



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

 ChessValleyParishes

Livestreaming:

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

SAFEGUARDING REPS.

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Mill End Parish

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Chorleywood Parish

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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 IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR B) - 21ST JANUARY 2024

JESUS, MAN OF PRAYER

In our itinerary of catechesis on prayer we now arrive at Jesus. The beginning of his public ministry takes place with his baptism in the River Jordan. The Evangelists narrate how all the people came together in prayer. The people went to John to be baptized, for the forgiveness of sins: it is of a penitential character, of conversion.

Jesus' first public act is therefore participation in a choral prayer of the people, in which everyone recognizes themselves as a sinner. This is why the Baptist wishes to oppose it, and says: *"I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"* (Mt 3:14). He understands who Jesus is. But Jesus insists: His is an act of obedience to the will of the Father, an act of solidarity with our human condition. He prays with the sinners of the People of God. Let us keep this clearly in mind: Jesus is the Righteous One; he is not a sinner. But he wished to come down to us, sinners, and he prays with us, and when we pray he is with us, praying; he is with us because he is in heaven, praying for us. We never pray alone; we always pray with Jesus. He does not stay on the opposite side of the river to mark his difference and distance from the disobedient people, but rather he immerses his feet in the same purifying waters.

Jesus is not a distant God. He places himself at the forefront of a people of penitents, as if charging himself with opening a breach through which all of us, after him, must have the courage to pass. The journey, is difficult; but he goes ahead, opening the way.

The Gospel of Luke, in particular, highlights the climate of prayer in which the baptism of Jesus took place: *"Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened"* (3:21). By praying, Jesus opens the door to the heavens, and the Holy Spirit descends from that breach. And from on high a voice proclaims the wonderful truth: *"Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased"* (v. 22). This simple phrase enables us to intuit something of Jesus' ministry and of his heart, always turned to the Father. In the whirlwind of life and the world that will come to condemn him, even in the hardest and most sorrowful experiences he will have to endure, even when hatred and persecution are unleashed around him, Jesus is never without the refuge of a dwelling place: he dwells eternally in the Father.

This prayer of Jesus, which on the banks of the River Jordan is totally personal — and will be thus for all his earthly life — in Pentecost becomes the grace of prayer for all those baptized in Christ. He himself obtained this gift for us, and he invites us to pray as he prayed.

Therefore, if during prayer we feel sluggish and empty, if it seems to us that life has been completely useless, we must at that moment beg that Jesus' prayer also become our own. *"I cannot pray today, I don't know what to do: I don't feel like it, I am unworthy"*. In that moment, it is necessary to entrust ourselves to him so that he may pray for us. In this moment he is before the Father, praying for us; he is the intercessor; he shows the wounds to the Father, for us. Let us trust in this! If we are trustful, we will then hear a voice from heaven, louder than the voice rising from the depths of ourselves, and we will hear this voice whispering words of tenderness: *"You are God's beloved"*. Jesus did not descend into the waters of the Jordan for himself, but for all of us. It was the entire People of God who went to the Jordan to pray, to ask for forgiveness, to receive that baptism of penance. This is humility. It takes humility to pray. He opened the heavens, as Moses had opened the waters of the Red Sea, so that we could all pass behind Him. Jesus gave us his own prayer, which is his loving dialogue with the Father. Let us welcome this gift, the gift of prayer.

*Extract from Pope Francis' Catechesis on Prayer,
For the 3rd Week of Ordinary Time in the Year of Prayer*

FROM THE PARISH DIARIES

TUE 23RD JANUARY	4.30pm	Youth Choir	St John the Evangelist
WED 24TH JANUARY	2.15pm	Faith and Friendship Group - Hall	Our Lady Help of Christians
THU 25TH 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
SUN 28TH JANUARY	9.30am 6.00pm	SVP Coffee Morning - Hall Youth Choir sing at Mass	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 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
MONDAY 22 ND JANUARY	11am Funeral - Sergio Coco RIP		
TUESDAY 23 RD JANUARY	9.30am Merwyn Mascarenhas RIP		9.30am Fr Stuart Gullan-Steel RIP
WED 24TH JANUARY <i>ST FRANCIS DE SALES</i>	9.30am John Olohan RIP	9.30am For the sick and housebound of the Parishes	
THU 25TH JANUARY <i>THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL THE APOSTLE</i>	9.30am Eugene Maguire RIP (22 nd Anniv.)		
FRI 26TH JANUARY <i>SS TIMOTHY & TITUS</i>	9.30am Bridie Brennan RIP		
SATURDAY 27 TH JANUARY	9.30am Kate Harrison (Ints.)	6pm Deacon Anthony Clark RIP	
SUNDAY 28 TH JANUARY <i>FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</i>	8.30am For the People of the Parishes 11am Diane Quinn RIP 6pm For the People of the Parishes	10.30am For the People of the Parishes	9am For the People of the Parishes
SANCTUARY LAMPS	This week our Sanctuary Lamp (Our Lady's) burns for Josie & Tony Westhrop 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, 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

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.

ASH WEDNESDAY (14th February)

This year we would once again like to prepare our own ash from last year's palms (or palms from any previous year should you have them!). Please hunt around at home for them and bring them to the sacristy after Mass by Sunday 4th February so they can be burned and used on Ash Wednesday. Thank you!

KAIROS ONLINE PRAYER GROUP

Will meet at 7.30 pm on the last Tuesday of every month. The first online Prayer Group for 2024 will be on Tuesday 27th February. For more information or to join the online Prayer Group then please contact Anne Lorrimer-Roberts (anne@themessagemachine.com) or Paul Forrest (pga.forrest@btinternet.com).

RICKMANSWORTH 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.

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 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.

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.

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

ANNUAL MASS OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

On Saturday 10th February at 2.30pm, Cardinal Vincent will celebrate the Annual Mass of Our Lady of Lourdes at Westminster Cathedral, during which anointing of the sick will be offered. If you would like to attend then please contact the parish office to register for a ticket.

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.

PRAYING WITH ST TERESA OF AVILA

Immerse yourself in the life and spirituality of the much-loved Carmelite saint, Teresa of Avila, over a weekend set in the beautiful Stonyhurst estate. The retreat will be preached by Fr Matthew Blake, OCD and runs from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th March. Visit <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/praying-with-saint-teresa/> to book and for more information.

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.

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.

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS - NOTICES

COFFEE MORNINGS

Please join us in the hall after the 8.30am Mass on Sunday 28th January for our SVP Coffee Morning. There will also be a coffee morning after Mass on Sunday 4th February. Donations go to Our Lady's Building Fund.

200 CLUB

Congratulations to Anita Khurwal (£41.25); Susan 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

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

ST JOHN FISHER - NOTICES

MISSIO/RED BOX HOLDERS

Please could you collect a Gift Aid form from Mary at the back of Church today and then return it as soon as possible. Apparently ours are out of date and the MISSIO office need renewed ones to collect the extra 25%. Thank you very much, Mary 284975.

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