



# St John Fisher Roman Catholic Church

80 Imperial Close, North Harrow, HA2 7LW, 020 8868 7531

www.stjohnfisheronline.org.uk

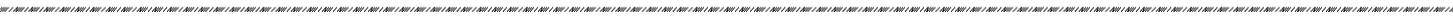
Parish Priest: Fr. Shaun Middleton, 020 8429 5684, shaunmiddleton@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Catechist: Kay O'Connor, 020 8429 5682, kayoconnor@rcdow.org.uk

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

## 14<sup>th</sup> December 2014 ~ Third Sunday of Advent Year B

### '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...*

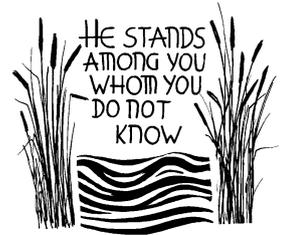
To live the Gospel of Jesus Christ  
 To Gather the Community and Tell the Story  
 To Sing and Make Music to the Lord  
 To Break the Bread and Share the Cup

#### *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

"There was a man sent from God whose name was John." Says the prologue to John's gospel. The precise meaning of the verb used of John the Baptist is sometimes missed. It has the sense of something or someone coming to be. It conveys the idea that this man lived in a particular time and place, which is why we should contrast this line with the way the Evangelist talks about the Word a few lines earlier. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God" (1.1). The Greek tense places the Word beyond the restrictions of time or place and we are told that John is sent from God. It seems to me that in pondering this subtle choice of words we can grasp something of what John the Baptist is about and indeed something of what we are to be about in our time and in our place. As TS Elliot put in his "Four Quartets", "The point of intersection of the timeless with time, is an occupation for the saint."

John is "sent from God". In the Gospel of John, apart from Jesus, no other character is introduced in this way. Yet John does not point to himself but rather he points away from himself to an as yet unseen Christ. They ask him "Who are you?" We already know the answer from the Prologue. But they don't. And if in the sixth verse there is an echo of the Gospel's first verse, then in that echo we can hear the difference. John was as we are now, living out our lives, sent as his witnesses here now. When on Christmas Day you hear "The Word became flesh" know that the language has shifted and the Word is spoken of as someone existing in time and space.



When they question him, John says that he is not the Christ, not Elijah, nor the prophet. Most pointedly, he declares, "I am not". This is the gospel, which again and again has Jesus say, "I am". John's denials, his saying who he is not, is a kind of pointing to who Jesus is.

John's strange task is to point to the one who is the light. In his "Hallowing the Time" Geoffrey Preston OP talks about this strange aspect of our Christian calling. He quotes a Chinese proverb: "The sun does not need a bell to announce its shining." And yet the One whom we believe is the Light of men and women in every time and place does indeed need a John the Baptist, a finger to point him out. He will neither compel nor force himself upon anyone. He leaves us free. CS Lewis once wrote, "His compulsion is our liberation".

The Lord in whom we believe is a poor fighter in a crowd. His voice can so easily go unheard. So often he stands among us as one we do not know. And it is our task both as a Church and as individuals to point to the Light here and now. And we can only do in so far as we are like the light, perhaps as a lamp on a winter's night is kin to the sun on a summer's day. But like John we are not the Light. But what a dignity, what a purpose we have! We, who in so many ways are not, are called to point to the One who is "I am".

In these days of Advent, purple cloth and sombre tones should help us see the ways in which we can say "I am not" and the ways we can let his "I am" echo in our lives. Then may we be fittingly prepared to behold the Light shining in the darkness, in all its splendour, beauty and glory.

*Fr Shaun.*

## Mass Times & Intentions

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December (First Mass of Sunday)  
18.00 People of the Parish  
Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Gaudete Sunday)  
08.30 Maura Sheehan RIP  
10.00 Luke Lambe (Anniv)  
11.30 Mary & Tony Mills (Anniv)  
Monday 15<sup>th</sup> – Advent feria  
09.30 Horst Nekut RIP  
**19.30 Advent Penitential Service**  
Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> – Advent feria  
09.30 Kåre Bjørnerud (Anniv)  
Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> – Advent feria  
19.00 Adrian Taylor (1<sup>st</sup> Anniv)  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> – Advent feria  
09.30 Joseph Thiruchelvam RIP  
Friday 19<sup>th</sup> – Advent feria  
09.30 Noel O'Brien 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, 19<sup>th</sup> 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**, Denis Coleman, Dave Connor, Louis Wales, Al Matsumura.

**Pray Also For**, Luke Lambe, Mary & Tony Mills, Kåre Bjørnerud, Adrian Taylor, Stanislaus Bannis, Theresa Fallon, Josie Tobin, Virginia Cabral Francisco, Waclaw Kowalewicz, Frank Beesley, Virginia Dellamura, Bridie Haynes, Nora Egan, Ying-Eng Kit, Manuel Rodrigues and Brendan Connolly 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*

8.30am 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 Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 at 11am.

**Altar Servers** Next week 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> Dec Team B will serve.

**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.

**Christmas Posters** Please collect your poster from the porch.

**'The Pylon'** The Christmas Edition of our exciting Parish magazine is available in the porch. Price £1 (please put money in 'Papers' box).

**CAFOD Traidcraft Food & Christmas Card Stall** Open this weekend after 6pm and 8.30am Mass in the Church porch and in the Church hall at the coffee morning after 10am and 11.30am Mass. We have some special offers this weekend. The Traidcraft food stall will not be open in January/February 2015.

**Christmas Coffee Morning** Please join us in the hall today after 10am and 11.30am Mass. We shall be serving traditional Christmas food and selling raffle tickets for the wonderful Christmas hamper, which has kindly been donated by a parishioner, as well as other raffle prizes. All proceeds towards our church.

**'Lights of Life' Christmas Tree** Please fill in a card if you so wish and put it in the box (near the baptismal font). 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.

**Senior Citizen's Christmas Party** A big thanks to the pipers, Irish dancers and all those who helped to make it such a wonderful evening. *Sheila Rogers*

**Church Cleaners** Copies of new rota on the shelf in the kitchen.

**Churches Together in North Harrow** Please collect the Christmas greetings cards for distribution from the Church porch.

**Mass in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes with Anointing of the Sick in Westminster Cathedral, Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at 2pm** The Sacrament of the Sick will be administered during the Mass by the bishops and priests. If you would like to participate in this Celebration and you or the person you are accompanying will be attending in a wheelchair please contact Claudia on 8429 5681/[claudiamchugh@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:claudiamchugh@rcdow.org.uk) by 19<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

**Cardinal's Mass of Thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Matrimony at Westminster Cathedral, Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2015 at 3pm** The Archbishop will be inviting to this Mass all couples in the Diocese who are celebrating their 10<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> (and every year over 60) wedding anniversary of Catholic marriage in 2015. If you qualify, please contact Claudia on [claudiamchugh@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:claudiamchugh@rcdow.org.uk) or 8429 5681 by **Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> February 2015** with the following details: husband and wife's names, wedding date, full postal address and email (or telephone number, if no email).

**Parish 100 Club** The major structural work to the church has been completed and we hope that you like it. Over the next seven years, we will need to pay the diocese back the loan that it has given to our parish to make this work possible. One fund raising initiative is for parishioners to join the Parish 100 Club. We would ask parishioners to buy a monthly ticket which costs £5; if 100 people join and pay £5 a month, the amount raised each month is £500... and £250 is given away in prizes as follows: £100 £75 £50 £25. This leaves £250 which goes to the parish. If 200 people join, the prizes go up to £200, £150, £100 and £50. So the more people join, the greater the monthly prize money will be. It would be fantastic if we could have a parish 200 club so we could raise £6000 a year which would be enormously helpful. **A Registration form is available from the porch or our website.** Thank you for your support.

