

**MASSES & SERVICES from: Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> December to Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December**

**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2023**

Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	6.00pm	Moyra Whelan RIP 1 <sup>st</sup> Anniv (Manning)
Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	9.00am	Joe Roule RIP (Lavin)
December	11.00am	People of our Parish
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup>	9.15am	Derek Flack RIP Recently (Murray)
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup>	9.15am	Holy Souls RIP
Wed 6 <sup>th</sup>	12 noon	Marie Gifford (Crampin)
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup>		NO MASS
Friday 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION – Parish Feast Day</b>	
	12 noon	Deceased Priests of our Parish (McAdam)

**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup>	6.00pm	Jim & Pearl Cole RIP (Murray)
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	9.00am	Michael Gifford RIP Recently (Ching)
December 2023	11.00am	People of our Parish

**HOSPITAL:** If you are going into hospital this week for surgery Fr Martin will be offering the Sacrament of the Sick after all weekend Masses.

**SACRAMENT OF PENANCE** on Saturdays 5pm-5.45pm. You are always welcome to this sacrament

**ROSARY:** Each weekday we will recite the Rosary as follows:  
Monday, Tuesday, Friday after Mass and Wednesday at 11.40am before the start of mid-day Mass.

**DIOCESE OF BRENTWOOD WEBSITE:** <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/>

**OFFERINGS:** Thank you for your generous weekly Offerings of £800 Standing Orders. On 26<sup>th</sup> November 2023 you gave: Envelopes £172.50 and loose £460.89. You can give donations to the Priest's House and online for our parish or charities our parish supports at:  
[www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/donations/?parish=epping//////////](http://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/donations/?parish=epping//////////)

**IN CASES OF EMERGENCY:** Father Martin will usually have his day off on Thursdays. In cases of emergency please call one of the local parishes, either St Edmund's, Loughton – Tel: 0208 5089438, Holy Cross, Harlow – Tel 01279 425776 or The Assumption, Harlow – Tel 01279 429388. This would also apply if Fr Martin is on holiday.

**PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL:**

“St Michael the Archangel, defend us in this day of battle. Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray. And do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen.”

**The Immaculate Conception Catholic Church**



11 Church Hill, Epping, Essex, CM16 4RA

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Parish Administrator: Mrs Margaret Lechley

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Registered Charity Number: 234092

Our parish is twinned with Thistle Grove & Lebohang

Parish in the Diocese of Dundee, South Africa

**1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B 3<sup>rd</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

*Stay awake! Be Ready!*

As we begin the season of Advent, the readings continue to focus (as in recent weeks) not just on the coming of Christ at the end of time, but also on his coming in our own lives. The people of Israel, newly returned from exile, find the task of rebuilding their land difficult, and ask God their Father to come and help them. They have done penance, and now trust that he will return (**First Reading** Isaiah 63: 16–17; 64: 1, 3–8).

In the **Second Reading** (1 Cor. 1: 3–9), Paul writes to the Corinthians of his gratitude for the graces they have received. Their strong Christian witness and the gifts of the Spirit they have been given will stand them in good stead when the Lord returns on the last day.

In the **Gospel** (Mark 13: 33–37) Jesus uses images familiar to his audience to warn them to remain alert and awake, as a doorkeeper would. In this way they will not be caught unawares when the Lord comes again. So we, too, pray to enter this season of Advent trusting that the Lord will come: as he came in history at Christmas; as he comes in our hearts if we keep our door open; and as he will come at the end of time.

We pray for all those in the world who are waiting with longing and hope for freedom from oppression and peace.



**THE CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS:** Just a reminder that the Offertory collection taken at the Christmas Masses is our personal gift to the priest. Together with the Offertory taken at Easter this provides a major part of his income for the year. Your generosity, as always, is greatly appreciated.

**ADVENT BEGINS TODAY: Please take and use the following during Advent:**  
**ADVENT & CHRISTMAS CALENDAR** for children with a thought for each day  
**MY DAY BY DAY FOR INFANTS:** preparing for Christ's birth at Christmas  
**MY DAY BY DAY FOR JUNIORS:** preparing for Christ's birth at Christmas  
**WALK WITH ME FOR ADULTS - A journey of prayer for Advent**  
All of these are being given out free by our parish though you can make donations to cover their costs in the book slot of the box at the back of the church.

**RECONCILIATION SERVICE:** On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December there will be a Reconciliation Service at St Edmund of Canterbury, Loughton at 7.30pm.

**CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES IN OUR PARISH:**

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> December – Mass at 6pm

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December – No 9am Mass.

Mass at 11am only for SUNDAY OBLIGATION

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve Masses for CHRISTMAS at 6.00pm, preceded by Carols at 5.30pm and 8.00pm preceded by Carols at 7.30pm  
Christmas Day Masses at 9.00am and 11.00am  
St Stephen's Day Mass 10.00am

**FIRST RECONCILIATION:** Children will celebrate their First Reconciliation in Church on Wednesday next, 6<sup>th</sup> December at 5.30pm. This will be the last meeting for the children before Christmas. The course will re-commence on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January at the usual time of 5.30pm in our hall.

**CHRISTMAS FUNDRAISER:** Our thanks to Adriana, Emma and the wonderful team of dedicated volunteers for organising the very successful Christmas Market & Raffle, last Sunday. The magnificent sum of £2500 was raised for our parish, of which £916 came from the Raffle. We thank all parishioners who supported this event and the businesses in the town who donated prizes. In return for their generosity we ask our parishioners to support their businesses.

**WE PRAY FOR OUR SICK AT HOME, IN HOSPITAL & CARE HOMES:**

Lord Jesus Christ, our Most Holy Redeemer, by the grace of your Holy Spirit, grant comfort and healing to all who suffer in mind, body or spirit. When they are afraid give them courage, when they are afflicted give them patience, when dejected lift them up with new hope, when they are alone, assure them of the prayerful support of your holy people. Through Christ, our Saviour. Amen.

**ANNIVERSARIES:** Philip Darcy (4/12), Dougil Qvani, John Goodman (5/12) Fr Brian Drea. Hans Bengesser, Michael Mulligan (6/12), Fr Michael Healy, Mary Ivey (7/12), Alfred Gill, Michael O'Mahoney, Ron Gaylor, Fr Bernard Pownall (8/12), Colin Saunders, Beverly Ziade, Jack Lafford, Fr John Lane, Canon Anthony McKenty (9/12), Anthony

**PARISH CHRISTMAS CARDS** are available for collection and distributing this weekend. They give details of our Christmas Masses and greetings from our Church to people at home. Please take yours and near neighbours to help reduce our postage costs. Our thanks go to Peter and Sarah Day for preparing them.

**PARISH EMAIL ADDRESS:** Please use the email address [epping@brcdt.org](mailto:epping@brcdt.org) only when emailing Fr Martin or the parish office. The email address [admin@epping.plu.com](mailto:admin@epping.plu.com) is no longer supported and emails will no longer be forwarded.

**SHOEBOX APPEAL:** A huge 'thank you' to all who donated so very generously to the Shoebox Appeal. The organisers are delighted, and the recipients will be thrilled with your Christmas gifts to them. Our thanks to Melanie Hollinshead for co-ordinating the Appeal in our parish.

**EPPING CHORUS** will hold a Christmas concert on Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm at St. John's Church, Epping. Simon Winters will conduct "*Christmas Reflections*", a popular programme of seasonal music. Admission is free but a retiring collection will be taken for Choir Funds.

**EPPING FOREST FOODBANK** needs the usual food and household items. Thank you to our generous parishioners for giving for people in need through the **FOODBANK! WE CAN REFER PEOPLE WHO MAY BE IN NEED OF HELP TO THE FOODBANK.** Please contact Fr Martin or our Parish Office.

**HALL HIRE:** Our Parish Hall is available for bookings. Special rates for parishioners and charities. Please contact our Parish Administrator at the Parish Office for bookings.

**PRAYER FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE:**

God of peace,  
Whose son Jesus Christ taught us  
To love our neighbour as ourselves  
Give your strength to the people of Ukraine.  
Give your wisdom to the leaders of the world.  
Give your love to all of us who pray for peace –  
Peace that will transform,  
Peace that will heal,  
Peace that will last.  
For the sake of the same Jesus Christ.  
The Prince of Peace, Amen

Turner, Gladys Long (10/12), **Eternal rest grant to them Lord, let perpetual light shine on them. May they rest in peace. Lord, may they rest in peace and rise in glory.**