

Presbytery

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**ST MARY MAGDALEN
CATHOLIC CHURCH**
**DECEMBER - MONTH OF
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**
4 DECEMBER 2016
2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
YEAR A

Mass Times

Monday—Thursday: 9:30am

Friday: 9:30am,
6:30pm

Saturday: 9:30am, 6:30pm (Vigil
Mass of Sunday)

Sunday: 9:00am, 10:30am,
12:00 noon, 6:30pm

Sinhalese Mass

Last Sunday of the month: 4:30pm

Eucharistic Adoration

Weekdays: One hour before
morning Mass

Saturday: 8:30am-9:30am
5:30pm-6:15pm

Confessions

Saturday: 10:00am—10:30am
5:30pm—6:15pm

The View From Here

There is much in the Catholic media about the celebration of the Mass *ad orientem*—i.e. both priest and people facing east. I have no objection to facing in either direction although facing east would mean not being distracted by people arriving late, leaving early, checking their telephones, going to the toilet several times during one Mass, etc. On the other hand, facing you does flag up if regulars are away for a while and helps me to notice newcomers or irregular attendees—of whom there are many vainly hoping to persuade me of their practice in the weeks leading up to school application deadlines.

However, if I were facing east I would miss one of the most uplifting benefits of the glass porch which allows the main doors to be left open—the numerous people who walk along Harlesden Road and stop, look in and make the sign of the cross, or quite often walk past and then come back and into the church. Pope Francis was right when he spoke about the value of ensuring churches are seen to be open and we should be proud that we responded to his call. Indeed, rarely a week goes by when someone doesn't say in the morning that they never knew our church was open, or when I am locking up that there isn't someone making an evening visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

Of course we regular parishioners always knew how to get into St Mary Magdalen but St Anselm, in one of the most beautiful readings for Advent, his *Proslogion*, challenges us who can take the Lord's Real Presence for granted. "Come now, insignificant man, fly for a moment from your affairs, escape for a little while from the tumult of your thoughts. Put aside now your weighty cares and leave your wearisome toils. Abandon yourself for a little to God and rest for a little in him. Enter into the inner chamber of your soul, shut out everything save God and what can be of help in your quest for him and having locked the door seek him out. Speak now, my whole heart, speak now to God: 'I seek your countenance, O Lord, your countenance I seek.' Come then, Lord my God, teach my heart where and how to seek you, where and how to find you... Lord, if you are not present here, where shall I look for you?" And where else is the Lord, but truly present in the tabernacle? St Anselm concludes, "Teach me to seek you, and reveal yourself to me as I seek, because I can neither seek you if you do not teach me how, nor find you unless you reveal yourself. Let me seek you in desiring you; let me desire you in seeking you; let me find you in loving you; let me love you in finding you."

By opening our doors we are truly proclaiming our faith to our local community—let them see that we too seek and have found the Presence of Lord this Advent. *Fr Kevin*

Those who have died recently: Harry Reid, John Holohan

Those who are sick: Robin Tobin, Alfred Igwe, Margaret Doherty

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Sr Gabriel Hogan, Benedict Tugbobo, Cathy Kirwan, Stephen Moriarty, John Boland, Edward Leeson, James McGrath, Enos Moore, Rohan Moore, Patrick Liston

Parish News

Collection. Last week's collection was £1,944.14 (excluding standing orders). Thank you very much for your generosity. Standing order figures will be published at the end of the year.

Thank you from Ashford Place. "I would like to say a very sincere thank you for your monthly food donations, which you kindly collect and deliver to us. This food helps us to provide meals for those who are homeless, and for disadvantaged people in our community. We also provide food parcels for those in need. We are deeply grateful for your generosity especially in these times of economic uncertainty". Danny Maher CEO Ashford Place.

Repository. Advent calendars, Advent candles, wreaths, cribs, Christmas cards, Mass bouquets, Christmas story books, the new Westminster Year book and many other items are on sale now in the Repository.

Special Needs Group Christmas Cake Sale takes place after all morning Masses today, Sunday 4 December. The money raised from the cake sale will be used to fund a Christmas lunch and gifts for people in and around the parish with learning disabilities.

St Mary Magdalen Wednesday Club have arranged to go to Mickie's Christmas Variety Lunch on Thursday 15 December 2016. Cost is £25 (lunch and coach). The coach will leave from St Mary Magdalen's Church, Peter Avenue NW10 at 10:30am. If you would like to join us please contact Barbara on 020 8963 0973.

Children's Nativity Play. This will take place as part of the Parish Carol Concert on Sunday 18 December 2016. We are looking for as many children as possible to take part in this wonderful event and all are welcome. We also need parents/carers to help prepare the children for the play. Rehearsals will take place in the church on Thursday 8 December and Friday 16 December at 3:30pm. Please leave your details with the Parish Office if you can assist in any way. Thank you.

Newsletter/Order of Mass leaflet. Please take your newsletter home with you after Mass and share it with family and friends. Order of Mass leaflets should be returned to the racks either at the back of the church or in the side porch. Thank you.

Diocesan News

Advent at the Niland Centre, Rosary Priory, 93 Elstree Road, Bushey Heath WD23 4EE. Advent Day of Prayer with Bishop Emeritus John Crowley on Thursday 8 December (10:00am start; Mass for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception at 3:00pm). Suggested donation £12. Please bring a packed lunch. Tea and coffee provided. Places are limited. Advance registration required. Also, *Celebrating Christmas in Song* with Sister Avril OP and friends on Friday 16 December at 7:00pm. Suggested donation £10 including seasonal refreshments. Register at <http://www.nilandconferencecentre.co.uk/events/advent-reflection-thursday-8-december-2016/>

The Passage. Please support a Carol Service in aid of *The Passage*, a charity working with homeless people on Friday 16 December at 6:00pm in St Margaret's Church, Westminster, the parish church of the House of Commons. Readers include Nick Hancock, Lynda Baron, Kathryn Pogson and Cardinal Vincent Nichols. Admission by advanced ticket only from *The Passage*, telephone 020 7592 1856 or alternatively email tickets@passage.org.uk, minimum recommended donation £2.

'Christmas Celebration' at Westminster Cathedral. An evening of Christmas music, readings and words from Cardinal Vincent Nichols will take place on Tuesday 20 and Wednesday 21 December at 7:30pm at Westminster Cathedral. Tickets available from www.ticketmaster.com or telephone 0844 844 0444.

The Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, Saturday 24 July 2017— Sunday 30 July 2017, is once again looking to recruit volunteers to help on this pilgrimage next summer. Every year, the Diocese of Westminster takes a pilgrimage to Lourdes in the French Pyrenees. They bring a large number of sick pilgrims to Lourdes and rely on the help of people like you to care for them. If you are aged between 16 and 18, you can serve as a 'Red Cap', helping people in wheelchairs and taking part in the processions and many other tasks. Please contact Katrina Lavery at katri.lavery@clovershipping.com. If you are over 18, your help would be very much appreciated as a St Frai Helper. Some of our sick pilgrims in most need of support and medical care stay in a hospital-like building called the Accueil St Frai. It is well-equipped for their care and they are looked after by a team of doctors, nurses and volunteers. The role of a St Frai helper is to support the nurses and provide the sort of care for which you don't need a medical qualification. If you're interested in helping in the St Frai in Lourdes, email chief helper Nick Leonard at westminster-stfrai@gmail.com. Serving on a pilgrimage, in any capacity, is a hugely rewarding experience and an opportunity to make a very positive difference in the lives of the people we care for.

Parish Diary

Monday	7:00pm	Prayer Group—Annexe
Wednesday	8:00pm	<i>Pioneers</i> —Annexe
Friday	7:00pm	<i>Knights of St Columba</i> —Annexe
Saturday	11:30am—1:00pm	Play and Prayer Group—Annexe
Saturday	7:30pm—9:30pm	"The Feast London" - a Catholic prayer meeting of the Light of Jesus Family in the Annexe

Responsorial Psalm and Acclamation

Antiphon: In His days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.

Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare a way for the Lord, make His paths straight, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!