

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS Saturday 23rd to Sunday 31st December 2017

FOURTH SUNDAY in ADVENT (B) 24 December 2017 Expectant Mothers' Day

SATURDAY 23rd 6.00pm Cecilia Joseph's Intentions (Joseph)

SUNDAY 24th 9.00am Liam Downey RIP

December 2017 11.00am People of our Parish

CHRISTMAS EVE 24th December 2017

The Birth of Christ 6.00pm Deceased members of the Lennon Family (Lechley)

Sunday, 24 Dec. 8.30pm Carols before Mass

9.00pm Private Intention **Parish Mass Book page 97**

CHRISTMAS DAY: THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST

Monday 9.00am Felix Friel **Parish Mass Book page 100**

25 December 2017 11.00am People of our Parish **Parish Mass Book page 102**

Tuesday St Stephen, Deacon & First Martyr

26th December 10.00am Veronica Beard RIP

Wednesday St John, Apostle & Evangelist

27th December 9.00am Cecilia Joseph's intentions (Joseph)

Thursday The Holy Innocents, Children & Martyrs

28th December 9.00am Veronica Beard RIP (Beard)

Friday St Thomas of Canterbury, Bishop & Martyr

29 December 2017 9.00am Mary Canny RIP - Anniv (Canny)

SATURDAY 30th THE HOLY FAMILY of JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

December 2017 6.00pm People of our Parish

SUNDAY 31st 9.00am James Hayes RIP (Coynne)

11.00am Victoria Joseph & Joseph Sussai RIP Anniv (Patten)

SACRAMENT of PENANCE: Saturdays 11am – 12 noon & 5.15pm to 5.40pm

MORNING PRAYER of THE DIVINE OFFICE 15 minutes before weekday Mass

BLESSED SACRAMENT Prayer & Adoration for 1 hour after weekday Mass

PARISH MASS BOOK: FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT Year B 24 December 2017

Page 7 The Beginning of Mass **Page 52** Preface 2 of Advent

Page 90 Collect & Readings **Page 28** Eucharistic Prayer 3

Page 11 The Nicene Creed **Page 43** The Communion Rite

Page 14 Preparation of Gifts **Page 92** Post Communion Prayer

WE PRAY FOR OUR SICK AT HOME & IN HOSPITAL Mark Toohey, Paula Hall, Marcheta Swift-Daley, Hilda Silver, Hannah Robinson, Daphne McAdam, Ann Dowd, Rhoda Limebear, Giovanni Borelli, Roger Minnis, Sean Clohessy, Tony Mullan, James Bullen, Fr Martin Knott, Fr Tom Jordan, and all who are ill.

OFFERINGS: Offertories: Envelopes £513.30, Loose £338.15, CAFOD £15.24

Standing Orders £700, Thank you for your generous offerings.

CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS in our Diocese, are by tradition a gift from parishioners to the priest(s) of their parish, and are personal to the priest(s) in their own parish.

The Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Epping



Parish Priest: Father John McGrath Tel: 01992 572516

Deacon: Rev Duncan Whitehouse Tel: 01992 577173

Address: 11 Church Hill, Epping, Essex, CM16 4RA

Email: epping@dioceseofbrentwood.org

Website: www.eppingcatholicchurch.co.uk

Registered Charity Number: 234092

Our parish is twinned with Thistle Grove/Lebohang

Parish in the Diocese of Dundee, South Africa

Hall Bookings: e-mail: arnold_verrall@email.com

Telephone Arnold Verrall: 07764404813 or

01992 001995 (dial 01992 even in Epping area)

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT & CHRISTMAS B 25 December 2017

Dear Parishioners,

“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, which means God with us” (Matt.1:18-25) fulfils Isaiah's prophesy (Is.7:14). In celebrating Jesus' birth of at Christmas, we show “God with us”. God became man in Jesus to bring God to us, and bring us to God. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was first to welcome him when she accepted God's message from the angel Gabriel by saying, “I am the servant of the Lord, let it be done unto me according to your word”(Luke 1:38). Joseph, her husband, a man of faith, welcomed the Word of God and chose to obey it in his relationship with Mary. The challenge for us, as for Mary and Joseph, is to live our relationships and life according to God's plan, and put his will before our own. By living according to God's will, great things can be achieved in and through us, which benefit others, as happened with Mary and Joseph.

Many families in our parish are blessed with the gift of children and new life. When we look at the face of a new-born child, we are also looking at the face of Jesus. God's glory was made visible to us in the face of Jesus and in the face of every child. His glory is perfectly reflected to us in the face of Jesus, who became man like us in all things, but sin. He took our frail human nature to share with us the divine nature of God, and enable us to draw close to God and become his people.

Christmas, when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, has a message of peace from God to people of goodwill. God places in human hearts a longing and desire for peace and reconciliation at Christmas. In this season of peace, he calls to heal divisions, abandon hatred and make a conversion to love. Christmas can be difficult where people are troubled by divisions, un-forgiveness or hostilities. When families come together at Christmas they have a sense that God intends us to be united in love and go forward together as people freed from hurts. So, whilst a message of peace to people of goodwill was given over two thousand years ago at Christmas, on the birth of the Prince of Peace, it is a message which is addressed to each one of us every day by God who loves us, and wants us to have reconciliation and peace.

May the Lord bless you and your families with peace & joy at Christmas. Fr John

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN EPPING CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCHEON: We invite people who will be alone on Christmas Day to a traditional luncheon in our Hall. Couples & carers are welcome. Please phone **Mary Morgan** or give your details to Fr John or Deacon Duncan at the Priest's House. We need drivers to pick up our guests about 12.30pm & take them home at 4pm. Gifts of toiletries, groceries & gloves are needed. If you can help, phone **Mary Morgan on 01992 574719**.

EPPING FOODBANK CHRISTMAS APPEAL THANK YOU!

A huge thank you to parishioners who responded so generously to the appeal for Christmas treats for the clients of Epping Foodbank. You made a very big difference to many local families. Happy Christmas to you all.

Brentwood Catholic Children's Society Crib Donations: The Crib Offerings are given each year to the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society to support children and families needing help. Please pray for those children and families for whom Christmas may be a difficult time. On behalf of the trustees, staff, and children and families whom we are privileged to help, we thank you for your support and wish you a very Happy Christmas.

TALKS ON THE CATHOLIC FAITH Any adults interested in our Catholic faith or who wants to find out about our faith, become Catholic or wish to understand our faith and support the faith of family members is invited to a series of talks in the Priest's House. The talks will be suitable for Catholic adults who may not have been Confirmed or have not been practising their faith and wish to renew and rethink their faith. There is no commitment involved in attending any or all sessions and we would warmly welcome anyone who is interested. Please contact Fr John at The Priest's House.

UNDERSTANDING THE CREED On **Wednesdays 24 & 31 January from 7 pm to 8.30 pm**. Fr Adrian Graffy will explore the Nicene Creed recited at Sunday Mass. These 'Gidea Park Faith Evenings' will take place in the hall at Gidea Park Catholic Church (410 Brentwood Road, Gidea Park, RM2 6DH). Please book by email to GPstudydays@gmail.com Refreshments provided. Admission is free.

WALSINGHAM HOUSE at ABBOTSWICK - Open afternoon. Come on **Saturday 13 January** between **12noon and 4pm** to see the newly refurbished house and new chapel. There will be refreshments in the dining room, tours of the house and peaceful prayer in the chapel, with Adoration from **2.30 – 3.30pm**. Everyone is welcome. Information on the project: to donate, visit www.bcys.net/abbotswick The address is Walsingham House at Abbotswick, Navestock Side, Nr Brentwood CM14 5SH. It is less than 40 minutes from most of East London and Essex. Come and see!

HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT RELIGIOUS LIFE? The Congregation of Jesus is hosting a discernment weekend, from the **9 -11 February 2018**, at the Bar Convent, York, for women considering religious life. The weekend offers guidance on how to discern a vocation and discern which congregation would suit. It is open to women of any age, and there is no charge - though you are welcome to make a donation. If you are interested, please contact us first, via vocations@congregatiojesu.org.uk, so we can make sure the weekend is appropriate for you, and ensure a room is available.

RECENTLY DECEASED: Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

BEATRICE WEBBER, who died on **Monday 11 December**. She will be received into our Church at 11am on Tuesday, 11 January, for her Funeral Service, to be followed by Committal at Parndon Wood Crematorium. **May she rest in peace.**

EILEEN McNERNEY, who died on **Tuesday 19 December**. She will be received into our Church at **4.30pm on Thursday 11 January**. Requiem Mass will be celebrated on **Friday 12, at 10.45am**, to be followed by committal at Bentley Crematorium, Ongar Road, Brentwood. May she rest in peace.

We offer our sympathy and prayers for their families & the repose of their souls. May the Lord send his Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to console them at this time.

PILGRIMAGE TO KNOCK SHRINE, IRELAND: Inaugural Diocesan Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine, Ireland on **28 May 2018**. Led by Bishop Alan Williams. £699.00 per person sharing. Price includes flights from Stansted, all taxes, transfers, 5 nights' in newly refurbished Knock House Hotel, in the shrine grounds, with full Irish Breakfast daily, light lunch and a 4 course Dinner each evening. All entertainment & guided tours included. Wheelchair accessible rooms in the hotel. Limited single rooms available. Groups and individual bookings welcome. The pilgrimage will also visit Ballintubber Abbey, Croagh Patrick, Westport and other famous sights in County Mayo. Please contact **01268 762278** or email knockpilgrimage@gmail.com. Knock Pilgrimages is a member of the Travel Trust Association and is fully protected by ATOL T7613.

PARISH CONCERT/SOCIAL NIGHT with the ELEVATORS a band with two very talented parishioners, Sheila & Steve Earl, on **Saturday 20 January**. Doors open **7.15pm for 8pm** start. Tickets £7 and £3 for under 16s. Dance the night away to classics by Bowie, Blondie, the Beatles, Bryan Adams & many more. Please bring your own food & drinks. Details of tickets later. **All proceeds to the parish.**

IT'S GALLOPING TOWARDS YOU!!  **Everyone** is invited to our exciting parish **RACE NIGHT** on **Saturday 10 February 2018**. More details in the New Year, but **KEEP THE DATE FREE**. Why not become a **Horse Owner @ £5 each**, (there's a prize for the winning horse owner in each race). **Contact Teresa Cullen, Peter Day, Margo Flack, Norah Poole, John Ryan, or Dorothy Whitehouse, or phone 01992 577173** to lasso your horse and give it a name.

"HE'S BEHIND YOU!" Our very own Panto Dame will star again this year in Woodford Pantomime's Jack and the Beanstalk' at the Sir James Hawkey Hall in Woodford Green. All youngsters (and the young at heart) who wish to join a fantastic evening on **Saturday 13 January 2018 at 4.30pm**. Please contact Maggie Keeling ASAP to reserve seats: maggie@keelingphysio.com or telephone 07718858879. All tickets are £13.50p (+ a small booking fee). Thanks.

USED POSTAGE STAMPS Please keep used postage stamps and put them in the box under the Parish Letter Tray in the Church Porch. They will be welcomed by St Clare Hospice at Hastingwood where we take them after Christmas & in June each year. Volunteers at the Hospice sort them and receive cash for the Hospice Funds.