

CHRISTMAS IN CHURCH

Details of everything that is happening in church in the days leading up to, and over, Christmas, will be found on the Christmas leaflet, which is now available. If you didn't collect one last weekend, please do so today. You might also like to take one for someone you know who may no longer be a regular attendee, or someone who simply has an interest in the Church.

CHRISTMAS DAY

The first Mass of Christmas is at Midnight, preceded by carols from 11.30pm. The Masses on Christmas Day are at 8.30am, 9.45am and 11.30am.

St STEPHEN's DAY

December 26th is the feast of St Stephen, and Mass will be celebrated at 10.00am. St Stephen, was the first martyr, and is the patron saint of Altar Servers. During this Mass some of our more recent servers will be enrolled in the Guild of St Stephen. We hope that many of our servers will be present to celebrate their patron.

CHILDREN'S CAROL SERVICE

This takes place on Christmas Eve at 5.00pm. This year we are dramatizing the story of "Fear not Joseph." This doesn't require speaking parts, but we need a cast to take the parts of shepherds, angels, wisemen etc. Any child wishing to take part must come to the rehearsal on **Saturday 23rd December from 11.00am to 1.00pm.**

Attendance at the rehearsal is essential for participation. We have some costumes, but anything else, you may have, that is suitable would be useful. Children of primary school age are welcome, and need to be in church by **4.30pm on Christmas eve.** To take part please contact Ginny St John Glew 01582 620322 or email gabby.sj@gmail.com

PENITENTIAL SERVICE

In the midst of all that remains to be done for Christmas, one important preparation is celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation, going to confession. We have the opportunity to do this as a parish tomorrow, Monday, December 18th, at 7.30pm. Do think about making time to attend, and so using this important opportunity

CAROL SERVICE

The Parish Carol Service takes place this, Sunday, evening at 6.00pm. With beautiful music, and scripture readings, another lovely opportunity to focus on the message, and meaning of Christmas. Afterwards mulled wine and mince pies will be served in the undercroft

ENTERING INTO ADVENT

Advent is a lovely season of preparation for the coming of Christmas, and it is a shame if we miss out on that. To assist us there are the booklets in the 'Day by Day' series, which have just two short readings for each day. As well as for adults there are also booklets for infants and juniors with appropriate activities. These are on sale, 75p in the porch.

ADVENT MONDAYS

On the three Mondays of Advent there will be a short reflection at the convent, 18 Kirkdale Road between 2.00pm and 3.00pm

REST IN PEACE

Please remember in your prayers the late Anne Grace Murray Lawson, who died recently as well as her family. Her funeral takes place this Monday 18th December at 1.15pm. May she rest in peace.

Please note there will be no 9.15am mass this Monday, 18th December.

PARISH DIARIES

Parish diaries, for the coming year, are now available. A voluntary contribution is welcome, and this can be placed in the Newspapers & Catholic Magazines box.

SVP CHARITY CHRISTMAS TREE

The SVP Charity Christmas Tree will be supporting our local Food Bank this year. The tree is positioned outside the Repository at the back of the church and each tag has items which the Food Bank are currently running low on. If you would like to support this worthy cause, please take a tag. There is no need to wrap your item as the Food Bank will need to sort and distribute the items once they are received. There is a box underneath the tree where items can be

left. Thank you. Any queries tel. 622215

Antonioli Family.

CHRISTMAS IN THE REPOSITORY

Christmas cards, both single and boxes, wrapping paper, contemporary cribs and candles. There are also a number of lovely items for children, Advent calendars, colouring and activity books, games and puzzles, and story books to appeal to the very young, all showing the true meaning of Christmas. Come and have a look

DEVELOPING WORLD GROUP

On 1 December we sent £680 to pay for an oven (to cook food and provide heat), a table and chairs for a youth centre in a township in the Dundee diocese in Natal. Most of the beneficiaries are orphans from across the township, who meet and learn practical skills at the centre (which does not receive government grants, relying instead entirely on donations.) We are now working with the Columban Fathers to fund the purchase of a large hand pump for a village (of mainly low caste Hindus) in the Thar Parkar desert in south-east Pakistan. We will provide more information when the project gets under way. Between 13th November and 11th December, parishioners donated £61.86 in cash, together with £438.00 in standing orders.

Thank you for your generosity.

THE DWG & LEA SINGERS CONCERT

The Lea Singers' Charity Christmas Concert is on Saturday 23 December at 7.30pm at Harpenden Public Halls, with its usual mix of Christmas music, audience participation, mulled wine and mince pies.

The chosen charity this year is our Developing World Group. Please come along to enjoy an evening of festive cheer and also support a great cause by buying a raffle ticket or ten, with a chance of winning a fabulous Lea Singers hamper.

Tickets are £15 (£5 for under 18s and students), from Brigid Brennan on 07881 785299, Rollings Wine in Station Road, Stage Door in Southdown, the Public Hall or online at leasingers.co.uk. They will also be on sale after Mass this weekend.

CATENIAN EVENTS

14th January 5-0pm at the Gordan Craig theatre Stevenage, our annual visit to the panto to see the incredibly entertaining and hilariously funny Jack and the Beanstalk. We have been going to the panto for over thirty years so this year we would like to offer out the last few remaining group tickets at £16.50 each (deadline 30th Nov) . Age range of our group is from a few weeks old to 80+ which includes you, and you'll love it. For more details about both events, contact denniscooper238@btinternet.com

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Do you support Catholic schools and the right of Catholics to send their children to them? Then we need you to make your voice heard. The Government is making a critical decision on whether to overturn the admissions cap which prevents Catholic schools from allowing all Catholic pupils to attend. They have acknowledged that this policy discriminates against Catholics and promised to abandon it; now we need you to tell them not to u-turn on their promise to Catholics.

Visit <http://catholicnews.org.uk/> or search for 'Catholic Education' in your search engine to write to the Government and urge them to drop their policy which bans new Catholic schools

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNING BODY OF ST DOMINIC SCHOOL TO PROSPECTIVE RECEPTION CLASS PARENTS

As you will be aware, the application process for Reception class 2018-19 has begun. This year, sibling applications to the school will be the lowest for a number of years. Whilst we cannot guarantee places to all applicants, we anticipate that we will be able to allocate places within the parish at a much further distance from the school than has been the case in recent years. You are warmly invited to join the next tour of the school on 11th December. Should you require any further information please contact the admissions secretary through the school office.

