

NEWSLETTER

1 SUNDAY OF
ADVENT

Woe to the soul which has not Christ dwelling in it

As once God was angry with the Jews and gave Jerusalem over for a spectacle to its enemies, and those who hated them ruled over them and there was no longer there any feast or sacrifice, so, being angry with the soul for its transgression of his command, God handed it over to his enemies, who seduced it and utterly deformed it.

Just as a house which has no master dwelling in it is dark, neglected and despised, and is filled with dirt and filth, so a soul which does not have its Lord feasting in it with his angels is filled with darkness of sin, the shame of passion and every sort of disgrace.

Alas for the street in which no one walks, in which the voice of man is not heard; it is a lurking place for wild beasts. Alas for the soul in which the Lord does not walk and put to flight by his voice the spiritual beats of wickedness. Alas for the house in which its master does not dwell. Alas for the land which has no farmer to till it. Alas for the ship which has been abandoned by its steersman: it is tossed about by the winds and waves of the ocean, and perishes. Alas for the soul which does not have its true steersman Christ in it: it lives in the bitter darkness of the sea and is tossed by the waves of passions. It is buffeted by the wicked spirits as by winter tempests, and finally comes to destruction.

Alas for the soul which is without Christ to cultivate it so that it will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. When it is deserted it becomes full of thorns and thistles, and finally, its harvest is not one of fruit but of destruction by fire. Alas for the soul which has not Christ for its Lord dwelling in it, for when it is deserted and filled with the stench of passions it becomes a den of vice.

When a farmer sets out to till the ground he has to take proper tools and clothing for work in the fields: so when Christ, the heavenly king and the true husbandman, came to humanity laid waste by sin, he clothed himself in a body and carried the cross as his implement and cultivated the deserted soul. He pulled up the thorns and thistles of evil spirits and tore up the weeds of sin. With fire he burnt up all the harvest of its sins. When thus he had tilled the ground of the soul with the wooden plough of his cross, he planted in it a lovely garden of the Spirit; a garden which brings forth for God as its master the sweetness and most delightful fruits of every sort.

Attributed to St. Macarius



MASS INTENTIONS

December 2nd, 2023

6pm - Pro Populo

December 3rd, 2023

9am— Holy Souls

11 am - Ints of Holy Father

Tue - 5h December

9.15 am - Holy Souls

Friday - 8th December

9.15 am - Holy Souls

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

Confession on Saturday between
5.15-5.45 pm
or by appointment.

**St Edmund's church
cordially invites you
to their Community
Christmas Carol
service.**

This is to bring community together and to celebrate Christmas, especially for people who might be travelling over the festive period. Please invite your friends and your neighbours and let us sing some traditional carols together.

Saturday 16th of December 2023 at 7pm.

A Prayer after Communion

Grant O Lord, we pray, that, benefiting from participation in heavenly things.

We may be helped by what you give in this present age and prepared for the gifts that are eternal. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

Readings for this & next Sunday

1st Reading—
Isaiah 63: 16-17, 64:1, 3-8
Psalm 79; 2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Response v 4
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Gospel – Mark 13; 33-37

1st Reading— Isaiah 40;
1-5: 9-11
Psalm 84: 9-14, 56 Resp v 8
2nd Reading -
1 Peter 3:8-14,
Gospel – Mark 1; 1-8

Christian Vigilance

The culmination of salvation history remains the Father's secret...That the disciples *never know when the time will come* means that they are to live in a state of constant watchfulness. Although Jesus has not given them the exact timetable that they may have wanted, he has given them the clues that will enable them to be sufficiently prepared. God withholds the timetable because what he desires is not calculation but vigilance. [Today's Gospel] drives home this point. The man *left his servants in charge* (literally gives his slaves authority). This scenario clearly points to Jesus and the Church. Jesus has already delegated authority to his apostles: now he speaks of his departure, when they will exercise his authority over the community he has founded. Each has been entrusted with his work, a unique service or ministry to carry out within the household of faith.

Be on the watch is another verb that means to stay awake and be on the lookout, part of the duty of the prophets. Again Jesus emphasises that they do not know who is coming. Lord (kyrios) refers to Jesus in his lordship over the house of God-both the temple of the old covenant and the Church of the new covenant. He may appear at any of the four divisions of the night, in Roman reckoning. Jesus is speaking of his sudden and unexpected coming at the end of time, when he will judge his disciples for how they have exercised their authority...Jesus warns that he may come suddenly and find them sleeping-which is just what will happen during his agony in Gethsemane. To be asleep signifies spiritual torpor and self-indulgence to be awake is to be alive in faith. The trial in Gethsemane is the beginning of the trial that will last throughout the whole age of the Church, in which Jesus' followers are called to be constantly alert and attentive to the presence of their Lord. The final verse affirms that his warning is directed not only at the four who are privy to this discourse, but to all his disciples for all time: Watch! There is no room for complacency in the Christian life.

Mary Healy

Dear Friends of Jesuit Refugee Service UK

You are warmly invited to join us for this year's JRS UK Advent Service on 15th December at 7pm at Farm Street church in London. The Advent Service is a highlight of the JRS year, an opportunity for refugee friends, volunteers and supporters to come together in community and celebration.

This year's service will include carols, readings, and performances from our drama group. We will also have poems written by our very own refugee friends.

After the service we'll come together for a reception of mulled wine, mince pies and other nibbles.

We would love to see you and your loved ones there. If you're unable to join us in person, do please join us via the livestream. We will share the link to the livestream closer to the day on our web page: <https://www.jrsuk.net/news/advent-service-2023/>

Feel free also to pass this invitation on to anyone who you think might be interested.

To help us better prepare our welcome, please RSVP by replying to this email or by emailing Loddan, Communications and Events Assistant, at loddan.othman@jrs.net. If you have any allergies or accessibility requirements we should be aware of, do let us know.

Thank you, as always, for your support. Victoria Firth
Senior Communications & Engagement Officer, tel 020 7488 7310 www.jrsuk.net

Westminster Cathedral the mother Church of our diocese has improved the lighting of its main sanctuary. The previous aged and inefficient system had to be replaced as spare parts were no longer available. The improved lighting is of great benefit on major occasions particularly if they are being broadcast or live streamed. The improvements are being funded by the Friends of Westminster Cathedral. They are asking for our help by supporting their Big Give Campaign with online donations. For donations made from 12.00 noon on Tuesday 28 November and before 12.00 noon on Tuesday 5 December every £1 given is worth £2 with matched funding and £2.25 if you can tick the Gift Aid box. The link to the donation site is <https://bit.ly/FriendsBG23>

CHRISTMAS TIMETABLE

Saturday, 16th December 2023 – 7pm Parish Community Christmas Carols

Sunday, 24th December 2023 Fourth Sunday of Advent

Masses at 6pm, Saturday & 11am Sunday

Sunday, 24th December 2023 Christmas Eve

6.00pm

Children's Mass for Christmas

11.30 pm

Midnight Mass of Christmas with Carols before

Monday, 25th December 2023 Christmas Day

11am

Mass of Christmas Day

Tuesday, 26th December 2023 St Stephen

Mass at 11am

27th December 2023

No Mass

28th December 2023

No Mass

29th December 2023

No Mass

Sunday, 31st

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Masses at 6pm, Saturday 11am Sunday

Monday, 1st January 2024

The Holy Mother of God

Mass at 11am

2nd January 2024

No Mass

3rd January 2024

No Mass

4th January 2024

No Mass

5th January 2024

9.15 am Masss

Sunday, 7th January 2024

The Epiphany of the Lord

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

We are looking for volunteers who would like to serve mulled wine and mince pies after midnight mass. If you wish to help, please, talk to Fr Christopher or drop an email to millwall@rcdow.org.uk. Thank you.

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; <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/millwall/>



Fr Christopher Silva

Parish Priest,

Mrs Katherine Woznicka

Parish Administrator

The office may be contacted by phone:

Monday to Friday 9am-2pm

Closed on Bank Holidays

Mrs Diane Winship - Safeguarding Representative

Mr John Chesson - Data Protection Parish Officer

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS:

loose: £313.50 envelopes: £109.00 contactless collection last weekend: £560.00 total: **£982.50**

Standing orders in **February - £5706**; , in **March - £3820**, in **April £4002**, in **May - £2533**, in **June - 3545**,
in **July - 2758**, in **August - 5713**, in **September- 2832**, in **October- 2805**,

As a charity we rely on your donations only. As you have not been allowed to come to the church , we only were receiving donations set up as standing orders. We will be grateful for your financial support when you are back.

Your new sets of gift aided envelopes are available for collection before/after any mass or from the office.

Alternatively you could send your donation by bank. Parish account is on Parish Web.

Thank you for your Generosity

WRCDT Charity No: 233699

RICHARD HOUSE - London's first children's hospice

Richard House is a children's hospice based in the heart of Newham that has been providing specialised free care services to seriously ill children and their families across East London communities for over 22 years. We are now supporting over 300 families and are asking you to consider supporting Richard House.

Many parents of seriously ill children are unable to work due to complex medical conditions of their children, requiring 24/7 care. We offer free specialised care to these families and hope you can help us to continue to fulfil our mission. We get limited support from local authorities, with three quarters' of the money we need is coming from fundraising alone.

More information you can find on our website at www.richardhouse.org.uk

We hope you will consider supporting Richard House at this time!

Your sincerely, *Charlie Grey*, Community Fundraiser, charlieg@richardhouse.org.uk

A prayer for the souls in purgatory

Lord I come before You with a spirit dedicated to love and service, echoing the themes that govern our lives and the souls we remember in purgatory. In the silence of my heart, I hold the holy souls dearly, offering my days actions for their spiritual comfort. May the compassion that you have planted within us flourish as we remember those on their purifying journey.

Today, let me be a vessel of your mercy, sharing with others the kindness that can bridge the gap between earth and eternity. Let my deeds reflect the sanctity of service that supports the souls entrusted to Your care.

With every breadth, I yearn to embody the virtues that draw us closer to You, Lord. May the love I share alleviate the burdens of those who have passed and light their path to Your divine presence.

This month of remembrance deepens our connection to the communion of saints and the faithful departed. I commit to walking with a heart full of hope, extending my prayers as a beacon of light for the souls still journeying home.

Grant, O Lord, that my intentions and actions today may resonate with the eternal harmony of Your divine plan. May they bring peace to the souls in purgatory, as we all strive to embrace the joy of Your salvation.

In Your mercy hear this prayer, and may the souls of all the faithful departed, through Your boundless love, find rest and everlasting joy. Amen