



# CATHOLIC CHURCH OF OUR LADY, ST JOHN'S WOOD

+ 4th Sunday of Advent, Year B & Christmastide – 24 December 2023

Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust: Registered Charity Number 233699



The Nativity of Jesus is one of the most painted scenes of all time. The richness and variety is incredible. One reason for the variety is that, so often, like the artwork by Piero della Francesca above, the artist captures the scene with figures in contemporary dress and playing instruments of the time. We shouldn't flinch from this inaccuracy, because it reveals a deeper truth: the Nativity of Jesus transcends the confines of time and space. It is a momentous event that is equally relevant to every generation, as it was to the shepherds and wise men who came to the crib. God became one with us, the timeless Word became flesh. He entered our world. It begins a new era of hope and salvation for humanity. The crib in Bethlehem is not merely a historical incident but an ongoing revelation of God's boundless love.

The message of the Nativity reminds us that God's love knows no bounds and His presence is constant. Whilst we might not see the infant Christ in the simplicity of a stable, we are in his presence before our tabernacle today and on the altar at Mass. In these Christ is present to us in our modern world.

The Nativity is a guide for all ages, teaching all generations the essence of humility, love, and divine grace. The Nativity speaks to us today as vividly as it did centuries ago, inviting us to embrace its meaning of the love of God for each of us and to wonder at the marvel of God becoming human for our sake. Happy Christmas to you all. *Fr Kevin, Fr Alex & Sr Brigid*

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

## Mass Times

### Sunday 24 December

#### Christmas Eve

6:00pm (Saturday Vigil)  
9:00am, 10:30am, 12 noon,  
6:00pm (Christmas Vigil, Sung with  
Carols & Nativity Play)  
Midnight (Sung with Choir)

### Monday 25 December

#### Christmas Day

9:00am  
10:30am (Sung with Choir)  
12 noon (Sung with Carols)

#### Tuesday 26 &

### Wednesday 27 December:

10:00am

### Thursday 28 December:

7:00pm

### Friday 29 & Saturday 30 December:

10:00am

*For other Confession times and the  
rest of Christmastide please see the  
separate leaflet.*

## Music for Sunday

7	Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending
157	O Mother Blest, Whom God Bestows
36	The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came
Guerrero	<i>Missa In te, Domine Speravi (94-360)</i>
Morales	<i>Veni Domine et noli tardare</i>

## Sunday Readings

Page 90  
2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14-16  
Psalm 88:2-5, 27, 29 R v 2  
Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 1:26-38

**A Christmas Leaflet** with the times of all Masses, Confessions and church opening times for the season is available to take home with you today. Please give them out to people who might be thinking of coming to our parish over the Christmas season.

**Christmas Offering.** Please take home a Christmas offertory envelope. This is your Christmas gift to the parish and is not taxed by the Diocese, so even if you are going away please use it. Thank you for your kindness, thoughtfulness and generosity throughout the year.

**Crib Offerings** will be donated to the Catholic Children's Society to support their work with local children and families, many of whom are facing severe hardship due to the cost-of-living crisis. Thank you for your support.

**Westminster Year Book 2024** is now available priced £5.00 from the repository.

**Solemnity of the Epiphany Masses (Holy Day of Obligation)** on Saturday 6 January 2024 at 6:00pm (Vigil) and on Sunday 7 January 2024 at 9:00am, 10:30am, 12 noon and 6:00pm.

**Next newsletter** available 6/7 January 2024.

**Rest in Peace: Ines Maria Cheney.** Requiem Mass at Our Lady's on Tuesday 9 January 2024 at 11:30am, committal at St Mary's Catholic Cemetery.

**First Holy Communion Programme** continues on Saturday 13 January 2024 from 12:00pm—1:00pm in the parish hall.

**Confirmation Programme** continues on Sunday 14 January 2024 from 4:00pm—5:30pm in the parish hall.

**Tea & Coffee** will resume in the parish hall after the 9:00am Mass on Sunday 14 January 2024. To be able to continue with this important ministry we need more volunteers to assist. If you can help, please contact Kathleen in the parish office.

**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 can meet these criteria then please contact Kathleen in the Parish Office to arrange an appointment.

**Your Offerings** can be given electronically via <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/stjohnswood/donating-to-the-parish/> but please remember to say what your donation is for, and if you pay tax, please complete the *Gift Aid* form. Standing order forms, the easiest way to give regularly, can also be found there too. To *Gift Aid* using the *CollecTins* follow the prompts to register each card or 'phone on the machine, or scan the QR code and register them at home. God bless you for however you give to us and to those in need.

**SVP Vinnie Packs** cold weather essentials for the homeless. To sponsor a pack at £4.20 each please send your donation to Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ, cheques payable to SVP or via BACS to Nat West S/C 60-60-04, A/c Nr 46088237

**March for Life UK** are launching their new initiative 'Connect' in 2024 to help bring together like minded pro-lifers in their own communities and turn the tide on abortion at a local level. If you are interested in being part of this, please send an email to: [info@marchforlife.co.uk](mailto:info@marchforlife.co.uk). More information can be found at: <https://www.marchforlife.co.uk/connect/>

**Retrouvaille in England and Wales** is a lifeline for Troubled Marriages. Retrouvaille is a programme designed to help heal and renew marriages. The word Retrouvaille simply means rediscovery. Rediscover yourself, your partner, and a loving relationship in your marriage. For further information including details of programmes taking place in the New Year please visit: <http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk/>

**Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2024** will take place from 19—26 July 2024. The Sanctuary's theme for the year is '*Come here in procession*'. Please see the poster in the porch.