



CATHOLIC CHURCH OF OUR LADY, ST JOHN'S WOOD

+ OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, King of the Universe - 26 November 2023

Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust: Registered Charity Number 233699



Surprise! Surprise!

For those of you as old as me, yes, there will be a nod to Cilla Black's famous catchphrase in a moment. But first, some Scriptural exegesis... As many of you know, there is a three-year cycle of Sunday readings—year A, B and C. In years B and C, the Gospel for today's solemnity speak of Christ's Kingship even though they are mocking references to it by Pontius Pilate at Jesus' trial and the Jews standing at the foot of the cross respectively. But tis year the Gospel is all about us sharing in that Kingship as a reward for living a virtuous life. For once, it is all about me, Fr Alex!

This call expands on last week's Gospel. Then we were told it is not enough to do nothing with the gifts and talents we have been given. Today, precisely what we are supposed to do is spelt out for us in no uncertain terms—feed and water the hungry and thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those imprisoned. In other words, carry out six of what the Church calls the seven Corporal Works of Mercy

But there is an added dimension to this. Notice that the virtuous don't get a fabulously unexpected reward drawn from the bottom of God's tombola—they get the place prepared for them since the foundation of the world. It is something God had already set aside for them. It was His expectation that they would live such a virtuous life. This reminds me of the old Penny Catechism which asks the question, "Why did God make me?" The answer? - "God made me to love Him and serve Him in this life and to be happy with Him in the next". In other words, a virtuous life simply merits what God had mind for us in the first place. Such a noble life and our seat at the banqueting table in the Kingdom of Heaven are presumed of us by God.

But at the other end of the scale, those who do not act in a positively virtuous way forfeit their reward and get the place of the devil and his angels—they are, in a sense, cut off from humanity for eternity because they isolated themselves from the needy in this world. Thus, not doing good is to miss an open goal, to throw away what is our inheritance from the moment we were created. And since our Baptismal pledge is to "love God and our neighbour" and our lives are nourished by the Word of God at Mass every Sunday, we cannot say that we do not know precisely what Christ is asking us to do so as to share in His Kingship.

St John Chrysostom harmonises the spiritual and apostolic (active) life with our reward in God's Kingdom: "We paint this house of our souls, adorn it, with the beaten gold of good works; and for walls and stones embellish it with faith and generosity; and for its roof, we put prayer on the top."

Our King offers a reward that is part of our loving creation. But if our love isn't active, it should be no surprise, surprise that we forfeit this. *Fr Kevin*

Mass Times

Sunday

6:00pm (Saturday)
9:00am (Sung), 10:30am (Sung Latin), 12:00 noon (Sung),
6:00pm

Weekdays

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday:
10:00am
Thursday: 7:00pm
Friday, Saturday: 10:00am

Exposition & Confessions

Saturday 10:30am—11:00am

Confessions

Saturday 5:15pm—5:45pm

Music for Sunday

187	The Church's One Foundation
209	Christ is Made the Sure Foundation
207	At the Name of Jesus
Lassus	<i>Missa Vinum bonum</i>
Palestrina	<i>Caro mea vere est cibus a 8</i>

Sunday Readings

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Ezekiel 34:11—12, 15—17
Psalm 22:1—3, 5—6 R v 1
1 Corinthians 15:20—26, 28
Matthew 25:31—46

Catholic Church of Our Lady, St John's Wood, 54 Lodge Road, London, NW8 8LA

020 7286 3214 <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/stjohnswood/>

Facebook: Our Lady's RC Church, St John's Wood <https://www.facebook.com/ourladysjw>

Parish Clergy:	Canon Kevin Jordan (kevinjordan@rcdow.org.uk) Fr Alex Balzanella (alexanderbalzanella@rcdow.org.uk)
Parish Sister:	Sr Brigid Collins, RSM (brigid@rcdow.org.uk)
Parish Administrator:	Kathleen Reddington (stjohnswood@rcdow.org.uk)
Parish Safeguarding Rep:	Frances Uchea (stjohnswoodsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)
Director of Music:	Martin Toyer (martintoyer@rcdow.org.uk)

World Youth Sunday is observed today in England and Wales on the Solemnity of Christ the King, Sunday 26 November. The theme for World Youth Day 2023 is "Come and See." Resources can be found at: <https://youth.rcdow.org.uk/resources/world-youth-sunday-resources/>

SVP Appeal will take place after all Masses this weekend to raise funds to purchase vouchers for Christmas for those in need in our Community. Please give generously. Thank you.

Tea and Coffee after 9:00am Mass in the parish hall. We desperately require more volunteers to assist in this important ministry. If you can help, please contact Kathleen in the parish office.

First Holy Communion and Confirmation in 2024. Application forms for both Sacraments are available to collect from one of the clergy after Mass. Candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation must collect the forms themselves. Only if you can attend all the sessions should you post completed forms through the rectory door by 12 noon on Tuesday 5 December 2023.

If you are applying to Catholic nursery , infant and primary schools, follow this link to Admissions: <https://catholiceducation.org.uk/guidance-for-schools/admissions> and read the Guidance for Clergy document. If you meet these criteria please contact Kathleen in the Parish Office to arrange an appointment.

UCM Afternoon Vintage Tea takes place on Saturday 2 December at 2:00pm. Tickets cost £10 per head and will be available after all Masses next weekend. There will be a raffle at this event. If anyone can donate a bottle, toiletries etc. for the raffle this will be greatly appreciated. Any donations can be left at the parish office.

Advent Retreat for Young Adults (18-30s) with the Assumption Sisters on Sunday 3 December. Young people are invited for a day retreat to prepare spiritually for Christmas, with reflections, prayer, adoration, and confessions. Venue: Our Lady of Mount Carmel & St Simon Stock, London W8 4BB. Register at: tramy@assumptionreligious.org. Please see the poster in the porch.

English Group for Adults takes place in the parish lower hall on Monday 4 December from 10:00am until 12:00 noon. Anyone wishing to improve their English as well as any volunteer helpers are welcome to come along and join this friendly group. Everyone is welcome. For further information please contact Lois on 07761 590 240.

Radio Maria England. Usher in the festive season with a charity Christmas concert to support Radio Maria England. Join them for 'Wanderings' on 5 December at 7:30pm in St. Wilfrid's Hall at the Brompton Oratory for a magical evening of solo piano and song from Schubert lieder to Beethoven sonatas. Refreshments provided. Book your ticket at: <https://radiomariaengland.uk/events/>

CAFOD are having a Carol Concert on Wednesday 13 December from 7:00pm until 8:00pm at St James church, Spanish Place, 22 George Street London W1U 3QY. All are welcome. Please see the poster in the porch.

The Christmas Big Clean needs you to help give an added sparkle to our well-kept church and sanctuary. Please come along to the church on Monday 18 December at 6:30pm followed by festive refreshments. All are needed and welcome.

Volunteers for the Church Repository. If you could help in the repository before and after any of the weekday and weekend Masses, please contact the parish office.

Job Vacancies For details regarding diocesan job vacancies, please visit <https://jobs.rcdow.org.uk>.

<u>Day</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Group</u>
Sunday	Upper Hall	After 9:00am Mass	Tea & Coffee
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	Upper Hall	9:00am-11:30am	Parents & Toddlers
Tuesday	Upper Hall	1:00pm-4:30pm	Over 50's
Wednesday	Upper Hall	1:00pm-2:00pm	Art Class
Thursday	Lower Hall	10:30am-12 noon	Creative Writing