families connected to our schools. You may want to conclude this special weekly time with a simple prayer such as:

St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church, pray for us. Mary, Star of Evangelisation, pray for us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of **Sunday 8th December 2024**



1st Reading: Baruch 5:1-9

High Mountains Laid Flat

Jerusalem, take off your dress of sorrow and distress; put on the beauty of the glory of God for ever; wrap the cloak of the integrity of God around you; put the diadem of the glory of the Eternal on your head: since God means to show your splendour to every nation under heaven, since the name God gives you for ever will be, 'Peace through integrity, and honour through devotedness'. Arise, Jerusalem, stand on the heights and turn your eyes to the east: see your sons reassembled from west and east at the command of the Holy One, jubilant that God has remembered them. Though they left you on foot, with enemies for an escort, now God brings them back to you like royal princes carried back in glory. For God has decreed the flattening of each mountain, of the everlasting hills, the filling of the valleys to make the ground level so that Israel can walk in safety under the glory of God. And the forests and every fragrant tree will provide shade for Israel at the command of God; for God will guide Israel in joy by the light of his glory with his mercy and integrity for escort.

This part of the Book of Baruch is a meditation on Isaiah's promises for Jerusalem at the return of Israel from exile in Babylon. It is, of course, taken up by John the Baptist in his proclamation that the high mountains will be flattened and the valleys filled in to make a smooth road for the Messiah to cross the desert to Jerusalem. In the Hebrew tradition there were many aspects to the Messiah (the harbinger of God's kingship), expected by the people of Israel. For Isaiah the Messiah was a conquering hero, his garments stained with the blood of his victories. In this prophecy from Baruch the reign of God is more peaceful, a heartfelt dedication to God and the values of the divine sovereignty; for at this coming of God Jerusalem is renamed 'Peace through Integrity (or Justice)' and 'Honour through Devotedness'. True peace is possible only through the saving justice of God, when the People of God truly act as God's representatives, made in the image of God and the envoys of his saving values. The ideal of God's kingdom appears in the Garden of Eden before the Fall, when his representatives (Adam and Eve) lived in perfect harmony with one another and with God's whole creation.

In what sense has the coming of Christ brought peace to the world?



2nd Reading: Philippians 1:4-6. 8-11

Filled with the Fruits of Uprightness

Every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognise what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

Paul always begins his letters with a commendation and a blessing. The Philippians to whom he is writing were Paul's favourite community; the letter is full of friendship and affection. Here he commends the Philippians for their partnership with him in the work of the Gospel, and prays that God's work in them may be completed so that they may be ready for the Day of the Lord, which Paul envisaged to be imminent. Today's passage is chosen by the Church as a preparation for the coming of the Lord Jesus at Christmas – and Christmas shopping leaves no doubt about the imminence of that Coming! This serves as a reminder that the traditional three comings of Christ cannot be separated: the coming in history was the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem; the coming in mystery is the coming of Christ into our hearts as we endeavour to mould ourselves as his faithful followers and to live out his values; the coming in majesty is the final coming of Christ in glory to gather his elect to himself, either at our homecoming in death or at the end of all things. The three comings lead on, one to another: the coming in history gives a new impetus to the Kingdom of God; the coming in majesty brings the Kingdom to its climax; the coming in mystery is our own repeated response to the Kingdom here and now.

What impact do these three comings of Christ have on our daily lives?

“ We endeavour to mould ourselves as his faithful followers and to live out his values. ”

The Wednesday Word Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God

**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**

LOVE, LISTEN AND LEARN

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/2025

Due to the fact that there are now fewer pupils in London (there is a continued decrease in the population of children) and the issues with finding affordable housing we currently have some places in our Nursery, Reception, Years 1, 2 and 3 2024/2025 year groups.

Please contact the school if you wish to apply for a place for your child.



**THANK YOU PARENTS AND PARISHIONERS FOR
RECOMMENDING OUR SCHOOL AND HELPING TO BUILD
UP OUR PUPIL NUMBERS.**

Phone Number: 020 88042396

E-mail: office@stmarys.enfield.sch.uk

'Pupils are eager to come to school each morning because their teachers do their best to help them learn...Pupils learn in a calm environment. This is because the school has high expectations for pupils...Pupils conduct themselves well because they know what is right and have been taught how to behave well. Pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. They are proud to talk about their work which is presented with pride...Warm, caring relationships permeate the school... Pupils are confident that adults will listen to their worries and help them. This means they feel happy and safe...The curriculum is ambitious and well structured...Adults have secure subject knowledge...Leaders have high expectations and are ambitious for pupils...Safeguarding is a priority here.'
(OFSTED Inspection, November 2023).