

NEWS

First Sunday of Advent

29 November 2020

ADVENT AND THE END OF LOCKDOWN 2: See the homepage for details of times of Mass as from 03 December. In effect we return to the way things were before the November lockdown. Tier 2 restrictions make it awkward to arrange meetings with the clergy, but we will be creative about this!

VOLUNTEERS!! Returning to public Mass means that we depend again on our wonderful volunteer stewards. Can you help? Please consider volunteering as the more volunteers we have the easier the job is for everybody and the more our churches can be open, especially for the beginning of the Christmas season. See the homepage for details of how to volunteer.

ADVENT CALENDARS AND CHRISTMAS CARDS: At St Gabriel's we have a small stock of Advent Calendars and Christmas Cards. Please ask in church during opening hours. It is not possible to display items for general viewing because of the need for covid security.

ADVENT "WALK WITH ME" BOOKLETS: Prayers and meditations for each day of Advent. Available now priced at £1. Individually wrapped for covid security, ask the stewards at either church.

CELEBRATE ADVENT AS A FAMILY AT HOME: Some resources for families:

Advent Wreath – this can be a simple drawing to colour, or make something more elaborate. The wreath is a sign of God's unending love for us and each candle represents stages on the journey to the light of Christmas: Christ. The lighting of candles (safely), recalls the journey of salvation, our journey to towards Christmas, and Christ's return to us: offer a prayer, a song, reflect on the Gospel during this Advent. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOwLEzLxMHY/>
<https://www.pathwaystogod.org/resources/ignatian-insight/4-ways-celebrate-advent-home-your-family>

Advent Prayer Corner – particularly at this time, a small space set aside at home can help the whole family prepare for Christmas; with a crib, an Advent candle, pictures and symbols, photographs of family, a couple of cushions. For a few minutes, perhaps just before bedtime, we can gather to light the candle and pray: "God bless....."

Resources - for more ideas, activities for Advent see: <https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/advent/>

DIVINE MERCY APOSTOLATE NOVENA STARTS ON ADVENT SUNDAY: Follow link: <https://www.divinemercuryapostolate.co.uk/copy-of-divine-mercy-sunday-2>

ADVENT ZOOM EVENT WITH THE IRISH CHAPLAINCY: 'Journey into Advent' with the Irish Chaplaincy: a zoom service on Friday, December 4th 4pm, with readings, reflections and Taizé music. Contact: eddie.gilmore@irishchaplaincy.org.uk

"JESUS, I ADORE YOU": is a new book of prayers before the Blessed Sacrament for younger children. Available from St Gabriel's office or stewards priced £5.95. A really good teaching resource for parents, especially in this time without public celebration of Mass.

DIOCESE OF WESTMINSTER ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2019: has arrived. We keep a copy of the full report in the Parish Office, but at present that means it is unavailable. If you want to study all the figures and information, it is online at www.rcdow.org.uk/about

SCHOOL TRANSFER AND ADMISSION APPLICATIONS: Any family needing to discuss the endorsement of "school forms" will need to arrange to meet with one of the clergy at a covid-secure setting and at an appropriate time. Please send in an email to the parish address with details of your name, address and the child's name also. Primary school applications are now being processed. See information below from particular schools.

ST RAPHAEL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS INFORMATION:

Nursery Applications at St. Raphael's Catholic Primary School: If you would like to apply for a place for your child at St. Raphael's School for a Nursery place in September 2021 (date of birth 1.9.17 - 31.8.18) application packs will be placed on School's website (www.straphaels.org) from Monday 26th October 2020. Pack will also be ready for collection at the school office from Monday 2nd November 2020.

Reception Applications at St. Raphael's Catholic Primary School: If you would like to apply for a place for your child at St. Raphael's School for a Reception place in September 2021 (date of birth 1.9.16 - 31.8.17) application packs will be placed on School's website (www.straphaels.org) from Monday 26th October 2020. Pack will also be ready for collection at the school office from Monday 2nd November 2020.

CARITAS WESTMINSTER ADVENT GIVING CALENDAR: Caritas Westminster are sharing an '[Advent Giving Calendar](#)' (attached) which gives suggestions for items to collect each day in Advent to donate to a local foodbank or food poverty project in time for Christmas. Whilst we are unfortunately not able to come together as a Catholic community, the calendar provides a way for us to participate in social action together at home. The calendar provides information for finding local projects to donate to. (Foodbank donations can be made at our churches as usual during opening times.)



HAND MADE ICON FOR SALE: Cristinel Paslaru, who made the icons of the Baptism of Christ in St Gabriel's and of the Holy Trinity in St Bernard's is a professional Icon Writer from Iasi in Romania.

He has made a new icon of St Christopher (25cms x 12cms) which is looking for a home. His price is £150. Cristi's work is beautiful and of the highest quality. All questions or enquiries to Fr James.

LOCAL JOB OPPORTUNITY WITH WESTMINSTER DIOCESAN YOUTH SERVICE: A job opportunity has arisen with the Youth Ministry Department. The role is for a Senior Retreat Leader and all the details are included in the link below.

<https://dowym.com/voices/job-opportunity-programmes-senior-retreat-leader/>

HEATING IN CHURCH: This will soon be an issue. At St Gabriel's we can use the heating as normal - but the church must remain ventilated when in use, so the windows will be open. At St Bernard's the heating is in the form of air circulated in the building, and this we cannot use when church is open for reasons of covid security. All we can do is heat the church before Mass. Again, the church must continue to be ventilated when in use. Please come dressed in extra layers as the weather changes!

RECEPTIONIST JOB VACANCY AT ST DOMINIC'S 6TH FORM COLLEGE: St Dominic's is seeking to appoint a part-time receptionist to start as soon as possible. St. Dominic's Sixth Form College is a very friendly place to work with hard working students and a dedicated, committed staff team. We can offer a very pleasant working environment and regular professional development opportunities.

This is an important and busy role. You will be required to work efficiently and accurately and have good ICT skills. The role is a busy one and you will be able to work under pressure. A calm, pleasant demeanour is essential for this particular role.

A job description and application form can be downloaded from the College website www.stdoms.ac.uk. Completed applications should be emailed to Dee Wick, PA to the Principal and HR Lead at dew@stdoms.ac.uk