

Presbytery

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**ST MARY MAGDALEN
CATHOLIC CHURCH**
**DECEMBER—MONTH OF
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**
16 December 2018
3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
YEAR C

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

Monday—Friday:
One hour before
morning Mass

Saturday: 8:30am—9:30am
5:30pm—6:15pm

First Friday (Holy Hour):
7:00pm—8:00pm

Confessions

Monday—Friday:
10:00am—10:30am

Friday: 7:00pm—7:30pm

Saturday: 10:00am—11:00am
5:30pm—6:15pm

Underdrive

As difficult as it is to believe that I am old enough, our family once had a Triumph Dolomite. Laden with children and luggage it had a switch on the top of the gearstick called “overdrive”. Trundling along, dad would flick that switch and the seemingly impossible would happen—our beast of burden would shoot off like a rocket going into orbit.

With only eight days to Christmas most of us feel like we need an overdrive button. When is the last day for posting cards and will I get them written in time? Have I got a moment to visit Brent Cross for that present I forgot? Will the sprouts be too hard as I didn't put them on until November this year rather than October? So much to do...

Yet in today's second reading St Paul tells us to be happy, to rejoice, not to worry, and to embrace the peace of God. He obviously wasn't cooking three ducks for six clergymen on Christmas Day: but has what is truly important changed so much in 2000 years?

Even at this stage, when the readings change from being about the Second Coming to the story leading up to the historical birth of Jesus Christ, we shouldn't forget that we are *still* waiting for Christ to come again. Therefore, just as with His first coming, we should heed the words of St John the Baptist and take stock of our lives: have we been generous to the needy and just in our business affairs? Have we lived up to our Baptismal promise to love God by making time for Him? John warns that Christ will sort our good from our bad but we would do well to make a start on readying ourselves now.

There is no better way to do this than by going to Confession. As well as the usual times on Saturdays, we are offering extra hours for this in the run-up to Christmas after all the weekday Masses. If you have time, come to Mass, spend a while rejoicing that our Eucharistic Lord is coming in the flesh, and then pass a few minutes seeing what can be got rid of to make space for Him. Whatever those things are, bring them to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and let Him gently blow them away.

I realise we can't all have sabbaticals, but one of the things I'm looking forward to most in the next six months is just being a priest without all the administration. Finances, drains, health and safety are important but they are not my vocation in life, just as Christ didn't come to give us Christmas cards, presents or sprouts. We all need to find peace for a little while, even just for a moment, to discover the real person inside us, that hidden, burdened but deeply-loved individual that the Christ-child came to save.

I pray that you can find your underdrive switch in the coming days and that you have a moment to flick it on. Or as *Star Trek's* Captain Picard would put it, “Engage”. *Fr Kevin*

Those who are sick: Agustin Paunon, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Pat Doyle, Pierre Timon, Lorenzo Aureli, Julia Egan

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Vivienne Mangan, Mary Langan, Kevin Walsh

Parish News

Collection. Last week's collection was £2,012.00 (excluding standing orders). Standing orders for November amounted to £1,619.00. Thank you very much for your generosity.

The wife and family of the late William O'Sullivan RIP, would like to thank everybody who sent Mass cards and messages of sympathy following their recent sad bereavement. The Holy sacrifice of the Mass will be offered for your Intentions.

Christmas Offering Envelopes are available on your benches this weekend. Your Christmas offering is not taxed by the Diocese and was traditionally your Christmas gift to the clergy.

Advent and Christmas 2018 and New Year 2019. Leaflets giving the times of Masses and other services over this period are now available in the racks at the back of the church or in the porch.

Christmas Rotas. If they have not already done so, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and readers should indicate their availability on the lists at the back of the church. There are a few slots that still need to be filled. Servers should check with their parents then indicate their availability on the list in the sacristy. Thank you for your ministry throughout the year.

Repository. Advent calendars, Advent candles, wreaths, cribs, Christmas cards, Mass bouquets, Christmas story books, church art calendars, cribs, candles, a wide selection of cards to suit all occasions and many other religious items are on sale now in the repository. The repository is open before and after all Sunday Masses, including the Saturday Vigil.

First Holy Communion and Confirmation catechists. Thank you for undertaking these important ministries in our parish. In line with the new data protection regulations which came into effect on 25 May 2018, please could all those serving as First Holy Communion and Confirmation catechists complete and sign the lists on the table in the sacristy. You can read our full privacy policy on rcdow.org.uk/diocese/privacy-policy.

Cash Counters. A new rota for 2019 is now available to collect from the rack in the sacristy. If you can spare a couple of hours every six weeks to help count the collections, please talk to Father Kevin to arrange full training.

Welcomers' Rotas. A new rota is now available in the sacristy.

Parish Carol Concert and Nativity takes place this Sunday 16 December 2018 at 3:30pm in the church. Please join us for a joyous afternoon for all. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served after the concert.

Cleaning of the church floors will take place immediately after 9:30am Mass on Friday 21 December 2018 when the church will close until approximately 2:30pm.

Ashford Place. The monthly collection of non perishable food stuffs only, for Ashford Place, takes place next weekend.

Monsignor Roger Reader is delighted to have been appointed as your new parish priest. He will be here from the weekend of 12/13 January 2019 and looks forward to meeting you and building the Kingdom of God with you in Willesden Green.

Crib Offering 2018. This Christmas our crib offering will be donated to the *Catholic Children's Society* to provide family support, emergency grants and mental health services for vulnerable children in our Diocese.

What happens if you go into hospital? In light of strict data protection rules it is essential that on entering hospital you indicate that your details or those of your relative are to be passed to the Roman Catholic chaplain. Also state that you or your relative would like the Roman Catholic chaplain to visit you. Chaplains visit the wards during the week and provide an on-call service in case of emergencies.

Diocesan News

Advent Contemplation Resource. *Jesuit Media Initiatives* and our own Marriage and Family Life Team have joined forces to produce a series of imaginative contemplations to help families journey alongside the Holy Family in prayer this Advent. The series of six imaginative contemplations, plus an introduction, is available to listen to or download from the Jesuits' spirituality website *Pathways to God* www.pathwaystogod.org.uk. Each contemplation focuses on a person or group from the Nativity story: Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and the Magi, who will all be very familiar to children. Each session will have its own suggested storyline and we are invited to imagine and reflect along with it.

New Beginnings takes place on Saturday 5 January 2019 from 11:00am—4:00pm with Lynne Galloway at the Mount Street Jesuit Centre, 114 Mount Street, W1K 3AH. Take time to pause for prayerful reflection on the road you travelled in 2018, becoming more aware of God's presence within all the ups and downs of life, and to prayerfully consider what God might be inviting you to at this time of a new beginning. There will be input, times of guided prayer, and silent prayer and sharing and listening in small groups. For more information email admin@mountstreet.info or telephone 020 7495 1673.

Parish Diary

Monday	7:00pm	Prayer Group—Annexe
Tuesday	7:00pm— 8:30pm	<i>Stitch Amazingly</i> —Annexe

Readings at Mass

First Reading:	Zephaniah 3:14—18
Psalm Response:	Sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.
Second Reading:	Philippians 4:4—7
Alleluia Verse:	The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor.
Gospel:	Luke 3:10—18