



Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Church
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)

6 DECEMBER 2020

401-403 Ewell Road, Tolworth, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 7DG
 Tel: 020 8399 9550; E-mail: tolworth@rcaos.org.uk + www.olionline.co.uk + **Parish Office:** Mon-Fri from 10am to 2pm
Parish Priest: Fr. Ignatius Edet + **Curate:** Fr. Joseph Edem + **Deacon:** Rev. Al Callan + **Secretary:** Mrs Denise Kidd
School: Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School + **Headteacher:** Mrs. Frances Robertson

MASS INTENTIONS AND PRAYERS		
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) YOU CAN ALSO PARTICIPATE VIA ONLINE LIVESREAMING AT https://www.olionline.co.uk		
5 Sat <i>Vigil</i>	18.30	John & David Doyle (<i>Doyle & Hall Families</i>)
6 Sun Bible Sunday	09.00	Linford Fuller (<i>L. Lewis</i>)
	11.00	Joe & Bertha D'Costa – RIP
	18.00	<i>Pro Populo</i> – For the People
SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT		
EUCCHARISTIC EXPOSITION: Monday – Friday at 8.30am		
7 Mon <i>Feria</i>	9.30	Bertha D'Costa – RIP
8 Tues <i>Immaculate Conception</i>	9.30	Church Building Fund Subscribers
	19.00	<i>Pro Populo</i> – For the People
9 Wed <i>Feria</i>	9.30	Silvia Bailey (<i>M. Howley</i>)
	19.00	Family & Friends of Kathy Jankowska (<i>Kathy</i>)
10 Thurs <i>Feria</i>	7.00	Holy Souls
	9.30	Martin Hart – RIP (<i>D. Kidd</i>)
11 Friday <i>Feria</i>	7.00	Robert & Annie Eales – RIP (<i>FM</i>)
	9.30	Guiletta & Romano Jankowska & Family (<i>Kathy</i>)
12 Sat <i>Feria</i>	9.00	Don Paul Ramanayake – RIP (<i>M. Peiris</i>)
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) – GAUDETE!		
12 Sat <i>Vigil</i>	18.30	Dec'd of Pawlowicz & Galinowski families (<i>Szymanski's</i>)
13 Sun	9.00	Ottavio D'Agostino (<i>Franco</i>)
	11.00	Private
	18.00	
OTHER SERVICES		
Sacrament of Reconciliation	Saturday: 9.30-10am & 5.30-6.15pm	
St Anthony of Padua	Tuesday: after morning and evening Masses	
Our Lady of Perpetual Help	Wednesday: after morning and evening Masses	
Our Lady of Fatima	1st Saturday of the month	
LIVESREAMING CONTINUES		
The dispensation from Sunday obligation granted by the Bishops at the onset of the lockdown is still in place till further notice. Livestreaming of all weekday and Sunday Masses will also continue so that those who may not yet consider it safe for them to attend Mass in person, especially over the weekend, can participate virtually.		

PREPARE A WAY FOR THE LORD

Advent is a time of hope. But what kind of hope? Christian hope is not just *informative*. It does not consist merely in giving us information about (our) salvation in Christ Jesus. It is also – indeed, over and above this – *performative*. In other words, it is a hope which moves us to action, to do something, namely, to change our lives as a result of our encounter with God, especially through his Son, Jesus Christ.

Today's liturgy presents us with this vision in the light of the messianic expectations of the people of Israel in the first reading (Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11) and the Gospel (Mk 1:1-8), and the early Church's expectation of the second coming of Christ in the second reading (2 Peter 3:8-14).

In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah announces a message of God's comfort and hope to the people of Israel in exile in Babylon: *"Console my people, console them" says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for....'* The declaration of an end to the seventy years of captivity in Babylon was indeed a cheery news. Alas, they would return to their homeland and rebuild Jerusalem, their pride! But it was also an invitation to action at a deeper level, namely, the restoration of their relationship with God: *"A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low. Let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley...'* Otherwise, God's glory would remain concealed: *"then, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all mankind shall see it..."*

These powerful imageries of repentance are taken up by Mark the evangelist and applied to the person and message of John the Baptist. This way, the evangelist underscores the main mission of the eccentric Baptist at the river Jordan. He was not the messiah. Like a voice crying in the wilderness in Isaiah, his duty was to announce the nearness of the Lord who *"will baptise you with the Holy Spirit,"* and prepare the people of Israel for his arrival by *"proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."* Hope in the approaching messianic reign was one thing that *"all Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem [who] made their way to him"* to be baptised after confessing their sins, had in common. In other words, their hope in God's coming, moved them to turn around their lives, to change.

Like the people of Israel longed for his first coming, today the Christian people await Christ's return in glory. Our faith is rooted in God's faithfulness. This, in turn, is what gives us hope. Therefore, it does not matter how soon or how late he would come because *"with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day."* If anything, our faith assures us that he will surely come again, and at his own appointed time just as he did at his first coming (see Gal 4:4). The seeming delay in the Lord's coming, the apostle reminds us in the epistle, is actually to an advantage. It provides us the opportunity to be fully prepared through repentance and saintly living: *"he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways...you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come ... do your best to live lives without spot or stain...."*

We stand in a twofold relationship to this message of hope. First, as the addressees of the voice that cries in the wilderness, we are called to prepare a way for the Lord in our hearts, homes, family, Church and community. What are the obstacles that impede me from responding to him? What can I do this Advent to become more responsive to God's voice? Second, as messengers of the word by virtue of our baptism, we are also called, like John the Baptist, to draw the men and women of our time to turn over their lives to God. Fulfilling this mission requires letting go of ourselves like John. © IAE

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

1ST READING	Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11
2ND READING	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
GOSPEL	John 1: 6-8,19-28

PRAYERS REMEMBRANCE	
	Please remember in your prayers all those who have recently died , especially Bella Fernandes, Bridie Keane, Angelica Viscido, Brian Summers, and those whose anniversaries are remembered at this time. May they rest in peace. Amen.
	Please remember and pray for the sick, the housebound and all who care for them, especially those within our own parish community: Vanessa Andrew, Martin Dray, Anthony Durkin, Sue Ewen, Pauline Ferrara, Ann Groves, Thomas Haley, Heather & George Trutwein, Yvonne Norman, Esme Mills, Sharon Kelly, Frances Cox, Mary Ryan, Betty Harte, Antonio Ciaiola, Joan McGovern, Rita Reginald, Elizabeth Saunders, Thomas O'Connor, Jimmy Simon, Ron Malone, Sarah Mills, Samar Staussi, Annita Smith, Ann-Marie Deasy, Shirlene A., Ida Rebello, Kathleen & Chris McGuinness, Kathleen O'Connell, Fr Arbo Lekule, Fr Guy Noonan, and Claire Pender.

WEEKLY COLLECTIONS	
	<p><i>Due to current social distancing measures at Mass, the weekly collection will be taken as you leave the church or in an envelope through the Presbytery door or through bank transfer.</i></p> <p><i>I am grateful to those of you who have started to make your regular contribution to the Church via standing order (form available at olionline.co.uk), or by online banking: RCAS Our Lady Immaculate Church, Account Number: 06467032; Sort Code: 60-21-05.</i></p> <p>IMPORTANT: If you would normally have given by Gift Aid envelopes, please include your Gift Aid number in your online instruction to your bank. If you are not in the Gift Aid scheme, please include the letters NGA in the instruction to the bank.</p> <p>Any queries? Please contact Allan Cook, email: tolworthgac@rcaos.org.uk or phone: 020 8399 4368</p> <p>Thank you for your generosity to your parish.</p>

INFANT BAPTISM	
	Please contact the Parish Office for information pack & to register for the pre-baptism course. Next course: TBA

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION	
	Please, watch this space for information for the next programme.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION 2020	
	Candidates Meeting: Next date TBA

CONTACTLESS PAYMENTS

Who carries cash these days? Most retailers don't take it anymore! Yet for many, we come to Church and get "caught out" by the collection bags at the end of Mass. Great news! You will find contactless payment machines from this week in the narthex: select the amount you wish to give, tap your payment card on the reader, and the payment will come through to the parish. This will be available for use at any time the Church doors are open. Thank you for your generosity.

PARISH NEWS AND EVENTS
<p>CHURCH OPENING TIMES FOR PRIVATE PRAYERS</p> <p>Sunday (6/12): 2pm – 3.30pm Monday (7/12): 10.15am – 11.15am & 5pm – 6.30pm Tuesday (8/12): 10.15 – 12pm; 4pm – 7pm Wednesday (9/12): 10.30am – 1pm Thursday (10/12): 10.30am – 12pm Friday (11/12): Saturday (12/12): 9.30am – 10am</p> <p>SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION</p> <p>Tuesday, 8 December is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Patronal Feast of our Church and Diocese. There will be two Masses: Morning Mass, 9.30am, and evening Mass, 7pm.</p> <p>REMEMBERING THE UNBORN THIS ADVENT</p> <p>This Tuesday we will be celebrating the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On this day, let us remember all unborn children, especially those recently conceived. That safety, protection and love would be granted to them, and that we the Church, with the intercession of Our Lady, would take on the call to support these precious children of God. Lord hear us! – see www.righttolife.org.uk</p> <p>GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON FAITH ENGAGEMENT</p> <p>Officials of the MHCLG have asked for individual Catholics to respond to this open consultation on the way Government engages with faith communities. The link to the online submission is: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/independent-faith-engagement-review-call-for-evidence This call for evidence aims to collect views to underpin the Faith Engagement Review. This call for evidence opened on 13th November and will run for a period of 4 weeks closing at 11:45pm on 11 December 2020.</p> <p>LENTEN PROJECT RAFFLE 2020</p> <p>The annual Lenten Project Raffle for 2020 had to be cancelled due to coronavirus. The tickets went out in the school bags. As the raffle was never drawn those who returned counterfoils are entitled to a refund unless they would like to donate the amount to the Lenten Project. If you would like a refund please contact Phil Townsend. Please have your ticket numbers available for verification.</p> <p>DONATIONS TO FOODBANK: Please leave your donations in the boxes provided in the Old Chapel (9am – 6pm). <u>Urgently Needed Food Items:</u> cereals, instant mash, juice, tinned meat, fish & spaghetti, biscuits, noodles, rice, pasta, tea and coffee. Thanks.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR WHILE IN CHURCH IN ADVENT</p> <p>As you look around the Church, and take part in the Church's liturgies, you will have noticed some changes. We have an advent wreath. Also known as the Advent Crown, it symbolises the four weeks of advent. It is circular, representing God's infinite love, and decorated with evergreen leaves which represent the hope of eternal life. Sundays 1, 2 and 4 have violet-coloured candles, rose for the third Sunday, and white for Christmas Day, representing the joy of Christ's birth, and of course white also being a festive liturgical colour. The vestments the priest wears are violet or purple, representing sorrow and penitence, and the patience we must have during this season of preparation for the birth of Our Lord. There should be no flowers within the sanctuary as we have embarked on a solemn season of preparation for Christmas, and for similar reasons, there should be no additional incidental organ music: like the sanctuary decorations, it is stripped back to only that which is needed to accompany the singing. People will ask, "Why are we not singing Christmas Carols?" "They are playing them on the radio!" Christ's birth in the liturgy is celebrated on 25th December (24th for vigil Masses) so it would not make any sense whatsoever to be preparing for his coming on the one hand and celebrating his arrival (early) on the other hand! Finally, you will see another change next week as the colour purple gives way to rose and we celebrate Gaudete Sunday (we also have the rose-coloured candle on the wreath). The word comes from the entrance antiphon for this Mass, which is 'Rejoice!' This Sunday gives us a little bit of a break about midway through the season, which is otherwise of a penitential character, and signifies the nearness of the Lord's coming (a limited number of flowers are permitted to be used, and the music will also reflect this effective "light relief" halfway through our Advent preparations). ©AR</p>