

The Announcer

St Augustine's Catholic Church

The Presbytery, Esdaile Lane, Hoddesdon, EN11 8DS

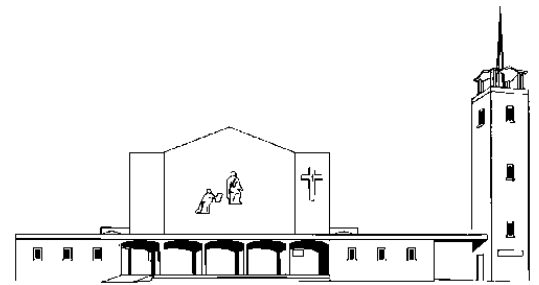
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Year A

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

11TH DECEMBER 2016

Matthew 11: 2-11 – *Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?*

My Dear Parishioners of St Augustine's,

THIS THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT WE KNOW AS 'GAUDETE SUNDAY,' from one of the Latin words for 'Rejoice!' ... It's the middle Sunday of the season, halfway from the beginning of Advent to our celebration of the Lord's Nativity, and we see Christmas appearing, as it were, 'over the horizon.' Hoping for the Lord to come – waiting for Christmas – does bring great joy, as we long for the birth of Jesus, our Saviour. It's lovely that this Advent is the full four weeks, owing to Christmas Day's being a Sunday: it gives us greater time to make the preparations in our hearts.



We hear, for a 2nd Sunday running, the witness of John the Baptist. In today's Gospel passage, he is already imprisoned by King Herod, and in the desperation of his circumstances is worried whether Jesus really is the Messiah. Perhaps John envisaged a more triumphant, even aggressive, Saviour, routing the Roman occupiers and bringing Israel back to glory. Jesus's reply gently reassures him, drawing on the prophecies of Isaiah (today's first reading): "the blind see again, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor." Yes, Our Lord *truly* fulfils the expectation of Israel: He brings compassion and healing in His wake; He is "close to the broken hearted."

THESE TWO KEY ADVENT CELEBRATIONS ARE COMING UP:

(i) The **Parish Carol Service on Sunday 18th December at 5pm.** This is a very beautiful hour of prayers and readings and carols as we enter the last week before Christmas. Please do come along – young and old – for this prayerful occasion. Readers needed! – please sign up.

(ii) The **Parish Penitential Services for Advent on Monday 19th December at 11.30am or 7.30pm.** One of the most obvious ways to make our preparation carefully for Christmas is by a good Confession, so keep this date noted for a great opportunity for receiving God's mercy.

May the Lord bless us with hope and holy longing as we await Christ's birth!

Fr Philip

Pope Francis, from *Misericordia et Misera*, closing the 'Holy Year of Mercy,' n.1:



[The Woman taken in Adultery, *John 8*] is not an encounter of sin and judgement in the abstract, but of a sinner and her Saviour. Jesus looked that woman in the eye and read in her heart a desire to be understood, forgiven and set free. The misery of sin was clothed with the mercy of love. Jesus's only judgement is one filled with mercy and compassion for the condition of this sinner. To those who wished to judge and condemn her to death, Jesus replies with a lengthy silence. His purpose was to let God's voice be heard in the conscience not only of the woman, but also in those of her accusers, who drop their stones and one by one leave the scene.

PRAYER & LITURGY

FRIDAY PRAYER GROUP: 3rd Friday of each month, 7.30-8.30pm: **next meeting Dec 16th**. A semi-formal hour in the Lady Chapel to reflect together on Sunday Scriptures and bring our needs and prayers to the Lord. All welcome!

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS

SUNDAY HOLY HOUR (3rd Sunday of each month) will be replaced next month by the **Parish Carol Service, 5pm on Sun 18th Dec**. **Adult and young readers are needed, so if you are able to assist, please sign the lists at the back of the church.** Volunteers are needed to help make refreshments afterwards. If you can help, please contact the presbytery.

RECONCILIATION FOR CHRISTMAS: Our Parish Penitential Service will be on Monday 19th December at 11.30am and 7.30pm. Fr Philip will also hear confessions as much as possible after Sunday Masses in Advent.

Penitential Services in other local parishes are:
WARE: Adults: Thurs 15th December 7.30pm
WALTHAM CROSS: Tuesday 20th Dec 8pm.
HERTFORD parish (tel. 582019) has extra confessions in the week before Christmas.

SCHOOL CAROLS: St Cross School is holding its Carol Service in church on **Wed 14th Dec at 7pm** and St Augustine's School is holding its Carol Service in church on **Thurs 15th Dec at 6.30pm**. All are welcome to attend.

MIDNIGHT MASS/CHRISTMAS DAY: If you are a Minister of Holy Communion, Reader or Altar Server and can assist at the Christmas Masses, please sign your name a.s.a.p. on the lists at the back of church. **Please note there will be no 6.30pm Mass on Christmas Eve.**

EPIPHANY PARTY will be held on **Saturday 7th January 2017** after the 6.30pm Mass in the crypt. We will have a shared meal of **finger food only** so, if you can bring either a sweet or savoury dish, please do sign your name on the list at the back of the church. Drinks will be provided by parish.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION at Westminster Cathedral. An evening of Christmas music, readings, and words from Cardinal Vincent Nichols will take place on **Tuesday 20th and Wednesday 21st December at 7.30pm** at Westminster Cathedral. Tickets available from www.ticketmaster.co.uk or 0844 844 0444

"THE BIG PICTURE": An inspiring step-by-step, easy-to-use guide through the Bible, 6 sessions on Old Testament, 6 sessions on New Testament, starts on the **10th January 2017** in the crypt at 7.30pm. Flyers available this weekend!

HOUSEBOUND & SICK PARISHIONERS

Please pray for our sick parishioners & friends: John Askew, Rosa Augello, Helen & Michael Sherman, Annette Pinto, Anne Smith, Siobhan Fiorentini, Marina Morris, Giovanna Scozzaro.

PLEASE TELL US IF ANYONE IS HOUSEBOUND, EVEN TEMPORARILY, SO THEY CAN BE VISITED & HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION.

Housebound parishioners may like to know that Mass is regularly broadcast on the internet from the Catholic Church in Bishops Stortford:
<http://www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford>

IF YOU GO IN TO HOSPITAL: Catholics in hospital are unlikely to receive an *automatic* visit from the Catholic Chaplain. If someone is sick in hospital, **please let us know here at the Presbytery, and/or ask the staff on the ward**, so that your loved one can be visited whilst in hospital, and receive Holy Communion and any other Sacraments from the Chaplain.
Chaplains are: Lister, Rev Anthony Curran 01438-285138 or 07884-187463; Princess Alexandra, Fr Leszek Gamracy 01279-426017

CATECHETICS

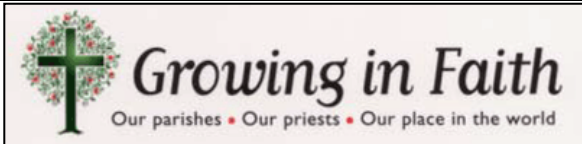
ADULT CONFIRMATION COURSE: Tuesday evenings, continues **13th Dec 8-9.30pm**.

BAPTISM COURSE: the next course will be held **Wed 4th and Fri 27th Jan 2017 7.30-9.00pm** in the presbytery. The course must be completed before a Baptism can be arranged. To enrol on course, please contact presbytery.

CONFIRMATION 2017: The next session will be on **12th Dec at 7.15-8.45pm** in the crypt for **candidates and parents**. Candidates will need to have read chapter 8 of the Gospel of Mark. **We have slightly adjusted the times of the Confirmation Masses on the 7th May 2017 to 1.15pm and 4pm. However, the numbers for each Mass are very unbalanced. About 10 candidates need to swap from 1.15pm to 4pm.** If no one does this voluntarily, then we may have to use a ballot to decide on the allocation.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME: The fourth meeting for parents will be on **Wed**

18th Jan 8-9pm in the crypt. The fourth session for children will be on Mon 16th Jan 6-7.30pm.



On the noticeboard is now posted the most recent summary of our parish's 'Growing in Faith' donations, which benefit both the diocese, and our own parish's project of employing a part-time catechetical co-ordinator. **We have raised pledges of c. £190k, to give our parish project, ultimately, a slice of c. £55k.** As yet we have not sourced anyone to take up the post of a parish catechist, but Fr Philip is in discussion with friends in the diocese who have experience in this area, to try and find a recommended and suitably qualified person for the post. Do pray that this can come about soon.

www.rcdow.org.uk/growing-in-faith

SCHOOLS/UNDER-5s

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS 2017: Applications are now open for both St Augustine's and St Cross Schools. Please ensure that you apply to both schools as 60 Reception places are available. Application packs are available from the school offices. Please do not forget to also apply online to Herts CC. **The primary-school 'Catholic practice' register has now finished.**

ST AUGUSTINE'S UNDER 5's needs a cleaner to start in January 2017. The hours are flexible and would be 2hrs per week. For more information, please contact under 5's on 460614.

JUSTICE & PEACE & PRO-LIFE

TRAIDCRAFT stall will be at the back of the church **next weekend** after all Masses.

CAFOD WORLD GIFTS are a fun and meaningful way to give gifts and make a difference to some of the poorest communities around the world. Catalogues are now available at the back of church.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY is distributing 12,000 'Vinnie Packs' to the homeless over the winter, mostly in the Westminster diocese. The packs contain gloves, socks, woolly hats, pens, toothpaste and toothbrushes. See svp.org.uk/node/330 for

more information. They cost about £3.20 to produce. Any contribution will be very welcome. Donations can be made by text VIMP33£[AMOUNT] to 70070 or by cheque made out to SVP and sent to Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, SW1P 9EZ.

MISCELLANEOUS

HOUSE VISITS: Fr Philip has very nearly finished his visiting of the parish in this round of visits – just a few roads on the W. of the A10 to visit shortly. He thanks all those who have invited him in to chat in their homes, and hopes to initiate a 4th cycle of visits in the new year.

WESTMINSTER YEAR BOOKS 2017 are now available by the newspapers for £4.50. Please place your money in the newspaper box.

CHRISTMAS CARDS: Please do not leave Christmas cards for parishioners at the back of the church. We have found from past years that they are not collected. Thank you.

CHURCH CLEANERS are **urgently needed** to help clean the church for just one hour per month. **Help is still needed on Wednesday mornings and afternoons.** If you can help, please contact presbytery **as soon as possible.**

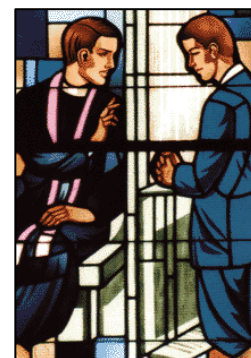
CHURCH CLEANING: Cheryl Holbourn, Mima Salvo, Josie Warren, Barbara Wright and Tracey Hayes. Thank you for your help!

SUNDAY LUNCH: Fr Philip would like to continue meeting parishioners/families in their homes, as much as possible. Sunday lunch 1.30pm is a good (but by no means only) time. Free dates: 8th, 22nd and 29th January 2017.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Prayer to Prepare for Confession

Come Holy Spirit into my soul. Enlighten my mind that I may know the sins I ought to confess, and grant me Your grace to confess them fully, humbly and with contrite heart. Help me to firmly resolve not to commit them again. O Blessed Virgin, Mother of my Redeemer, mirror of innocence and sanctity, and refuge of penitent sinners, intercede for me through the Passion of Your Son, that I may obtain the grace to make a good confession



Masses this week		Today's Liturgy	
Sat 10th December 10am Mass <i>Dec'd members of Graffato/Giamalva families</i>		PAGE 88 in the Mass books 1st Reading: Isaiah 35: 1–6, 10 <i>God himself is coming to save you.</i> Psalm 145 — Come, Lord, and save us. 2nd Reading: James 5: 7–10 <i>Do not lose heart for the Lord's coming will be soon.</i> Gospel Accl: <i>Alleluia, alleluia! The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor. Alleluia.</i> Gospel: Matthew 11: 2–11 <i>Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?</i> PREFACE TODAY: Advent I (p. 65) EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER: no. 1 (p. 18) NEXT WEEK'S READINGS FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 1st Reading: Isaiah 7: 10–14 2nd Reading: Romans 1: 1–7 Gospel: Matthew 1: 18–24	
4.00pm* Italian Mass 6.30pm* Onofria (Nora) Maniscalco RIP			
Sun 11th Dec THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9.15am** Mary & Christopher Byrne 11.15am For the Parish ‡			
Mon 12th December OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE 8.15am Adoration 9am Morning Prayer 9.15am Mass Patrick Duffy RIP			
Tues 13th December ST LUCY, Virgin & Martyr 8.15am Adoration 9am Morning Prayer 9.15am Mass Michael O'Dea's Intentions			
Wed 14th Dec ST JOHN OF THE CROSS, Priest & Dr 8.15am Adoration 9am Morning Prayer 9.15am Mass Giuseppe & Maria-Teresa DiStefano — <i>followed by coffee in crypt</i>			
Thurs 15th December NO Mass			
Fri 16th December <i>(Abstinence from meat for those aged 14+)</i> 11am Adoration of Blessed Sacrament/11.50 Benediction 12 noon Funeral Annie Keogh RIP		SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION) Saturday 10.30 – 11am & 5.30 – 6.15pm Sunday 8.30 – 9am & 10.40 – 11am or ask Fr Philip at <i>any other time.</i> ROSARY Rosary is said in the Walsingham Chapel after each weekday Mass and after Saturday 10am Mass. SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK Any parishioner frail through illness or old age, or going into hospital for major surgery, can ask Fr Philip for the Sacrament of Anointing at any time. SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE Catholics must approach their parish priest at least 6 months prior to their intended wedding, and before setting a wedding date. Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust Registered Charity No. 233699	
Sat 17th December 10am Mass Stella Corroppoli RIP			
4.00pm* Italian Mass 6.30pm* Luciano Dilena RiP			
Sun 18th Dec FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9.15am** Edward Mates RIP Anniv 11.15am For the Parish ‡ 5.00pm Parish Carol Service			
<p style="text-align: center;">* Vigil Mass of Sunday ** With Children's Liturgy (nursery-age to year 2 only) ‡ There are also Sunday evening Masses in English in Hertford (6pm) and Waltham Cross (6.30pm)</p>			
REGULAR EVENTS			
Mon 12th	7.15pm Confirmation, crypt	Wed 14th	6pm Brownies, crypt
Tues 13th	12.30pm lunch club, crypt	Fri 16th	7.30pm Prayer group, church

NEWSLETTER ITEMS TO PRESBYTERY IN WRITING, BY FAX, OR E-MAIL BY 9AM THURS WITH YOUR NAME & PHONE NO. —NEW PARISHIONERS Please take a parish membership form & information leaflet from the box attached to the notice board. The completed forms should be posted through the presbytery letterbox. **MOVING HOME?** Please post your new details through the presbytery letterbox. **PARROCCHIANI:** *Si pregano tutti i parrocchiani di prendere i questionari (uno per ciascun famiglia) che si trovano vicino al tabellone degli avvisi. Una volta compilati, i questionari devono essere riconsegnati depositandoli nella cassetta della posta vicina alla statua di Sant'Antonio.*