

FIVE PRECIOUS WOUNDS

CATHOLIC CHURCH



Parish Bulletin – 3rd Sunday of Advent – 17th December 2023

Welcome to everybody at Mass today and especially to anyone who is new or visiting. We ask God’s blessing on you and your loved ones this week.

THIS WEEK

Sunday 17th December Saturday 6pm 10am 12pm	3rd Sunday of Advent Michael White - RIP Diosdado S. Perez - RIP Mary and Thomas Griffin - RIP Anniversary
Monday 18th December No Mass	
Tuesday 19th December 10am	Gwynn Morfey - Healing
Wednesday 20th December 10am	Dudley Henry - RIP
Thursday 21st November 10am	St Peter Canisius, Priest, Doctor Melanie patricia M. Atienza - Special intention
Friday 22nd December 10am	Grant Scherf - special Intention
Sunday 24th December Saturday 6pm 10am 12pm	4th Sunday of Advent Alice Bolard - RIP Clifford Marshall - RIP Mary & John Lawlor - RIP Anniversary

PARISH SCHEDULE

Sunday Mass:
6pm Saturday (Said Mass), 10.00am (Sung Mass), 12pm (Mass with hymns)

Weekday Mass:
Tuesday – Friday 10.00am

Holy Days of Obligation:
10.00am and 7.00pm

Eucharistic Adoration:
Friday 10.35-11.20am and Saturday 5.00-5.45pm

Confessions:
Friday 10.35-11.20am and Saturday 5.15-5.45pm

Nigerian Friends:
Monthly on the 2nd Sunday of the month at 1.00 pm

Ghanaian Association:
Monthly on the last Sunday of the month at 1 pm

Filipino Association:
Mass on the First Sunday of the month at 3 pm

First Saturday Devotion – Rosary Group:
First Saturday of each month at 4.00pm in the parish hall.

Divine Mercy Devotion:
Third Saturday of each month at 3.00pm in the parish hall.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

So, John the Baptist came as a witness to the light. In today’s gospel reading he seems rather to refuse witness. He is quite negative, answering with a stalwart and repeated ‘No!’. He witnesses only that ‘There is one standing among you whom you do not know’. It is not always easy to find Jesus. All the way through the Gospel of John there are misunderstandings about Jesus; people fail to recognise him for what he is: there’s the Samaritan at the well, Nicodemus in the night, Mary Magdalene beside the empty tomb, even Peter and the disciples as they fish on the Lake. We can easily become so wrapped up in our own troubles and worries that we fail to recognise the one figure who can provide the solution to them, although he is standing among us, the one who ‘has the words of eternal life’. He may come to us in a way we do not like, as a corrective - blocking or diverting the way we have chosen. He may come as suffering, disappointment, failure or bereavement. All of these may be acts of God’s love, to show us the way, though we cannot see it at the time. It is just like John the Baptist, saying steadily ‘No!’, until eventually we turn around and see Christ as our true light. How can I find Jesus in the crowded events of my busy life? He often comes in unexpected ways. Is he in the quiet voice of a friend? Is he in the anger of someone I have annoyed? Is he in the rebuke of someone who knows me better than I know myself? Is he in my failures and frustrations?



TODAY’S MASS READINGS

FAITH APPS FOR YOUR PHONE

Here are some great apps to help you develop your faith, which you may be interested in exploring:

Bible in one year • Hallow • Amen • Laudate • The Catholic App • Universalis



Entrance Antiphon:

Phil 4: 4-5
Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.
Indeed, the Lord is near.

First reading:

Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11
The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
for the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken;

to proclaim liberty to captives,
freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

‘I exult for joy in the Lord,
my soul rejoices in my God,
for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation,
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,
like a bride adorned in her jewels.

‘For as the earth makes fresh things grow,
as a garden makes seeds spring up,
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise
spring up in the sight of the nations.’

Responsorial Psalm

Luke 1:46-50,53-54

My soul rejoices in my God.

My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.

My soul rejoices in my God.

The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him.

My soul rejoices in my God.

He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy.

My soul rejoices in my God.

Second reading:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
Be happy at all times; pray constantly;
and for all things give thanks to God,
because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

Gospel Acclamation:

Is 61:1(Lk4:18)
Alleluia, alleluia!
The spirit of the Lord has been given to me.

He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor.
Alleluia!

Gospel:

John 1:6-8,19-28
A man came, sent by God.
His name was John.
He came as a witness,
as a witness to speak for the light,
so that everyone might believe through him.
He was not the light,
only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, ‘I am not the Christ.’ ‘Well then,’ they asked ‘are you Elijah?’ ‘I am not’ he said. ‘Are you the Prophet?’ He answered, ‘No.’ So they said to him, ‘Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?’ So John said, ‘I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:
Make a straight way for the Lord.’

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, ‘Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?’ John replied, ‘I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.’ This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

Communion Antiphon

Cf. Is 35: 4
Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.
Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

AROUND THE PARISH



LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

Planned giving 402.50, loose plate £347.89. Our parish relies entirely on your donations to pay our bills, so thank you for making a difference! Many are now switching to making a standing order with their banks to make their weekly contributions. For more information, please visit our website <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/stonebridge/donate/> and follow the link to making a donation.

Advent and Christmas

This is the season of Advent. A booklet with the times of all our Advent and Christmas services is now available.

Our Annual Carol Service takes place today (Sunday 17th December) at 6:30pm, followed by a reception and raffle in the hall. All welcome!

Confessions

There will be an extra opportunity to go to Confession with Fr Tony between the 10am and 12pm Masses today (Sunday 17th December).

Confessions

Every Friday 10.40am – 11.20am

Every Saturday 5.15pm – 5.45pm

In addition:

Sunday 17th December: 11.00am – 12.00pm

Thursday 21st December: 6.00pm – 7.00pm

Saturday 23rd December: 11.00am – 12.00pm.

If you haven't been to Confession for a while, there are leaflets to help you prepare at the back of church.

Open House There will be no Open House on Tuesdays until further notice. During this time, please call the office to make an appointment with Fr Tony. Many thanks for your understanding.

Help needed to clean the church for Christmas

On Saturday 23rd December from 10am we are going to clean and decorate the church for Christmas. Please come along and lend a hand. Many hands make light work!

Fr Tony writes:

I am grateful for the many prayers that have been offered for my mum, Lin, following her recent cancer diagnosis. She will begin treatment just before Christmas. During the period, I will be away from the parish on Mondays and Tuesdays. Mass will take place on Tuesday mornings as usual.

Alpha - the journey continues...

On Thursday evening we had a wonderful celebration to mark the end of our parish Alpha course. We are going to continue meeting as an Alpha family to connect with God and each other and be inspired to share Jesus with others. On Thursday 18th January at 6.30pm we will gather for food, worship music and begin watching the Prayer Course. All welcome - you don't need to have done Alpha to join us!

Youth group

Our youth group has good food, games, friendship, maybe a video if we have time (Alpha youth). All aged 13-18 are welcome. Our next one will be on Thursday 4th January at 6.30pm, in the hall. Please bring along a completed parental consent form, which you can obtain through the office. All welcome!

Red poinsettia plants

Do you think you can bring a poinsettia plant or two to decorate the church for Christmas? As in other years, we would like to make the church look beautiful with a sea of red plants! You can leave your plant donation by the Sacred Heart Chapel.

If you cannot donate a plant, please consider making a donation towards the cost of our Christmas flowers. There is a donation box in the wall on the left immediately as you come into church. Thank you!

New Year Bring-and-Share Lunch

On Sunday 28th January after the 12pm Mass we will be hosting a bring-and-share lunch to welcome (a little belatedly!) 2024. Please bring a plate of food to share with fellow parishioners. All welcome!

Parish Grand Draw

We are launching another Grand Draw! Tickets will be £10 and the top prizes will be a Samsung tablet computer, a designer handbag for ladies, and a gents' watch. The draw will be made at the bring-and-share lunch on 28th January. All proceeds to parish funds.

First Saturday Devotion

From 6th January we will begin the First Saturday devotion to Our Lady at 4pm. This will be followed as normal by Adoration and Confessions, and Mass at 6pm.

Walk with Me - Advent 2023

Walk with me is a daily Advent companion in the form of a small booklet, with readings and reflection for each day of this holy season. Copies of Walk with me are now available at the back of church. The suggested donation is £1 per copy.

CAFOD Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal

Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 03033033030 to support

those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers

Friday collection

As many of you know, we are blessed in having music at our Friday morning Mass and Adoration. To help defray the cost for our Friday music, we have introduced a collection at the end of Mass and Adoration. If everyone who comes on a Friday donates just a pound or two to this collection it will go a long way to covering these costs and helping the parish in difficult financial circumstances.

First Holy Communion 2023-24

Please remember that parents should sign the Mass attendance register which is at the back of church on Sundays.

Holy communion for the sick and housebound

Are you able to help with the important role of taking Holy Communion to the sick and housebound? Just one visit a month to someone at home can make a world of difference to them. If you can help, please speak to Fr Tony. You will receive training and be enrolled as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

SVP - 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 of Lourdes Catholic Primary School & Nursery - Open Morning for 2024-2025 Intake – Thursday 16th November 2023

Nestled in the midst of a busy community, Our Lady of Lourdes is an oasis of calm that provides a fantastic learning environment for your child to develop. Our wonderfully spacious and colourful learning environment has the most up-to-date facilities to encourage your child's development, providing a happy and secure stepping-stone from which your child can progress. Our staff are highly qualified, dedicated and caring, with a wealth of experience in delivering early years education. The children are presented with a wide range of practical experiences intended to motivate, stimulate and challenge and which promote learning through experience and encouragement of independence in preparation for the next stage of their learning journey. We still have limited spaces in both settings for this academic year. To arrange a visit please contact the school office on 0208 961 5037.

AROUND THE PARISH

HOW TO CONTACT US

Address:
Brentfield Road, London, NW10 8ER
Telephone:
0208 965 3313
Website:
<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/stonebridge>

Parish priest:
Fr Tony Thomas
tonythomas@rcdow.org.uk
Permanent Deacon:
Rev. Andrew Safo Poku
andrewsafofoku@rcdow.org.uk
Parish administrator:
Violet D'Souza
stonebridge@rcdow.org.uk

Safeguarding representative:
Janeen Nwosu
stonebridgesg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk
Primary School
Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School
www.lourdes.brent.sch.uk

The parish office is open from 10.30-2.30pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
There is an 'Open House' each Tuesday between 5.00pm and 6.00pm to see Fr Tony briefly without an appointment.

Carol Concert

This year's Carol Concert will take place this Sunday 17th December at 6.30pm, followed by refreshments in the hall. All are welcome.



QUOTE OF THE WEEK

'If you have too much to do, with God's help, you will find time to do it all'

St Peter Canisius, Priest, Doctor
Memorial day falls this Thursday

CHILDREN'S CORNER

This wordsearch is inspired by today's Gospel. How many hidden words can you find?

S	E	Y	H	A	J	I	L	E	A
E	L	W	N	O	H	I	L	S	T
S	E	N	H	A	G	R	E	I	S
S	V	N	A	H	H	E	W	T	S
T	I	O	T	R	S	T	O	P	E
S	T	J	C	I	E	A	E	A	N
E	E	T	R	E	S	W	E	B	T
I	S	A	I	A	H	A	S	E	I
R	H	T	J	O	R	D	A	N	W
P	R	O	P	H	E	T	I	H	A

JOHN WITNESS LIGHT

LEVITES ELIJAH PROPHET

ISAIAH PHARISEES BAPTISE

WATER BETHANY JORDAN

TEA AND COFFEE AFTER MASS

There are refreshments in the hall after the 12.00pm Mass on Sundays and after all weekday Masses.
Please join us for a friendly cuppa and chat!

PRAYERS, PLEASE

Please keep in your prayers our parishioners who are sick or housebound:

Lin Thomas, Kadeem Edwards, Amar Atienza, Betty O'Reily (Elizabeth), Eileen Dowd, Marcella Frawley, Valda Baptist, Omolara Ademuyiwa

Please give the names of any sick or housebound you would like mentioned in the newsletter to Fr Tony or Violet, our administrator.