



# CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY & ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY



PP: Fr Denis Sarsfield. Parish Office: 01462 893127. Email: Baldock@rcdow.org.uk

## THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 17<sup>th</sup> December 2023



This Sunday is called Gaudete, which means joy; this joy is arising in the Church, as Christmas is near. The opening antiphon in today's liturgy urges us to rejoice: **'let us rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice'**! The Lord is near. Often people say that Christmas is for children. It is more true to say that Christmas is for adults who have not forgotten what it means to be a child. There is a sense of joy and fun in children, which is hard to suppress. Christmas is for those who have suffered 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' and have not allowed it to destroy their wonder or joy or hope. Christmas is a time to rekindle our faith that our God will return; he is coming to us as a small child, making possible what seemed impossible. He is, after all, the God who raises the dead.

A child has no difficulty believing such wonders and we are called to learn how to trust in the God of the impossible. St Theresa of the Child Jesus said that: *'sanctity does not depend on this or that practice, but on a disposition of the heart, that makes us small and humble in the arms of God, conscious of our littleness, and bodily trusting in His Fatherly goodness.'* Grown-ups still 'get' something of wonder at second hand, through their children. The excitement and amazement of children, especially at Christmas time, is contagious, through their eyes we glimpse again what we once knew - the excited waiting of the Advent season, the longing, almost beyond bearing, for a great day ahead. The season of Advent invites us to return and rediscover something we have lost. This is what the word repent means - turn back, turn around,

return. We are to do this not just to lament what has been lost, but to rediscover a sense of excitement, to be alert and keen and awake and attentive once more. We are to be open to the wonders that the Lord will yet reveal in our lives, which will awaken us from tiredness and cynicism. We are to become children of our Heavenly Father; claiming back that lost sense that a child's soul has, through prayer and reconciliation, penance and right living. It is not really an added extra, this child's soul in us, it is essential for our maturity since unless we become like little children, we shall never enter the kingdom of heaven.

### THE BIG CHRISTMAS CLEAN

The big clean will be held on Friday 22nd December 2023 from 8.30AM It would be great to try & get as many as possible to help in preparing our church for the Christmas celebrations. If you are not a regular cleaner but would still like to help please do come along. Tea & mince pies will be served.

### THE FIRE OF ADVENT

"Advent, like its cousin Lent, is a season for prayer and reformation of our hearts. Since it comes at winter time, fire is a fitting sign to help us celebrate Advent...If Christ is to come more fully into our lives this Christmas, if God is to become really incarnate for us, then fire will have to be present in our prayer. Our worship and devotion will have to stoke the kind of fire in our souls that can truly change our hearts. Ours is a great responsibility not to waste this Advent time." "Take time to be aware that in the very midst of our busy preparations for the celebration of Christ's birth in ancient Bethlehem, Christ is reborn in the Bethlehem's of our homes and daily lives. Take time, slow down, be still, be awake to the Divine Mystery that looks so common and so ordinary yet is wondrously present. "An old abbot was fond of saying, 'The devil is always the most active on the highest feast days.' "The supreme trick of Old Scratch is to have us so busy decorating, preparing food, practicing music and cleaning in preparation for the feast of Christmas that we actually miss the coming of Christ. Hurt feelings, anger, impatience, injured egos—the list of clouds that busyness creates to blind us to the birth can be long, but it is familiar to us all." An Advent Examination.

Readings Parish Mass Book page 87.

**RC HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN:** John O'Neil. Please call the Chaplaincy office at the Lister Hospital Contact Tel: Mobile: 07876 526935 Lister 01438 285518,  
**FOR ALL GENERAL PARISH ENQUIRIES CONTACT:** Parish Office: Tel: 01462 893127

**CHURCH HALL HIRE:** Please contact parish office 01462 893127

**BAPTISM**

**PREPARATION:** For further information please contact the parish office on 01462-893127 .

**RCIA COURSE:** The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults programme consists of regular weekly meetings; if you would like to find out more please speak directly to Fr. Denis.  
**ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL** is our Catholic Parish Primary School. Parish families are welcome to visit and have a tour of the school. Contact the School Office or the Head teacher, Mr Tom Timson 01462 892478 The school website is [http://www.stjohns4\\_herts.sch.uk/index.html](http://www.stjohns4_herts.sch.uk/index.html)

**NEWSLETTER**

Please submit items for inclusion, preferably by Tuesday evening, by either emailing the parish email address ([baldock@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:baldock@rcdow.org.uk)) or handing them to Fr. Denis. Thank you

**VATICAN NEWS**

Remember that you can keep up with all the latest news from The Vatican at the Official Vatican Network [www.news.va/en](http://www.news.va/en).

Your **SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVES** have responsibility for promoting good and safe practices in all activities involving children, young people, and adults at risk. Please Contact: Patricia Cusack & Colette Murphy [Baldocksg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:Baldocksg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk) [Baldocksg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:Baldocksg3@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)

**A Short Prayer before Confession**

Loving God, thank you for the gift of this Sacrament of your healing love and mercy. Help me to know the sins I ought to confess, and grant me your grace to confess them fully with a contrite heart. Amen

**YOUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR:**



We pray for the sick and housebound in the parish especially; Celia Sheehan and for those who care for and support them. We remember those who have died recently, Michael Hill, and those whose anniversary occurs at this time: Ruth Cannon; Leon Sicheri; Mary Diana Norton; Mary Postlethwaite; Rebecca Hegarty; Mary Teresa Smith; Eileen Moynihan; Maggie Tuthill; Dennis King; Ellen McGuinness; Andrij Hnatiw; Herbert Rigby; Barbara Maraldo; Patricia Gray; Emma Targett; Catherine Wilson; Tony Ronewicz.

**Prayer: A voice that speaks of peace**

God of mercy, help us to listen to your voice, a voice that speaks of peace to all people. Let the sound resonate within us, until a whisper becomes a shout which cannot be ignored. Move us with your love, so that our actions echo your peace, and we may bring comfort to those touched by conflict. Fill us with your hope, O Lord, and quiet the fear and hatred which divides us, as we seek to build a future together, of true and

lasting peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Prince of Peace, Amen.

Sat 16 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm	Phil & Michael Maloney Intention
Sun 17 <sup>th</sup>	8.30am 10.30am	Michael & Breege Kerrane RIP Frank Horohan RIP
Mon 18 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Stewart Anthony RIP
Tue 19 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Dennis King RIP
Wed 20 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Kathleen Hirst RIP
Thu 21 <sup>st</sup>	10.00am	Peter Robbins RIP
Fri 22 <sup>nd</sup>	No mass	

Please note that mass intentions as set out above may not always be read out, but the intention is offered.

Holy Hour: Saturday 5.15 - 6.15 pm

Confessions: Saturday 5.45 - 6.15 pm

Or by appointment with Fr. Denis.

Family Mass: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday 10.30 am

Fr. Denis is still celebrating the Vigil Mass online at 6.30 pm every Saturday night & Sunday Mass at 10.30am. All are accessible through the Parish Facebook page: **Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity and St Augustine of Canterbury**. For more information, please go to the Parish website. The Wednesday word is available via: <http://www.wednesdayword.org/school/index.htm>

**SUNDAY MASSES**

Saturday Vigil Mass 23rd December 6.30pm

Sunday 24th December Morning mass 9.30am

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

**CHRISTMAS EVE Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December**

4.30pm Vigil Mass of Christmas, Family Mass

8.40pm Carols and Readings

9 pm The Mass of the Nativity of the Lord

**CHRISTMAS DAY Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December**

Mass 9.30am Mass

Blessing of the Children's toys during mass

**St Stephen's Day 26th December 10am Mass**

**SUNDAY HOLY FAMILY MASSES**

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December vigil Mass 6.30pm

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December 8.30 and 10.30 am Mass

Blessing of the Children's toys at 10.30 mass

**NEW YEAR'S DAY Mary The Holy Mother of God**

Monday 1st January Mass 10am

**THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January vigil Mass 6.30pm

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January 8.30 and 10.30 am Mass