

ST THOMAS MORE – PARISH NEWSLETTER

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Parish Priest: Mgr Nicholas Morrish nicholasmorrish@rcdow.org.uk

Also helping in the parish:

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SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER 2023

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Year B)



Christmas Timetable

The Christmas Service Cards with the times of Masses over the whole Christmas season are available in the Narthex. Please note that on Sunday 24th December (Fourth Sunday of Advent) Mass will be at 9.30am and 11.00am.

In the evening the Vigil Mass of Christmas will be at **6pm**;

the Mass during the Night will be at **10pm**;

the Christmas Day Mass will be at **11am**.

Christmas Season

This newsletter will be distributed on the fourth Sunday of Advent. That very evening Christmas begins, so the newsletter straddles the end of Advent and the beginning of the Christmas season.

The crib has now been installed in the church and will remain in place until 2nd February, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord and hopefully will help many people pray about the mystery of Christ's birth.

At times, for security, it may be necessary to lock the doors leading from the Narthex to the church. On those occasions, if the front doors of the church are open, please do feel welcome to pray in the Narthex. The crib will be lit once Christmas begins; it is possible to see the crib from the entrance.

The Carol Service on Wednesday 20 December was very well attended, the musicians treated us to some very beautiful music and the congregation clearly enjoyed singing the well-known carols. Many people suggested this could become an annual event.

Thank you to all those who have been working so hard to prepare everything for Christmas, whether it was setting up the crib, preparing the hall, organising the carol concert or decorating the Christmas tree and of course many thanks to those who clean the church every Monday and decorate the church so beautifully with flowers.

Christmas Offerings

It is standard practice that the collection taken at the Masses on Christmas Day are contributions to the upkeep of the parish clergy. The collections at the morning Masses on Sunday 24th will be for the parish as usual while the collections taken at the 6pm Vigil Mass, the 10pm night Mass and the 11am Mass on Christmas day will be for the clergy. The white envelopes available in the Narthex marked *Christmas*

Offerings can be used for this purpose or money can be placed directly in the collection baskets.

From Cardinal Vincent

From a letter the Cardinal wrote to the priests of the Diocese:

"Clearly our thoughts and prayers continue to focus on the desperate need for peace in all places of conflict but especially in the Holy Land. The terrible damage done to the compound of the Parish of the Holy Family in Gaza and the killing of some of the people sheltering there touches us in a particular way. Please do keep them in your prayers.

I wish you a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

Special Collection for the Holy Land

There will be a special retiring collection **on Sunday 7 January** the Solemnity of the Epiphany for the Holy Land. Cardinal Vincent wrote:

"I thank all those who have made contributions to charities seeking to support victims of the conflict between Israel and Hamas. I thank all who have made those contributions through Friends of the Holy Land who continue to do such remarkable work in these difficult times. I am aware that every parish has very recently received an appeal from CAFOD for this same aim. An appeal has arrived, as well, from the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pizzaballa, who is also deeply concerned about the impact on the Palestinian population in the West Bank, for many of whom sources of earning have effectively ended.

The crib offerings this year will be applied, as is our custom, to the Catholic Children's Society for the relief of poverty at home.

I ask that you hold a special collection immediately after Christmas, on the Feast of the Holy Family or on the Solemnity of

the Epiphany, for relief for those suffering from the conflict in the Holy Land.” He explains that the collection will be forwarded to the Latin Patriarch as a response to his appeal.

Crib Collection

To implement the Cardinal’s decision about the Crib Collection we will use the candle stand at the Thomas More Chapel for donations to the Westminster Catholic Children’s Society until the end of the Christmas Season.

First Holy Communion Classes

Classes begin again on Saturday 13th January.

Mass intentions

Please be aware that we have already allocated the Mass intentions several weeks ahead. However if your Mass intention is for someone who has recently died or is seriously ill, we shall try to allocate a Mass as soon as possible.

Please speak to Maggie Ainsworth in the Parish Office (Tuesday or Friday mornings) or email her at swisscottage@rcdow.org.uk about any Masses you wish to be offered on a specific day. Alternatively please use the brown Mass intention envelopes in the Narthex. These can be handed to a priest or put through the letterbox of the presbytery.

Parish Notes

Fr Bernard will be away on retreat 26 December - 1 January; then I shall attend a retreat 2 – 8 January, during which time Fr Bernard will celebrate the parish Masses.

On behalf of Fathers Bernard and Paul, I would like to thank you all for the lovely Christmas Cards, gifts and greetings we have received. You will all be in our prayers during this Christmas time.

All three of us, wish you and your families every joy and blessing of the Christmas Season. May the Lord give us his peace!

Christmas

From a Christmas homily of St Josemaría Escrivá

There is a great simplicity about his birth. Our Lord comes without any fanfare. No one knows about him. On earth only Mary and Joseph share in the divine adventure. And then the shepherds who received the message from the angels. And later on the wise men from the East. They were the only witnesses of this transcendental event which unites heaven and earth, God and man.

How can our hearts be so hard that we get used to these scenes? God humbled himself to allow us to get near him, so that we could give our love in exchange for his, so that our freedom might bow, not only at the sight of his power, but also before the wonder of his humility.

The greatness of this Child who is God! His Father is the God who made heaven and earth and there he is, in a manger, ‘because there was no room at the inn’—there was nowhere else for the Lord of all creation.

Every time Christmas comes around, I love to look at representations of the child Jesus. Statues and pictures which show a God who lowered himself to remind me that God is calling us. The Almighty wants us to know that he is defenceless, that he needs men’s help. From the cradle at Bethlehem, Christ tells you and me that he needs us. He urges us to live a Christian life to the full—a life of self-sacrifice, work and joy.

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Tel: 020 7435 1388

24th – 30th December 2023

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/swisscottage/>

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
SUN 24th December 4th Sunday of Advent (Readings: Year B) * * * * * THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)	9.30am People of the Parish 11am Mass Urs Hübscher (RIP) * * * * * 6.00pm Christmas Vigil Mass For victims of persecution and war 10pm Mass During the Night Holy Father's intentions	The Church opens at 9.15am 10.30am Confessions * * * * * 5.30pm Confessions 9.30pm Confessions
MON 25th December CHRISTMAS DAY	11am Christmas Day Mass People of the Parish	Church opens at 10.15am 10.30am Confessions Church closes after Mass
TUE 26th December ST STEPHEN, The First Martyr	10am Mass Kathleen Noel Benz (RIP)	
WED 27th December ST JOHN, Apostle & Evangelist	10am Mass Mabel Bull (RIP)	
THU 28th December THE HOLY INNOCENTS, Martyrs	10am Mass Persecuted Christians	
FRI 29th December ST THOMAS BECKET, Bishop & Martyr No Friday abstinence	10am Mass Erland and Rose Marie Karlsson (Wedding anniversary)	10am to Noon Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
SAT 30th December 6 th DAY IN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS	10am Mass Holy Souls	The Church opens at 9.30am No First Holy Communion Class

Prayer Intentions:

Recently deceased: Alex Solomon-Tabet; Ken Brown; Fr Dominic McKenna; Jeanette Francise-Tabet; Robinson Emmanuel; Joan Ross; Maria Maguire; Mervyn Agnew; Fr Terry Murray OMI
Anniversary: Brigid Monaghan; Helen O'Neil; Cristina Pancha; Jamil Tayar-Tabet; Erik Karlsson; Maria Fernanda; José Miguel Vargas Alvoraz; Mark Sharman

Confessions:

Weekdays after Christmas Day: before and after 10am Mass
 Saturday: before and after 10am Mass
 Sunday: 10.30am and 5.30pm (before Mass)

Forthcoming liturgical celebrations:

1st January: **SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD**
 7th January: **THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**