



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:

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

 ChessValleyParishes

 ChessValleyParishes

Livestreaming:

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

SAFEGUARDING REPS.

Rickmansworth Parish

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:
rickmansworth@rcdow.org.uk

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

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR B) - 14TH JANUARY 2024

VOCAL PRAYER

Prayer is dialogue with God. Within the human being, prayer becomes word, invocation, hymn, poetry. The Bible educates people to ensure that everything comes to light through the word, that nothing human is excluded, censored. Above all, pain is dangerous if it stays hidden, closed up within us... Pain that is closed up within us, that cannot express or give vent to itself, can poison the soul. It is deadly.

This is why Sacred Scripture teaches us to pray, sometimes even with bold words. The sacred writers do not want to deceive us about the human person: they know that our hearts also harbour unedifying feelings, even hatred. When these negative feelings come knocking at the door of our hearts, we must be capable of defusing them with prayer and with God's words. We also find very harsh expressions against enemies in the Psalms — expressions that the spiritual masters teach us are to be directed to the devil and to our sins — yet they are words that belong to human reality and ended up in the riverbed of the Sacred Scriptures. They are there to testify to us that if, in the face of violence, no words existed to make negative feelings harmless, then the world would be overwhelmed.

The first human prayer is always a vocal recitation. Although we are all aware that praying does not always mean repeating words, vocal prayer is nevertheless the surest, and can always be practised. Feelings, on the other hand, are always uncertain: they come and go, they leave us and return. Not only that, but the graces of prayer are also unpredictable: at times consolations abound, but on the darkest days they seem to evaporate completely. The prayer of the heart is mysterious, and at certain times it is lacking. Instead, the prayer of the lips that is whispered or recited together, is always accessible, and is as necessary as manual labour. The Catechism teaches us about this, and states that: *"Vocal prayer is an essential element of the Christian life. To his disciples, drawn by their Master's silent prayer, Jesus teaches a vocal prayer, the Our Father"* (n. 2701). And everything is there, in that prayer.

We should all have the humility of those who, perhaps because their hearing is no longer acute, recite quietly the prayers they learned as children, filling the nave with whispers. That prayer does not disturb the silence, but testifies their fidelity to the duty of prayer, practised throughout their lives. These practitioners of humble prayer are often the great intercessors in parishes. Only God knows when and how much their hearts have been united to those prayers they recited: surely these people too had to face nights and moments of emptiness. But one can always remain faithful to vocal prayer. It is like an anchor: one can hold on to the rope and remain, faithful, come what may.

We all have something to learn from the perseverance of the Russian pilgrim, mentioned in a famous work on spirituality, who learned the art of prayer by repeating the same invocation over and over again: *"Jesus Christ, Son of God, Lord, have mercy on us, sinners!"*. If his life received graces, if his gaze was transformed until it became like that of a child, it is because he insisted on reciting a simple Christian exclamation. I recommend you read the story of the Russian pilgrim; it will help you to understand what vocal prayer is.

Therefore, we must not disregard vocal prayer. One might say, *"Ah, this is for children, for ignorant folk; I am seeking mental prayer, meditation, the inner void so that God might come to me"*. One must not succumb to the pride of scorning vocal prayer. It is the prayer of the simple. The words we speak take us by the hand; at times they restore flavour, they awaken even the sleepest of hearts; they reawaken feelings we had forgotten. And they lead us towards the experience of God. And above all, they are the only ones that, in a sure way, address to God the questions that he wants to hear. Jesus did not leave us in a fog. He told us: *"when you pray, say this"*.

*Extract from Pope Francis' Catechesis on Prayer,
For the 2nd Week of Ordinary Time in the Year of Prayer*

FROM THE PARISH DIARIES

SUN 14TH JANUARY	10.30am	Youth Choir sing at Mass	St John the Evangelist
TUE 16TH JANUARY	4.30pm 6.30pm	Youth Choir Youth Group - Hall	St John the Evangelist St John the Evangelist
THU 18TH JANUARY	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 20TH JANUARY	9.30am	GIFT Family Day	Our Lady Help of Christians

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

	Our Lady Help of Christians	St John the Evangelist	St John Fisher
SATURDAY 13 TH JANUARY	9.30am Funeral - John Philips RIP	6pm Angelo Azilli RIP (Anniv.)	
SUNDAY 14 TH JANUARY <i>SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</i>	8.30am Jack O'Connor RIP & Timothy O'Mara RIP 11am Diane Quinn RIP 6pm Joyce Burrows RIP (Anniv.)	10.30am For the People of the Parishes	9am Fr Stuart Gullan-Steel RIP
MONDAY 15 TH JANUARY	9.30am Fr Terry Murray RIP		
TUESDAY 16 TH JANUARY	9.30am L & M Anson		NO MASS TODAY
WEDNESDAY 17 TH JANUARY	9.30am Fr Stuart Gullan-Steel RIP	NO MASS TODAY	
THURSDAY 18 TH JANUARY	9.30am For the sick and housebound of the parishes		
FRIDAY 19 TH JANUARY	9.30am Deacon Anthony Clark RIP		
SATURDAY 20 TH JANUARY	9.30am For our GIFT Families	6pm Dot Jameson RIP	
SUNDAY 21 ST JANUARY <i>THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</i>	8.30am For the People of the Parishes 11am William Farrell RIP (Anniv.) 6pm For the People of the Parishes	10.30am For the People of the Parishes	9am Deacon Anthony Clark RIP
SANCTUARY LAMPS			This week our Sanctuary Lamp (Blessed Sacrament) burns for the intentions of the Fields family



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

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, Derek Treanor and Edith Moid

NOTICES FOR ALL THREE PARISHES

MASSES THIS WEEK

On Sunday 13th January we welcome Fr Bernard Boylan who will be celebrating the 8.30am Mass in Rickmansworth and the 10.30am Mass in Mill End. There will be no Mass on Tuesday in Chorleywood and Wednesday in Mill End.

SERGIO COCO RIP

The funeral of Sergio Coco will take place at Our Lady Help of Christians at 11.00am on Monday 22nd January, followed by committal at West Herts Crematorium. We commend him to the love and mercy of the Lord and pray for his family at this sad and difficult time.

JOINT PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

The JPPC will be meeting on Monday 15th 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 Monday 15th.

HCPT SPONSORSHIP

Each year Fr Andrew travels with Group 10 on the HCPT Pilgrimage. The pilgrimage takes disabled and disadvantaged children and adults on a life changing week to the shrine of Lourdes in France. If you would like to find out more and support the group then please go to <https://www.justgiving.com/page/group-10-2023> or speak to Fr Andrew.

SAFEGUARDING

If you are concerned about the welfare of a child or adult at risk, do not delay in contacting the police, using 999 if a child or adult is believed to be in immediate danger. If there is no immediate danger, then please contact our Safeguarding Office directly. The contact details of our Safeguarding Reps are on the front of the newsletter.

CHURCH AND HALL BOILERS

The church and hall boilers have both been declared unsafe to be used. Please wrap up warmly as it may be a while before new boilers are installed.

PEACE SUNDAY – 14th 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/yxfw67x>

NEW YEAR PROJECT

If you are looking to do something in 2024 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/>

ALPHA COURSE

Unfortunately the Alpha Course that was due to start on 9th January has had to be postponed until a later date. More details will follow in future weeks about when the course will be starting.

FAITH & FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Will meet at 2.15pm on the following Wednesdays 24th January, 7th & 21st February and 6th & 20th March. The January meetings will follow DVDs about caring for our planet.

YOUTH GROUP

Wishing everyone a happy and joyful New Year. Why not join the Youth Group in 2024? The next meeting (for those in secondary school) is on Tuesday 16th January 6.30-8pm at St John's, Mill End. Come and join us, share some food and fun with friends. Parents/guardians please let us know who's coming - text Belinda 07788 721222.

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.

DIOCESAN NOTICES

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 2024

The Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes Pilgrimage will take place from 19th to 26th July 2024. Join the pilgrimage as a pilgrim. Serve the sick as a St Frai Helper (18+). Support the sick by sponsoring a St Frai helper to care for them on the pilgrimage and praying for our care team. For more information go to <https://rcdow.org.uk/pilgrimages/lourdes/> or contact the Pilgrimage Office on 020 7798 9173.

WESTMINSTER DIOCESE JOB VACANCIES

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

NOTICES FOR ALL THREE PARISHES

GIFT AID

Thank you to everyone who has Gift-Aided their offering. Gift Aid adds 25p to the value of every £1 given, at no extra cost to you. If you are a UK tax payer and would like to Gift Aid your offering please contact Kerry. Please let us know if your tax circumstances have changed (2022/23 tax year) so that we do not ask for a tax refund if you haven't paid the associated tax. We will also need to know if you have changed your address recently.

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.

SPONSORED SANCTUARY LAMPS

In each of our churches 2 sanctuary lamp candles burn throughout the week – one by the tabernacle indicating the Lord's presence, and the other by the statue of Our Lady. Would you like one of these to burn in memory of a loved one, or for a particular intention? If so, we are asking for a donation of £10 per week, for your intention to be remembered and recorded in the weekly newsletter. Please hand your donation into the Parish Office or to one of the priests marked 'Sanctuary Lamp Donation', together with a note stating your particular intention, and the Church and the location of the lamp that you would like to burn for that intention.

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.

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

Congratulations to Anita Khurwal (£41.25); Susan and Alec Ray (£24.75) and Tony Leahy (£16.50).

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 it is not too late - please contact Louise on rickmansworthcof@rcdow.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

COFFEE AND TEA AFTER 10.30AM MASS

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.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 21st February 7.30pm Annual Parishes Meeting (via Zoom)

Sunday 21st – Friday 26th April Week of Guided Prayer

Sunday 12th May – 12pm Marian Procession at Our Lady's, Rickmansworth

Saturday 18th May 12pm – New Parishioners Lunch