

MASSES & SERVICES from: Sat 16th December to Sunday 24th December**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) "GAUDETTE SUNDAY"****17th December 2023**

Saturday 16 th	6.00pm	Angela Timms RIP (Murray)
Sunday 17 th	9.00am	People of our Parish
December	11.00am	Roger Crampin RIP Anniv (Crampin)
	3.00pm	Traditional Latin Mass
Monday 18 th	9.15am	Intentions of John Gavin & Family (SB)
Tuesday 19 th	9.15am	Grace Kelly RIP (SB)
Wed 20 th	11.00am	Stanley Joyce RIP REQUIEM MASS
Thursday 21 st		NO MASS
Friday 22 nd	12 noon	Richard Floor RIP Recently (Sr Susan)

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)**EXPECTANT MOTHERS' SUNDAY 24th December 2023**

Saturday 23 rd	6.00pm	Intentions of Graham Childs (Vallance)
Sunday 24 th	9.00am	NO MASS
December 2023	11.00am	People of our Parish
		CHRISTMAS MASSES
Sunday 34 th	6.00pm	Preceded by Carols at 5.30pm
	8.00pm	Preceded by Carols at 7.30pm
	9.00am	
	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 10th December 2023 you gave: Envelopes £151.15 and loose £449.36. 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//////////

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.

The Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

11 Church Hill, Epping, Essex, CM16 4RA
 Parish Priest: Father Martin Fletcher Tel: 01992 572516
 Deacon: Rev Duncan Whitehouse Tel: 01992 577173
 Parish Administrator: Mrs Margaret Lechley
 Email: epping@brcdt.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

3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B 17th DECEMBER 2023*Rejoice, the Lord is near.*

The readings on this Gaudete ('Rejoice!') Sunday are full of encouragement, resonating with joyful hope as we draw closer to the birthday of Jesus: God's Son coming to live amongst us. Isaiah, Mary, and John the Baptist all bear joyful witness to what God has done and will do for his people.

Isaiah (**First Reading** Isa. 61: 1–2.10–11) announces the coming of the anointed one: a cause for rejoicing. He will bring freedom, healing and good news to the people. Images of clothing bodies and growing seeds celebrate God's activity in the world and in our lives.

St Paul (**Second Reading** 1 Thess. 5: 16–24) encourages us to be guided by the Holy Spirit in all that we do; we are to give thanks for all things to God, and to pray constantly. Paul urges us to be happy always, because Christ is faithful to his promise and will not fail us.

The focus of the **Gospel** (John 1: 6–8.19–28) is John the Baptist, who bears witness, testifying to the true identity of 'the light': Jesus himself. John answers the priests' questions about his own identity and ministry, then announces that the Saviour they seek, Jesus, is already amongst them, though 'unknown to them'. As we continue preparing for Christmas, we rejoice that Jesus is already in our hearts and lives.

Let's pray to receive the graces needed to announce his message and presence through our attitudes, actions and words.



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.

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES IN OUR PARISH:

Saturday 23rd December – Mass at 6pm

Sunday 24th December – NO 9AM MASS.

Mass at 11am only for SUNDAY OBLIGATION

Sunday 24th 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

USHERS: We have a small dedicated team of ushers at our weekend Masses but desperately need more to help at the Christmas Masses only. Please speak to Fr Martin if you can help with this one off commitment.

RECENTLY DECEASED:

We offer our sympathy to our parishioner, Françoise Fernandez and her family, on the recent death of her mother in France. May she rest in peace.

STANLEY JOYCE RIP, who died on 9th December. His Funeral Mass will take place in our church on **Wednesday 20th December** at 11am. We offer our sympathy to his family. **May he rest in peace.**

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. We offer our sympathy and prayers for all who mourn.

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 your servants who suffer in mind, body or spirit.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ANNIVERSARIES: Leonard Taylor, Reginald Ivey, Florence Harrington (16/12), Paulette Jarrold, Irene Bassett, Herbert Kellard, Julia Farrell (18/12), Giovanni Borelli, Eileen Mc Nerney (19/12), Monica Henderson, Fr William Guinevan (20/12), David Sebire, Joseph Hawes, Brigid Nix, Mina v1Min Tello, Elizabeth Evans, (21/12), Margaret Munday, Margaret Hanley, Fr Arthur Crowd (22/12), Len Pegrum, Bishop Brian Foley (23/12), Kim Chi, Michael McCormack, Betty O'Mahoney, Anthony Matthews, Margaret Munday (24/12), **Eternal rest grant to them Lord, let perpetual light shine on them. May they rest in peace.**

CAROLS ON THE GREEN presented by Epping Rotary Club on **Christmas Eve at 3pm.** All welcome to attend this community Christmas event.

FR JOHN'S NEW ADDRESS: A number of parishioners have asked for Fr John's new address. It is 4 Whitefriars Crescent, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex SS0 8EU

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.

EVENINGS FOR VOCATIONS ENQUIRERS: We are planning to continue the Evenings for Vocations enquirers in the new year. Canon John Harvey has kindly agreed to host the evenings at the Cathedra. More information to follow shortly.

YOUNG ADULT RETREAT – Saturday 6th January 2024

“A full day retreat for those aged 18 – 27 (having left school), at our beautiful retreat house Walsingham House at Abbotswick. Explore your faith, be inspired to put your faith into action, learn, ask questions and pray, all with other young adults. There is a small cost of just £10 to cover the day, with lunch and refreshments provided. For more information and to apply, please visit www.bcys.net/events/youngadults/”

HIGHAMS SCHOOL OF DANCING: Dance classes starting in our Hall on **Thursday 11th January 2024**, These are not affiliated to our parish but may be of interest to parishioners. Please see poster in church porch for further details.

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

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.”