



# St John Fisher Roman Catholic Church

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[www.stjohnfisheronline.org.uk](http://www.stjohnfisheronline.org.uk)

Parish Priest: Fr. Shaun Middleton, 020 8429 5684, [shaunmiddleton@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:shaunmiddleton@rcdow.org.uk)

Parish Catechist: Kay O'Connor, 020 8429 5682, [kayoconnor@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:kayoconnor@rcdow.org.uk)

Parish Administrator: Claudia McHugh, 020 8429 5681, [claudiamchugh@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:claudiamchugh@rcdow.org.uk) (9.30am-1.30pm, Mon-Wed-Fri)

## 15<sup>th</sup> December 2013 ~ Third Sunday of Advent Year A

**'Gaudete in Domino semper, iterum dico gaudete.'**

### *We Welcome...*

People of All Faiths and Cultures  
Divorced or Separated Persons  
Families with Children  
Those in Loving Relationships  
Those in Difficulty  
Married Couples  
Single Persons  
Those in Recovery  
Travellers from Far and Near  
Widows and Widowers  
Visitors

### *We Seek...*

To live the Gospel of Jesus Christ  
To Gather the Community and Tell the Story  
To Sing and Make Music to the Lord  
To Break the Bread and Share the Cup

### *We Celebrate...*

Diversity  
A spirit of hospitality  
The unity that God wills  
Enlightening those who seek God  
Forming small faith communities  
Reaching out to alienated Catholics  
Reverencing the dignity of each person  
Caring for the needs of the less fortunate  
Empowering Christians to realise their call  
Providing a spiritual Oasis  
Honouring an understanding among all faiths  
Nurturing our gifts and sharing them

Gaudete-Rejoice! This is the instruction we are given at the beginning of Mass today. But what do we have to rejoice about? The Gospel presents us with the rather odd figure of John the Baptist. The Lord proclaims that no greater man than he has been born. It's clear that John the Baptist has much to rejoice about. What entitles him to this great honour?

John the Baptist was on the edge. His diet and his dress sense were weird, his living environment less than desirable. These things matter little to John. He was quite clear about his mission, and that was his sole focus. He was tasked with preparing the hearts of the people to receive the great joy of the Messiah. He preached to them a clear message of repentance, that they must turn away from sin so that they can recognise him when he comes. He gave them a baptism of repentance, a symbol of their liberation from the slavery of sin, which made them ready to greet their Redeemer. People flocked to him to listen and to be baptised. He fulfilled his task with great zeal and passion.

At this time John is in prison. But you cannot imprison someone who has truly repented with a full heart. Even though John cannot see the Lord face to face, he is able to recognise him through the thick walls of a prison. The words conveyed to him by the Lord most certainly would make John rejoice.

Repentance is a huge problem for us because it demands we examine every aspect of our lives. There are lots of areas where we are simply not ready for repenting. It's painful for us to break free from patterns of sin that seem to give us comfort and make us happy. We think we will miss them and suffer without them. There are lots of things in our lives that we don't want to admit are sinful, and sometimes when we look at the extent of our sinfulness we can become disheartened, and think that repentance is pointless. It is, however, necessary if we desire to receive our Saviour. God's grace and the fellowship of each other spurs us on to true repentance. We have the great comfort of God's mercy which means we don't need to languish in slavery to sin. We're right on the threshold of our complete happiness. We're on the very edge of true joy.

This Sunday reminds us that, like John the Baptist, we're on the edge. We need to edge our way closer to true repentance because that's where we find our joy. Our salvation is a work in progress. Let's continue through Advent to encourage each other in prayer both to repent and rejoice.

*Fr Shaun*

## Mass Times & Intentions

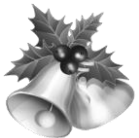
Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December (First Mass of Sunday)  
18.00 Dan Doody RIP  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December – 3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
08.30 People of the Parish  
10.00 Annie Donovan (Anniv)  
11.30 Mary & Tony Mills (Anniv)  
Monday 16<sup>th</sup> – Advent feria  
09.30 Sister Teresa Geohegan (Sick)  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> – Advent feria  
09.30 Sue Gunovsky (Sick)  
Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> – Advent feria  
19.00 Mary Rodrigues RIP, Olinda Mesquita RIP &  
Assumption Fernandes RIP  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> – Advent feria  
09.30 Patrick Bowles (Anniv) & Helen Foley RIP  
Friday 20<sup>th</sup> – Advent feria  
09.30 Maureen Buckley RIP  
(St. John Fisher School at Mass)  
Sacrament of Reconciliation: Sat 17.15-17.45

**Please note** St. John Fisher School will be attending Mass on Friday, 20th December at 9.30am.

**Please keep the sick in your prayers. A list of sick parishioners is displayed on the notice board at the back of the Church.**

**Recently Deceased**, Alison Davis, Paul Cleland, John Tyrrell.

**Pray Also For**, Annie Donovan, Mary & Tony Mills, Patrick Bowles, Kåre Bjørnerud, Virginia Cabral Francisco, Waclaw Kowalewicz, Frank Beesley, Virginia Dellamura, Bridie Haynes, Nora Egan, Ying-Eng Kit, Manuel Rodrigues, Brendan Connolly and Christopher Hilton whose anniversaries occur at this time.



## Christmas Mass Times

*Christmas Eve 24<sup>th</sup> December*

5.00pm Family Mass  
10.30pm Lessons and Carols followed by Mass

*Christmas Day 25<sup>th</sup> December*

08.30am Mass  
10.00am Children's Mass  
11.30am Mass

*St Stephen's Day 26<sup>th</sup> December*

11.00am Mass

For the rest of Christmas the Mass schedule will take place at the usual times except on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00pm (*no Morning Mass*) and Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 at 11.00am (*no Evening Mass*).

**Christmas Offering** Attached to this week's newsletter is an envelope in which you can make a Christmas Offering for Fr Shaun. These offerings support him in his ministry here in the Parish and they will be collected over the Masses of Christmas. Thank you for your kindness and generosity at this time.

**'Lights of Life' Christmas Tree** Please fill in a card if you so wish and put it in the box (near St. Anthony statue). Your card will be

put on the tree from this weekend. A memory book is also available to write the names of those you wish to remember.

### **Car Parking Arrangements whilst building works are in progress**

The Car Park will be closed from **6<sup>th</sup> January 2014** to facilitate major building works to the Church. On Sundays, Saturdays and on special occasions every endeavour will be made to open the Car Park for genuine visitors to the Church, but the area available for car parking will be reduced on grounds of safety. We apologise for any inconvenience caused by the closure of the car park.

**Bethany Group** Next meeting on Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm in the Sacristy room.

**Christmas Coffee Morning** Today after the 10am and 11.30am Mass we shall be serving traditional Christmas food and drink, selling raffle tickets for the wonderful Harrods Hamper, "guess the weight" of the Christmas cake and much more! So, do come along with family and friends and join in the Christmas festivities and enjoy a slice of Christmas cheer in the small hall. All proceeds towards the replacement of the Altar Servers albs.

**CAFOD Traidcraft Food & Christmas Card Stall** Open this weekend after all masses in the Church porch and in the Church hall at the coffee morning after the 10am and 11.30am Masses.

**'The Pylon'** The Christmas Edition of our exciting Parish magazine is now available at the back of the church. Price £1 (please put money in 'Papers' box). Please buy a copy and support our advertisers who are all parishioners.

**Christmas Posters** The Christmas Posters are here. Please collect your poster from the Church porch.

**Churches Together in North Harrow** The Christmas greetings cards are now available for distribution. Please collect your pack from the Church Porch.

**Google Groups** We are setting up an electronic email which will contain the Parish Newsletter. This will be sent to all who are registered and who have given us an email address. If you wish to opt out, please let us know and remember to make sure to release it from the spam report if it should end up there.

**St. John Fisher Social Club** The Club bar will be closed on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

**St. John Fisher Recipe Book** One of our parishioners has come up with a marvellous idea. It is proposed that we create a St John Fisher recipe book. The idea is that people give us their recipes and write a paragraph or two about where the recipe came from. This might be something about the person who gave you the recipe or it could be a cultural reference such as food that is cooked to celebrate a particular event in your home country. You might submit a recipe as an individual or as a family. As we have parishioners from all around the world this could be an exciting project so please send your recipes in and include cooking times, cooking temperature and the method of how to make the dish. We already have someone who has volunteered to do the illustrations for the book, so now we would like help especially in the production of the book. If you have experience in using *Microsoft Publisher* or another publishing programme please let Fr. Shaun or Kay know. We would have the book professionally printed and then sell it in order to raise funds for the re-ordering. If all goes well we would like to have the book ready by the time of next year's International Day. In the meantime, please send your recipes to [harrownorth@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:harrownorth@rcdow.org.uk).

