



Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Church  
**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – B**

**24 DECEMBER 2023**

401-403 Ewell Road, Tolworth, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 7DG

Tel: 020 8399 9550; E-mail: [tolworth@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:tolworth@rcaos.org.uk) + [www.olionline.co.uk](http://www.olionline.co.uk) + **Parish Office:** Mon-Fri from 10am to 2pm

**Parish Priest:** Fr. Ignatius Edet + **Curate:** TBA + **Deacon:** Rev. Al Callan (Retd) + **Secretary:** Mrs Denise Kidd

**School:** Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School + **Headteacher:** Mr Ben Martin

**MASS INTENTIONS AND PRAYERS**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – B**

**LIVESTREAM LINK:** <https://www.olionline.co.uk>

23 Sat – Vigil	18.30	Stella Joseph & Family
24 Sunday Day of Prayer for Expectant Mothers	09.00 11.00	Christopher Byrne – RIP ( <i>T Rutter</i> ) Jack Hoey – RIP ( <i>K&amp;N McGuinness</i> )

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

First Vigil	17.00	Chris & Tom McGuinness – RIP
Second Vigil	19.00	Catherine Yap & Family
Mass in the Night	22.00	<i>Pro Populo</i> – People of the Parish

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

Mass at Dawn	8.00	Harold Wood – RIP
Mass in the Day	9.15	Nicholas Reginald ( <i>Maria</i> )
Mass in the Day	11.00	Anne Shea – RIP ( <i>F Evans</i> )

**CHRISTMAS OCTAVE**

**EUCCHARISTIC EXPOSITION:** Monday – Friday at 8.00am

26 Tuesday <i>St Stephen</i>	9.30	Paul Lee ( <i>L Ko</i> )
27 Wednesday <i>St John</i>	9.30 19.00	Mary Joyce – RIP ( <i>M-J Gray</i> ) Liz Jones & Family
28 Thursday <i>The Holy Innocents</i>	7.00 9.30	G Wickramasingham & Family Janaki Gandhimathi – RIP ( <i>Suresh</i> )
29 Friday <i>St Thomas of Canterbury</i>	7.00 9.30	Holy Souls Paul Joseph – RIP ( <i>S Joseph</i> )
30 Saturday <i>Day Six of Octave</i>	9.00	Eddie Savage – RIP ( <i>J Savage</i> )

**THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH**

30 Sat – Vigil	18.30	Rosary Anthony – RIP
31 Sunday	09.00 11.00 18.00	Alex & Rosemary Maranzano Ryan Lynch – RIP ( <i>S Tremenheere</i> ) Holy Souls

**OTHER SERVICES**

<b>Eucharistic Exposition</b>	Monday – Friday: 8am
<b>Morning Prayer (Lauds)</b>	Monday – Friday: 9am
<b>Sacrament of Reconciliation</b>	Saturday: 9.30-10am & 5.30-6.00pm
<b>Youth Mass</b>	Last Sunday: 6pm Mass
<b>St Anthony of Padua</b>	<b>Tuesday:</b> after morning and evening Masses
<b>Our Lady of Perpetual Help</b>	<b>Wednesday:</b> after morning and evening Masses
<b>Our Lady of Fatima</b>	1st Saturday of the month
<b>Syro Malabar Prayer Group</b>	1st Friday of the month: 7pm

**SHARED PRAYER OF THE WEEK**

Mother Mary, as you carried your dear Son in your immaculate womb, you also carried Him in your heart. Pray for me, this Advent / Christmas, that I may surrender myself to the will of the Father in imitation of you. You said “Yes” to all that God asked of you and never hesitated to fully embrace His divine will. Pray that I may imitate your perfect example so as to share a deeper union with you and your divine Son. Amen.

**BEHOLD THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD!**

The fourth and last Sunday of Advent brings us much closer to the great feast of the birth of Christ at Christmas. Indeed, this year, it coincides with the last day of Advent. It is fitting that the liturgy turns our focus to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the woman through whom God accomplished the mystery of the Incarnation. Mary is certainly the epitome of divine election. She was chosen by God for a unique role in both human and salvation history even before she was born. According to Justin Martyr (AD 160), Irenaeus of Lyons (AD 180) and other Church Fathers, Mary’s role was already prophesied immediately after *The Fall*. Beyond the pronouncement of judgement against Adam and Eve, Genesis 3 contains a message of redemption particularly in verse 15 where God says to the serpent: *“I will make you enemies of each other: you and the woman, your offspring and her offspring. It will crush your head and you will strike its heel.”*

In the light of the mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption, the Fathers of the Church considered this text, especially the phrase, *“It [her offspring] will crush your head and you will strike its heel,”* as *protoevangelium*, the first good news or gospel. They also identified the *offspring of the woman* with Jesus and his mother Mary as the *new Eve*, following the lead by St Paul in 1 Co 15:45 where he describes Jesus as the *second Adam*. This typological or allegorical comparison between Eve and Mary (the *new Eve*) and Adam and Jesus (the *second Adam*), highlights, among others, both the pre-eminence and the salvific character of God’s choice of Mary. ‘Why her?’ we may ask.

Mary’s election is neither a reward for her good deeds nor a response to her prayer. It is purely a divine initiative. The Angel Gabriel underlines this in the Gospel (Lk 1:26-28) when he says to her, *“Rejoice, so highly favoured”* ... *‘you have won God’s favour.’* Though she is not chosen because of any merit on her part, God’s election makes her indeed ‘worthy’ before God and deserving of being revered by all generations. Hence, she declares in the *Magnificat*: *“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit exults in God my saviour, because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid. Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed, for the Almighty has done great things for me. Holy is his name”* (Lk 1:47-49).

Does this mean that Mary is completely lacking in merit? No! What then is her ‘merit’? One way of looking at this is to return to the above parallel between her and Eve. What is it that was lacking in Eve (and Adam) but abundantly present in Mary (and Jesus)? Obedience to God’s will. That is it! Mary’s response to God’s choice of her is clearly exceptional. She is *“deeply disturbed”* by the angel’s word and truthfully queried the prospect of giving birth as a virgin. Yet, she believes that *“nothing is impossible to God,”* and surrenders herself completely to God’s will: *“I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you have said be done to me”* (v. 38). To this ‘Yes,’ she remains completely faithful to the end. She is, therefore, not merely a passive vessel at God’s disposal, but an active collaborator with God in bringing about the fulfilment of God’s plan for humanity and the world.

As we prepare to celebrate the mystery of the Lord’s Nativity and to welcome Him when he comes again, we remember that like Mary, each of us is chosen and favoured by God. Likewise, we recall that unlike Mary, we are often slow or refuse to say ‘Yes’ to him and/or are unfaithful to our ‘Yes.’ Therefore, we entrust ourselves to her maternal care and intercession. ©IAE

**NEXT SUNDAY’S READINGS**

<b>1ST READING</b>	Gen 15:1-6, 21:1-3 / Ecclesiasticus 3:3-7, 14-17
<b>2ND READING</b>	Colossians 3:12-21 / Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19
<b>GOSPEL</b>	Luke 2:22-40

## PRAYERS REMEMBRANCE



Please remember in your prayers all who have recently died, especially John (Jack) Hoey and those whose anniversaries occur 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 in our parish community: Vanessa Andrew, Martin Dray, Pauline Ferrara, Ann Groves, Thomas Haley, George Trutwein, Frances Cox, Mary Ryan, Joan McGovern, Rita Reginald, Thomas O'Connor, Jimmy Simon, Sarah Mills, Samar Staussi, Annita Smith, Shirlene A., Kathleen McGuinness, Kathleen O'Connell, Claire Pender, Hazel D'Aguiar, Mary O'Mara, Elizabeth Jones, Ray Lewry, Wendy Cook, Tony Cook, Nivetheni Robert, Joe Ingrassi, Baby Freddie Page, Clare & Baby Polly, Gerry Hague, Maureen Stephens, Maureen Sellwood, Eric Powell, Tony & Mavis Fisher, Andy Moolman, Mary L Taylor, Ian Beard, Qiaochen Shi, Nee Collier, Ida Rebello, Ravenna Ahmed, Jesse Osborne, and Shirley Nicholson.

## PARISH NEWS AND EVENTS

### MASSES THIS WEEKEND 23/24 DECEMBER

The normal Sunday Masses for this weekend are 6.30pm (Saturday 23 Dec), 9am, and 11am. **There will be no 6pm Mass due to Christmas Eve.** NB: The Christmas Eve Masses (5pm, 7pm, and 10pm) do not fulfil the Sunday obligation for this weekend.

### CHRISTMAS OFFERING

The collection taken at all Christmas Masses is your gift to our priest, Fr Ignatius. As usual, envelopes are available in the Narthex. **If you are a member of the parish Gift Aid scheme**, please enter your gift aid number on the envelope to enable tax to be reclaimed for the benefit of the parish. If you do not know your gift aid number, Lance Louis (email [tolworthgac1@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:tolworthgac1@rcaos.org.uk) or phone 07851 070036) will be happy to give it to you.

### PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office is closed for Christmas and will re-open on Tuesday 2 January 2024 at 10am. For urgent pastoral needs only (e.g., Sick Calls), please ring 0208 899 9550 ext 2.

### CRIB OFFERING

Our parish Crib Offering this year will go to support the Catholic Children's Society's (CCS) Southwark Crisis Fund, which provides help for local families who are facing real hardship and have nowhere else to run to. You can donate at the Crib or via the CCS website [www.cathchild.org.uk/crib](http://www.cathchild.org.uk/crib).

### REMEMBERING THE UNBORN

As we celebrate the Birth of Christ, we pray for all expectant mothers. We pray for an overwhelming sense of hope and joy to fill their lives, and for increased support to be given by their family, friends and local communities, as they journey through this life changing experience. For more information, please visit [www.righttolife.org.uk](http://www.righttolife.org.uk)

## WEEKLY COLLECTIONS

### LAST WEEKEND

Non-Gift-aid: £797.29

Gift-aid: £331.60 **Total: £1,128.89\***

### TOTAL COLLECTION FOR NOVEMBER

A. Cash / cheques – £4,693.06

1. Gift-Aided – £3,093.24

2. Non-G/A – £3,093.24

B. Standing Orders/Bank Transfers – £2,543.00

1. Gift-Aided – £2,543.00

2. Non-G/A – £192.00

C. Contactless Machine – £928.73

**Total = £8,356.79 (Last Month: £9,114.91).**

**Thank you for your generosity to your parish.**

Kindly consider making your regular contribution to the Church via standing order (form available at [olionline.co.uk](http://olionline.co.uk)), or by online banking:

**RCAS Our Lady Immaculate Church, Account Number: 06467032; Sort Code: 60-21-05.**

**IMPORTANT:** Please include your Gift Aid number in your online instruction to your bank. Non-Gift Aid donors, please include the letters NGA.

Any queries? Please contact Lance Louis: [tolworthgac1@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:tolworthgac1@rcaos.org.uk) or 07851 070036.



\*Excluding standing orders & online payments – the monthly total of which will be published on or after the first weekend of every new month.

## MESSAGE FROM ARCHBISHOP JOHN WILSON

Archbishop John Wilson has recorded his annual Christmas message for the Archdiocese, calling for us all to embrace prayer and welcome Christ into our hearts. He reminds us that: "if we ask, we will be heard. If we seek, we will be found. If we knock, the Lord Jesus will open the door". So let 2024 be the year we all give prayer a go and welcome Christ into our hearts. To read or watch the message, visit <http://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/>

Or use the QR code below.



## THE FEASTS OF CHRISTMAS

### 1. CHRISTMAS EVE

1) 5pm – Vigil Mass 1

2) 7pm – Vigil Mass 2

3) 10pm – Mass in the Night (*Carol singing – 9.30pm*)

### 2. CHRISTMAS DAY

1) 8am – Mass at Dawn

2) 9.15am – Mass during the Day 1

3) 11am – Mass during the Day 2

3. CHRISTMAS OCTAVE – DAY 2 (*St Stephen*)

4. CHRISTMAS OCTAVE – DAY 3 (*St John the Evangelist*)

5. CHRISTMAS OCTAVE – DAY 4 (*The Holy Innocents*)

6. CHRISTMAS OCTAVE – DAY 5 (*St Thomas of Canterbury*)

7. CHRISTMAS OCTAVE – DAY 6

8. CHRISTMAS OCTAVE – DAY 7 (*The Holy Family*)

9. CHRISTMAS OCTAVE – DAY 8 (*Mary, The Holy Mother of God*)

## FOOD BANK DONATIONS: RENEWED APPEAL

"Food banks are seeing more people than ever coming to them for help, many of whom need emergency support for the first time...across the UK, local food banks gave out close to 3 million emergency food parcels last year. Over a million of these parcels were provided for children."

These are recent words of the Trussell Trust. Please continue to be generous with your food donations. All non-perishable food items are welcome. Thank you.

## MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

I would like to wish all parishioners and visitors to our parish a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

Permit me to thank all those who have worked hard in many ways to make our celebration of the festivities of our Lord's birth this year solemn, joyful, uplifting, and memorable. May I thank especially the church cleaners, florists, welcomers, readers, extraordinary ministers of holy communion, servers, catechists, choristers, organists, sacristans, repository attendants, and many others who contributed quietly behind the scenes.

**Buon Natale \* Joyeux Noël \* Fröhliche Weihnachten \* Felix Natal \* Vrolijk Kerstfeest \* Krismasi Njema \* Krisamas Kee Badhae \* Suba Naththalak Wewa \* Felix Navidad!**

Fr Ignatius, PP