

Masses & Services Saturday 22nd March to 30th March 2025		
Saturday 22nd	10.00am	Private Intention (RC) <i>Followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & opportunity for Confession until 11am</i>
THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR C 23rd March 2025		
Saturday 22nd	6.00pm	Elizabeth Rodgers RIP Anniv (Rodgers)
Sunday 23rd	9.00am	People of our Parish
March	11.00am	Our Confirmation Candidates, their Sponsors, Catechists & Families
Monday 24th	9.15am	Private Intention (SB)
Tuesday 25th	9.15am	Intentions of Mary & Donal Bergin (Nalan)
	7.30pm	Lenten Reflection
Wed 26th	12 Noon	Graham Childs RIP First Anniv (Vallance)
Thurs 27th		NO MASS
Friday 28th	12 Noon	Holy Souls RIP
Saturday 29th	10.00am	Mary Judge RIP <i>Followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & opportunity for Confession until 11am</i>
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR C 30th March 2025		
Saturday 29th	6.00pm	Danny White RIP First Anniv (Lechley)
Sunday 30th	9.00am	People of our Parish
March 2025	11.00am	Intentions of Ian Fleming (Scannell)

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturdays 5.15pm-5.45pm.

ROSARY: After Mass Monday, Tuesday, Friday and before 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 weekend you gave £148 in Envelopes and £457.70 in Loose Plate. You can give donations to the Priest's House and online for our parish or charities our parish supports at:

IN CASES OF EMERGENCY: In cases of emergency, if Fr Martin is unavailable, please call one of the local parishes, St Edmund's, Loughton – Tel: 0208 5089438, Holy Cross, Harlow – Tel 01279 425776 or The Assumption, Harlow – Tel 01279 429388.

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



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Registered Charity Number: 234092
Our parish is twinned with Thistle Grove & Lebohang Parish in the Diocese of Dundee, South Africa

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT YEAR C

23rd March 2025

The readings this week encourage us to repent. Reflecting on what happened to the people of God in the Old Testament can help us to avoid making the same errors. As St Paul tells us in today's Epistle, many Israelites fell away from their belief, in spite of God's goodness.

In the **First Reading** (Exodus 3: 1–8,13–15) Moses is drawn towards a burning bush, where God reveals himself as the creator of all things and indicates his name: 'I am who I am'.

St Paul (**Second Reading** 1 Cor. 10:1–6,10–12) reminds the Corinthians of how their forebears failed to please God in the desert. This should be a warning to them: they must be on their guard at all times. Being baptised is no guarantee against falling into temptation.

The **Psalm** (103) expresses our gratitude to God for being loving, patient and compassionate.

This same compassion is exemplified in the **Gospel** (Luke 13:1–9). After a call to repentance, the parable of the fig tree illustrates how patient God is, even when, like that tree, his people – us – do not bear fruit over a long period of time.

As Pilgrims of Hope in this Jubilee year, we pray to be granted greater compassion and forgiveness towards those who repent of their trespasses against us. Perhaps we can also look more closely at our own lives. What might we change this Lent to bear more fruit?



PASTORAL VISIT: This Sunday we welcome Bishop Alan to our parish. At the 11am Mass he will Confirm our young candidates:

Bethany, Caoimhe, Ciara, Ellie, Florence, Jack, Lennie, Nancy, Nathan, Orran, Shauna, Shyina and Sophia.

After the 11am Mass there will be refreshments in our parish hall to which all parishioners are invited and have an opportunity to meet the Bishop.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME: The next session for the children will take place on **Saturday, 26th April at the usual time of 4.30pm.**

LENT SERVICES:

STATIONS OF THE CROSS will be held here during Lent on Friday evenings at 7.30pm.

SATURDAY MASS DURING LENT: During Lent we will have Mass at 10am on Saturday mornings, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 11am and the opportunity for Confession.

LENTEN REFLECTION: You are warmly invited to a one hour Lenten Reflection on the life of Jesus, with readings and songs, presented by Michael Wigley, on **Tuesday 25th March at 7.30pm**, in our church. No admission charge. All welcome.

EASTER LILIES: We offer parishioners the opportunity to remember deceased relatives and friends at Easter by displaying lilies in the flower arrangements in church. It is suggested a donation of £3 is made for each lily. Please put your donation into an envelope, clearly marked 'Easter Lily in memory of "name"' and either put it in the Offertory collection or through the Presbytery letter box. If you are a taxpayer, please Gift Aid your donation by using the red Special Donations envelope in the Church or use one of the special envelopes in your box.

LENT LUNCHESES: Many thanks to all those who helped in any way with our Lent Lunch, last Saturday. To those who made soups, co-ordinated the event or helped on the day. A special word of thanks to our Confirmation Group who volunteered at the lunch. It was wonderful to see our young parishioners support this community event. **The next lunch will take place on Saturday 29th March at St John's Church.** A chance to meet friends and support a range of charities on Saturdays of Lent as one of the Churches in Epping offers a light lunch (soup, cheese, bread, tea or coffee) **from 12.30pm to 2pm.**

USHERS/WELCOMERS: We have a very small, dedicated team of ushers who, on a rota basis, welcome parishioners to our weekend Masses. We are in desperate need of more parishioners to join this team. Please speak to Fr Martin if you can help.

DONATIONS: In the absence of the collection box at the back of the church, please put donations for Holy Souls, Poor and Needy or any other charities in a clearly marked envelope and post through the letterbox to the priest's house. Many thanks.

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!**

SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF UNBORN CHILDREN:

The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) is holding a meeting which is open to anyone who is interested in the pro-life cause, on **Tuesday 8th April, at 7.30 p.m.** here at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. In this meeting, SPUC will focus on current pro-life campaigns, especially the serious threat posed by the assisted suicide bill currently before Parliament. All are welcome to attend.

MARY'S MEALS: Many thanks for the excellent response to the recent recycling box for Mary's Meals. We have now sent off two large sacks of donations to them. The Mary's Meals campaign was born in 2002 when Magnus McFarlane-Barrow visited Malawi during a famine and met a mother dying from AIDS. When Magnus asked her eldest son, Edward, what his dreams were in life, he replied simply "I want to have enough food to eat and to go to school for one day."

EPPING CHORUS: After 53 years, this concert on Good Friday, will unfortunately mark the **farewell concert** of this well respected local choir. There is a distinctly French theme to the concert, with (see poster) the main work being Gounod's "St Cecilia Mass" which is absolutely lovely, as well as Faure's "Cantique de Jean Racine". Admission is FREE with donations requested. If you wish you can get your free tickets in advance on line via <http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/epping-chorus>.

THE DIVINE MERCY APOSTOLATE, LONDON is holding a Preparation for Divine Mercy Sunday Retreat at Aylesford Priory, Aylesford, Kent on **Saturday 26th April 2025 from 10 am to 4:30 pm.** The retreat will include teachings on the Message of Divine Mercy, Holy Mass, Hour of Mercy with Stations of the Cross, Adoration and Benediction and Veneration of the Image of Merciful Jesus. All welcome. Call millie on [07957594646](tel:07957594646) for more information. Coaches from Slough, Ealing Broadway and Victoria www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/donations/?parish=epping//////////

ANNIVERSARIES: Maurice O'Regan (22/3), Richard Tanti, Canon Arthur Holmes (23/3), Hannah Ibson, Fr John Sherlock, Marian Branwood (25/3), Kay McDonald, Michael Peachey, Mgr Alfred Gilbey, Fr Denis Hall (26/3), Patricia Ryan (27/3), Mary Flower (28/3). **May they rest in peace.**

WE PRAY FOR OUR SICK AT HOME, IN HOSPITAL & CARE HOMES: Toohey Family, Paula Hall, Catherine Steel, James Bullen, Albert Fuller and John Millward, Jackie Hickman & Frank Mulligan. ***May the Lord send the healing power of his Holy Spirit down upon them and all who are ill.***

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