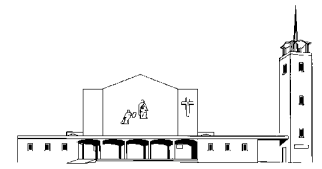




The Announcer



St Augustine's Catholic Church

The Presbytery, Esdaile Lane, Hoddesdon, EN11 8DS Tel: 01992-440986

Parish Priest: Fr Julian Davies

E-mail: hoddesdon@rcdow.org.uk Web-site: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hoddesdon>
FaceBook: "CatholicHoddesdon" Secretary: Dawn Bates (Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, 9am-4pm)
Also in residence: Fr Mathews Valiyaputhenpura Joy (Chaplain to Knanaya community)
Safeguarding parish rep: Kathryn Hall – hoddesdong@safeguardrcdow.org.uk
Italian safeguarding rep: Rossetta Tona – italianmissionsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

YEAR B

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

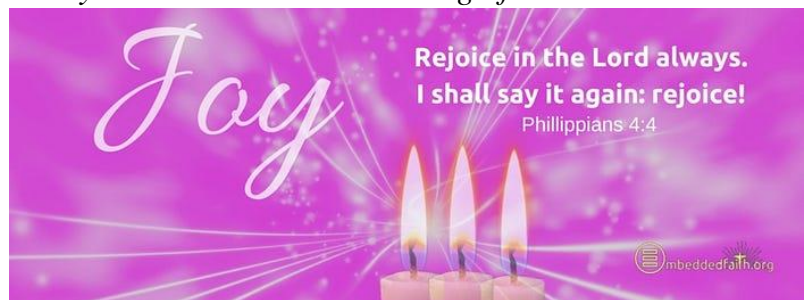
17TH DECEMBER 2023

Gospel: *John 1:6-8, 19-28*

There stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me.

Advent is a time of reflection, hope and repentance, but today reminds us, it is also a time of joy. 'Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice. Indeed the Lord is near' proclaims our entrance antiphon. Today is called Gaudete Sunday ('Rejoice' Sunday), and we even have a different liturgical colour to underline the fact. We rejoice as we await Jesus' return, while already experiencing the joy of his living presence among us. It was for this joy that Isaiah prophesied

of the Messiah's coming in our first reading: 'I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation'. Our psalm is Mary's song of joy on knowing that she carries the Lord in her womb: 'My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour'. The same joy is seen in the two extracts from St Paul's letters. The first (the entrance antiphon) is from his letter to the Philippians, 'Rejoice in the Lord always'. The second (our epistle reading) is from his first letter to the Thessalonians, and starts with the words, 'Be happy'. Most translations however, including our own Douai, render it, 'Always rejoice'. Why did Paul have to tell the Christians of his day to 'always rejoice', or similarly, 'rejoice in the Lord always'? Might he have the same message for us today? Do we need to be told to rejoice because it is all too easy for us Christians not to? Zipped lips have no place in heaven. Yet isn't it a feigned joy if it comes from being told that we have to rejoice? After all, joy is gift of the Spirit and like all spiritual gifts it wells up from within. Water reaches the surface. It bubbles or bursts out wherever it finds an opening. There is little you can do to stop it. You can try to channel it, but it comes out nevertheless. Isn't joy the same? Isn't forced. It just appears. I think of the springs of water at home on the farm in Mid-Wales. Long before it reaches the surface, spring water travels quite a distance and remains unseen. Just like spring water, joy can be under the surface for quite a while before it emerges into the light. Even when someone is going through the deepest difficulty or loss, joy can be there, not necessarily revealed on the facial surface, but deeper down, because that person knows that come what may, nothing can shake the rock-solid foundation of their faith in God's love. Jesus himself experienced the same joy, even as he went to the death. The letter to the Hebrews says, 'For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame'. We can know the same joy whenever we know we are doing God's will, come what may. This doesn't mean that we have no part to play in accessing joy. Jesus himself had to align himself with God's perfect will for the salvation of the world. Joy has to be willed in us also. It is much more than a passing experience, dependent upon our moods and circumstances, which is how most people understand joy. The temptation is for us Christians to think the same. When Jesus said 'Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord', such joy had to be accessed by entering upon it, just as we would need to enter across a threshold. This is a joy which is an act of will even before an experience. Most people understand joy as coming from the things which they desire or like, which gives them a sense of contentment, regardless of the source and end of the desire. True joy is aligning ourselves with God's will, more than an emotional high. A pleasurable experience may be good or bad, and invariably fleeting, if it is not sourced in God our Creator, but elsewhere, including the volatility of our temperaments. The advertising con artists tell us the more you accumulate the greater the joy. This can never be true Christian joy. Deprivation is not its enemy. In this season of unrestrained consumerism, how about cultivating some simplicity, and seeking out where true joy can be found. John the Baptist found it in the one whose sandal- straps he was not fit to undo. How about you and me?



Fr Julian.

PRAYER & LITURGY

MASS: The 9.15am Mass on Monday 18th December will be with St Augustine's School in church.

ANTONIO FIONDELLA of Claremont, died recently. His funeral will be on **Tuesday 19th December at 9.15am.** *May he rest in peace.*

PLEASE PRAY for all those who have died recently including Antonio Fiondella, Vincenzo Lombardi, Francesco Distefano, Edward Connolly and for all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Giuseppe Leto, Angela Smith, Calogero Tagliarini, Bridget Gorry, Edward McManus, Vincenzo Silenti, Albert Warden, Livio Fattore, Theodora Van Hage, Lena Byrne and Stefano Diesi. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.*

ADVENT

RECONCILIATION BEFORE CHRISTMAS: Our Parish Penitential Services will be on **Monday 18th December at 11.30am and 7.30pm.**

PARISH CAROL SERVICE will be held this **Sunday 17th December at 6pm with adult and children choirs.** Refreshments will be served afterwards in the crypt. All are welcome!

CHRISTMAS MASSES: There will be a children's Nativity Mass at 4pm on **Christmas Eve** and there will also be Mass at Midnight on **Christmas Eve.** On **Christmas Day,** Mass will be at 9.15am and 11.15am.

CRIB APPEAL: Our Crib offerings are donated to the Catholic Children's Society. The Society is helping local families in crisis who are struggling to put food on the table, keep warm and provide a safe home for their children. You can donate at the Crib or via the CCS website www.cathchild.org.uk/crib.

ADVENT EXTRA magazines are now available to buy from the back of the church for £2.75. Please place your money in the newspaper box.

REPOSITORY now has Christmas cards, gifts and decorations for sale. Please do pop in to take a look.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR: Gabby Hanley will be running the Children's Choir at the 9.15am Mass on Sunday mornings. The children will be singing at the Carol Service on the **17th December at 6pm** and also on **Christmas Eve Mass at 4pm.**



HELPERS FOR CHILDREN'S LITURGY at the 9.15am Mass are needed. **If you can help, please do contact the presbytery immediately.** Without more

volunteers, children's liturgy may not be able to continue. Children's Liturgy will be held on the **17th December.**



PRAYER GROUP will be held in the crypt on the first Thursday of each month at 7.30pm. Next date will be on **Thursday 4th January 2024.** All are welcome!

POPE'S INTENTION FOR DECEMBER:

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society and that institutions may offer inclusive programmes which value their active participation.



HOUSEBOUND & SICK PARISHIONERS

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

IF YOU GO IN TO HOSPITAL: 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, John O'Neill 01438-285138 or 07876-526935; Princess Alexandra, Fr Felix Adiele 01279-973183.

CATECHETICS

'Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: If you are considering becoming a Catholic or are an adult Catholic wishing to be confirmed **our next meeting will be on Tuesday 9th January at 7.30pm** in the crypt.



CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME 2024: The candidates are expected to attend the Advent Penitential Service on **Monday 18th December at 7.30pm in the church.**

The next meeting will be on **Monday 8th January 2024 from 7-8pm** in the crypt.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2023/2024: The next meeting for children in year 3 will be on the **14th January.**

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION: If your child is in year 2 and is interested in making their First Holy Communion in 2025, please contact the presbytery to register your interest as soon as possible.



BAPTISM COURSE: The next course will be held on **Saturday 20th January 2024 at 11.30am** in the church. The course must be

completed before a Baptism can be arranged. To enrol on the course, please contact the presbytery.

JUSTICE & PEACE & PRO-LIFE

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 available at the back of the church.



SPUC WHITE FLOWER APPEAL: The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) will be holding its annual appeal on the **13th/14th January**.

SCHOOLS/UNDER 5'S

ST CROSS SCHOOL is looking for an Afterschool Club Leader from January to July. Monday to Thursday 3pm - 6pm. Training will be provided. If interested, please contact the school - 01992 467 309

ST AUGUSTINE'S SCHOOL: Open days for school are on: Mon 8th January @ 9:15am, Wed 10th January @ 2:00pm and Mon 15th January @9:15am - this is the last date for Reception class applications Nursery dates are: Mon 22nd January @9:15am, Mon 29th January @9:15am and Mon 5th February @9:15am. <https://staugustines.herts.sch.uk/herts/primary/staugustines/site/pages/sign-upform>

ST AUGUSTINE'S UNDER 5'S - a Registered Charity. The Under 5s is a friendly, busy and thriving early years setting. As a charity trustees are needed to help to continue to provide a valuable service for our parish and the community. If you are interested in helping and would like to find out more, please call the Under 5s on 01992 460614.

SOCIAL & MISCELLANEOUS

SEPARATION SUPPORT GROUP: The next meeting date for those undergoing separation or divorce will be held on **Wednesday 20th December** from 4.30-6pm in the presbytery.



BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP: We are seeking to develop our ability to help those of us who have undergone bereavement. If you would like to be involved, please contact the parish office.

TUESDAY LUNCH CLUB will finish on Tuesday 19th December and resume again on **Tuesday 9th January 2024**.

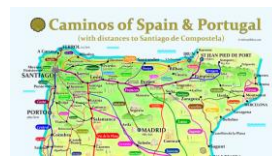
WEDNESDAY 20th December, after coffee in the crypt, we will show a beautiful film about Silent Night (2012).



2023 PARISH MAGAZINE in full colour, 60 pages, is now available to buy after all Masses this weekend. You can also purchase the magazine from the presbytery during the week. To cover the cost of printing, the cost is £5.

CAMINO DE SANTIAGO:

A photo presentation of the pilgrimage route (500 miles / 790 kms) will be held on **Friday 26th January at 7pm in the crypt**. This will be accompanied by wine and nibbles at a cost of £5 per head. Please contact the presbytery if you would like to attend.



WESTMINSTER YEAR BOOKS 2024 are now available to buy for £5 from the back of church. 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.

DIOCESAN JOB VACANCIES can be viewed online <https://rcdow.org.uk/diocese/jobs>.

CHURCH CLEANING: Elizabeth Nsonwah, Tina Pegna and Sophie Lenguito. Thank you for your help.

CHURCH CLEANERS

are needed to help with the Wednesday and Thursday cleaning teams. This would be for one hour per month. If you can help, please contact the presbytery.



FINANCE

PARISH FINANCE: Thank you to all who continue to give regularly by standing order, or by envelopes. For those whose finances are more stable at present, please consider your parish giving, to help the parish out. Please see the link below <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hoddesdon/donate/> for the details, or fill in [this form](#). For a Standing Order, here are the necessary details:

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Account Name: | WRCDT Hoddesdon |
| Sort Code: | 40-05-20 |
| Account Number: | 31264370 |

NO CASH? You can make your offering here by scanning the QR Code with your smartphone. Alternatively, there is a contactless device at the left-hand exit door of the church. If you are a Tax Payer, please complete the Gift Aid Declaration.



| Liturgy this week | Today's Liturgy |
|---|---|
| Sat 16th December 9.30am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass <i>Thomas and Lena Byrne RIP</i> | Page 87 in the Mass books 1st Reading: Isaiah 61: 1-2, 10-11 <i>I exult for joy in the Lord.</i> |
| 4.00pm Italian Mass* 6.30pm Mass <i>Justin Ighade's intentions</i> | Ps Luke 146-50 — My soul rejoices in my God. |
| Sun 17th December THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9.15am Mass <i>For the Parish</i> 11.15am Mass <i>In Thanksgiving</i> 6pm Parish Carol Service | 2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24 <i>May you all be kept safe, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of the Lord.</i> |
| Mon 18th December 8.30am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 9.15am Mass <i>Maureen Murphy RIP</i> 6pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament | Gospel Accl. Alleluia, alleluia! The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor. Alleluia! Gospel: John 1: 6-8, 19-28 <i>There stands among you -unknown to you – the one who is coming after me.</i> |
| Tues 19th December 8.30am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 9.15am Funeral Antonio Fiondella RIP 6pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament | <p style="text-align: center;">NEXT WEEK'S READINGS FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B)</p> |
| Wed 20th December 8.30am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 9.15am Mass <i>Giuseppe, Maria-Teresa and Gaetano Distefano</i> followed by coffee in the crypt 6pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament | 1st Reading: 2 Samuel 7: 1-5, 8-12, 14-16 2nd Reading: Romans 16: 25-27 Gospel: Luke 1: 26-38 |
| Thurs 21st December St Peter Canisius 7.30am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 8am Mass <i>Luciano Dilena RIP</i> NO Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament | <p style="text-align: center;">SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Saturday 10.30 – 11am & 5.30 – 6.15pm Sunday 8.45 – 9am & 10.45 – 11am or ask Fr Julian at any other time.</p> |
| Friday 22nd December (Abstinence from meat for those aged 14+) 11am Exposition of Blessed Sacrament /11.50 Benediction 12 noon Mass <i>Deceased members of Galligan & Murphy Families</i> 6pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament | <p style="text-align: center;">ROSARY</p> <p>The Rosary is often prayed in the Lady Chapel after weekday Mass and Saturday 10am Mass.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK</p> <p>Any parishioner sick, frail, or going into hospital for major surgery, can ask Fr Julian for the Sacrament of Anointing at any time.</p> |
| Sat 23rd December St John of Kanty 9.30am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass <i>O'Connor Family intentions</i> | <p style="text-align: center;">SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE</p> <p>Catholics must approach their parish priest at least 6 months prior to their intended wedding, and before setting a wedding date.</p> |
| 4.00pm Italian Mass* 6.30pm Mass <i>Justina Ogbodu RIP</i> | <p style="text-align: center;">Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust Registered Charity No. 233699</p> |
| Sun 24th December FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9.15am Mass <i>For the Parish</i> 11.15am Mass <i>Deceased members of Beary Family</i> (For later Christmas Eve services, see inside) | |
| * Vigil Mass of Sunday | |
| REGULAR EVENTS | |
| Tues 19th 1pm Lunch club, crypt | Tues 19th 2.30pm Tuesday club, crypt |

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 in the porch. The completed forms should be posted through the presbytery letterbox. **MOVING HOME?** Please post 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*