



The Announcer



St Augustine's Catholic Church

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YEAR C

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

22ND DEC 2024

Gospel: Luke 1: 39-45

Why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

The stunned faces of those entering the bright light of day after being liberated from the hellish, dark prison cells of Damascus, is like a parable of the coming of Christ. *'The people walking in darkness have seen a great light'*. In the landscape of the thick darkness of our human condition, an inextinguishable light has shined in the birth of our Saviour. Cowed human beings imprisoned in the clutches of sin, evil, death and fear are set free. By entering into our prison cells, Jesus has opened the way to our freedom. Christ in whom the expanse of the cosmos has its being, willingly confines himself to the locality and temporality of a human body. Our epistle reading from Hebrews says: *'when Christ came into the world, he said, 'sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me'*. His body was conceived in the darkness of Mary's belly. Light in a dark and little room. *'Immensity'*, said John Donne, *'cloistered in your dear womb'*. Jesus' first home was not the stable but the confined space of his mother's body in Nazareth, as she sojourned in the hill country of Judea and then as she travelled on the difficult path southwards to Bethlehem. Her blood nurtured his. He took all the nutrients and oxygen from her body to sustain his. He was totally dependent on her before his birth and then after his birth upon her and his adopted father. Consider the humility of God who surrenders himself to total dependence on another and to the restriction of limited space. Jesus' confinement in the womb parallels his confinement in the grave. Through the light of his presence both places become an open door to life and freedom. *'If the Son of man makes you free you shall be free indeed'*. *'In my Father's house are many rooms'*. He forewent spaciousness in his human life, to prepare a spacious place for those who make space for him. This is what Mary did and what each of us is called to do. He comes to make his home in us, if we will allow him. He knocks on our door and awaits our invitation to enter. Are we making space for him this Christmas? To welcome him is to welcome him in the most unlikely places and people. It is to say yes to the endless possibility of redeeming grace. To welcome Christ is to close the door to selfish self and discover the joy of for-giving love. By gifting herself, by opening the door of her life, by saying yes to God, Mary welcomes not just the Father but all his children as well. Our Lady open the door, *Notre Dame ouvrez la porte!* So interceded the Archbishop of Paris as he struck the doors to enter into his restored cathedral. Mary's openness to God was the opening phrase in the symphony of salvation. She becomes the instrument through whom the Holy Spirit makes his music. We also are part of the composition. Sound is affected by its spatial surrounding, so the more we make space for God, the more we enable God to make music through our lives. *'I shall be made thy music'* wrote John Donne, *'Since I am coming to that holy room, Where, with thy choir of saints for evermore, I shall be made thy music; as I come I tune the instrument here at the door'*. As Donne succumbs to God's will, he sees his journey as a tuning of the instrument, cooperating with God in his musical composition. By attuning ourselves to his Word, God allows us to tune the instrument of our lives. Just as instruments can be in tune or out of tune, (and to varying degrees), so it is the same with our lives. If we want to be in tune with heaven, then we need to allow God to use instrumentally. Do we know our place in the orchestra? The skies above Bethlehem were ringing with harmony on the night Jesus was born. Are you listening? Can you hear? If we are at war with ourselves, with others and above all with God, we will be deafened to its call. *'And man, at war with man, hears not the love-song which they bring; -Oh hush the noise, ye men of strife, and hear the angels sing!* This Christmas, may you know the deep peace of God, as one with whom he is well pleased. Make space for Him and discover the joy of gift!



Fr Julian

PRAYER & LITURGY

LUCIA SCHILLACI of Stockfield Avenue died recently. Her funeral will be on **Monday 23rd December** at 12 noon at Woollensbrook.

JUDITH MARSHALL of Paternoster House Care Home died recently. Her funeral will be held on **Monday 6th January at 11am** at Parndon Wood.

VICKY FORNI of Holne Chase, Roydon died recently. Her funeral will be on **Wednesday 8th January at 11am**. There will be no 9.15am Mass that day. *May they rest in peace.*

PLEASE PRAY for all those who have died recently including Albert Willmer, Judith Marshall, Lucia Schillaci and Vicky Forni and for all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Onofrio Dileto, Theodora Van Hage, Lena Byrne, Stefano Diesi, Bill Rainsford, Paul Grixti, Jean Walsh, Mary Ryan, Kay Gaffney, Christine Davies, Arnaldo Moruzzi, Salvatore Colletti and Ettore Forte. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.*

ADVENT

PARISH CAROL SERVICE will be held on **Sunday 22nd December at 6pm** with adult and children choirs.

CHRISTMAS MASSES: There will be a children's Nativity Mass at 5pm on **Christmas Eve** and children can dress as a shepherd, king or angel or one of the stable animals. There will also be Mass at Midnight on **Christmas Eve**. On **Christmas Day**, Mass will be at 9.15am and 11.15am. The Italian Mass will be at 3.30pm on Christmas Eve.

CRIB APPEAL: Our Crib offerings are donated to the Catholic Children's Society. The Society provides a range of services to help disadvantaged children and families including mental health support, early years education and emergency grants for families in crisis. You can donate at the Crib or via the CCB website www.cathchild.org.uk/crib.

ADVENT EXTRA magazines are available to buy from the table at back of church for £2.95. Please pay your money into the newspaper box.

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



POPE'S INTENTION FOR DECEMBER is for pilgrims of hope. Let us pray that this Jubilee strengthen us in our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in the midst of our

lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

MASS BOOKS: Due to the new lectionary, the readings will now be printed and available from the blue trays in the porch beside the newsletters which will be in the red trays. **New Sunday Missals are available to buy from the repository for £19.95.**



CHILDREN'S CHOIR: Gabby Hanley will be running the Children's Choir at the 9.15am Mass on Sunday mornings. The children choir will be on **22nd December** at the 9.15am Mass.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY will be resume at the 9.15am Mass on **5th January 2025**.

PRAYER GROUP will not be meeting in January, but will resume again on **Thursday 6th February** at 7.30pm in the crypt and will continue to meet on the first Thursday of each month.



NEW YEARS EVE: There will be no 9.15am Mass on New Year's Eve, but there will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 11pm with Mass at 11.30pm.

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



COME AND SEE will continue on **Tuesday 7th January 2025 at 7.30pm** for all who want to learn more about becoming a Catholic, or if you missed one of the Sacraments or if you simply want to renew your faith.

YOUTH CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME 2025: The next meeting will be held in the crypt on **Monday 13th January at 7pm**.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME: The next meeting will be on **Sunday 5th January 2025 at 5pm** in the crypt.



FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2026:

If your child is in year 2 and is interested in making their First Holy Communion in 2026, please do contact the presbytery to register your interest.



BAPTISM COURSE: The next course will be held on **Wednesday 22nd January at 7.15pm** 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

The SVP are distributing over 10,000 homeless packs during the extreme cold weather. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £4.10 per pack? Donations can be sent to Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West **sort code** 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237.

SPUC WHITE FLOWER APPEAL: The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) will be holding its annual appeal on **18th/19th January 2025**.

SOCIAL & MISCELLANEOUS



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

SILENT NIGHT: On **Monday 23rd December**, after morning Mass, we will show a beautiful film in the crypt about Silent Night (2012).



CHURCH CLEANERS: Two more cleaners are needed to join the Thursday morning group for one hour per month. If you can help, please contact the presbytery.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP:

If you've experienced a bereavement please feel welcome to come to the parish support group. We are not a counselling service, but can always point people in that direction, if it is necessary. The next meeting will be on held in the New Year in the presbytery.



CHURCH CLEANING: Pat Kavanagh, Sue Alvey & Val. Thank you for your help.

SCAM EMAILS: We have been warned by the Diocese that there are scam emails targeting parishioners. They impersonate the Parish Priest, often using a similar email name. They typically request the recipient to purchase Amazon or other gift cards as gifts for the priest. Never purchase gift cards for the parish priest based on an email

request. Please do contact the parish office if you receive a suspicious email.

CHRISTMAS CARDS: Please do not leave Christmas cards for parishioners at the back of church or in the crypt. 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>.

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.



THANK YOU from the presbytery to everyone for your very kind cards, gifts and good wishes. They are very much appreciated.
Fr Julian, Fr Mathews and Dawn.

Liturgy this week	Today's Liturgy
Saturday 21st December St Peter Canisius 9.30am Exposition of Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass <i>Jean Walsh RIP</i>	1st Reading: Micah 5: 2-5a <i>From you shall come forth one who is to be ruler in Israel.</i>
4.00pm Italian Mass* 6.30pm Mass <i>For the Parish</i>	Ps 80 — Bring us back, O God; let your face shine forth, and we shall be saved.
Sun 22nd Dec FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9.15am Mass <i>Fr Philip's intentions</i> 11.15am Mass <i>Decd members of O'Connor Family</i> 6pm Parish Carol Service	2nd Reading: Hebrews 10: 5-10 <i>Behold, I have come to do your will.</i>
Mon 23rd December St John of Kanty, Priest 8.30am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 9.15am Mass <i>Justina Ogbodu RIP</i> 6pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	Gospel Accl. Alleluia, alleluia! Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word. Alleluia!
Tues 24th December Christmas Eve 8.30am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 9.15am Mass <i>Delaney & Robb Family intentions</i> 3.30pm Italian Mass 5.00pm Children's Nativity Mass <i>Priest's intentions</i> 12pm Midnight Mass <i>Priest's intentions</i>	Gospel: Luke 1: 39-45 <i>Why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?</i>
Wed 25th December NATIVITY OF THE LORD 9.15am Mass <i>Priest's intentions</i> 11.15am <i>Priest's intentions</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">NEXT WEEK'S READINGS HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH (YEAR C)</p> 1st Reading: Samuel 1: 20-22, 24-28 2nd Reading: John 3: 1-2, 21-24 Gospel: Luke 2: 41-52
Thurs 26th December SAINT STEPHEN, The First Martyr 7.30am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 8am Mass <i>Mary Stritch RIP</i> NO Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	<p style="text-align: center;">SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION)</p> Saturday 10.30 – 11am & 5.30 – 6.15pm Sunday 8.45 – 9am & 10.45 – 11am or ask Fr Julian at any other time.
Friday 27th December ST JOHN, Apostle & Evangelist (abstinence from meat for those aged 14+) 11am Exposition of Blessed Sacrament/11.50 Benediction 12 noon Mass <i>Decd member Delaney Family</i> 6pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	<p style="text-align: center;">ROSARY</p> The Rosary is often prayed in the Lady Chapel after weekday Mass and Saturday 10am Mass.
Saturday 28th December THE HOLY INNOCENTS, Martyrs 9.30am Exposition of Blessed Sacrament 10am Mass <i>Beary Family intentions</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK</p> Any parishioner sick, frail, or going into hospital for major surgery, can ask Fr Julian for the Sacrament of Anointing at any time.
4.00pm Italian Mass* 6.30pm Mass <i>Decd members of Murphy & Galligan Families</i> Sun 29th December HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH 9.15am Mass <i>Mary & John Hanley & Family intentions</i> 11.15am Mass <i>For the Parish</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE</p> 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
* Vigil Mass of Sunday	
REGULAR EVENTS	

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