



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

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 @ChessValleyRC

 ChessValleyParishes

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Livestreaming:

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

SAFEGUARDING REPS.

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Chorleywood Parish

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Diocesan Safeguarding

Coordinator 0207 798 9356

YOUTH MINISTRY

Margaret Simon - Youth Ministry
Leadership Team:
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Jaison Jeyaventhana - Youth Choir
Director rickyouthchoir@rcdow.org.uk

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (YEAR B) - 7TH JANUARY 2024

PRAYING IN COMMUNION WITH MARY

We know that the main pathway of Christian prayer is the humanity of Jesus. Christ is the Mediator, the bridge that we cross to turn to the Father (cf. CCC, 2674). He is the only Redeemer: there are no co-redeemers with Christ. He is the Mediator par excellence. Each prayer we raise to God is through Christ, with Christ and in Christ, and is fulfilled thanks to his intercession. The Holy Spirit extends Christ's mediation to every time and every place: there is no other name by which we can be saved (cf. Acts 4:12). Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and humanity.

Other references Christians find for their prayer and devotion take on meaning from Christ's sole mediation, first among them, the Virgin Mary, Jesus' Mother.

She occupies a privileged place in the lives of Christians, and therefore, in their prayer as well, because she is the Mother of Jesus. Eastern Churches have often depicted her as the Odigitria, the one who "shows the way" to her Son, Jesus Christ. Her presence is everywhere in Christian iconography, sometimes very prominently, but always in relation to her Son and in connection with him. Her hands, her eyes, her behaviour are a living "catechesis", always indicating the cornerstone, the centre: Jesus. Mary is completely directed toward him (cf. CCC, 2674) to such an extent that we can say she is more disciple than Mother. That indication, at the wedding at Cana, Mary states: "do whatever he will tell you". She always refers to Christ. She is the first disciple.

This is the role Mary fulfilled throughout her entire earthly life and which she forever retains: to be the humble handmaid of the Lord, nothing more. At a certain point in the Gospels, she almost seems to disappear; but she reappears in the crucial moments, such as at Cana, when her Son, thanks to her caring intervention, performs his first "sign" (cf. Jn 2:1-12), and then on Golgotha at the foot of the cross.

Jesus extended Mary's maternity to the entire Church when he entrusted her to his beloved disciple shortly before dying on the cross. From that moment on, we have all been gathered under her mantle; but as a Mother, not as a goddess, not as co-redeemer: as a Mother. It is true that Christian piety has always given her beautiful titles. But let us be careful: the beautiful things that the Church, the Saints, say about Mary, take nothing away from Christ's sole Redemption. They are expressions of love like a child for his or her mom — some are exaggerated. But love, as we know, always makes us exaggerate things, but out of love.

And so, we began to pray to her using several expressions present in the Gospels directed to her: "full of grace", "blessed are you among women" (cf. CCC, 2676). Sanctioned by the Council of Ephesus, the title "Theotokos", "Mother of God", was soon added to the Hail Mary. And, after the praise we add the supplication: we ask Mary to pray for us sinners, that she intercede with her tenderness, "now and at the hour of our death". Now, in life's concrete situations, and in the final moment, so that she may accompany us in our passage to eternal life. Mary is always present at the bedside of her children when they depart this world. If someone is alone and abandoned, she is Mother, she is nearby, as she was beside her Son when everyone had abandoned him.

Prayers said to her are not in vain. The Woman who said "yes", who promptly welcomed the Angel's invitation, also responds to our supplications; she hears our voices, even those that remain closed in our hearts that do not have the strength to be uttered but which God knows better than we ourselves do. She listens as Mother. Just like, and more than, every good mother, Mary protects us from danger, she is concerned about us even when we are focused on our own matters and lose a sense of the way, and endanger not only our health, but also our salvation. Mary is there, praying for us, praying for those who do not pray. Praying with us. Why? Because she is our Mother.

*Extract from Pope Francis' Catechesis on Prayer,
For the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God in the Year of Prayer*

FROM THE PARISH DIARIES

SUN 7TH JANUARY	9.30am	Coffee Morning - Hall	Our Lady Help of Christians
TUE 9TH JANUARY	4.30pm 7.30pm - 9.15pm	Youth Choir Alpha - Hall	St John the Evangelist Our Lady Help of Christians
WED 10TH JANUARY	2.15pm	Faith & Friendship Group - Hall	Our Lady Help of Christians
THU 11TH 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

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

	Our Lady Help of Christians	St John the Evangelist	St John Fisher
SATURDAY 6 TH JANUARY	9.30am Richard Volpini RIP	6pm Margaret Hughes RIP (Anniv.)	
SUNDAY 7 TH JANUARY <i>THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD</i>	8.30am For the People of the Parishes 11am Brian Feeley RIP (6 th Anniv.) 6.00pm William Blake RIP	10.30am For the People of the Parishes	9am Moyra O'Donnell RIP
MONDAY 8 TH JANUARY <i>THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD</i>	9.30am Michael Jubber RIP (Anniv.)		
TUESDAY 9 TH JANUARY	9.30am Patsy Rees (Ints.)		9.30am Patrick Dowling RIP
WEDNESDAY 10 TH JANUARY	NO MASS TODAY	9.30am Fr Stuart Gullan-Steel	
THURSDAY 11 TH JANUARY	9.30am Holy Souls		
FRIDAY 12 TH JANUARY	9.30am Luisa Foley		
SATURDAY 13 TH JANUARY	9.30am Funeral - John Philips RIP	6pm Deacon Anthony Clark RIP	
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



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, 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

JOHN PHILIPS RIP

The funeral of John Philips will take place at Our Lady Help of Christians at 11.00am on Saturday 13th January. We commend him to the love and mercy of the Lord and pray for his family at this sad and difficult time.

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.

PARKING CHARGE NOTICES ISSUED ON CHRISTMAS DAY

Please be aware that Creative Car Parks did not turn off the camera on Christmas Day as stated in our contract. They have apologised for this and have cancelled the following PCNs: 17374362231; 17374252231; 17374232231; 17374262231; 17374322231; 17374352231; 17374372231; 17374442231; 17374452231. If you received a PCN which is not listed, please contact Kerry, who will forward it to Creative for cancellation.

CHURCH AND HALL BOILERS

The church and hall boilers were both condemned on Friday by a gas safety engineer. Please wrap up warmly as it may be a while before new boilers are installed. Some oil filled radiators have been ordered in the meantime.

SECOND COLLECTION

There will be a second collection at all Masses this weekend, for relief for those suffering from the conflict in the Holy Land. This diocesan wide collection will be sent to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pizzaballa, who can direct the funds to those who need them most.

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/yxfcw67x](https://tinyurl.com/yxfcw67x)

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 - 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 reignite 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...**

FAITH & FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Will meet at 2.15pm on the following Wednesdays - 10th & 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. Why not 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

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

COFFEE MORNING

Please join us in the hall after the 8.30am Mass this Sunday 7th December for our coffee morning. Donations go to Our Lady's Building Fund.

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@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

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