

# CATHOLIC PARISH OF HEMEL WEST

## 3RD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

11 December 2022

Sunday cycle  
Readings Year A  
Weekday readings  
Year 1  
Divine Office  
Week 3



### **TODAY'S MASS**

**'A greater than John the Baptist  
has never been seen'**

**Third Sunday of Advent - Gaudete!**

**Fr Brian writes....**

The third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete is the Latin word meaning “rejoice.” This Sunday is so named because “Rejoice” is the first word in the entrance antiphon for today's Mass taken from Philippians 4:4,5: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The Lord is near.” Some people mark this Sunday on their Advent wreath with a rose candle, as we have done, instead of a purple candle. The priest also wears a rose-coloured chasuble. Do you know when the priest next wears a rose coloured chasuble? Aside from the diversion that is liturgical haute couture, this Sunday is a joyful reminder that our salvation is near. This week's Gospel Reading continues our Advent reflection on the person and message of John the Baptist. I said last week that we can be inspired by him to repent and reform. This Sunday we hear Jesus' message to John the Baptist, now in prison, about the signs of the kingdom found in Jesus' ministry and Jesus' assessment of John's role in the Kingdom of God. The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of John's arrest in chapter 14:3-12. In today's Gospel, John sends word to Jesus from prison, asking if Jesus is the Messiah for whom he has been waiting. Jesus responds by pointing to the miracles that he has worked and invites John and the other hearers to make their own determination. In his next breath, however, Jesus praises John for his role in preparing the way for Jesus. Then Jesus says that all of those who work for the Kingdom of God will be as great as John and even greater. Is that you? Jesus' message to John about the signs of the kingdom being performed recalls the salvation described by the prophet Isaiah. This passage is a reminder that the beginning of salvation is already mysteriously present to us, but also yet to be fulfilled. Salvation is already in our midst as manifest in the miraculous deeds of Jesus and in the Church. But salvation is also to be fulfilled in the coming reign of God. Even as we observe our world today, we can find glimpses of God's work among us, despite the sorry mess us humans have turned it into. Even more, we help to prepare the way for God's kingdom by our words and our deeds. This message is indeed a cause for rejoicing, whilst avoiding any hint of complacency as we **STAY AWAKE!**

# 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.**

## MASS TIMES ON CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY

This year Christmas Eve falls on a Saturday. Therefore, the Sunday Vigil Mass will be at **5pm** and not the usual time of 6pm at Ss Mary & Joseph. This Mass will be celebrated by Fr Brian Reynolds. The earlier time will allow preparation for **Christmas Mass in the Night** which will be at **8pm** in Ss Mary & Joseph church, preceded by Carols at 7.30pm. Christmas Day is a Sunday, and so all Masses will be at their usual time and location. Fr Bernard Scholes will celebrate the 12pm Mass. If you have attended the 5pm or the 8pm Mass on the Saturday, this fulfils your obligation to be at Mass on Christmas Day.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Carols by Candlelight:** Please join us for Carols by Candlelight on Monday 19 December, 7.30pm in Ss Mary & Joseph's church. Followed by mince pies and mulled wine in the Parish Centre.

**Taizé for Advent:** There will be a Taizé services on Friday 16 December. We will meet at 7pm at Ss Mary & Joseph church for song, prayer, silence and reflection.

**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 this weekend. 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.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2023 A NOTE FOR PARENTS WHO ARE ALREADY REGISTERED:** Don't forget to **book-in** for attendance at the First Holy Communion sessions starting in January! You will have received a notification via e-alert, so check your emails, especially your spam/junk folder. Here's the link to the e-alert: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hemelhempsteadwest/news/> **Very important!!** If you do not book in by Friday 16 December, then it will be presumed that you **do not** wish your child to make their First Holy Communion in 2023. This means that they will have to wait until the 2024 programme. Over half the parents who registered in September, have not booked in. Don't leave it too late! Do encourage your children through their Advent journey to complete the My Day booklet. They will be collected in at the first session in January. And don't forget to complete yours as well! A related note: children are expected at Mass **every Sunday**; there is no exemption for sporting or leisure events.

**CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE:** Raffle tickets will be on sale for the Christmas Hamper, on the weekends of 10/11 & 17/18 December. The draw will be on Monday 19 December, in the Parish Centre after the Carol Service.

**THE NATIVITY CRIB:** The blessing of the crib will take place on Sunday 11 December, at 2pm. It is situated on the raised grass area beside Ceilys Hair Salon in the centre of Marlowes. This is a celebration of the 60th anniversary of the crib being present in our town to bear witness to the true meaning of Christmas.

**FIRE DRILL:** Thank you for participating in the fire drill last week. We will have two fire drills per year in May and November, which will be facilitated by parish fire wardens for each Mass. Observations showed that we evacuated in less than 2.5 minutes at the 6pm and 8.30am Masses. This is excellent. We will need to work to improve the evacuation times at the 10.15am and the 12pm Masses, so that we hit the benchmark of 2.50 minutes for all out. Significant issues were; not

evacuating immediately, not evacuating by the nearest fire exit, stopping to use the contactless machine, packing items away and not evacuating, lighting votive candles before leaving, persons outside the church entering at the time of the evacuation, closing the fire door when leaving, re-entering the church when not instructed to do so. These issues and others will be resolved when the parish fire wardens are in place. Until the next fire drill, please remember, if we need to evacuate the church **everyone must leave immediately** via the nearest fire exit and go away from the church, only re-entering if authorised by a parish fire warden, myself or a fire brigade officer.

#### CHURCH OPEN FOR PRAYER DURING THE DAY:

Just a reminder that Ss Mary & Joseph church is open during the day until 5pm for personal prayer (not communal prayer) and has been for most of this year. The only exception is Thursday or closure for operational reasons. Do pop in and say a prayer. Invite your friends to join you and light a votive candle for your deceased relatives and friends.

**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/hemel Hempsteadwest/donate/>

**CHRISTMAS MEMORY TREE:** Any donations to the Christmas memory tree at St Mark's will go towards purchasing a new Advent wreath stand.

**PARISH OFFICE:** Please note that the parish office will be closed from Monday 19 December until Monday 2 January and will reopen on Tuesday 3 January.

**YEAR BOOK:** The Westminster 2023 Year book is available to purchase from the parish office at the cost of £5.

#### 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 the Parish Administrator so that she can amend your booking. Otherwise - you'll have to wait for the next preparation session!

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. Matthew 21: 23 -27  
 Tues. Matthew 21: 28-32  
 Wed. Luke 7: 19 -23  
 Thurs. Luke 7: 24-30  
 Fri. John 5: 33-36  
 Sat. Matthew 1: 1-17  
 Sun. Matthew 1: 18-24

#### Sunday Offertory Collection, Contactless Payments and Standing Orders for November 2022.

Loose Cash & Contactless	£1,975.05
Standing Orders	£4,041.82
<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,016.87</b>

Thank you very much for your generous Sunday Offering. May God Bless you!

**N.B** Please consider making your Offering via Standing Order (with Gift Aid if a tax payer) or via Contactless, rather than loose cash.

#### Office Hours and Telephone cover for Hemel West.

Email: [shirleybailey@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:shirleybailey@rcdow.org.uk)  
 Phone: 01442 391 759 option 2

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

## HOLY MASS

<b>SUN 11 Dec</b>	<b>3rd Sunday of Advent</b>	(SMSJ) 6pm (Sat vigil) (SMSJ) 8.30am (SMSJ) 10.15am (SM) 12 noon	Martin Quigley (RIP ANNIV) Peggy & John West (RIP) Pro Populo Deceased Members of the Soares & Courage Families
<b>MON 12 Dec</b>		(SMSJ) 10am	Thanks for answered Prayers & Family & Friends
<b>TUE 13 Dec</b>	Advent feria	(SMSJ) 10am	Justice & Peace Groups (INT)
<b>WED 14 Dec</b>		(SM) 1.30pm	Tony Madden (RIP)
<b>THU 15 Dec</b>			No public Mass
<b>FRI 16 Dec</b>	Advent feria	(SMSJ) 10am	We Pray for our Priests in the Parish
<b>SAT 17 Dec</b>	Advent feria	(SMSJ) 6pm	Martin Daniels (Recovery from Illness)
<b>SUN 18 Dec</b>	<b>4th Sunday of Advent</b>	(SMSJ) 8.30am (SMSJ) 10.15am (SM) 12 noon	Elizabeth Platt (RIP) Billy Barrett (RIP ANNIV) Pro Populo

**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](mailto: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](mailto:brianmcmahon@rcdow.org.uk) ( Opt 3)

**Parish Administrator:** Shirley Bailey      [shirleybailey@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:shirleybailey@rcdow.org.uk) ( Opt 2)

**Hall Bookings:** via Shirley or [hemelwesthallbookings@rcdow.org.uk](mailto: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/>

 **01442 391 759**

*Diocese of Westminster Charity N<sup>o</sup>: 233699*