



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

Paul Matarewicz

p.matarewicz@gmail.com

Anne Lorrimer-Roberts

anne@themessagemachine.com

Geraldine Page

geraldine.page21@gmail.com

Paul Forrest

pga.forrest@btinternet.com

Richard Booth

boothrm1925@gmail.com

Address for all correspondence:

5 Park Road, Rickmansworth
WD3 1HU

Telephone: 01923 773387

 @ChessValleyRC

 ChessValleyParishes

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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

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (YEAR B) - 17TH MARCH 2024

THE PRAYER OF JACOB

In the Book of Genesis we find the story of a man who had turned shrewdness into his best talent: Jacob. The biblical account tells us about the difficult relationship Jacob had with his brother Esau. Ever since childhood, there was a rivalry between them. Jacob is the second-born son - they were twins - but through deceit he manages to obtain the blessing and birthright of their father Isaac (cf. Gen 25:19-34). It is only the first in a long series of ploys of which this unscrupulous man is capable. Even the name "Jacob" means someone who is cunning in his movements.

Forced to flee far from his brother, he seems to succeed in every undertaking in his life. He is adept at business: he greatly enriches himself, becoming the owner of an enormous flock. With tenacity and patience he manages to marry Laban's most beautiful daughter, with whom he is truly in love. Jacob is a "self-made" man; with his ingenuity, his cunning, he manages to obtain everything he wants. But he lacks something. He lacks a living relationship with his own roots.

And one day he hears the call of home, of his ancient homeland, where his brother Esau still lives. Jacob sets out, undertaking a long journey with a caravan of many people and animals, until he reaches the final leg, the Jabbok stream. Here the Book of Genesis recounts that after having all his people and all the livestock cross the stream, Jacob remains alone on the foreign riverbank. And he ponders: What awaits him? What attitude will his brother Esau assume? And, as it is growing dark, a stranger suddenly grabs him and begins to wrestle with him. The Catechism explains: *"From this account, the spiritual tradition of the Church has retained the symbol of prayer as a battle of faith and as the triumph of perseverance"* (ccc, 2573).

Jacob wrestles the entire night, never letting go of his adversary. That mysterious wrestler asks the patriarch for his name and tells him: *"Your name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed"* (Gen 32:28). Then Jacob also asks the other: *"Tell me, I pray, your name"*. The other does not reveal it to him, but blesses him instead. Then Jacob understands he has encountered God.

Wrestling with God: a metaphor for prayer. At other times Jacob had revealed himself capable of dialoguing with God, of sensing him as a friendly and close presence. But that night, through a lengthy struggle that nearly makes him succumb, the patriarch emerges changed. A change of name, a change in his way of life and a change in personality: he emerges changed. For once he is no longer master of the situation, he is no longer a strategic and calculating man. God returns him to a mortal man who trembles and fears, because in the struggle, Jacob was afraid. For once Jacob has nothing but his frailty and powerlessness, and also his sins, to present to God. And it is this Jacob who receives God's blessing, with which he limps into the promised land: vulnerable and wounded, but with a new heart. At first, Jacob was a self-assured man; he trusted in his own shrewdness. He was a man who was impervious to grace, resistant to mercy; he did not know what mercy was. He did not think he needed mercy. But God saved what had been lost. He made him understand that he was limited, that he was a sinner who needed mercy, and He saved him.

We all have an appointment with God in the many nights of our life: dark moments, moments of sin, moments of disorientation. There is an appointment there with God, always. He will surprise us at the moment we do not expect him, when we find ourselves truly alone. That same night, struggling against the unknown, we will realise that we are only poor men and women — but right then, in that moment, we need not fear: because God will give us a new name, which contains the meaning of our entire life; he will change our heart and will offer us the blessing reserved to those who have allowed themselves to be changed by him. This is a beautiful invitation to allow ourselves to be changed by God. Each of us can say, "Lord, you know me". "Lord, you know me. Change me".

*Extract from Pope Francis' Catechesis on Prayer,
For the 5th Sunday of Lent in the Year of Prayer*

FROM THE PARISH DIARIES

SUN 17TH MARCH	12.30pm	SVP Community Lunch - Hall	St John the Evangelist
TUES 19TH MARCH	10.00am - 11.00am 3.00pm 4.30pm 6.30pm	Holy Hour and Confessions SJF Ladies Meeting Youth Choir Youth Group - Hall	St John Fisher Mary's Flat St John the Evangelist Our Lady Help of Christians
WED 20TH MARCH	10.00am - 11.00am 2.15pm	Holy Hour and Confessions Faith & Friendship Group - Hall	St John the Evangelist Our Lady Help of Christians
THU 21ST MARCH	2.00pm	Warm Space - Hall	St John the Evangelist
FRI 22ND MARCH	7.00pm	Stations of the Cross	St John the Evangelist
SAT 23RD MARCH	10.00am - 11.00am	Holy Hour and Confessions	Our Lady Help of Christians
SUN 24TH MARCH	9.30am 10.30am	SVP Coffee Morning - Hall Children's Liturgy - Hall	Our Lady Help of Christians St John the Evangelist

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS THIS WEEK

	Our Lady Help of Christians	St John the Evangelist	St John Fisher
SATURDAY 16 TH MARCH	9.30am For our GIFT Families	6pm Olive Somers RIP	
SUNDAY 17 TH MARCH <i>FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT</i>	8.30am Frank Tiernan RIP 11am Bill Graham RIP (Anniv.) 6pm Edward Linney RIP (Anniv.)	10.30am Eve Clark RIP	9am For the People of the Parishes
MONDAY 18 TH MARCH	9.30am Private Intention		
TUESDAY 19 TH MARCH <i>ST JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY</i>	9.30am For Vocations to the Priesthood		9.30am For Vocations to the Priesthood
WEDNESDAY 20 TH MARCH	11am Funeral - Therese Addison RIP	9.30am Grant Ealy (Ints.)	
THURSDAY 21 ST MARCH	9.30am Eileen McConway RIP (Anniv.)		
FRIDAY 22 ND MARCH	NO MASS TODAY		11.30am Funeral - Gladys Kerr RIP
SATURDAY 23 RD MARCH	9.30am Martin & Nina Burke RIP	6pm John Reynolds RIP	
SUNDAY 24 TH MARCH <i>PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD</i>	8.30am For the People of the Parishes 11am Desmond Joseph Pierce (1 st Anniv.) (<i>beginning with blessing of Palms at Calvary Cross Garden</i>) 6pm Anthony Owen RIP	10.30am For the People of the Parishes (<i>beginning with blessing of Palms from top of Field Way</i>)	9am For the People of the Parishes
SANCTUARY LAMPS		This week both our Sanctuary Lamps (Blessed Sacrament & Our Lady's) burn in thanksgiving for graces received	

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, Antoinette Moss and Rita Sadler

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

NOTICES FOR ALL THREE PARISHES

THERESE ADDISON RIP

The funeral of Therese Addison will take place at Our Lady Help of Christians on Wednesday 20th March at 11.00am. We commend her to the love and mercy of the Lord and pray for her family at this sad and difficult time.

GLADYS KERR RIP

The funeral of Gladys Kerr will take place at St John Fisher on Friday 22nd March at 11.30am, followed by committal at Chilterns Crematorium. We commend her to the love and mercy of the Lord and pray for her family at this sad and difficult time. *Please note that the parking restriction on Shire Lane (single yellow line) has been lifted from 11am that day*

CATHERINE (KITTY) FINUCANE RIP

The funeral of Kitty Finucane will take place at St John Fisher on Tuesday 9th April at 11.00am, followed by committal at Chorleywood Lawn Cemetery. We commend her to the love and mercy of the Lord and pray for her family at this sad and difficult time.

EASTER OFFERING

The offering at the Easter Masses is your personal gift to your priests. The Easter and Christmas 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 an Easter offering, you can do so via BACS, or through the parish websites using the Donate tab. Please reference this as 'Easter Offering'. If you use Planned Giving Envelopes please use the one marked Easter Offering. Thank you.

BRITISH SUMMER TIME

A reminder that the clocks go forward an hour in the early hours of Easter Sunday morning (31st March).

WEEK OF GUIDED PRAYER

Who runs the week of guided prayer? A team from the Jesuit Institute will come to the parishes to meet you, and one of them will be your guide for the week and will help you develop your prayer life. Read the insert in the newsletter for further details and be prepared to sign up! Further details will be in the booking form, available in the church porch. For queries contact Margaret Burke on mm.burke@doctors.org.uk 07808 610789.

ALTAR SERVERS

There will soon be training for anyone who like to join our team of Altar Servers. If your child is interested in joining this important ministry please contact the parish office for a registration form and further details. New servers must have received their First Holy Communion before they can begin this ministry.

ST JOHN'S SCHOOL, MILL END

On Wednesday 20th March 3pm - 6pm in the parish hall there will be a drop in meeting with representatives of Tilbury Douglas, the contractor, and the DfE, at which the agreed strategy for the demolition of the new building will be shared along with all of the steps that are being taken to ensure that the current school site and surrounding local area remain safe throughout this process. All welcome.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The praying of Lenten Stations of the Cross will be at St John the Evangelist, Mill End: 22nd March and Our Lady's, Rickmansworth: 29th March at 7.00pm. 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

PARISH CELL GROUPS

Over the coming months we are planning to set up some small groups who will meet every 2 weeks for a time of formation, prayer and fellowship. These groups are designed to meet in people's homes and be led by a facilitator to keep the meetings focused on a particular topic. If you would be interested in hosting or leading a group, or would just like to find out more, please email Beatrix on chessvalleycellgroups@gmail.com or leave your details at the parish office and she will be in touch with you.

6TH RICKMANSWORTH SEA SCOUT GROUP

Our **Book Sale** will be held on Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th March from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. Any donations of items can be brought to the Scout HQ behind Our Lady's Church on Thursday/Friday Evenings or collection can be arranged by telephoning – 246169 / 776035. Current and Past Supporters are reminded that help is needed to run these events.

DIOCESAN NOTICES

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 19TH - 26TH JULY 2024

Registration for the Westminster diocesan pilgrimage led by Cardinal Vincent Nichols is now open via the application form on <https://rcdow.org.uk/pilgrimages/lourdes/> or by contacting the Pilgrimage Office on 020 7798 9173. Options to travel by plane, train or coach are available and there are many volunteering opportunities for those wishing to serve. All applications to join this year's pilgrimage need to be submitted by Tuesday 30th April.

HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY VACANCY

The post of Catholic chaplain for West Herts NHS Hospital Trust is now being advertised after the recent departure of Theresa Taylor-Brookes. If interested please go to <https://findajob.dwp.gov.uk/details/14158316>

ANNUAL MASS FOR MATRIMONY

The annual Mass for Matrimony will be celebrated in the Cathedral by the Cardinal on Saturday 25th May at 2.30pm for couples celebrating significant wedding anniversaries such as 5th, 10th, 25th, 30th, 40th, 50th, 60th and 60+. If you are celebrating a significant anniversary, please give the parish office the following details before 15th April: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email).

CALLED TO LOVE

A new, unique retreat for singles, dating and engaged couples who want to think more deeply about relationships and the call to marriage. A relaxed weekend with input, prayer, discussion and social, as well as the opportunity to meet like-minded others! Runs from Saturday 4th to Sunday 5th May, with the option of an night's stay on Friday. Visit <https://christianheritagecentre.com/events/called-to-love/> to book and for more information

NOTICES FOR ALL THREE PARISHES

THE VEILING OF CROSSES AND STATUES

From the Fifth Sunday of Lent until the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday the crosses and statues of our churches are veiled in purple cloths. The veiling of crosses and images is a sort of "fasting" from sacred depictions which represent the paschal glory of our salvation. Just as the Lenten fast concludes with the Paschal feast, so too, our fasting from the cross culminates in an adoration of the holy wood on which the sacrifice of Calvary was offered for our sins. Likewise, a fasting from the glorious images of the mysteries of faith and the saints in glory culminates on the Easter night with a renewed appreciation of the glorious victory won by Christ, risen from the tomb to win for us eternal life.

YOUTH GROUP (for those in secondary school)

The next Youth Group is on Tuesday 19th March 6.30-8pm at Our Lady's Hall. Come and share some food and have fun with friends. Parents/guardians please email rickmansworth@rcdow.org.uk to let us know who is coming.

FAITH & FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Will meet at 2.15pm on Wednesday 20th March. This meeting will be following a DVD reflecting on The Nicene Creed.

KAIROS ONLINE PRAYER GROUP

Will meet at 7.30pm on the last Tuesday of every month. 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).

SVP COMMUNITY LUNCH

Chess Valley SVP will be resuming their Community lunch on Sunday March 17th 12.30pm and every 3rd Sunday of the month. This will now be in the Church Hall at St John the Evangelist, Mill End. We look forward to welcoming our regular guests and parishioners from across the three parishes. If you know of someone who would benefit from this please let them know. We hope you can join us.

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, long-life orange juice and toilet rolls.**

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS - NOTICES

COFFEE MORNING

Please join us in the hall after the 8.30am Mass on Sunday 24th March for our SVP Coffee Morning.

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

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

TEA AND COFFEE

Tea and Coffee will be served in the lounge after Mass this morning.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

We would like to restart counting the offertory collection straight after Mass on a Sunday. In order to do this we need volunteers who would be willing to spend about 10 minutes straight after Mass counting the collection and getting it ready for banking. If you are able to help with this or would like more information about what is involved, please speak to Fr Andrew or Carolyn Opie for more details.

LADIES MEETING

Our meeting is now on Tuesday 19th March at 3pm at Mary's flat. Please ring if you need any further details - 284975.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Saturday 18th May 6pm Youth Mass, St John the Evangelist, Mill End