

# Church of St John the Evangelist, Islington

39 Duncan Terrace, N1 8AL, 0207 226 3277

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

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## Fourth Sunday of Advent (Year C – 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2024)

### Masses until January 5<sup>th</sup>

Weekday Masses and Adoration	Sunday Masses	Confessions
Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup> 10am	Saturday Vigil 6pm Sunday 10am, 12 noon, 6.30pm	Sat 5:30 - 5:50pm (and on request)
<b>Tue 24<sup>th</sup> 6pm Family Christmas Vigil Mass</b> <b>11.30pm Carols followed by Midnight Mass</b> <b>Wed 25<sup>th</sup> 10am, 12 noon Christmas Day Mass</b>		
Thu 26 <sup>th</sup> 12 noon Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> 10am Mon 30 <sup>th</sup> Tue 31 <sup>st</sup> 10am	Wed 1 <sup>st</sup> 12 noon Thu 2 <sup>nd</sup> 10am Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> 10am, 12 noon funeral	Adoration after weekday 10am Masses only

**A**s we come to the last Sunday of Advent, we turn to Mary. On the morning of Dec 9<sup>th</sup>, 1531, in a village in Mexico, a peasant, Juan Diego saw a very beautiful lady appear to him on his way to work. She was clothed with the stars of the sky, standing on the moon and she blocked out the sun by her presence. It was Our Lady, reminiscent of the Woman clothed with the sun from Revelation 12. Uniquely, she appeared without her child, like in other apparitions, but she was dressed as a young Aztec girl, pregnant with child. She said she was the mother of the ‘very true deity’ and she wanted to give birth to the Christ child in the hearts of the Mexican people. For about eight or nine years, the Franciscans had laboured in the vineyard, preaching the gospel to the indigenous people of Mexico with little success. Few people, like Juan Diego came to believe in the gospel. After the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe, nine million became Catholic over the next ten years or so. It is Mary who continues to come, carrying her child, with the desire to give birth to him in our hearts. When Mary visited Elizabeth, her presence caused new joy to break forth in that house. Today Mary wants to visit you with her child. Welcome her today. Ask her to renew you by giving birth to her son in your heart this Christmas.

### *News & Events*

***A very happy and holy Christmas to all parishoners*** Fr Rajiv, Fr Jakub and Fr John wish you all a peaceful Christmas and joyful 2025. Blessings to you, your family and friends.

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

***Requiescat in pace*** The funeral for **Sean Gannon** will take place at 12 noon on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

***Thank you – Nativity Scene and Christmas tree.*** Big thanks to all those that were able to help set up the Christmas Nativity Scene, supplying the Christmas tree and moving it all into place! It’s a fun logistical challenge.

**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.

**Special New Year's Eve thanksgiving Mass** Spend New Year's Eve thanking God for all that He's given us - for all the good and the not so good. However our year has been, we can offer it all up to God in thanksgiving and place the coming year into his hands. There will be mass **on New Year's Eve, at Blessed Sacrament Church (N1 0SR) at 11 AM, with Adoration from 10.30pm** with light refreshments after. **On New Year's Day, Mass at St John's is at 12 noon.** Let's start the year by putting Jesus front and centre in our life.

**Christmas lunch** Thank you everyone who offered to help with the Christmas lunch. We now have all the volunteers that we need. We know that not everyone who offered to help was able to get a spot - but we are really grateful to all of you. It's truly heartwarming to see how generous people are with their time and skills especially at this busy time of year. We intend to hold the event every year from now on. So if you didn't get a chance this year - maybe next year. We'll keep you updated with how it all goes.

**Parish office partially closed** from today until January 6<sup>th</sup> for a well earned (partial!) rest. We'll be responding to emails and voicemails but it'll take us a little longer.

**Last newsletter** This is the last newsletter until Sunday January 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Pictures needed!** Thank you to all who have generously shared their pictures. If you would like to appear on our new website and if you have pictures of Baptisms, First Holy Communion, Confirmation or weddings then please do email them to us. We might not be able to use all the photos, but will let you know when they're published. Digital copies only please.

**Buying Christmas presents?** 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. If you're buying things online, you can also help St John's by going through [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) to any retailer who will then donate a percentage to us. Search for St John the Evangelist at EasyFundRaising.

**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.

**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.

**Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme** This scheme allows our listed churches to receive a grant for the VAT incurred in repairing our churches. The lack of renewal of this scheme will severely affect the finances of all parishes whose buildings are listed in a very negative way. That includes ours. Please write to our MP to request them to write to Lisa Nandy, the Secretary of State at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport who will decide if this scheme is terminated. Please go to the link below which simplifies the letter writing.  
<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/listed-places-of-worship-grant-scheme/>

**Sponsor a homeless pack** The SVP are distributing over 10,000 homeless packs (Vinnie Packs), containing thermal gloves, hat, socks, and other essentials. If you would like to sponsor packs at a suggested donation of £4.10 per pack, please send them 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.