



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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 @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

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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

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (YEAR B) - 4TH FEBRUARY 2024

THE PERSEVERING PRAYER

Jesus gave us the example of continual prayer, practiced with perseverance. Constant dialogue with his Father, in silence and in recollection, was the fulcrum of his entire mission. The Gospels also report his exhortations to the disciples, that they pray insistently, without growing tired. The Catechism recalls three parables contained in the Gospel of Luke that underline this characteristic of Jesus' prayer (cf. CCC, 2613).

First of all, prayer must be tenacious: like the character in the parable who, having to welcome a guest who arrived unexpectedly in the middle of the night, goes to knock on the door of a friend and asks him for some bread. The friend responds, "No!", because he is already in bed — but he insists and insists until he forces his friend to get up and give him some bread (cf. Lk 11:5-8). A tenacious request. But God is more patient than we are, and those who knock with faith and perseverance on the door of his heart will not be disappointed. God always responds. Always. Our Father knows well what we need; insistence is necessary not to inform him or to convince him, but rather it is necessary to nurture the desire and expectation in us.

The second parable is that of the widow who goes to the judge so that he may help her obtain justice. This judge is corrupt; he is a man without scruples, but in the end, exasperated by the insistence of the widow, he decides to please her (cf. Lk 18:1-8) ... He thought: *"But, it is better to resolve this problem and get her off my back rather than she continuously come before me to complain"*. This parable makes us understand that faith is not a momentary leap, but a courageous disposition to call on God, even to "argue" with him, without resigning oneself to evil and injustice.

The third parable presents a pharisee and a publican who go to the Temple to pray. The first turns to God boasting of his merits; the other feels unworthy even to enter the sanctuary. God however does not listen to the prayer of the first, that is, of the proud one, while he does grant the prayer of the humble (cf. Lk 18:9-14). There is no true prayer without a spirit of humility. It is precisely humility that leads us to ask in prayer.

The teaching of the Gospel is clear: we need to pray always, even when everything seems in vain, when God appears to be deaf and mute and it seems we are wasting time. A Christian's prayer keeps stride with his or her faith. And many days of our life, faith seems to be an illusion, a barren struggle. There are moments of darkness in our life, and in those moments, faith seems to be an illusion. But the practice of prayer means accepting this struggle too. But we have to continue, with this struggle in the tough moments, the moments in which we feel nothing. Many saints experienced the night of faith and God's silence and these saints were persevering.

During these nights of faith, those who pray are never alone. Indeed, Jesus is not only a witness and teacher of prayer; he is more. He welcomes us in his prayer so that we might pray in him and through him. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit. This is why the Gospel invites us to pray to the Father in Jesus' name. Saint John provides these words of the Lord: *"Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son"* (14:13). And the Catechism explains that *"the certitude that our petitions will be heard is founded on the prayer of Jesus"* (n. 2614).

Christ is everything for us, even in our prayer life. Saint Augustine used to say this with an enlightening expression that we also find in the Catechism: Jesus *"prays for us as our priest, prays in us as our Head, and is prayed to by us as our God. Therefore, let us acknowledge our voice in him and his in us"* (n. 2616). This is why the Christian who prays fears nothing, he or she trusts in the Holy Spirit who was given to us as a gift and who prays in us, eliciting prayer. May the Holy Spirit himself, Teacher of prayer, teach us the path of prayer.

*Extract from Pope Francis' Catechesis on Prayer,
For the 5th Week of Ordinary Time in the Year of Prayer*

FROM THE PARISH DIARIES

SUN 4TH FEBRUARY	9.30am	Coffee Morning - Hall	Our Lady Help of Christians
TUE 6TH FEBRUARY	4.30pm	Youth Choir	St John the Evangelist
WED 7TH FEBRUARY	2.15pm	Faith & Friendship Group - Hall	Our Lady Help of Christians
THU 8TH FEBRUARY	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 10TH FEBRUARY	11.15am	Baptisms	Our Lady Help of Christians
SUN 11TH FEBRUARY	10.30am	Youth Choir sings at Mass	St John the Evangelist

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

	Our Lady Help of Christians	St John the Evangelist	St John Fisher
SAT 3RD FEBRUARY <i>SS LAURENCE, DUNSTAN & THEODORE</i>	9.30am For the Volunteers of the Parishes	6pm Stuart Taperell RIP	
SUNDAY 4 TH FEBRUARY <i>FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</i>	8.30am Joe Grove RIP (Anniv.) 11am Santoshi & Anouki Alles (Ints.) 6pm For the People of the Parishes	10.30am Michael Dixon RIP	9am For the Volunteers of the Parishes
MON 5TH FEBRUARY <i>ST AGATHA, VIRGIN</i>	9.30am Christa Stevens & Family (Ints.)		
TUES 6TH FEBRUARY <i>ST PAUL MIKI & COMPANIONS, MARTYRS</i>	9.30am For the sick and housebound of the Parishes		9.30am For the sick and housebound of the Parishes
WEDNESDAY 7 TH FEBRUARY	9.30am For peace in the Holy Land	9.30am For staff and pupils of St John's School	
THURSDAY 8 TH FEBRUARY	9.30am Frank Rice RIP (Anniv.)		
FRIDAY 9 TH FEBRUARY	11.00am Funeral - Michael Ryan RIP		
SAT 10TH FEBRUARY <i>ST SCHOLASTICA, VIRGIN</i>	9.30am For the Volunteers of the Parishes	6pm For the People of the Parishes	
SUNDAY 11 TH FEBRUARY <i>FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</i>	8.30am For the People of the Parishes 11am Josie & Tony Westthrop RIP 6pm For the People of the Parishes	10.30am For the Volunteers of the Parishes	9am For the People of the Parishes
SANCTUARY LAMPS			

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

MICHAEL RYAN RIP

The funeral of Michael Ryan will take place at Our Lady Help of Christians at 11.00am on Friday 9th February, followed by committal at Chorleywood Lawn Cemetery. We commend him to the love and mercy of the Lord and pray for his family at this sad and difficult time.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the solemn season of Lent, is on 14th February. Masses (with the imposition of ashes) across the three parishes will be as follows: 7.30pm Vigil (13th February) at St John Fisher, 11.00am at St John the Evangelist; 9.30am and 7.00pm at Our Lady Help of Christians. The 11.00am Mass at St John the Evangelist will also be attended by some members of staff and pupils from St John's School.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The praying of Lenten Stations of the Cross will once again circulate around the three parishes on a Friday at 7.00pm as follows: Our Lady's Rickmansworth: 16th February, 8th March, 29th March; St John Fisher, Chorleywood: 23rd February, 15th March; St John the Evangelist, Mill End: 1st March, 22nd March. The devotions will be led by parishioners. We hope that many parishioners from across the three parishes will come and join us for this important aspect of our Lenten spirituality

ANNUAL PARISHES MEETING

The APM this year will take place online via Zoom and will be a combined meeting across the parishes. It will take place on Wednesday 21st February at 7.30pm. All parishioners are encouraged to join us if possible to hear what is going on in our parishes. The details for the APM on Zoom are as follows: Meeting ID: 899 2181 5624 Passcode: 551968

YOUTH GROUP

Join us for a pancake, fun and games and meet up with friends on Tuesday 13th February 6.30pm - 8pm at Our Lady's hall (for those in secondary school). Parents/guardians please message Belinda 07788 721222 to let us know who is coming.

PETITIONS TO LOURDES

As part of his role as Acting Director for the Westminster Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, Fr Andrew will be in Lourdes from 8th - 12th February on the International Pilgrimage Directors' Conference. If you would like him to drop off a petition of prayer at the grotto whilst he is there then please put it in an envelope marked 'Lourdes Petition' and drop it off at the Presbytery before Monday 5th February.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER – A WOMEN LED, GLOBAL, ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

The WDP service for 2024 has been prepared by the Christian women of Palestine, with the theme, 'I beg you, bear with one another in love.' The service for the Rickmansworth area will take place at 2.00pm on Friday 1st March at Our Lady Help of Christians, and will be followed by refreshments. All are welcome to attend, and we encourage parishioners to support this short service which is an opportunity to meet with our local Christian communities in a spirit of prayerful and convivial fellowship. If anyone needs a lift, please contact Geraldine (07725 748490) or Cristina (07470 266284).

KAIROIS ONLINE PRAYER GROUP

Will meet at 7.30pm 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).

FAITH & FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Will meet at 2.15pm on the following Wednesdays: 7th & 21st February and 6th & 20th March. These meetings will be following a DVD reflecting on The Nicene Creed.

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 Jason 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

EVANGELISING POST-CHRISTIAN BRITAIN

Talk at St. James's, Spanish Place W1U 3QY at 7.00pm on Tuesday 20 February. The talk will be given by Mgr James Shea, the co-author of the book *From Christendom to Apostolic Mission*, which provides a perceptive analysis of the situation in which we find ourselves and offers practical suggestions as to how we best evangelise a post-Christian culture. This is open to all, and will be followed by Q&As and refreshments.

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.

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 2pm 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 this Sunday for our coffee morning. Donations go to Our Lady's Building Fund.

STAMPS FOR THE MISSIONS

Thank you for saving your stamps for the Missions. £20 has been raised from the recent collection which will be donated to The White Fathers who are Missionaries to Africa. 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

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