



St John The Evangelist

Berry Lane, Rickmansworth, WD3 7HG
<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/millend/>



Our Lady Help of Christians

5 Park Road, Rickmansworth, WD3 1HU
<http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/rickmansworth>



St John Fisher

Hill Cottage, Shire Lane, Chorleywood, WD3 5NH
<http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/chorleywood>

Livestreaming: <https://www.churchservices.tv/rickmansworth>

ENCOUNTERING JESUS, SERVING OTHERS

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

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SAFEGUARDING REPS.

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SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR C) - 20TH FEBRUARY 2022

Merciful like the Father

We have heard the passage from the Gospel of Luke (6:36-38) that inspired the motto of this extraordinary Holy Year: *Merciful like the Father*. The complete phrase reads: "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (v. 36). It is not a catchphrase, but a life commitment. To understand this expression well, we can compare it with the parallel text from the Gospel of Matthew, where Jesus says: "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (5:48).

In the well-known Sermon on the Mount, the Lord teaches that perfection lies in love, the fulfilment of all the precepts of the Law. In this same perspective, St Luke specifies that perfection is merciful love: to be *perfect* means to be *merciful*. Is a person who is not merciful perfect? No! Is a person who is not merciful good? No! Goodness and perfection are rooted in mercy. Certainly, God is perfect. However, if we consider Him in this way, it becomes impossible for men to aim towards that absolute perfection. Instead, having Him before our eyes as merciful, allows us to better understand what constitutes his perfection, and this spurs us to be, as He is, full of love, compassion, mercy.

I ask myself: are Jesus' words realistic? Is it really possible to love like God loves and to be merciful like He is?

If we look at the history of salvation, we see that the whole of God's revelation is an unceasing and untiring love for mankind. Jesus' death on the Cross is the culmination of the love story between God and man. A love so great that God alone can understand it. It is clear that, compared to this immeasurable love, our love will always be lacking. But when Jesus calls us to be merciful *like* the Father, he does not mean in quantity! He asks his disciples to become *signs, channels, witnesses* of his mercy.

The Church can be nothing other than a sacrament of God's mercy in the world, at every time and for all of mankind. Every Christian, therefore, is called to be a witness of mercy, and this happens along the path of holiness. Let us think of the many saints who became merciful because they allowed their hearts to be filled with divine mercy. They embodied the Lord's love, pouring it into the multiple needs of a suffering humanity. Within the flourishing of many forms of charity you can see the reflection of Christ's merciful face.

Merciful love is therefore the only way forward. We all have a great need to be a bit more merciful, to not speak ill of others, to not judge, to not "sting" others with criticism, with envy and jealousy. We must forgive, be merciful, and live our lives with love.

This love enables Jesus' disciples to never lose the identity they received from Him, and to recognize themselves as children of the same Father. In the love that they practice in life we see reflected that Mercy that will never end (cf. 1 Cor 13:1-12). Do not forget this: mercy is a gift; forgiveness and giving. In this way, the heart expands, it grows with love. While selfishness and anger make the heart small, they make it harden like a stone. Which do you prefer? A heart of stone or a heart full of love? If you prefer a heart full of love, be merciful!

*Extract from General Audience of Pope Francis
St Peter's Square, Wednesday, 21 September 2016*

FROM THE PARISH DIARIES

SUN 20TH FEBRUARY	9.15am 11.30am 5.00pm - 5.45pm	First Holy Communion Class - Hall Tea and Coffee after Mass - Hall Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Confessions	St John the Evangelist St John the Evangelist Our Lady Help of Christians
MON 21ST FEBRUARY	5.30pm	First Holy Communion Class - Hall	Our Lady Help of Christians
TUE 22ND FEBRUARY	7.00pm - 9.00pm 7.30pm	Prayer & Life Workshop - Hall Online Parents FHC Session	Our Lady Help of Christians Via Zoom
WED 23RD FEBRUARY	9.00am 9.30am	Rosary before Mass St John's School (Year 3) at Mass	St John the Evangelist St John the Evangelist
THU 24TH FEBRUARY	6.00pm 7.00pm - 9.00pm 8.00pm - 9.30pm	Reception of the Body — Michael Dixon RIP Prayer & Life Workshop - Hall Life in the Spirit Prayer Group - Hall	St John the Evangelist St John the Evangelist Our Lady Help of Christians
FRI 25TH FEBRUARY		NO Tea and Coffee after Mass today	
SAT 26TH FEBRUARY	5.00pm - 5.45pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Confessions	St John the Evangelist
SUN 27TH FEBRUARY	9.15am 9.30am 11.30am 4.15pm 5.00pm - 5.45pm	First Holy Communion Class - Hall SVP Coffee Morning - Hall Tea and Coffee after Mass - Hall Confirmation Session - Hall Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Confessions	St John the Evangelist Our Lady Help of Christians St John the Evangelist Our Lady Help of Christians Our Lady Help of Christians

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

	Our Lady Help of Christians	St John the Evangelist	St John Fisher
SATURDAY 19 TH FEBRUARY	9.30am For the sick and housebound of the parishes	6pm (Vigil) Teresa Healy RIP & Nellie Mulvihill RIP	
SUNDAY 20 TH FEBRUARY <i>SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</i>	8.30am Sheila Sharp RIP 11am Michael Townend RIP 6pm Mai O'Driscoll RIP	10.30am For the People of the Parishes	9am For the People of the Parishes
MONDAY 21 ST FEBRUARY	9.30am Fr Des Baker RIP		
TUE 22ND FEBRUARY <i>THE CHAIR OF ST PETER THE APOSTLE</i>	9.30am For the sick and housebound of the parishes		9.30am Fr Seamus McGeoghan RIP
WED 23RD FEBRUARY <i>ST POLYCARP, BISHOP</i>	9.30am Fr Seamus McGeoghan RIP	9.30am Fr Des Baker RIP	
THURSDAY 24 TH FEBRUARY	9.30am For the sick and housebound of the parishes		
FRIDAY 25 TH FEBRUARY	NO MASS TODAY	11am Funeral - Michael Dixon RIP	
SATURDAY 26 TH FEBRUARY	9.30am For the sick and housebound of the parishes	6pm (Vigil) For the People of the Parishes	
SUNDAY 27 TH FEBRUARY <i>EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</i>	8.30am For the People of the Parishes 11am Anne McCormack RIP & Tom Stoneman RIP 6pm Fr Seamus McGeoghan RIP	10.30am Sarah Meier RIP	9am For the People of the Parishes

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISHES

Our Lady Help of Christians: Kathleen Collins, Brenda Reynolds, Neville Mathews, Agnes Harper, Ginny Goodgol, Maria Wallis, Heather Kean, John Caneparo, Henry Cutting, Nalene Nixon, Pam Bell, Maureen Douglas, Michael Gaukroger, Molly Gray and Leslie Edwards.

St John the Evangelist: Rita Murray, Alfredo Rock and Paul O'Connor.

St John Fisher: Nora O'Toole, Francis De Souza, Georgina Kelham, Pete Murray, Steve Kibbey, Matthew Leone, Jean-Pierre Roche, Angela Hoy, Pat Finucane, Colin Dowling, Kitty Finucane, Anne Trenchard, Paul Kennett, Ann Penn, Paddy Goble, Pam Fitzpatrick, Julian Harris and Canon Robert Plourde.

NOTICES FOR ALL THREE PARISHES

ST JOHN'S SCHOOL AT MASS

We are pleased to announce that over the coming weeks our Wednesday 9.30am Mass at St John the Evangelist will be attended by children from St John's School. They will be sat in designated areas of the Church allowing space for parishioners to attend Mass and the Church will continue to be kept well ventilated so all can attend confidently and safely.

FIRST COMMUNION CLASSES

These resume this week at St John's on Sunday 20th February and at Our Lady's Parish Hall on Monday 21st February. There is also an online session for all Parents to attend on Tuesday 22nd February. If you have not received the details of this Zoom session then please contact Fr Andrew.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the solemn season of Lent, is on 2nd March. Masses (with the imposition of ashes) across the three parishes will be as follows: 7.30pm Vigil (1st March) at St John Fisher, 9.30am at St John the Evangelist; 9.30am and 7.30pm at Our Lady Help of Christians.

MICHAEL DIXON RIP

The body of Michael Dixon will be received at St John the Evangelist, Mill End at 6.00pm on Thursday 24th February, and the funeral will be celebrated there at 11.00am on Friday 25th February, followed by committal at Woodcock Hill Cemetery. We commend him to the love and mercy of the Lord and pray for his family at this sad and difficult time.

PARISH NOTICEBOARDS

If you would like to put a poster / leaflet on the parish noticeboards, please first speak to Fr Andrew.

ANNUAL PARISHES MEETING

The APM this year will take place online via Zoom and will be a combined meeting across the parishes. It will take place on Saturday 26th February at 2pm. All parishioners are encouraged to join us if possible to hear what is going on in our parishes. The details for the APM on Zoom are as follows: Meeting ID: 896 3738 9440 Passcode: 958771.

DIVINE RENOVATION "WATCH" PARTY

You are invited to a "watch" party to watch, listen, and discuss a recording of a conversation between three of the most prominent Christian leaders in the English speaking world today: Bishop Robert Barron (Word on Fire), Fr James Mallon (Divine Renovation), and Pastor Nicky Gumbel (Alpha), about what God is saying to the church.

It will take place on Monday 14th March 7.30pm - 9.30pm at Our Lady Help of Christian's Hall. If you would like to come, please, email Fr Damian damianryan@rcdow.org.uk by Friday 4th March, to register your place. Book early to avoid disappointment! Our hope is that this event can help us discern how God might be affirming what we are already doing, and other ways God might be inviting us to share in the building of His kingdom.

ONLINE EVENT TO ENCOURAGE PARISH RENEWAL, MISSION AND EVANGELISATION

As we slowly start to emerge into a post-pandemic world, mission-minded parish leaders know we have an incredible opportunity to recommit our energies to finding bold and new ways to evangelize. But there are important questions many are wrestling with: Join Fr. James Mallon, Bishop Robert Barron, and Revd. Nicky Gumbel for a conversation on What is God Saying to the Church? This is a FREE online event happening Tuesday, March 1, 2022, at 6pm. Visit <https://www.divinerenovation.org/events> to register today for what promises to be an inspiring conversation.

A SUPPORT MEETING FOR PARENTS OF THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.

A Support Meeting for parents of children of **any age** who have Special Needs will take place on **Friday 25th February** starting at 11.00am in the Holy Rood Parish Centre, WD18 0PJ. A friendly welcome, tea or coffee, support and help for your needs and those of your child. Any enquiries to Veronica Dyckhoff, 01923 441105. No need to book, just turn up.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER – A WOMEN LED, GLOBAL, ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

The WDP service for 2022 has been prepared by the Christian women of England, Wales & Northern Ireland, with the theme, 'I know the plans I have for you', based on Jeremiah 29:11. The overarching message is one of hope and trust that God's plans, though not always what we expect, bring hope and renewal for a future that we cannot always imagine. The WDP service in our local area will be hosted by Mill End Baptist Church, Field Way, on Friday 4th March at 2.00pm. All are welcome to attend, and we encourage our parishes to support this service which is another opportunity to further our contact with our fellow Christian communities. If anyone is in need of a lift, please contact Geraldine (07725 748490) or Cristina (07470 266284)

MOTHERS PRAYERS

For mothers who wish to pray together for their children and grandchildren. Mothers Prayers was launched in England in 1995 and is now in over 100 countries. A group will start in our parishes in January, meeting for an hour each week one morning. For more information visit www.mothersprayers.org. If you would like to join the group please contact Guyonne at guyonneberger@yahoo.fr

Lord, give me the eyes to see you in my children, your heart to love them and your gentleness to help them grow. Give me your wisdom to guide them, and your strength when I need to let them go. Amen

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Each week in the newsletter there is a list of parishioners who need our prayers. This list has not changed much for many years. If you know anyone whose name should be removed please let me know. If you would like to add someone on to this list, please make sure they are happy for their name to be published. Thank you, Kerry.

SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

If you know someone who is sick and housebound in our parishes who would like to receive Holy Communion, please let the parish office know so that we can be in contact with them.

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS - NOTICES

VESTMENT DONATION

We are in need of two new vestments for the parish for the sacristy. One would be a red chasuble which would cost £100 and another a rose chasuble for Advent and Lent which would cost approximately £150. If you would like to make a donation for one of these in memory of a loved one who would be remembered at Mass each time the vestment is worn, then please contact the parish office.

THE CALVARY CROSS

The parish Finance, Operations and Premises (FOP) Committee, is currently working on a plan for the renewal of our much loved and iconic Calvary Cross which had to be taken down just before Christmas. Initial estimates for this work are currently up to £25,000. This is a significant cost at a time when the parish finances are stretched due to the pandemic. Work will not be able to begin on restoring the Calvary until this money is raised specifically for this project, and this could of course take some time. Fundraising for the project will begin in the coming months, but if you would like to make a donation towards this restoration, perhaps in memory of a loved one, then please contact the parish office. There will be more details about further fundraising opportunities for this project soon.

SVP COFFEE MORNING - please join us in the hall after the 8.30am Mass on Sunday 27th February.

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST - NOTICES

CONTACTLESS DONATIONS

You will find our digital collection plate (Dona) in the church porch. Just use your contactless debit/credit card or smart phone/device to make a donation. Simply choose the amount you wish to donate and hold your card onto the reader. You can also opt-in for Gift Aid to increase your donation by 25%. If you are a UK taxpayer then donating with Gift Aid means that we can claim an extra 25p for every £1 received.

ST JOHN FISHER - NOTICES

PLANNED GIVING

Over the last two years, many parishioners have altered their planned giving arrangements and no longer use planned giving envelopes. As we are just about to place the order for next year's envelopes, it's a good time to ask all parishioners to consider how they wish to make their planned giving going forwards. Standing orders are the simplest and safest method for the parish as it reduces the amount of cash that needs to be handled and taken to the bank. It also allows parishioners to gift aid their donations if they are able. Planned giving envelopes can also be a tax efficient method of giving as each set of envelopes has a unique number that can be linked back to an individual and therefore allows donations to be gift aided.

If you wish to set up a standing order and/or register for gift aid, please contact either the parish office (rickmansworth@rcdow.org.uk) or Carolyn Opie (carolynopie@rcdow.org.uk). If you wish to order a set of planned giving envelopes for the financial year beginning in April 2022, please contact the parish office. If you are an existing user of planned giving envelopes, and have used them over the last year, a set will be ordered for you unless you inform us otherwise. Thank you.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER - SERVICE AT CHRIST CHURCH, CHORLEYWOOD AT 10.30AM ON FRIDAY 4th MARCH 2022

This year's service for World Day of Prayer in Chorleywood will be held at Christ Church at 10.30am on Friday 4th March. Everyone is most welcome.

DIOCESAN NOTICES

ANNUAL MASS OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Westminster Cathedral, Saturday 14th May 2022 at 3.00pm.

The Cardinal is inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese, who are celebrating their 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th and 60th (and every year over 60) Wedding Anniversary of Catholic Marriage in 2022. If you are celebrating an anniversary, please give the parish office the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email).

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR SCHOOL OPEN MORNING

Every September up to 6 choristers join WCCS in Year 4. Becoming a chorister offers boys the opportunity to sing in a world-class choir, and to join an independent school for boys. All choristers receive generous scholarships, supplemented by means-tested bursaries worth up to 100% of fees, where needed. The school is holding an open morning for prospective chorister families on **Sunday 27th February 10am to 1pm**. They invite applications from boys currently in Year 2 or Year 3. Interested parents should contact Lucy Auger to register on 020 77998 9081 or lauger@choirschool.com.

THE PASSAGE

The Passage, a Catholic Charity working with people who are homeless, is holding a St David's Day concert on **Thursday 3rd March** at 7.30pm in Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square with The London Welsh Male Voice Choir and soloist tenor Ryan Vaughan Davies. All tickets are £20. Please support the work of this excellent charity. Tickets at passage.org.uk/st-davids-day-concert or telephone 020 75921856