

Masses & Services Saturday 14th to Sunday 22nd December 2024		
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT Year C		15th Dec 2024
Saturday 14th	6.00pm	People of our Parish
Sunday 15th	9.00am	Doug & Bobby Dew RIP (Heughan)
December	11.00am	Intentions of Katie Hughes (Scannell)
Monday 16 th	9.15am	Canon Robert Horn RIP Recently
Tuesday 17 th	9.15am	Intentions of Eileen White (Lechley)
Wed 18 th	12 Noon	Georgina Fernades RIP Anniv (Murray)
Thursday 19 th	NO MASS	
Friday 20 th	12 Noon	Grace Kelly RIP (SB)
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT Year C		22nd Dec 2024
Saturday 21st	6.00pm	Dennis Gage RIP (Coyne)
Sunday 22nd	9.00am	People of our Parish
Dec 2024	11.00am	Intentions of Joan Holland (Scannell)

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturdays 5.15pm-5.45pm.

ROSARY: Prayed after Mass Monday, Tuesday, Friday and before Mass on Wednesday.

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.

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

OFFERINGS: Thank you for your generous offerings. Last week you gave £110.01 in Envelopes and £367.40 in Loose Plate. 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.

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.”

BRENTWOOD DIRECTORY: Copies of the Brentwood Directory are on sale at the back of the church. It gives information about our Diocese and details of Parishes and Mass times, Catholic schools, prayer groups and other organisations in our Diocese.

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

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR C 15th December 2024

This Gaudete Sunday begins with a resounding ‘Rejoice!’: a joyful and energising call for jubilation that echoes throughout the readings. We are full of joy in the Lord because he is very near. Our Advent journeying and anticipation is nearly over. We are preparing to celebrate both the coming of the Christ Child into our world, and the wonderful promise of the Good News that God is always close at hand.

The prophet Zephaniah (**First Reading** Zephaniah 3: 14–18) proclaims a jubilant God already in our midst: a God who saves, strengthens, calms and protects us with love; a God who dances and sings alongside us.

Paul’s letter to the Philippians (**Second Reading** Philippians 4:4–7) opens by encouraging us always to be joyful in the Lord. Through prayers of thanksgiving, we will come to know the true peace that rests in Christ Jesus.

John the Baptist (**Gospel** Luke 3:10–18) was grounded in his certain belief of the coming saviour who would bring, joy, peace and justice. He dedicated his life to calling people to repentance, so that they might be better able to respond and believe in the Good News. John was so rooted in Gospel values that many thought he himself was the Christ.

Let us pray this week for the grace to be like John, to proclaim Christ and the joyous Good News to a world that desperately needs it. As a community of prayer, we know we are loved by a joyful God. With that same joy, let us share this love with others.



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:

CHRISTMAS EVE - Tuesday 24th December

Mass at 6.00pm, preceded by Carols at 5.30pm and Mass at 9.00pm (Midnight Mass).
No 9.15am Mass on Christmas Eve.

CHRISTMAS DAY – Wednesday 25th December

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.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME: The programme will resume on Saturday 18th January at the usual time of 4.30pm

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: George Meldon, Fr Gerard Kerr (14/12), Mary McEvoy, Anne Melia (15/12), 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).

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord. May they rest in peace.

MESSAGE FROM EPPING FOREST FOODBANK “With Christmas fast approaching we are committed to making this festive season special for those facing hardship, and we once again seek support for our annual Christmas food drive. December is usually our busiest month of the year, and we think this year will be the same. **The items we urgently need are: Milk (UHT/powdered), long life fruit juice, tinned soup, pasta sauce, sponge pudding, tinned tomatoes, vegetables, meat/fish, tinned fruit, rice, pasta, tea bags, coffee, cereals, jam, biscuits, toiletries, nappies, washing up liquid, dog and cat food.**”

EPPING FOREST CHRISTMAS GIVING: Gift a local child a present this year. Epping Forest District Council is seeking kind donations from residents and businesses to see that no local child goes without a Christmas present this year. **Please see poster in church porch for further details.**

NINE LESSONS & CAROLS: Sunday 22nd December at 4pm lasting about an hour and a quarter in Brentwood Cathedral. This is a most beautiful Service of Music and Readings for Advent and Christmas and perhaps the high point of the Cathedral Choir's Choral Year. It is always very popular and well attended. In addition to the Choir Carols there are also popular Carols for everyone to sing. The Choir will be accompanied by Stephen King, the Cathedral Organist.

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

“OUR CHRISTMAS MARANATHA AT THE SION COMMUNITY Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, CM15 9BX, is on **Thursday 18th December**. The evening begins with Mass at 7pm followed by Prayer and Praise and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Our Celebrant is Fr. Arnaud and everyone welcome.”

MISSIO BOXES: At present we do not have a parish co-ordinator for the Missio (red) boxes. Please let Fr Martin or the Parish Office know if you are able to help.

ISLAM STUDY DAY: “In 2025 we mark sixty years since the promulgation of Nostra Aetate, the inter-faith document of Vatican II. We are delighted to welcome Sidra Naeem, distinguished teacher and chair of Havering Interfaith, who will speak about Islam. The talk will take place on **Saturday 18th January 2025** from 11.00 (11.00 GMT) in the hall at the Catholic Church of Christ the Eternal High Priest, in Gidea Park. The talk will also be available by livestream free of charge at www.whatgoodnews.org and will be available subsequently on the same website. The church is close to Gidea Park station (Elizabeth Line). Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee available from 10.30. Do join us.”

HOLY WEEK ESCORTED TOUR TO WESTPORT, KNOCK & COUNTY MAYO 13th April 2025. £849.00 pps. Price includes flight, 10kg hold luggage, 4 nights' in 4* Castlecourt Hotel, Westport with Dinner, Bed & Breakfast. Lunch on three days. All entertainment, excursions and transport included. Visit Knock, Galway City, Kylemore Abbey, Croagh Patrick, Live outdoor Passion Play at Ballintubber Abbey, Quiet Man Museum. Single supplement on Enquiry. Contact 01268 762 278 or 07740 175557 or email knockpilgrimages@gmail.com.

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