



# CATHOLIC CHURCH OF OUR LADY, OF THE ROSARY

+2nd Sunday of Advent, Year B - 10 December 2023

Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust: Registered Charity Number 233699



## What's Another Year?

Three years ago this week, the Diocese asked us to invite families and friends to form the biggest "bubble" possible before they decided which of the extra Masses they would come to that we were to offer on Christmas Day. All of this was to maximize the capacity of our churches during the Covid pandemic so that, hopefully, no-one would be turned away from celebrating the birth of our Saviour in the proper way.

Now there are no restrictions on the number that can attend Mass for Christmas. In a sense, the tortuous paths to Christ's coming of which Isaiah and John the Baptist speak in today's readings have been made straight. There are no external obstacles to the fullest celebration possible of our Faith. Normal service has been resumed.

But the call to straighten the path of the coming of the Lord is not an ancient or even recent historical one nor just about being ready for His future coming, the eschaton or *Parousia*—it is also about facilitating His coming to us every day. So, since the Scriptures speak to us now, what are the barriers to Christ's coming that we are asked to take down in 2023?

Each of us has valleys, dark moods formed by worry and worsened by the long nights and short days when we feel overly sorry for ourselves and overlook God's attempts to console us with His Word and His Real Presence in the Eucharist. And even when we do look at these difficult issues, sometimes we deal with them using only the giddy heights of our arrogant self-reliance, thinking we can lift ourselves all the way to salvation only to find that it is all too much for us alone. As for the cliffs and ridges, these are the things that seem so much more important during Advent when it merely becomes a countdown to Christmas Day, all the things which need to be organised for that wonderful celebration which can take over our lives. And then, even when these obstacles have been levelled, the debris and weeds remain to be tidied away to smooth the Lord's coming to us.

The very beginning of the Good News has John asking the faithful people to declutter their lives, to repent of their sinful and negative ways, to create a smooth path for Christ. Now is the time to make that highway and we begin that process by acknowledging that we need the Lord in our lives. Perhaps we don't always make His coming to us easy, especially as we are back to shoe-horning our Faith into already busy lives. But while it is just another ordinary year, let us recapture the sense of loss we feared in 2020. As we do, let us resolve to make this not just another Advent, but one where Christ's coming really means something—through Confession, straighten the path of Christ to come to us in the Eucharist that the Prince of Peace may calm and heal all our worries this year and always. *Fr Kevin*

## Mass Times

### Sunday

11:00 am (Sung Family Mass)

### Monday, Wednesday & Friday

12:30pm

### Saturday

6:00pm (Vigil Mass of Sunday)

### Confessions (Saturday)

5:00pm—5:30pm

### Church opening times

#### Monday—Friday

9:30am—1:00pm

## Music for Sunday

575 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

368 Like a Sea Without a Shore

478 Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

732 This is my Will, My One Command

## Sunday Readings

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Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Psalms 84:9-14 R v 8

2 Peter 3:8-14

Mark 1:1-8

**Catholic Church of Our Lady of the Rosary, 211 Old Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5QT  
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<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/marylebone>

Parish Clergy: Canon Kevin Jordan ([kevinjordan@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:kevinjordan@rcdow.org.uk))

Fr Alex Balzanella ([alexanderbalzanella@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:alexanderbalzanella@rcdow.org.uk))

Parish Administrator: Lorraine Etienne ([marylebone@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:marylebone@rcdow.org.uk))

Parish Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10.30am—3:30pm

Parish Safeguarding Rep: Valeria Naipan ([marylebone@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:marylebone@rcdow.org.uk))

**Childrens Liturgy** is cancelled today but will be held next Sunday 17 December.

**Welcomer** for today is Peter White

**Our Carol Service** is today Sunday 10 December at 3:00pm. There will be refreshments in the parish hall afterwards and parishioners are invited to bring mince pies and other festive treats that we can all share together. All are welcome.

**The Passage.** There will be a second collection after the Carol service today for The Passage which is a Christian Charity working with homeless people. Thank you for your support.

**CAFOD** are having a Carol Concert on Wednesday 13 December from 7:00pm until 8:00pm at St James Roman Catholic church, Spanish Place, 22 George Street London W1U 3QY. All are welcome. You can also Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at: [cafod.org.uk/ipc](http://cafod.org.uk/ipc) or telephone 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need.

**Let there be peace on earth: Young Adult Advent Retreat** for those aged 18-35 takes place on Saturday 16 December from 10:30am—2:30pm at the FCJ Spirituality Centre, 32 Phoenix Road, London NW1 1TA. Cost: By Donation. For more information and to book your place please email: [bookings.fcjcentre@fcjhouse-somerstown.co.uk](mailto:bookings.fcjcentre@fcjhouse-somerstown.co.uk).

**Crib Offerings** will be donated to the Catholic Children's Society to support their work with local children and families, many of whom are facing severe hardship due to the cost-of-living crisis. Thank you for your support.

**Christmas Offering.** This week you can take home a Christmas offertory envelope. This is your Christmas gift to the parish and is not taxed by the Diocese, so if you are going away please do use it. Thank you for your kindness, thoughtfulness and generosity throughout the year.

**Coffee morning** next week 17 December hosted by Clemence and Marie. All are welcome.

### **A Christmas Celebration in Westminster**

**Cathedral.** Tickets are now on sale for our annual Christmas concerts which celebrate the mystery of Christ's Incarnation in carols and readings performed by the world-famous Westminster Cathedral Choir, orchestra, and celebrity readers, on 19 and 20 December at 7.30pm. We encourage everybody to purchase tickets quickly before these popular events are sold out. Tickets can be purchased from the Cathedral Gift Shop or directly from Ticketmaster; go to [www.ticketmaster.co.uk](http://www.ticketmaster.co.uk) and type in Westminster Cathedral when prompted.

**SVP Vinnie Packs** cold weather essentials for the homeless. To sponsor a pack at £4.20 each please send your donation to Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ, cheques payable to SVP or via BACS to Nat West S/C 60-60-04, A/c Nr 46088237

**If you are applying to Catholic nursery , infant and primary schools,** follow this link to Admissions: <https://catholiceducation.org.uk/guidance-for-schools/admissions> and read the Guidance for Clergy document. If you can meet these criteria then please contact Lorraine in the Parish Office to arrange an appointment.

**An Advent/Christmas Leaflet** with the times of all Masses, Confessions for the season is available to take home with you today. Please give them out to people who might be thinking of coming to our parish over Christmas.

### **Feasts**

Sunday 10 December	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Wednesday 13 December	St Lucy, Virgin & Marty
Thursday 14 December	St John of the Cross Priest & Doctor