

Holy Rood Catholic Church

Holy Rood Rectory, Exchange Road, Watford,
Hertfordshire. WD18 0PJ

Tel: 01923 224 085

Parish Email: watford@rcdow.org.uk

Office Hours: Office closed until 9th January

Office Location: Percy Road, WD18 0QA

Parish Priest: Fr Gerard O'Brien

Assistant Priest: Fr Tim Mangatal

Deacon: Rev Neville Dyckhoff
nevilledyckhoff@rcdow.org.uk (☎Opt 2)

Parish Administrator: Annette Rahilly

Parish Bookkeeper: Jacqueline Faria

Safeguarding Representatives: Aitana Mateo
watfordsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

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Watford Hospital Chaplaincy: 01923 244366

Facebook: www.facebook.com/HolyRoodWatford

Web & Streaming: parish.rcdow.org.uk/watford

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Fourth Sunday of Advent

24 December 2023

Joy to the World

'Christmas is joy' said the Holy Father Pope Francis and that well-known Christian hymn, Joy to the World, in its opening verse expresses succinctly what happens at Christmas, in other words the true meaning of Christmas!

Joy to the world, the Lord is come

Let Earth receive her King

Let every heart prepare Him room

And Heaven and nature sing!

What is the joy of Christmas? It is the joy of our encounter with Jesus Christ! There are, in spades, fleeting joys, in this life, but real joy is found in God. He is the author of it and is all too generous in dispensing it, especially during the Christmas season where we commemorate the first advent of Jesus.

One way in which joy is manifested is through love. As human beings designed to give love and to receive, we imitate the love of God for the world. If God is the Sun, we are called to be the rays of the sun, emitting warmth and light to all whom we encounter, not just in the spirit of the Christmas season but every day of our lives.

Spend some time today at the crib, study the characters there, indeed, place your very self in that scene and behold your God who comes to you. For God is with us, as he said and promised He would be. It was not enough to be with us in spirit but he went above and beyond to be with us in person and He remains with us in the Eucharist, as real and present as He was when he walked the earth and showered it with grace and peace.

St Ambrose of Milan, once taught: Open wide your door to the One who comes. Open your soul, throw open the depths of your heart to see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the sweetness of grace. Open your heart and run to meet the Sun of eternal light that illuminates all men.

Let us rejoice, dear friends, for salvation has dawned, a light has been shone in the darkness, we need no longer fear, for Jesus is near and with us.

Christmas Offering If you are going to be away over Christmas, please consider making your Christmas offering before you go. The offerings at Christmas and Easter make up Fr Tim's & Fr Gerard's salary for the year. Thank you for your constant kindness and support.

Holy Rood Catholic Primary School is looking for reliable and enthusiastic people to join our staff team here at Holy Rood to work as 'Midday supervisors' in our lunch staff team. The working hours are between 11:30-1:30pm every day and all applicants will be subject to normal DBS checks for suitability to work with children. If you are interested in finding out more about this position, or would like to apply, please contact the school office at Holy Rood on 01923223785 or admin@holyrood.herts.sch.uk for more details.

School Applications signing sessions for Reception year Saturday 6th and 13th at 9am in Parish hall. Nursery year Saturday 10th and 17th February at 9am in Parish hall.

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

Sunday 24 December

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

8am	People of the Parish
9.30am	Deceased members of the Hardwidge, Howe & Southam families
11am	Domenico Santarsiero & Maria Jose Santarsiero RIP
12.30pm	Marie O'Brien RIP 1 st anniv.
6pm	People of the Parish
10pm	People of the Parish

Monday 25 December

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)

8am	People of the Parish
9.30am	People of the Parish
11am	People of the Parish

Tuesday 26 December

ST STEPHEN

No 8.30am Mass

12noon Stephen Tappnell Holland RIP

Wednesday 27 December

ST JOHN

12noon Stephen Tappnell Holland RIP

Thursday 28 December

THE HOLY INNOCENTS

12noon All pre-born children

Friday 29 December

ST THOMAS BECKET

12noon Please note time
Ernesto Mariconda Int.

No 6pm Mass, no devotions

Saturday 30 December

6th DAY IN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS

11am	Patrick Smyth RIP
6pm	Yash Inacio Picardo B/day thanksgiving

Sunday 31 December

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

8am	People of the Parish
9.30am	Paul Lenas RIP anniv.
11am	Patrick Browne 1 st anniv.
12.30pm	Michael O'Malley & Anna Darcy

BLESSED SACRAMENT LAMP
Mariya Private Int.

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT & BENEDICTION
None this week

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
Saturday 11.30am-12noon & 5pm-5.30pm

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK by request
BAPTISMS
Rev. Deacon Neville - 01923 224085 (Opt 2)
ALL BOOKINGS VIA PARISH OFFICE

Prayer for Strength

Every day I need you Lord, but this day especially, I need some extra strength to face whatever is to come. This day, more than any other day I need to feel you near me... to fortify my courage and to overcome my fear. By myself, I cannot meet the challenge of the hour... how much frail human creatures need a Higher Power sustaining them in all that life may bring. And so, dear Lord, hold my trembling hand... be with me, Lord, this day to know Your guiding hand at work in all, to know Your Blessed Presence, ever near.

Pope John XXIII

Christmas Masses

Please note in your diaries. Christmas Eve is a Sunday and we are obliged to attend Holy Mass. Christmas Day is Monday and again, we are obliged to attend Mass.

Christmas Eve

Sunday Masses 8am, 9.30am, 11am & 12.30pm

Christmas Masses

6pm

10pm

preceded by carols from.9.30pm.

Polish Mass 8pm.

Christmas Day

8am, 9.30 and 11am. Polish Mass - 2.15pm.

St Stephen's Day, Tues 26th December - 12noon.

Wed,27th, Thurs 28th & Friday 29th - 12 noon.

Holy Rood Family catechesis – Enrolment forms for the families that attended the 2 meetings will be ready for collection after every Mass Saturday 30th / Sunday 31st December, and Saturday 6th / Sunday 7th January.

Can the families who attended the meeting, but have not emailed their details as requested on the slip given to them at the meeting, do so this weekend. The information with the reference number is required for an enrolment form to be printed for your family, thank you Pauline.

Planned Giving Drive A huge thankyou to all who supported the PGD. Some people have mentioned that they have **standing orders direct with the Diocese direct**, Central Services and can they change this to go direct to our parish. Yes, this is possible. Please let office know. And remember we already pay 33% of our offering and any rent to central services.

