



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>

ENCOUNTERING JESUS, SERVING OTHERS

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Parish Priest:

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Assistant Priest:

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Rickmansworth

Paul Matarewicz
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Chorleywood

Anne Lorrimer-Roberts
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Mill End

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 @ChessValleyRC

 ChessValleyParishes

 ChessValleyParishes

Livestreaming:

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

SAFEGUARDING REPS.

Rickmansworth Parish

Carol Bartlett 01923 773841
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Mill End Parish

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Chorleywood Parish

Peter Mackie 07802 229337
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Diocesan Safeguarding

Coordinator 0207 798 9356

YOUTH MINISTRY

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

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

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B) - 17TH DECEMBER 2023

PRAYER AND THE TRINITY

The fundamental gift of every Christian existence is the Holy Spirit that Jesus had promised to send us. Without the Spirit there is no relationship with Christ and with the Father, because the Spirit opens our heart to God's presence and draws it into that "vortex" of love that is the very heart of God. We are not merely guests and pilgrims journeying on this earth; we are also guests and pilgrims in the mystery of the Trinity. If we can truly invoke God, calling him "Abba — Dad", it is because the Holy Spirit dwells in us; he is the One who transforms us deep within and makes us experience the soul-stirring joy of being loved by God as his true children.

The Catechism says: "Every time we begin to pray to Jesus it is the Holy Spirit who draws us on the way of prayer by his prevenient grace. Since he teaches us to pray by recalling Christ, how could we not pray to the Spirit too? That is why the Church invites us to call upon the Holy Spirit every day, especially at the beginning and the end of every important action" (n. 2670). This is the work of the Spirit in us. He "reminds" us of Jesus and makes him present to us. If Christ were only far away in time, we would be alone and lost in the world. But in the Spirit everything is brought to life: the possibility of encountering Christ is open to Christians of every time and place. He is not distant, the Spirit is with us: Jesus still teaches his disciples by transforming their hearts, as he did with Peter, with Paul, with Mary Magdalene, with all the apostles. Because it is the Spirit who brings him to us.

This is the experience of so many people who pray: men and women whom the Holy Spirit has formed according to the "measure" of Christ. It is a grace to be able to meet people like this: you realize that a different life pulsates in them, their gaze sees "beyond". Let us not think only of monks and hermits; they are also found among ordinary people, people who have woven a long history of dialogue with God, sometimes of inner struggle, which purifies faith. These humble witnesses have sought God in the Gospel, in the Eucharist received and adored, in the face of a brother or sister in difficulty, and they safeguard his presence like a secret flame.

The first task of Christians is precisely to keep alive this flame that Jesus brought to the earth; and what is this flame? It is the Love of God, the Holy Spirit. Without the fire of the Spirit, the prophecies are extinguished, sorrow supplants joy, routine substitutes love, service turns into slavery. The image of the lighted lamp next to the Tabernacle comes to mind. Even when the church empties and evening falls, even when the church is closed, that lamp remains lit, and continues to burn; no one sees it, yet it burns before the Lord. This is how the Spirit, in our heart, is always present like that lamp.

Again, we read in the Catechism: "The Holy Spirit, whose anointing permeates our whole being, is the interior Master of Christian prayer. He is the artisan of the living tradition of prayer. To be sure, there are as many paths of prayer as there are persons who pray, but it is the same Spirit acting in all and with all. It is in the communion of the Holy Spirit that Christian prayer is prayer in the Church" (n. 2672). Very often it happens that we do not pray, we don't feel like praying, or many times we pray like parrots, with the mouth, but our heart is not in it. This is the moment to say to the Spirit: "Come, come Holy Spirit, warm my heart. Come and teach me to pray, teach me to look to the Father, to look to the Son. Teach what the path of faith is like. Teach me how to love and, above all, teach me to have an attitude of hope". It means calling on the Spirit continually, so he may be present in our lives.

*Extract from Pope Francis' Catechesis on Prayer,
For the Third Week of Advent in the Year of Prayer*

FROM THE PARISH DIARIES

SUN 17TH DECEMBER	3.00pm	Christmas Carol Service	St John the Evangelist
MON 18TH DECEMBER	10.00am - 11.00am	Advent Holy Hour and Confessions	Our Lady Help of Christians
TUE 19TH DECEMBER	10.00am - 11.00am 4.30pm 7.00pm - 8.00pm	Advent Holy Hour and Confessions Youth Choir Advent Holy Hour and Confessions	St John Fisher St John the Evangelist Our Lady Help of Christians
WED 20TH DECEMBER	10.00am - 11.00am	Advent Holy Hour and Confessions	St John the Evangelist
THU 21ST DECEMBER	2.00pm 8.00pm - 9.30pm	Warm Space - Hall Life in the Spirit Prayer Group - Hall	St John the Evangelist Our Lady Help of Christians
SAT 23RD DECEMBER	10.00am - 11.00am	Advent Holy Hour and 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 16 TH DECEMBER	9.30am For the sick and housebound of the parishes	6pm Special Intention	
SUNDAY 17 TH DECEMBER <i>THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (GAUDETE SUNDAY)</i>	8.30am For the People of the Parishes 11am Patrick Mantle RIP (Anniv.) 6pm Diane Quinn RIP	10.30am Pascal Rock RIP (Anniv.)	9am Edward (Ted) Rogers RIP (Anniv.)
MONDAY 18 TH DECEMBER	9.30am Private Intention (CB)		
TUESDAY 19 TH DECEMBER	9.30am Peter Moss RIP (Anniv.)		9.30am Fr Terry Murray RIP
WEDNESDAY 20 TH DECEMBER	9.30am John O'Neill RIP	9.30am Mona St George RIP (Anniv.)	
THURSDAY 21 TH DECEMBER	11.00am Funeral - Bedelia Knight RIP		
FRIDAY 22 ND DECEMBER	9.30am Stephen Bowmer RIP		
SATURDAY 23 RD DECEMBER	9.30am Katherine O'Neill (Ints.)	6pm For the People of the Parishes	
SUNDAY 24 TH DECEMBER <i>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</i>	8.30am Jack & Kathleen Crossan RIP 11am Cathy Purtill RIP	10.30am John O'Connor RIP	9am Joy Cannon RIP
SUNDAY 24 TH DECEMBER <i>CHRISTMAS EVE</i>	6.00pm O'Brien Family (Ints.) 11.00pm Kate Harrison (Ints.)	5.30pm Mary Kerins (Ints.)	8.00pm For the People of the Parishes
SANCTUARY LAMPS	This week our Sanctuary Lamp (Blessed Sacrament) burns for V Boehler RIP		

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, Henry Cutting, Nalene Nixon, Maureen Douglas, Michael Gaukroger, Molly Gray, Leslie Edwards, Pauline Williams, Gloria Warmington, Veronica Finnegan, Sean and Louise Borg

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

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

NOTICES FOR ALL THREE PARISHES

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

Our joint parishes Carol Service will take place on Sunday 17th December 3pm at St John's Church, Mill End. Contributions from musicians across the parishes, as well as the singing of Carols and reflection on readings will be followed by Mulled wine and mince pies in the Parish Centre. There will be a collection at the end of the Service for the work of Aid to the Church in Need. All are welcome and do bring a friend!

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Our Advent & Christmas Leaflets are available to take away and to share with others who may wish to join us. Within these are the Mass times over Christmas, plus details of extra confessions during Advent.

OUR LADY'S CAR PARK

Please be careful to follow the one way system and to drive slowly around the car park to ensure all our parishioners are safe when coming to Church. **Please also remember to register your vehicle if you are using the site out of our regular Mass times.**

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

The offerings at the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses are your personal gift to your priests. The Christmas and Easter offerings, together with the stole fees and Mass stipends form the personal income paid by the parishes to Fr Andrew and Fr Matteo. If you wish to make a Christmas offering, you can do so via BACS using your respective parish bank details. Please mark your gift as Christmas Offering. If you use Planned Giving Envelopes please use the one marked Christmas Offering. There are also blue one-off gift aid envelopes available. Thank you

BEDELIA KNIGHT RIP

The funeral of Bedelia Knight will take place at Our Lady Help of Christians on Thursday 21st December at 11am followed by burial at Woodcock Hill Cemetery. We commend her to the love and mercy of the Lord and pray for her family at this sad and difficult time.

DIANE QUINN RIP

Diane Quinn, former parishioner at Our Lady's, died peacefully at home in Portsmouth on 9th December after a long illness. We pray for the repose of her soul and extend our sympathies to her husband Justin, former sacristan at Our Lady's for many years, and to their family. Her funeral will take place on Friday 22nd December at 1.30pm in Waterlooville. For further details please contact Margaret Burke on mm.burke@doctors.org.uk

RIGHT TO LIFE UPDATE

Lord Moylan's Foetal Sentience Committee Bill (one of three pro-life bills) has just received a First Reading in the House of Lords. Should the bill become law it would permit the creation of a committee that operates on an ongoing basis as a source of evidence-based, scientific expertise on the sentience (capacity to have feelings) of the human foetus and would advise the Government on the formulation of relevant policy and legislation. This Bill will ensure that the humanity of the unborn child is put firmly on the radar and debated extensively in Parliament, the media and wider society. See <https://righttolife.org.uk/news> for further information

YOUTH CHOIR

The Youth Choir (aged 8-13) sing on a Sunday once a month at Our Lady's and once a month at St John's, Mill End. There are rehearsals 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.

GROWING IN FAITH TOGETHER (GIFT)

Our family catechesis for all those with children aged 5-11 takes place once a month. 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 on a different theme each month.

GIFT Parents As part of GIFT we also hold Faith Formation for parents on one evening each month online (Zoom). These sessions are designed to help all our parents grow in their own faith, enabling them to lead their family on their journey of faith. In our parishes participation in GIFT is also a gateway to discerning with you the readiness of your children to begin preparation for the Sacraments. 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.

6TH RICKMANSWORTH SEA SCOUT GROUP

The Group are always pleased to welcome young people to join in with the variety of activities offered by the various sections, as well as encouraging adult volunteers to help us continue with this provision within the Parish and wider community. Further information please contact by email: info@6thRickySeaScouts.org.uk

DIOCESAN NOTICES

MARCH FOR LIFE UK

March for Life UK are launching their new initiative 'Connect' in 2024 to help bring together like minded pro-lifers in their own communities and turn the tide on abortion at a local level. If you are interested in being part of this, please just send your name/email to info@marchforlife.co.uk Find out more at <https://www.marchforlife.co.uk/connect/>

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 directly from Ticketmaster; go to www.ticketmaster.co.uk and type in Westminster Cathedral when prompted.

NOTICES FOR ALL THREE PARISHES

REGISTRATION

We encourage all parishioners to register for the parish using the Churchsuite system, available via the website under 'Register with the parishes'. As part of the registration system you will also be sent an updated skills audit. Please do complete this to help us find a way that you can invest in your parish using your gifts and in the time available to you.

WARM WINTER SPACE

Chess Valley SVP will once again 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

MILL END FOOD BANK

Chess Valley SVP will be collecting specific items needed by the food bank to supplement their food boxes. We will be monitoring what is needed by the Food Bank regularly and update this list accordingly both in the Parish newsletter and on the boxes. At present the Food bank are now short of: **Jam, custard, rice pudding, tea bags, coffee (both original and decaf), tinned fruit, fruit juice or squash, washing-up liquid, shower gel, shampoo and conditioner, chocolates, cartons of long-life milk and long-life orange juice.**

VINNIE PACKS

The SVP are distributing **over 10,000 Vinnie Packs** containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £4.20 per pack? Donations can be sent to **Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ** with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West **sort code 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237**. Thank you so much for your support.

CHRISTMAS DINNER ON CHRISTMAS DAY AT 12 NOON

Mill End Community Centre would like to invite anyone that is alone for Christmas Day to come and join us for Christmas Dinner with the RVS Volunteers. £10 per person. First come first served due to limited places. To book please call the Community Centre on 01923 493344. Don't be alone this Christmas.

CHESS VALLEY SVP

Members can offer regular visits to people who need company in our local community. If you know of anyone who is isolated or lonely and would appreciate a visit please email chessvalleysvp@gmail.com, you will need their permission to do so. All our members are recruited in line with our safer recruitment policy (including a DBS) and follow our Safeguarding policies.

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS - NOTICES

200 CLUB

Thank you to everyone who has just joined the 200 Club Draw and to all those who continue to support us each year. Good luck to you all. If you would still like to join from next month, it is not too late - please contact Louise on rickmansworthcof@redow.org who will send you the relevant details. Many thanks

STAMPS FOR THE MISSIONS

Thank you for saving your stamps for the Missions, the box is in the church porch. Please keep them coming! *Sheila H*

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST - NOTICES

CHRISTMAS FAIR

A very big thank you to all the team who organised the Fair and to those who came. A special thank you to Fr Christmas. We know how busy he is at this time of the year. It was a friendly, cheerful and buzzing atmosphere. Congratulations to all the prize winners. We have one ticket unclaimed. It is pink 325. If you have this ticket please ring Geraldine on 07725 748490. An amazing £748.30 was raised towards the upkeep of the church and hall.

CHRISTMAS EVE 5.30PM MASS CHILDREN'S NATIVITY

Children wishing to take part in the presentation of the Nativity story should come to the hall at 5.00pm for a rehearsal.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Can you help with our Children's liturgy team? We need adult helpers to supervise the classes. We would also like to invite secondary school age children to help run the classes, this volunteering can count towards DofE awards. All classes are pre written for catechists to follow and crafts are pre prepared. All you need to do is be at the 10.30am Sunday Mass on the day to help out with the class (over 18's need to have a DBS check). For more information or to volunteer please speak to Liz Townsend or any member of the Children's liturgy team or email liztownsenduk@gmail.com

ST JOHN FISHER - NOTICES

APF/MISSIO/RED BOX HOLDERS

Many thanks and congratulations to our small and loyal group of donors to our Missionaries across the world. This year we have collected a total of £644.45 (a record) with Gift Aid of £93 that should increase to £737. Brilliant!! N.B. I will soon be receiving new Gift Aid Forms for those who pay tax to renew. Blessings and love, Mary 284975

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 17th December 3pm - Joint Parishes Christmas Carol Service at St John's, Mill End
Sunday 21st - Friday 26th April - Week of Guided Prayer