

St Mary Magdalen Catholic Church

December —Month of the Immaculate Conception

Fourth Sunday of Advent—Year A

21 December 2025

This Parish is part of Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust, Registered Charity No: 233699

Presbytery
Peter Avenue, Willesden Green,
London, NW10 2DD
Tel: 020 8451 4677

Parish Website: Roman Catholic Parish of Willesden Green – Church of St Mary Magdalen (rcdow.org.uk)

YouTube: St Mary Magdalen RC Church, Willesden, London - YouTube

Facebook: St Mary Magdalen RC Church, Willesden Green | London | Facebook

Parish Clergy
Monsignor Roger Reader KCHS
rogerreader@rcdow.org.uk

Father Matteo Di Giuseppe
matteodigiuseppe@rcdow.org.uk
Office: 020 4542 3716

Father Kamal Kanawadi
kamalkanawadi@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Office
Maria Nowicka
willesdengreen@rcdow.org.uk

Parish office open:
Tuesday-Friday 10:00am - 3:00pm

Parish Outreach Worker
Barry Phillips-Devaney
wgoutreach@rcdow.org.uk

Mass Times
Saturday 6:30pm (Vigil Mass of Sunday)
Sunday: 9:00am*,
10:30am (Includes Children's Liturgy)
12noon & 6:30pm
Monday— Saturday: 9:30am*
**Livestreamed*

Eucharistic Adoration
Weekdays and Saturday:
One hour before morning Mass

Confession
Saturdays: 10:00am—10:30am
5:30pm— 6:15pm
& At Call

The issue of gender is never far from the headlines today. For many people it can feel like an entirely new phenomenon, yet what is truly new is the speed and intensity with which these questions are now debated. Careers are made and broken by where people stand, and society is being forced to think again—often painfully—about the role of men.

For centuries, men were viewed in narrowly defined ways: strong, authoritative, decisive, and dominant. Much of that has rightly been challenged. The injustices suffered by women over generations are real and undeniable. My own mother became a doctor in 1950, when such a path was highly unusual for a woman, and she endured discrimination throughout her medical career simply because of her gender. These experiences remind us that change has often been necessary and overdue.

Yet the role of men today has become increasingly complex and contested. At one extreme are voices that promote a distorted and aggressive version of masculinity—often loudly and lucratively online, corrupting the hearts of young men. At the other are attitudes that seem to despise men altogether, treating them as superfluous to life or inherently suspect. In this confusion, many men struggle to understand who they are meant to be.

Into this debate, today's gospel speaks with surprising clarity. Matthew's account of Joseph and the conception of Jesus brings the role of a man, and a father, into sharp focus. Joseph is engaged to Mary; in his time, this was effectively marriage. To discover that Mary was pregnant would have struck him to the very core of his being. His honour, his future, his place in society—all seemed to be at risk.

Joseph had options. He could have abandoned Mary. He could have publicly shamed her. He could even have assaulted her. Many men would have done this then, and many still do now. Instead, Matthew tells us that Joseph was "a righteous man". His righteousness is shown not in anger or self-assertion, but in restraint, compassion, and openness to God. He resists his first impulse to walk away. He listens. He dreams. He allows divine guidance to reshape his understanding of what has happened. In doing so, he stands by Mary—not just at the birth of Jesus, but throughout his life. Though not Jesus' biological father, Joseph becomes his true father.

Pope Francis reflected deeply on this in his Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde*, and offered a powerful meditation on masculinity and fatherhood through the figure of St Joseph: *"Joseph found happiness not in mere self-sacrifice but in self-gift. In him, we never see frustration but only trust. His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust. Our world today needs fathers. It has no use for tyrants who would domineer others as a means of compensating for their own needs. It rejects those who confuse authority with authoritarianism, service with servility, discussion with oppression, charity with a welfare mentality, power with destruction. Every true vocation is born of the gift of oneself, which is the fruit of mature sacrifice."*

As we approach Christmas, let us not lose sight of Joseph. Quiet, obedient, courageous, and faithful, he offers a vision of masculinity that is deeply countercultural: strong yet gentle, decisive yet humble, authoritative yet self-giving. Let him be a model for all men, young as well as old—and indeed for all of us—of what true humanity looks like when shaped by trust in God and love for others.

Monsignor Roger

Those who are sick: Rita Scanlon, Neville Burke, Monica Lynch, Jasper Terroni

Those who have died recently: Ann Flynn, Pauline McNeela, Patsy Smyth

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Damayanthi Peiris, Denis Mulligan, Mary Hopkins, Antonio Inacio Braganca, Mairead Casey, Ciaran Mallon

PARISH & DIOCESAN NEWS

Collection 14 December 2025 amounted to £1,596.60
Standing orders for November: £3,775.00
Contactless Income for November: £621.39
Thank you for your generosity in whatever way you give.

THANK YOU to everyone who helped out last Saturday in putting up the Christmas trees and cleaning our church. Please do visit the Tree of Light which stands just by the Lady Chapel.

TREE OF LIGHT – a symbol of shared remembrance and prayers

The 'Tree of Light' gives us a beautiful opportunity to honour the memory of a departed love one, or to express any other intention you may wish to pray for.

We ask that you bring your own personalised label to hang on the tree.





Crib Offering 2025

Our Christmas crib offering will be donated to the Catholic Children's Society to support their work helping vulnerable children in overcoming challenges so they can achieve their full potential and have hope of a brighter future. For more information, please go to: https://www.cathchild.org.uk/

Leaflets with details of our **Christmas and New Year Services** are available at the back of the church.

Mass Intentions commencing—Sunday 21 December

Saturday	6:30pm	Damayanthi Peiris	**Anniv**
Sunday	9:00am	Tim and Maureen Ryan	**Ints**
	10:30am	Denis Mulligan	**Anniv**
	12:00pm	Bryan Allen Ocang	**RIP**
	6:30pm	People of the Parish	**Ints**
Monday	9:30am	Private Intention	
Tuesday	9:30am	Anna Chalissery	**Anniv**
Wednesday	9:30am	Mairead Casey	**Anniv**
	CHRISTMAS EVE		
	6:30pm	Celebrant's Intentions	
	10:00pm	Celebrant's Intentions (Carols from 9:30pm)	
Thursday	**CHRISTMAS DAY**		
	9:00am	Celebrant's Intentions	
	11:00am	Celebrant's Intentions	
Friday	10:00am	For all our Altar Servers	**Ints**
Saturday	9:30am	Allen Baird	**RIP**

BAPTISM PREPARATION The next course preparing parents for the baptism of their child, will be held on **Saturday 17 January 2026** at 11:00am. Please contact the office to book a place.





Children's Nativity—Christmas Eve 6:30pm

If you would like to take part in the Nativity Play, come along to the rehearsals (in the church) on:
Monday 22nd at 4:30pm and Wednesday 24th Dec at 4:45pm,
ahead of our performance during the 6:30pm Mass on Christmas Eve.
If you can't make the rehearsals, we invite every child attending the 6:30pm Christmas Eve Mass to join in the celebration by dressing as a character from the Nativity—shepherds, angels, kings, or others.



CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPES

Should you wish to make a Christmas Offering to the Church this year, the envelopes are available on the back table. Your offering helps to cover the cost of our Priests stipends. We thank you greatly for supporting them.

Christmas Rotas for Readers and Eucharistic Ministers

Thank you to everyone who signed up to help at the Christmas and New Year services. There are still a few places available—please sign up again if you are able. The list is in the sacristy.

To mark the **closing of the Jubilee Year in the Diocese**, a Solemn Mass will be celebrated by Cardinal Nichols on Sunday, 28 December, at 12 noon at Westminster Cathedral. All are welcome.

THE GIFT OF OUTREACH

CAFOD'S WORLD GIFTS



This Christmas, give a gift that reaches beyond our own community. By supporting families in another part of the world, you can help provide education, basic living essentials, and access to vital health resources—sharing hope, care, and Christ's love in a meaningful way. CAFOD's World Gifts are available online at: https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/

Ethical gifts with real impact.

VINNIE PACKS

The SVP are distributing over 10,000 Vinnie Packs containing cold weather essentials to the homeless and those spending the principal part of their day on the streets. Each pack contains thermal gloves, thermal hat, two pairs of socks, flannel, toothbrush, toothpaste, information sheet and pen. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £4.10 per pack? Donations can be sent to **Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ** with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West **sort code 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237**. Thank you so much for your support.

Monsignor Roger, Fr Matteo and Fr Kamal wish you and your loved ones, a happy and holy Christmas.