



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

Parish Priest:

Fr Andrew Gallagher
andrewgallagher@rcdow.org.uk

Assistant Priest:

Fr Matteo Di Giuseppe
matteodigiuseppe@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Administrator:

Kerry Van Rensburg
rickmansworth@rcdow.org.uk

Rickmansworth

Paul Matarewicz
p.matarewicz@gmail.com

Chorleywood

Anne Lorrimer-Roberts
anne@themessagemachine.com

Mill End

Geraldine Page
geraldine.page21@gmail.com

Address for all correspondence:
5 Park Road, Rickmansworth
WD3 1HU
Telephone: 01923 773387

 @ChessValleyRC

SAFEGUARDING REPS.

Rickmansworth Parish

Caroline Mathie 01895 672572
rickmansworthsg1@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

Carol Bartlett 01923 773841
rickmansworthsg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

Mill End Parish

Matt McKiernan 01923 493747
millendsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

Chorleywood Parish

Peter Mackie 07802 229337
chorleywoodsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

Diocesan Safeguarding

Coordinator 0207 798 9356

YOUTH MINISTRY

Margaret Simon - Youth Ministry
Leadership Team:
rickmansworthyouth@rcdow.org.uk

Jaison Jeyaventhana - Youth Choir
Director rickyouthchoir@rcdow.org.uk

Caitlin Scott - Confirmation:
rickmansworthconfirmation@rcdow.org.uk

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (YEAR A) - 8TH JANUARY 2023

A Spiritual Testament

If in this late hour of my life I look back at the decades I have been through, first I see how many reasons I have to give thanks. First and foremost, I thank God himself, the giver of every good gift, who gave me life and guided me through various confusing times; always picking me up whenever I began to slip and always giving me again the light of his face. In retrospect I see and understand that even the dark and tiring stretches of this journey were for my salvation and that it was in them that He guided me well.

I thank my parents, who gave me life in a difficult time and who, at the cost of great sacrifice, with their love prepared for me a magnificent abode that, like clear light, illuminates all my days to this day. My father's lucid faith taught us children to believe, and as a signpost it has always been steadfast in the midst of all my scientific acquisitions; the profound devotion and great goodness of my mother represent a legacy for which I can never give thanks enough. My sister has assisted me for decades selflessly and with affectionate care; my brother, with the lucidity of his judgments, his vigorous resolve and serenity of heart, has always paved the way for me; without this constant preceding and accompanying me I could not have found the right path.

From my heart I thank God for the many friends, men and women, whom He has always placed at my side; for the collaborators in all the stages of my journey; for the teachers and students He has given me. I gratefully entrust them all to His goodness. And I want to thank the Lord for my beautiful homeland in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps, in which I have always seen the splendour of the Creator Himself shining through. I thank the people of my homeland because in them I have been able again and again to experience the beauty of faith. I pray that our land remains a land of faith, and I beg you, dear countrymen: Do not let yourselves be turned away from the faith. And finally, I thank God for all the beauty I have been able to experience at all the phases of my journey, especially, however, in Rome and in Italy, which has become my second homeland.

To all those whom I have wronged in any way, I heartily ask for forgiveness.

What I said before to my countrymen, I now say to all those in the Church who have been entrusted to my service: Stand firm in the faith! Do not let yourselves be confused! It often seems that science — the natural sciences on the one hand and historical research (especially exegesis of Sacred Scripture) on the other — are able to offer irrefutable results at odds with the Catholic faith. I have experienced the transformations of the natural sciences since long ago and have been able to see how, on the contrary, apparent certainties against the faith have vanished, proving to be not science, but philosophical interpretations only apparently pertaining to science; just as, on the other hand, it is in dialogue with the natural sciences that faith, too, has learned to understand better the limit of the scope of its claims, and thus its specificity. It is now sixty years that I have been accompanying the journey of Theology, particularly of the Biblical Sciences, and with the succession of different generations I have seen theses that seemed unshakable collapse, proving to be mere hypotheses: the liberal generation (Harnack, Jülicher etc.), the existentialist generation (Bultmann etc.), the Marxist generation. I saw and see how out of the tangle of assumptions the reasonableness of faith emerged and emerges again. Jesus Christ is truly the way, the truth and the life — and the Church, with all its insufficiencies, is truly His body.

Finally, I humbly ask: Pray for me, so that the Lord, despite all my sins and insufficiencies, welcomes me into the eternal dwellings. To all those entrusted to me, day by day, my heartfelt prayer goes out.

*The Spiritual Testament of Benedict XVI, written 29th August 2006,
published on the day of his death, 31st December 2022.*

FROM THE PARISH DIARIES

SUN 8TH JANUARY	9.30am 5.00pm - 5.45pm	Coffee after Mass - Hall Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Confessions	Our Lady Help of Christians Our Lady Help of Christians
TUE 10TH JANUARY	4.30pm - 5.45pm 6.30pm - 8.00pm	Youth Choir Practice Youth Group - Hall	St John the Evangelist Our Lady Help of Christians
WED 11TH JANUARY	2.15pm	Faith and Friendship Group - Small Hall	Our Lady Help of Christians
THU 12TH JANUARY	8.00pm - 9.30pm	Life in the Spirit Prayer Group - Hall	Our Lady Help of Christians
SAT 14TH JANUARY	9.30am 5.00pm - 5.45pm	GIFT Family Day - Hall Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Confessions	Our Lady Help of Christians St John the Evangelist
SUN 15TH JANUARY	5.00pm - 5.45pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Confessions	Our Lady Help of Christians

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

	Our Lady Help of Christians	St John the Evangelist	St John Fisher
SATURDAY 7 TH JANUARY	9.30am Michael Jubber RIP (Anniv.)	6pm For the People of the Parishes	
SUNDAY 8 TH JANUARY <i>THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD</i>	8.30am Special Intention 11am Brian Feehely RIP (Anniv.) 6pm Patricia Cannon RIP	10.30am Reg Viner RIP	9am Barbara Gibbons RIP
MONDAY 9 TH JANUARY	9.30am Paddy Kelly RIP		
TUESDAY 10 TH JANUARY	9.30am For the sick and housebound of the parishes		NO MASS TODAY
WEDNESDAY 11 TH JANUARY	9.30am Noreen O'Grady RIP	NO MASS TODAY	
THURSDAY 12 TH JANUARY	9.30am Jeremiah Cronin RIP (Anniv.)		
FRIDAY 13 TH JANUARY	9.30am Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI RIP		
SATURDAY 14 TH JANUARY	9.30am For the sick and housebound of the parishes	6pm Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI RIP	
SUNDAY 15 TH JANUARY <i>SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</i>	8.30am Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI RIP 11am Betty O'Reilly (Ints.) 6pm For the People of the Parishes	10.30am For the People of the Parishes	9am Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI RIP
SANCTUARY LAMPS	This week our Sanctuary Lamps (Our Lady's and Blessed Sacrament) burns for Janet M.	This week our Sanctuary Lamp (Blessed Sacrament) burns for Reg Viner RIP	



Mass Intentions

At the Altar the priest offers Mass for the good of the whole Church and for a particular intention. Do you want a Mass offered for a particular intention? Perhaps you would like a deceased friend or relative remembered, or you would like a Mass said for someone who is sick or for your own intention. For Mass to be offered it is the tradition that a stipend is donated to contribute to the upkeep of your priests. Please contact the parish office if you would like a Mass offered over the coming weeks.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISHES

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

St John the Evangelist: Rita Murray, Alfredo Rock, Paul O'Connor and Antoinette Moss and Kate Margetts

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

NOTICES FOR ALL THREE PARISHES

MASSES IN THE WEEK

There will be no weekday Mass at Chorleywood on Tuesday or Mill End on Wednesday.

JOINT SERVICE FOR WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

We will be hosting this annual Service at St John's, Mill End on Sunday 22nd January at 3.30pm to pray for Christian Unity with our brothers and sisters from the Christian Churches across Rickmansworth and Mill End. Please do join us in welcoming them and being united in prayer.

JOINT PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

The JPPC will be meeting on Saturday 14th January. The mission of the JPPC is to support the Senior Leadership Team in the development of a strategic and long-term vision for our three parish communities. If there is anything you would like to be discussed at this meeting please let Fr Andrew know before Saturday.

PEACE SUNDAY – 15th JANUARY

The work of Pax Christi is based on the gospel and inspired by faith. Pax Christi's vision is of a world where people can live in peace, without fear of violence in all its forms. Rooted in Catholic Christianity, Pax Christi works with all who share its values to abolish war and create communities of peace and justice. If you would like to make a contribution to the work of Pax Christi, donation envelopes are available this weekend. Donations can also be made on their website: <https://tinyurl.com/yxfew67x>

ANNUAL PARISHES MEETING 2023

This will take place on Saturday 18th February at 2pm and will be on zoom for members of all three parishes. This is a great opportunity to hear what has been happening in the parishes and what vision we have in the years ahead. Zoom details will be published in the newsletter in the coming weeks.

SEEKING SUPPORT?

If you are struggling in these difficult economic times to pay for shopping or need any other support, please do get in touch with the parish office and we will try to help you. Please remember your parish is here for your spiritual support but also as a community you can turn to when you have any other need.

NEW PARISHIONERS WELCOMING EVENT

We are aware that over the past two years there are many people who are new to the parish. Please do pick up one of our leaflets in the Church porch and fill in the form so we know who you are. There will also be a Welcome soup lunch with the Parishes' Senior Leadership Team for all new parishioners on Saturday 4th February at 12 noon in Our Lady's Parish Hall. Please do come along and introduce yourselves and find out more about how our parishes work together and ways in which you can get involved. To assist with catering please do let Kerry in the parish office know you are planning to attend and if you have any allergies on rickmansworth@rcdow.org.uk

INQUIRY INTO ASSISTED SUICIDE

The House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee has launched an inquiry into assisted suicide and is inviting members of the public to comment, and to suggest what actions might be helpful for the debate. Assisted suicide presents profound dangers to public safety and the common good, and so it is crucial that as many people as possible engage with the Parliamentary Inquiry and oppose its introduction into UK law. The Catholic Church is clear that we can never assist in taking the life of another, even if they request it. All life is sacred from conception until natural death, and we reiterate our call for investment in high quality palliative care. Our call is one for assistance in living and not assistance in committing suicide. Statements of the Bishops' Conference can be found at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/category/cbcew/life-issues/assisted-dying/> and the Anscombe Centre have produced a useful statement and resources about this Inquiry: <https://bioethics.org.uk/news-events/news-from-the-centre/anscombe-centre-statement-on-commons-hsc-committee-inquiry-into-assisted-suicide/>. Submissions must be in by Friday 20 January but the format of the Inquiry is simple, and not time-consuming.

CHESS VALLEY SVP

Chess Valley SVP will be providing a Warm Winter Space in the church hall at St John the Evangelist, Mill End, every Thursday afternoon between 2 to 4pm, for the duration of the winter months. Hot drinks, cakes and biscuits will be provided. Please let those you feel would benefit from this know. For further information, please email chessvalleysvp@gmail.com

ALPHA

Alpha face to face begins again on Tuesday 17th January from 7.30-9.15pm and runs every week until 28th March at Our Lady's hall. Alpha is an opportunity to explore life's big questions and the Christian faith in a friendly and informal environment. Each session includes snacks and hot/cold drinks, an engaging video designed to generate conversation, and a discussion time where you can say whatever you like or nothing at all. Sessions include topics such as 'Who is Jesus?', 'Why did Jesus die?' and 'How can I have Faith?' Please email chessvalleyalpha@rcdow.org.uk to register your interest or you are welcome to phone Deidre Gilmore on 07941 931319. As before, places are being prioritised for those who have not previously tried Alpha, If you are interested in attending Alpha but this isn't the right timing for you please do contact us as Alpha is an ongoing ministry within the Chess Valley Group of Parishes and we can hold your details for forthcoming Alphas. Please pass this invitation on to someone you know who might like to explore the meaning of life and have fun whilst doing so!

ALPHA - INVITATION TO PRAY

We are inviting all parishioners to join the Alpha Intercessory Prayer Team by either praying from home or to join in person for some or all of the Tuesdays from 7.30-8.15pm to pray for the guests and team attending Alpha. In addition to this we would also love to invite you to pray daily for our parish community and its ongoing formation. Maybe you could consider praying the following prayer: **Thank you loving Father for all those you have called to participate in Alpha; we ask your blessing upon all, both team and guests. Without you we can do nothing you are the Way, the Truth and the Life. Pour out your Holy Spirit and abundant blessings and gifts during this Alpha. May Alpha ignite or re-ignite the flame of faith in all hearts so that we may experience the wonder, joy and hope that being in relationship with you brings. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit...**

NOTICES FOR ALL THREE PARISHES

NEW YEAR PROJECT

If you are looking to do something in 2023 to help grow in understanding your faith why not try 'The Bible in a Year' or 'The Catechism in a Year' podcasts by Fr Mike Schmitz. Full details can be found at <https://ascensionpress.com/>

THE FAITH AND FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Will meet again at 2.15pm in Our Lady's Parish Hall on the following Wednesdays: January 11th and 25th, February 8th, March 1st, 15th and 29th. Do join us for tea, chat and a DVD about developing personal prayer.

YOUTH GROUP

Calling our young people (all those in secondary school). New Year, new beginnings, come to our next youth event Tuesday January 10th, Our Lady's Hall, 6.30-8pm. Join us for fun, games, snacks, meet new or old friends, bring a friend. Parents please message names and numbers attending to 07788 721222. We look forward to seeing you

GROWING IN FAITH TOGETHER (GIFT)

Our new family catechesis for all those with children aged 5-11 has now begun. The sessions are engaging, spirit-filled and fun, and they are for all the family. We celebrate Mass, enjoy a time of fellowship and refreshment before sharing catechesis and activities. As part of GIFT we will also hold Faith Formation for parents on one evening each month online (Zoom). These sessions are designed to help parents grow in their own faith, enabling them to lead their family on their journey of faith. We pray that GIFT will be a new way of approaching family catechesis across our parishes that will give all our families encouragement and strength in journeying together in faith. If your family would like to sign up for GIFT then please email the parish office (rickmansworth@rcdow.org.uk) with the names of each of your family, the children's ages and a contact phone number. Further details will then be sent to you.

YOUTH CHOIR

The Youth Choir (aged 8-13) will sing on a Sunday once a month at Our Lady's and once a month at St John's, Mill End. There will be a rehearsal for the choir on a Tuesday evening each week from 4.30-5.45pm. If your child is interested in joining the choir please could you contact the parish office. If there are any adults willing to assist Jaison in supervising the children during the rehearsals then please also contact the parish office for more details.

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS - NOTICES

CALVARY CROSS UPDATE

We are nearly there! The new cross is now on site and has been prepared, the statue is nearly restored and now we are just waiting for confirmation when the scaffold can be put up. We hope that the Cross will be back at the heart of our parish grounds by the end of January. Thank you for your patience.

MEMORIAL BOOK

The memorial book has not been updated for the last couple of years. If you would like to add a family member, or a parishioner to this book, please let Kerry know their name and date of death as soon as possible.

COFFEE AFTER 8.30AM MASS

Please join us in the hall for a catch up and make new parish friends at our coffee morning after Mass this Sunday. Donations go to Our Lady's Building Fund.

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST - NOTICES

COFFEE AND TEA AFTER 10.30AM MASS

A reminder that tea and coffee is available in the parish hall after the 10.30am Mass each Sunday. Do please come and join us for a cuppa and a chat.

ST JOHN FISHER - NOTICES

MISSIO/APF/RED BOX HOLDERS

I am very happy to let you know that our dwindling band of donors raised £117 in the December quarter and £530 for the year. With Gift Aid of £70 our total for the year is £600 for our hard working missionary priests, nuns and lay people. Very many thanks. Please contact me if you would like to join us, thanks and love, Mary 284975 xx

DIOCESAN NOTICES

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION – VOLUNTEERING FOR CAFOD

CAFOD, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, are looking people join us in our mission here in the Westminster diocese. Could you volunteer and help us raise awareness in either parishes or schools about our work across the developing world tackling poverty and injustice. Find out more by joining one of our volunteer meetings in Lambeth London on Saturday 21st January or Oakwood, North London on Wed 1st February. Please contact Tony at CAFOD for further details. westminster@cafod.org.uk or 0208 449 6970

MEMORIES CAFÉ – bereavement and loss drop-in support sessions

Every Monday - 11am to 1pm at the Watford Hospital Chaplaincy. Memories Café offers a chance to meet with others who understand the experience of loss. It is a space to talk about the pain of bereavement and find mutual support and encouragement when you need it most. For more information please email: westherts.spiritualcare@nhs.net

WESTMINSTER DIOCESE JOB VACANCIES

Please visit our website at <https://jobs.rcdow.org.uk/> where you can view the latest vacancies.