

# Church of St John the Evangelist, Islington

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**Parish priest:** Fr Rajiv Michael, **Asst Priest:** Fr Jakub Jozsko, **Administrator (Mon/Thu/Fri):** Grace Wu

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## Third Sunday of Advent (Year C – 15<sup>th</sup> December 2024)

### This Week

Weekday Masses	Sunday Masses	Confessions
<b>Mon</b> 10am Funeral Mass	Saturday Vigil 6pm	Saturday 5:30 - 5:50pm
<b>Thu</b> 12 noon Funeral Mass	Sunday 10am, 12 noon, 6.30pm	(and anytime, as possible, on request)
<b>Tue – Fri</b> 10am, followed by Adoration until 11am		

In today's gospel, John the Baptist is very practical and quite understanding of the fact that human beings are often trapped in situations they can't just get out of. So instead of telling the tax collectors to stop collaborating with the imperialist Roman swine, (as we might expect him to) he just tells them to take no more than they have to, likewise with the soldiers and tells the ordinary punters to help someone who is poor. To do something which is in their grasp. Sometimes I've heard people talking about how we have to change our whole lifestyle. Fair enough, that may well be true but that sort of talk often leaves people high and dry about what they can do practically to help others. So John's suggestions are full of practical common sense, but they are an exercise in damage limitation. His word to tax collectors is: "Take less". Jesus' word to a tax collector is "*Come down Zacchaens, hurry, because I am going to stay at your house today*" To the soldiers who torture him his word is not a lecture about human decency, but *Father, forgive them for they know not what they do*. Jesus is not interested in damage limitation, but in transformation. John is like a policeman who wants to stop two warring factions battering each other. Jesus wants to get them to sit down and talk to each other and learn about each other. Sometimes all we can manage realistically is the first, but we can never just stop there – Fr JH

### News & Events

**Masses this week** There are two funeral Masses. Monday's 10am Mass is a funeral Mass and there is no Adoration. On Thursday, there's a funeral Mass at 12 noon. The regular 10am Thursday Mass will still proceed and it is followed by Adoration.

**Confessions during Advent** If you haven't been to Confession for a while then this is the perfect time to go! Advent is a time of looking back and looking forward, and confession is a way to prepare for a brighter tomorrow. For your convenience, **confession will be available during all the Masses this Sunday and the next, 22<sup>nd</sup>**. There will also be a **Reconciliation service at Bl.Sacrament church** on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM.

**Coffee morning** Thank you to all parishoners that helped by serving and baking and for those that stay for a chat and made this parish more vibrant!

**Setting up the Christmas Nativity Scene** Take part in this special event and contribute your time and talent by helping set up the crib. We're looking for able and willing volunteers to take part on **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> at 7pm**. There'll be mince pies and mulled wine or just come along to help serve and sample the refreshments!

**Christmas Offertory Envelopes** may be taken from the back of the church from today and returned at any time convenient to you, especially if you will be away before or at Christmas. This collection goes towards the support of the priests of the parish, thank you.

**Requiescat in pace** The funeral for **Lisa Marie Kennedy** will take place at 10am on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December. The funeral for **Thomas Joseph Slattery** will be at 12 noon on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December.

**Confirmation course 2024/2025.** If you're between the ages of 14 to 16 at the time of enrolment, we would like to warmly welcome you to join our Confirmation Programme 2024/2025. The course will start January 2025 and the confirmation date has now been confirmed as **6pm Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May** with Bishop Nicholas Hudson. If you wish to be enrolled, please complete a form from the website or pick one up in the church porch.

**Christmas and New Year Mass times** are on our website, on the notice board and available to take home with you in the church porch.

**Christmas lunch – call for helpers!** Sign up sheets for volunteers are at the back of the church. On Christmas Day this year, at St John's school, we are holding an open Christmas lunch for anyone who might be alone or unable to afford or cook a meal or simply fancies some company. This is an old tradition of St John's, which we're really happy to revive.. There are a few ways you can get involved. **We need volunteers on December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>** to help prep ingredients, set up, decorate the space, help with cooking and host on the day. If you're unable to volunteer, perhaps you can gift a raffle prize or a financial donation – or know someone who might want to come for the lunch!

**Sponsor a homeless pack** The SVP are distributing over 10,000 homeless packs (Vinnie Packs) during the extreme cold weather, containing thermal gloves, hat, socks, and other essentials. If you would like to sponsor a pack, the suggested donation is £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. Thank you so much for your support!

**Scam emails targeting parishioners** We mentioned this last week and just wanted to remind you to stay vigilant with scammers who are targeting parishioners, impersonating their priests. The scam emails typically request the parishioner to purchase Amazon or other gift cards as gifts. Fr Rajiv and Fr Jakub would never ask you to do this by email. If you receive such an email supposedly from one of them, please don't respond and contact the parish office immediately. Thank you.

**Buying Christmas presents?** Advent is a time of prayer and preparation to prepare for the coming of Jesus: if he doesn't come back now, we remember his first coming in Bethlehem. But it's easy to be distracted with expectations of Christmas and the shopping involved. Maybe you could consider a 'virtual Christmas present' such as buying a goat, essentials for a family in need, through charities such as CAFOD, SCIAF or Christian Aid? Asking your children to choose the gifts is a wonderful way of teaching how other people live. You can also search for St John's at the [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) before going to any retailer who will then donate to us a percentage of the total but at no expense to you.

**Certificate of Catholic Practice** If you wish to request this certificate because you are applying for a place in a Catholic School for your child, please email the parish office for a priest information form.

**The New Lectionary** will be introduced at St John's in January. Many parishes moved to these at the beginning of Advent. We apologise for the delay, but this is due to costs for the altar books and the people missals. Thanks to those who have donated, and if any others would like to contribute towards these books, it would be gratefully received. A lectionary book can also be marked in memory of a loved one or for your intention.

**Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme – important! The government has, till now, allowed** listed churches to claim back the VAT incurred due to repairs. The present govt. seems to have removed this from their budget. This will severely affect our (and a lot of other churches') already stretched finances, especially given the repairs we have to continue here. **Please write to our MP** to request they take action. The link below has a standard letter which can be sent from the website itself. <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/listed-places-of-worship-grant-scheme/>