

## NEWSLETTER

FOURTH SUNDAY  
OF ADVENT

## MASS INTENTIONS

**December 22, 2018**

6pm - Ints of the Tang Family

**December 23, 2018**

9am - People of the Parish

11am—Fr Robert Barry RIP

For weekday mass intentions please, see the notice board on the left hand side of the main door of the church.

Confessions on

Saturday at 5.15-5.45pm or  
by appointment

## Mary's Visitation

Truth is, Divine Wisdom decided to give Jesus Christ through our Blessed Mother. Her charity contributed to our salvation in the mystery of the Incarnation, the source of grace, it will continue and contribute eternally in all operations, which are so many.

To comprehend this, we must take account of three chief operations of the grace of Jesus Christ. Which is, God calls us, justifies us, and empower us to persevere. So what is the first step, it's Vocation; justification is the progress we make; perseverance is the end of our journey. In all three stages, we cannot do it without Jesus Christ. When we look to Scripture the charity of the Blessed Mother is joined to them all.

With regards to vocation, look what happened to Saint John the Baptist while's in his mother's womb, we could see the image of sinners called by grace. John is in darkness: he can neither see or hear; un be known to him Jesus Christ comes to him The Lord approaches; He speaks to his heart; he arouses and draws this sleeping and insentient heart. We can see now how the Son of God treats us, poor sinners, he calls, he shows in John's case that the Blessed Mother's charity worked together with him.

We might say, What made the Lord come to John? It was the charity of the Blessed Mother. If our Lord acted in John's heart, it was the sheer sound of his Mother's voice; When we look at John the Baptist, we see our Blessed Mother as the Mother whom our Lord calls.

*Fr. Christopher*

**The office will be closed after  
Christmas and reopen  
on 14th January 2019.**

**There will be no Newsletter until  
the third weekend  
of January 2019.**

## Christmas

At the crib, we see Mary has given birth to Jesus: she has given us our Lord, the light of the world. It's so simple, and yet that event changed our history forever. That Christmas became a source of hope for all mankind.

When we profess our faith this Christmas, it should make you and me see that God is present in all situations even when we think he is absent. He is to be seen in the unwelcomed guest, in the unrecognizable, in the marginalized, who walks through our streets and knocks on our doors.

Our faith challenges us to make space for a new imagination, and never to be afraid of encountering new forms of relationships, where none of us have to feel there is no room for us on this earth. Christmas is a time to turn the power of fear into the power of charity.

In the Christ Child, God has come to meet us and make us active sharers in the life around us. The infant child offers himself to us, so we could lift him up in arms, and embrace him. So in him, we shall not be afraid to embrace, the needy, the broken hearted, the sick, the lonely, the naked, the refugee, the asylum seeker, the abused, those been trafficked, those in prison.

Through the infant child, God calls us to be messengers of hope and to be on guard for all those bowed down by despair. Through this child, God invites us to be agents of his generosity.

Moved by the joy of the child, we ask that your crying would shake us out from our indifference and may our eyes be open to those who are suffering. May the tenderness of the child awaken our sensitivity and to recognize you in all who arrive in our cities, and in our lives. May your tenderness persuade us to be agents of hope to all.

*Fr. Christopher*

## A CHRISTMAS BLESSING

Dear Friends in Christ,

As I gaze upon the Christmas tree,

What gifts would I leave beneath your tree,

No toys for pointless play.

But gifts to bless you each and every day.

The gift of friendship warm and true,

Is what I pray, I could leave for you.

Good health and happiness,

To keep you smiling all through the year.

That peace which comes from God,

A prayer to guide you along the road.

And when at last your heart

has lost its song,

The gift of hope to cheer you on.

These are the gifts

I'd leave beneath your tree.

(slightly adapted)

Have a Holy Christmas and

a Prosperous New Year. *Fr. Christopher*

## Readings for this and next Sunday

1st Reading; Micah 5:1-4

Psalm 79: 2-3, 15-16, 18-19, response v 4

2nd Reading - Hebrew 10; 5-10

1st Reading; Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6, 12-14

Psalm 127: 1-5 response v 1

2nd Reading - Colossians 3; 12-21

### How to Live Like the Holy Family

The woman, with her limitation, awakens in the man, who is also limited, a desire for fullness out of proportion with her capacity to answer it. She awakens a thirst that she is unable to quench, a hunger she is unable to satisfy. This is what gives rise to the anger and the violence that married couples so often experience and the delusion they feel if they do not understand the true nature of their relationship.

If husband and wife do not encounter what the sign is pointing to, the place where they can find the fulfillment of the promise that the other has aroused, then they are condemned to be consumed by a pretension from which they cannot free themselves, and their desire for the infinite, which no one like the person loved arouses, is condemned to remain unsatisfied.

The German poet Rainer Maria Rilke identified very keenly this drama in loving relationships, sensing that ending up in this spiral cannot be the only way out: this is the paradox of love between man and woman: two infinite's 'meet two limitations', two infinite needs to be loved meet two fragile and limited capacities to love. Only in the ambit of a greater love do they not consume themselves in pretension and not resign themselves, but walk together, each towards a fullness of which the other is sign.,

If you do not love Christ, Beauty made flesh, more than the person you love, the latter relationship withers, because Christ is the truth of this relationship, the fullness to which both partners point, and in whom their relationship is fulfilled. Only by letting him in is it possible for the most beautiful relationship that can happen in life not be corrupted and die in time. This is the audacity of his claim.

Fr. Julian Carron

### Mary, Mother of God

I see in Mary, the Mother who gave a human face to the Word so you and I could contemplate him. The affection of our Lord is the hinge of our salvation as Tertullian says, was knitted together in Mary's womb *'You heard me on the day when I called, and you gave new strength to my heart'* (Psalm 138 vs 3). Mary chosen beforehand to be the Mother of our Lord intimately shared in his mission, as she stood at the foot of the cross.

Mary is united to our Lord because she received from him the knowledge of the heart, the knowledge of faith, sustained by her experience as Mother by her close relationship with her Son. She is the woman of faith who made room for God in her heart; she is the believer par-excellence who perceived in her Son the coming of the fullness of time, *'God sent his Son, born of a woman, born a subject of the Law, to redeem the subjects of the Law, so that we could receive adoption as sons'* (Ga 4: 4-5). God is choosing the humble path of human existence, entered into our salvation. It's the reason why our Lord cannot be understood without our Lady.

Holy Mother Church, holds our Lord and gives him to us with joy and generosity. No declaration of our Lord, even the most inspiring, can ever be detached from the flesh and blood of the Church, from the historical vividness of the Body of Christ. If it weren't for the Church our Lord would appear as an idea or a feeling, a moral teaching. Without the Church, yours and my relationship with our Lord would be at the mercy of our imagination, our interpretations, and our moods.

Our Blessed Mother, first and most perfect disciple of our Lord, the model of the pilgrim Church, it is she, who opens the way to the Churches motherhood and sustains her maternal mission to all of us. The World Day of Peace we implore the intercession of our Mother, that our Lord would grant peace; peace in our hearts; peace within our homes and families; peace between nations.

Let's turn to Mary and contemplate her Motherhood. It would be well worth recalling the people of Ephesus, who cried before their pastors when they entered the Church: 'Holy Mother of God!' What an excellent greeting for our Mother. Fr. Christopher

### The Mystery of the Epiphany

Oh, when will that blessed day come on which we shall do as the Wise Men did, and, leaving everything, give ourselves to God?

I say, my brethren, that their faithfulness to their calling was strong; they overcame every difficulty and hindrance which stood in their way, so as to follow the star. And what sacrifices they had to make! They had to leave their country, their palaces, their families, and their kingdom, or in other words, they had to leave everything which was most dear to them in this world.

To part from them they underwent the fatigues of a long and troublesome journey, and all this of a very cold season of the year: everything seemed to stand in the way of their undertaking. How much ridicule did they have to put up with from their equals, and even from people? But no! Nothing daunts them from undertaking this important journey. You see hear plainly, my brethren, that the merit of the true faith consists in this: that we sacrifice all that which we love best to obey the voice of grace which calls us.

St John Vianney

## DATES AND TIMES OF SERVICES DURING THE CHRISTMAS PERIOD

**Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> December**

6.30pm  
11.30pm

**Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> December**

11am

**26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> December** – no Mass;

**Sunday, 30<sup>st</sup> December**

**31<sup>st</sup> December 2018**

**2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019**

**Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

**Christmas Eve**

Children's Mass for Christmas  
Christmas Night Carol Service &  
Midnight Mass of Christmas

**Christmas Day**

Mass of Christmas Day

**Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> December** – 10 am Mass

**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**

Masses at 6pm, Saturday & 9am & 11am Sunday

**11 am Mass;**

**1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 11 am Mass**

**No Mass**

**4<sup>th</sup> January 2019 10 am Mass**

**The Epiphany of the Lord**

Masses at 6pm, Saturday & 9am & 11am Sunday

### PARISH PROJECT,

Please, find below a message from Keely, who was our guest and now is waiting for your thoughts on our Hall Extension Project. Do not hesitate to email her. Thank you, Fr Christopher

*Dear Parishioners,*

*Thank you for welcoming me so warmly at your weekend masses .*

*I just wanted to reiterate my request for you to share your thoughts and ideas about the development of the hall as part of a wider project which would be largely, if not wholly, grant funded.*

*You can contact me at [keelytattersfield@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:keelytattersfield@rcdow.org.uk) or 07920488586. Please send me any ideas, feedback or questions. God bless, Keely Tattersfield*

### Christmas Foodbank Donations

Most people enjoy giving to others at Christmas, whether that is their time, money, or presents. Many people help the homeless during the winter or spend Christmas Day with pensioners. Others send donations to a favourite charity. Hopefully, everyone is kind and considerate to each other.

I would like to ask if anyone can donate milk to the foodbank. We need litre-sized cartons of long life whole milk, the ones that are usually in blue packaging. We typically use at least 12 per week, especially for the families with children.

It would be very kind of you to help. There are plastic collection boxes under the long table in the church entrance. We will try to ensure these remain visible, if the table is replaced by the Christmas tree. My thanks, Paul Marlow.

### FIRST HOLY COMMUNION COURSE—amended version

Dear Parents: Please note the changes to the First Penance and First Communion courses

#### FIRST PENANCE - 9am to 11am

1. Sunday January 13, 2. Sunday January 20 3. Sunday January 27 4. Sunday Feb 3 5. Sunday Feb 10  
6. Saturday March 2 - Last lesson on first penance with the first confession to take place immediately after

#### FIRST COMMUNION - 9am to 11am

1. Sunday March 3 2. Sunday March 10 3. Sunday March 17 4. Sunday March 24  
5. Sunday March 31 6. Sunday May 5 - last lesson on communion

First Holy Communion- Saturday 11th of May - 11am

From all the St Edmund's Communion Catechists

**Diocese of Westminster**  
**Roman Catholic Parish of St Edmund of Abingdon, Millwall**  
297 Westferry Road, Millwall. E14 3RS  
Telephone: 020-7987-4114; Email: millwall@rcdow.org.uk



**Fr Christopher Silva**  
*Parish Priest,*

**Mrs Katherine Woznicka**  
*Parish Secretary*

**The office may be contacted by phone:**  
**Monday to Friday 9am-2pm**  
**Closed on Bank Holidays**

**NEW PARISHIONERS** — Please fill in a “Registration Form” from the Church porch and hand it in to the Office or to the Parish Priest.

**BLESSING OF HOMES** — Contact the Parish Secretary to book a date and time.

**COMMUNION FOR THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND** — Contact the Parish Secretary to arrange for a visit from the Caring & Sharing Group.

**BAPTISMS** — Parents must attend a 2-session Baptism Formation Program (during pregnancy or after birth) – **Next baptismal course will be on Mon 7 January & Mon 14 January 2019 - 7.30pm.** Please, call the office to reserve your space. Please, note that all baptism will be during Mass.

**WEDDINGS** — Contact the Parish Priest by email or letter, **even if you wish to be married elsewhere.** Please give full names, contact details, religion of each party and whether or note either of you has been married before. The Church normally requires six months notice of weddings.

**WHAT HAPPENS IF I GO INTO HOSPITAL?** — If you are admitted as a patient, please ensure the Chaplains’ Office is informed you would like to be visited by a Catholic Minister. This has to be done by you or a relative.

**PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS** — The Parish is completely committed to the protection from abuse of all children and vulnerable adults in its care. The Parish Protection Officer is Mrs Diane Winship and she should be contacted directly on 07799-414-806 if you have cause for concern. The Diocesan Protection Officer may be contacted on 020-7798-9350/07803-634-236, by email to arianna.sommariva@rcdow.org.uk or at Vaughan House, 46 Francis Street, SW1P 1QN.

**AN EMAIL NEWSLETTER** — The newsletter is available electronically, enabling you to remain in touch even when you are away on holiday or on business—as well as reducing our ecological footprint. Email the Parish Secretary to arrange to added to the distribution list.

**SET OF DONATION ENVELOPES** , if you want to donate in envelopes and to gift aid your donations, you can let me know via email and I will prepare a box for you. During the week the boxes are available from the office.

*Katherine*

**LAST WEEK’S COLLECTIONS:** loose: 345.63 envelopes: 524.09, total: **869.72**  
***Thank you for your Generosity*** WRCDT Charity No: 233699

**ST EDMUND’S  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
Westferry Road, Millwall E14 3RS  
020 7987 2546

**BISHOP CHALLONER  
COLLEGIATE SCHOOLS**  
Commercial Road, London E1 0AB  
020 7791 9500