

CATHOLIC PARISH OF HEMEL WEST
2ND SUNDAY IN ADVENT
4 December 2022

Sunday cycle
Readings Year A
Weekday readings
Year 1
Divine Office
Week 2



TODAY'S MASS

**The one who follows me will baptise
you with the Holy Spirit and fire**

Second Sunday of Advent

Fr Brian writes....

In this week's Gospel Reading and next week's, our Advent preparation for Christmas invites us to consider John the Baptist and his relationship to Jesus. In this week's Gospel, Matthew describes the work and preaching of John the Baptist. John the Baptist appears in the tradition of the great prophets of Israel, preaching repentance and reform to the people of Israel. In this reading, John directs a particularly pointed call to repentance to the Pharisees and Sadducees, parties within the Jewish community of the first century. John marks the conversion of those who seek him out with a baptism of repentance. Other groups in this period are thought to have practiced ritual washings for similar purposes, and John's baptism may have been related to the practices of the Essenes, a Jewish sect of the first century. John's baptism can be understood as an anticipation of Christian baptism. In this passage, John himself alludes to the difference between his baptism and the one yet to come: "I am baptising you with water, for repentance . . . He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire." (Matthew 3:11). In this reading, John makes very clear that his relationship to the Messiah yet to come (Jesus) is one of service and subservience: ". . . the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals" (Matthew 3:11). In the context of Matthew's Gospel, today's passage is followed by Jesus' baptism by John, an event that is attested to in all four of the Gospels and appears to have been the start of Jesus' public ministry. John's preaching of the coming of the Lord is a key theme of the Advent season. As John's message prepared the way for Jesus in the first century, we, too, are called to prepare ourselves for Jesus' coming. We respond to John's message by our repentance and reform of our lives. It is, therefore, a good time to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, especially if you are returning to the practice of the faith, having been away for a period of time, so that you can receive Holy Communion worthily by making his paths into your heart straight.

CARITAS: Caritas Westminster are conducting research to better understand how well their work is known and understood by clergy and parishioners across the diocese. If you would be interested in joining a focus group, via Zoom, on 1, 6 or 7 December do get in touch, by emailing Julie in the Caritas team on juliechristiewebb@rcdow.org.uk

PARISH NEWS

Welcome to the parish of Hemel West. If you are new to the parish, please make yourself known to Fr Brian, by contacting him on 01442 391 759.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2023

A NOTE FOR PARENTS: If you were unable to get to Mass last Sunday, for exceptional reasons, such as illness or a family emergency, then there is a further opportunity this Second Sunday of Advent to pick up two small booklets from the back of the church. One is called, 'My Day by Day' and the other 'My Day by Day Junior.' The first is for parents and the second for children. They will be removed this Sunday after Mass. I encourage you to use them and discuss the content with your children. They will guide you through Advent and help you prepare for the incarnation, (you can research that word on the internet to see what it means and explain it in your own words to your children.) These booklets are only for parents and children enrolled on the Hemel West Parish First Holy Communion Programme 2023. **The children's booklet will be collected at the end of Christmas and form part of the evidence of participation in the First Holy Communion programme.** Further details of the programme i.e. location and arrangements for booking in for the sessions starting in January, were released earlier this week. Look forward to seeing you at Mass every Sunday during this season of preparation for the birth of Jesus at Christmas and his second coming at the end of time, when he will come to judge the living and the dead. **STAY AWAKE!**

FIRE DRILL IN DECEMBER: Get ready for a fire drill at the end of all Masses this weekend! When you hear the alarm sound, leave the church calmly but immediately via the nearest fire exit, not stopping to collect any items. Please do not re-enter the church once you have left, but disperse from the area around exits, avoiding bottlenecks, to allow people behind you to get out of the church to a place of safety. This is a necessary exercise to fulfil our legal duty of care under fire safety legislation. We are aiming to

completely evacuate the church within 2 minutes 30 seconds.

PLANNED GIVING DRIVE- update: Standing Order Forms and Sharing my time and talents forms: Thank you for completing your Standing Order form as an expression of your financial commitment to the parish of Hemel West. Some of the forms have been completed incorrectly, so Shirley will contact you to resolve any errors. Thank you for taking out a Standing Order as it really does help with financial planning, budget setting and cash- flow, especially when coupled with gift-aid. This year alone we have been able to claim over £14k in gift aid from the HMRC on our Offertory Collection donations, at no extra cost to parishioners. Just a note for those of you who ticked the box on the form that said you would prefer 'offertory envelopes' for your financial giving. You may recall that I said that I have made the decision that as a parish we will not offer that means, for previously explained reasons. I encourage you to make your offering via the contactless system, or as a last resort place your offering as loose cash into the collection basket. However, you give and whatever you give, it is all very appreciated. Thank you, especially at this time of economic distress. The associated Sharing my time and talents form may take a couple of months to process, as we do not have the resource in the office at this stage to process them. But we will get around to them and contact you as soon as we can in the New Year to follow up your offer of support to the parish. This will probably be a task for the yet to be appointed Pastoral Assistant Catechetical Co-ordinator, who I will hopefully be able to let you know about before the year end, following interviewing for the position in the next couple of weeks.

MARY'S MEALS: Mary's Meals, the global charity that serves life-changing meals to some of the world's poorest children will be visiting our parish on the weekend of 11/12 December. If you wish to support our work financially there will be a second collection as you leave Mass. Thank you in advance for your generosity. Inspired by Medjugorje and the prayers of Our Lady the

charity continues to grow feeding children in 20 countries such as Malawi, Haiti, India and Syria. Mary's Meals currently has an exciting campaign called 'Double the Love' running until the end of January 2023 in which every donation received will be matched by a group of generous donors, up to £1.5 million.

SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION: Mass will be celebrated on Thursday 8 December, 10am at Ss Mary & Joseph in honour of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS: If you would like to make our churches lovely for Christmas, do contribute to the Christmas Flower Fund by putting your donation in the dedicated envelope or you can donate online with the message: CHRISTMAS FLOWERS. Here's the link: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hemelhempsteadwest/donate/>

BAPTISM PREPARATION SESSION MONDAY 12 DECEMBER: If you have failed to provide your email address as instructed for the above session via ZOOM, then please contact Shirley Bailey (Parish Administrator) so that she can amend your booking and include your email address. Otherwise - you'll have to wait for the next preparation session!

BAPTISM PREPARATION CLASS: The next Baptism Preparation Class will take place on Monday 12 December, 7.30pm until 9pm via Zoom. You must provide your **email** address when making your booking to enable the Zoom link to be sent to you nearer the time. Full details can be found at link <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hemelhempsteadwest/sacramental-prep/baptism-preparation/> or go to the parish website: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hemelhempsteadwest/> were your attendance can be booked on the Events page.

CHRISTMAS MEMORY TREE: Parishioners at St Mark's are invited to write a small card and place it on the Christmas tree in memory of loved ones, from the third Sunday of Advent. You are welcome to make a small donation if you wish.

CWL: Raffle tickets will be on sale for the Christmas Hamper on the weekends of 10/11 & 17/18 December. The draw will be on 19 December after the Carol Service.

Please join us for tea/coffee, in St Joseph's Hall after the 10.15am Mass. All are welcome.

E-ALERT: Please sign up for the parish e-alerts and keep up with all the parish news.

GOSPEL READINGS FOR THE FORTHCOMING WEEK:

Mon. Luke 5: 17 -26
 Tues. Matthew 18 :12-14
 Wed. Matthew 11: 28 -30
 Thurs. Matthew 11 :11-15
 Fri. Matthew 11: 16-19
 Sat. Matthew 17: 10-13
 Sun Matthew 11: 2-11

PARISH FINANCES

PLANNED GIVING: Thank you to all those who have made the switch to donating by Standing Order. For those who wish to donate in this way, the details are:

Account Name: **WRCDT Hemel West**

Sort Code: **40-05-20**

Account No.: **31095048**

The offertory collection Income figures are published on a monthly basis once the bank reconciliation is completed.

Office Hours and Telephone cover for Hemel West.

Email: shirleybailey@rcdow.org.uk

Phone: 01442 391 759 option 2

Telephone cover for West	Hemel West Office Hours
Monday 12 noon-6pm	Monday 3pm-6pm
Tuesday 9.30am-3.30pm	Tuesday Closed
Wednesday 9.30am-3.30pm	Wednesday 9.30am-3.30pm
Thursday 9.30am-3.30pm	Thursday 9.30am-12.30pm
Friday 9.30am-3.30pm	Friday 9.30am-12.30pm

HOLY MASS

SUN 4 Dec	2nd Sunday of Advent	(SMSJ) 8.30am (SMSJ) 10.15am (SM) 12 noon	Mary McInerney (RIP) Ken Herbert (RIP) Pro Populo
MON 5 Dec	Advent feria	(SMSJ) 10am	Kieran McSweeney (RIP)
TUE 6 Dec	Advent feria	(SMSJ) 10am	
WED 7 Dec	St Ambrose	(SM) 1.30pm	Mary Carmel Kelly (RIP ANNIV)
THU 8 Dec	THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED	(SMSJ) 10am	Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
FRI 9 Dec	Advent feria	(SMSJ) 10am	Funeral for Kenneth Herbert (RIP)
SAT 10 Dec	Advent feria	(SMSJ) 6pm	Martin Quigley (RIP ANNIV)
SUN 11 Dec	3rd Sunday of Advent	(SMSJ) 8.30am (SMSJ) 10.15am (SM) 12 noon	Peggy & John West (RIP) Pro Populo Deceased Members of the Soares & Courage Families

MASS INTENTIONS: If you would like a Mass offered for a deceased family member or a friend, or for any other intention, do let Shirley Bailey know by emailing her at shirleybailey@rcdow.org.uk or you can call her on 01442 391 759. It is customary to make an offering and the diocese recommends £10 per Mass. If this is unaffordable for you, please feel free to make an offering you can afford.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: **Saturday:** 5pm-5.30pm at SS Mary & Joseph church and by appointment.



**Please switch off
all mobile phones**

MAKING CONTACT AT HEMEL WEST CATHOLIC PARISH

Parish Priest: Fr Brian McMahon brianmcmahon@rcdow.org.uk (Opt 3)
Parish Administrator: Shirley Bailey shirleybailey@rcdow.org.uk (Opt 2)
Hall Bookings: via Shirley or hemelwesthallbookings@rcdow.org.uk **(In Office Hours)**
Address: The Presbytery, 186 St John's Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP1 1NR
website: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hemelhempsteadwest/>

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Diocese of Westminster Charity N^o: 233699