

St Thomas More – Parish Newsletter

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Sunday 22nd January 2023, Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Mary's Meals

Until 31 January 2023, donations made to Mary's Meals will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1.5 million. It costs just £15.90 to feed a child with Mary's Meals every day for a school year. And this winter, a donation of £15.90 will feed two children.

We shall take up a **retiring collection for Mary's Meals after all Masses today.**

From the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters:

In our continuing catechesis on apostolic zeal, the desire to share with others the joy of the Gospel, we now look to its model and source: the example of Jesus himself.

As the eternal Word of God, made flesh for our salvation, Jesus' entire life was devoted to communicating and dialoguing with others, first with his heavenly Father in profound prayer, and then with others, especially the poor, the outcast and sinners. He proclaimed the coming of God's Kingdom not only by his preaching, but also by his ministry of healing, reconciliation and forgiveness.

As the Good Shepherd, the model for all pastors in the Church, Jesus was completely committed to the welfare of his flock, protecting the fold yet also setting out in search of the lost sheep.

Following his example, may we, in our daily lives, draw joy and strength from our union with the Father in prayer, allow our hearts to be shaped by pastoral zeal for the word of God, and strive, in all our words and actions, to share with others its saving message of joy, hope and new life.

Audience 18th January 2023

Magnificat — February and Lent

The February Magnificat (£5) and Lenten companion (£2) are available to buy. Please ask Maggie, or one of the priests for copies.

Valentine's Day Mass

Our traditional celebration of Christian Marriage, will be on **Friday 10th February 2023**. Mass at 6pm, followed by a reception in the Hall. All married couples, especially the recently married, and those preparing for marriage are welcome to attend.

Diocesan Accounts

We have been sent a copy of the 2021 Annual Report & Accounts and Annual Review with a short Financial Summary. These will be in the Narthex for people to review, but please do not remove them. There is also a poster with details of where the full report can be found on the diocesan website. <https://rcdow.org.uk/about-us/>

Catholic Children's Society's Christmas Gift Appeal 2022

Dear Fr Stefan,

I wanted to pass on my sincere thanks to St Thomas More Church for the vouchers you donated over Christmas to help disadvantaged families.

We received tremendous support this year and have been able to help over 1,200 children who would otherwise have gone without at Christmas. Below are just two examples:

1. A mother and her three young children had fled domestic abuse with only the clothes on their backs and were staying together in one room in a hostel and they relied on food banks to get by. At a time when many children were looking forward to Christmas, this mother knew she would have nothing to give her children. Thanks to your support, we were able to ensure that all three children could open presents on Christmas day. The mother said:

“After everything my children have been through, it broke my heart to think they would have nothing to look forward to at Christmas like other children. These gifts mean so much to us and have helped me feel much more positive about the future. I can’t thank you enough”

2. A mother lost her husband to cancer six months ago. In addition to coping with this traumatic bereavement, she had to face the challenge of bringing up her two young children alone. With no family nearby, she was extremely isolated. Her youngest was just two years old and the cost-of-living crisis meant that their flat was often cold as they struggled with rising energy and food costs. The family faced a bleak Christmas, with no money to help make this a special occasion. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to provide gifts and food for each child. This included toys as well as warm clothes and blankets, hot water bottles and an energy efficient/low-cost electric heater to help keep their home warm. The mother got in touch to say:

“We’ve had a difficult year and your help, support and kindness means a great deal to us. Just knowing there are people who care gives me strength to carry on. I’m so touched by these gifts, they’re a massive help and my children are over the moon! Thank you so much”

I hope this gives you an idea of the joy your parish helped spread at Christmas.

With many thanks and best wishes,
Emily Mundon

Partnerships & Communications Officer

World Day of the Sick

On Saturday February 11th 2023, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, and the 31st World Day of the Sick, Cardinal Vincent will celebrate Mass in the Cathedral at 2.30pm. During this Mass anointing of the sick will be offered.

If you would like to attend this Mass then please let Fr Nicholas know. Best to send him an email or a note.

Annual Mass for Matrimony

“The annual Mass for Matrimony will be celebrated in the Cathedral by the Cardinal on Saturday 13th May at 2.30pm for couples celebrating significant wedding anniversaries.

Full information and invitation will be issued shortly by the Diocesan Co-ordinator for Marriage and Family Life, Deacon Roger Carr-Jones, but in the meantime Parishes are invited to note the date and begin to advertise this very popular and important celebration.”

Open Morning for Prospective Chorister Families

Westminster Cathedral Choir School warmly welcomes families interested in chorister places for boys currently in Years 2, 3 or 4, for an open morning on Sunday 5th February from 10am to 12noon.

Becoming a chorister offers boys the opportunity to sing in our world-famous choir, and to join a world-class school for boys age 4 –13, with up to 100% off fees on a means-tested basis.

Interested families are invited to contact Lucy Auger to register for the open morning. Telephone 020 7798 9081 or email lauger@choirschool.com or visit www.choirschool.com for more information

Bach's St John Passion

As part of its Lenten devotions, Westminster Cathedral Choir, directed by Simon Johnson, will perform Johann Sebastian Bach's the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St John on Thursday 16th March at 7.30pm.

Tickets (£45/35/25/15) for this seasonal performance in aid of Westminster Cathedral are available from Ticketmaster.

Vespers for the Pope Emeritus

"Next Tuesday, 24 January 2023, at 5pm there will a service of Vespers in the Cathedral to honour the life of the late Pope Emeritus Benedict, and to pray for the repose of his soul.

Many of the Bishops of England and Wales will be attending, as well as ecumenical guests. Lord Williams of Oystermouth, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, will give an address.

The Cardinal has asked me to write to say that you would be most welcome to attend. There is no need to reply, nor indeed to vest and process: simply come along and sit in the congregation if you would like to.

Equally, any of your parishioners who might like to come would be very welcome too."

Fr Alexander Master
Private Secretary to Cardinal Vincent Nichols

Many thanks to all those who helped to dismantled, so efficiently, all the Christmas decorations in the Narthex and in the Hall. A sad duty, that has to be done.

The Crib will stay until Thursday 2nd February, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord.

God Bless you all!

Fr Stefan

ON UNITY OF THE CHURCH

The power of God's Spirit gives growth and builds up the Church down the centuries. As the Church turns her gaze to the new millennium, she asks the Spirit for the grace to strengthen her own unity and to make it grow towards full communion with other Christians.

How is the Church to obtain this grace? In the first place, through prayer. Prayer should always concern itself with the longing for unity, and as such is one of the basic forms of our love for Christ and for the Father who is rich in mercy. In this journey which we are undertaking with other Christians towards the new millennium prayer must occupy the first place.

How is she to obtain this grace? Through giving thanks, so that we do not present ourselves empty-handed at the appointed time: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words" (Rom 8:26), disposing us to ask God for what we need.

How is she to obtain this grace? Through hope in the Spirit, who can banish from us the painful memories of our separation. The Spirit is able to grant us clear-sightedness, strength and courage to take whatever steps are necessary, that our commitment may be ever more authentic.

And should we ask if all this is possible, the answer will always be, yes. It is the same answer which Mary of Nazareth heard: with God nothing is impossible.

I, John Paul, servus servorum Dei, venture to make my own the words of the Apostle Paul, whose martyrdom, together with that of the Apostle Peter, has bequeathed to this See of Rome the splendour of its witness, and I say to you, the faithful of the Catholic Church, and to you, my brothers and sisters of the other Churches and Ecclesial Communities: "Mend your ways, encourage one another, live in harmony, and the God of love and peace will be with you ... The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all".

St John Paul II, 25 May 1995

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH 3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time

22nd January – 28th January 2023

Tel: 020 7435 1388; <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/swisscottage/>

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
SUN 22nd January Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (Readings. Year A)	9.30am People of the Parish 11am Mass Persecuted Christians 6pm Mass For Vocations to the Priesthood	The Church opens at 9.15am 10.30am Confessions 5.30pm Confessions
MON 23rd January feria	7am Mass Holy Souls 10am Mass Cindy Owens and family (intentions)	The Church opens at 6.50am (Monday to Friday)
TUE 24th January St Francis de Sales, Bishop & Doctor	7am Mass Pauline Ainsworth (intentions) 10am Mass Carmine Albano (intentions)	
WED 25th January THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL THE APOSTLE	7am Mass For Christian Unity 10am Mass Nick Aldridge (RIP anniversary)	
THU 26th January Ss Timothy and Titus, Bishops	7am Mass Holy Souls 10am Mass Phil Argent (intentions)	
FRI 27th January St Angela Merici, Virgin Friday abstinence	7am Mass Dorothy Stucky (RIP) 10am Mass Mabel Bull (RIP anniversary)	10am – 12pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
SAT 28th January St Thomas Aquinas, Priest & Doctor	10am Mass Maria Sobotta-Tabet (RIP)	The Church opens at 9.30am 3.30pm Baptism of Ava Elizabeth Ann Connor

Prayer Intentions:

Recently deceased: Mike Cipolla; Michael Crook; Pope Benedict XVI; Angela Carpos; John Stopplecamp; Wendy Bellas; Irene O'Sullivan

Anniversary: Brigid Monaghan; Josephine Abdala-Tabet; Christine Banks; Mark Sharman; Elizabeth Covenden; Maria Fernanda; Simon Ulcickas; Nick Aldridge; Mabel Bull

Confessions:

Monday to Friday (before and after 10am Mass)

Saturday: before and after 10am Mass

Sunday: 10.30am and 5.30pm (before Mass)

Forthcoming Events:

18th-25th January: Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity

22nd February: ASH WEDNESDAY