



ST MATTHEW CATHOLIC CHURCH, WEST NORWOOD

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7 December 2025

Parish Newsletter

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)

TODAY'S MASS READING: Parish Mass Book, from page 85

1st Reading (Is. 11:1-10) **2nd Reading** (Rom.15:4-9). **Gospel** (Mt. 3:1-12)

Readings Next Sunday: 1st
Reading (Is.35:1-6a,10). 2nd
Reading (Jas 5:7-10). Gospel
(Mt.11:2-11)

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

On this Second Sunday of Advent, the Church invites us deeper into the spirit of preparation—not just for Christmas as a date on the calendar, but for Christ who comes to meet us: in history at Bethlehem, in mystery in the sacraments, and in glory at the end of time. Today's Gospel introduces us to John the Baptist, the voice crying in the wilderness: *"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths!"* His words are not gentle suggestions; they are a call to conversion, an invitation to examine our hearts and make room for Christ. Advent is not only about waiting; it is about *active waiting*, a waiting that transforms. The first reading from Isaiah gives us a beautiful vision of hope: *"A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse."* Even where life looks cut down, damaged, or hopeless, God brings new beginnings. This is the message of Advent: that God can bring life from what feels lifeless. John the Baptist reminds us that preparation involves repentance—turning away from what blocks us from God: selfishness, unforgiveness, pride, and spiritual complacency. Advent is a time to slow down, look within, and allow God to straighten what has become crooked in our lives. Saint Paul, in the second reading, urges us to persevere and live in harmony with one another. In a world often divided by anger, fear, or indifference, we are called to be instruments of peace, people who welcome others just as Christ has welcomed us. So as we continue this Advent journey, let us ask ourselves three simple questions:

What needs to be healed or restored in my life?

Who do I need to forgive or reconcile with?

How can I make more space for Christ—through prayer, charity, and love?

Let us allow this Advent to be a fresh beginning. May our hearts become the manger where Christ finds a warm welcome, not just at Christmas, but every day.

Come, Lord Jesus, and renew us.
Amen.

Parish Priest: Fr Celestine Ekwueme

Email: celestineekwueme@rcaos.org.uk

PARISH INFORMATION AND FAITH NEWS

Pope's December prayer intention: For Christians in areas of conflict

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.

PARISH NOTICES

A Note of Gratitude: Dear Parish Family, With grateful hearts, we wish to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who helped make our 120th anniversary celebration a truly memorable and grace-filled occasion. The day was a beautiful reflection of who we are as a community—joyful, generous, united, and rooted in faith.

A special word of appreciation goes to the organising committee—**Joseph, Annabel, and Marie-France**—for their dedication, planning, and tireless efforts in ensuring everything came together seamlessly. Thank you to the members of our expanded parish committees that attended our various meetings.

We are also deeply grateful to all who played a role in the celebration: those who prepared and brought food and drinks, those who contributed financially—whether towards the celebration or the beautiful new vessels for the altar—and all who gave of their time to set up, serve, and clean the hall afterward. Your service truly embodied the spirit of stewardship and Christian hospitality.

To every parishioner who attended, prayed with us, supported in any way, or simply shared in the joy of the day—**thank you**. Your presence and participation made this anniversary not only possible, but truly special. May God bless each of you for your generosity, unity, and love for our parish community. As we step into the next chapter of our journey together, may we continue to grow in faith, hope, and charity.

Dare to Hope: This book is available at the repository. It is a reflective book that can accompany you in your advent journey. £3 per copy.

Catechism Classes: First Holy Communion Classes start today after 11am mass. Next Sunday, we will have our first meeting with those to join the RCIA class. This will be after 11am mass as well.

A LEGION OF MARY SOCIETY: We are delighted to announce that we intend to start a *Legion of Mary Society* in our parish. This will be a beautiful opportunity for both **children** and **adults** to grow in faith through prayer, especially the **Rosary**. **Children** will gather to pray together, and adults will also have their own prayer meetings as part of this apostolic and devotional work. If you feel called to be part of this spiritual family, please write your name and contact details on the **sign-up sheet placed at the back of the church**. Let us entrust this initiative to the loving care of Our Blessed Mother, and may she guide us as we journey together in faith.

Jubilee Year: The Jubilee Year concludes in just six weeks. There is still time for individuals, groups and parishes to visit the designated shrines and churches across the archdiocese and to receive the plenary indulgence. For a full list of places: <https://rcaos.org.uk/faith/jubilee-2025/designated>

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK**PARISH MINISTRY**

Saturday 6	Vigil, 2nd Sunday Advent
6:30pm	Canon J Devane RIP
Sunday 7	2nd Sunday of Advent
9am	Francis Gracias RIP
11am	Nathan Akujobi; in thanksgiving.
Monday 8	Immaculate Conception BVM
9:30am	No Mass
Tuesday 9	Feria
6:00pm	No Adoration
7:00pm	Maigread Murphy RIP
Wednesday 10	Feria
9:30am	Mary Marshman RIP
Thursday 11	Feria
11am @ BH	Holy Souls
Friday 12	Feria
9:30am	Derek D'Souza RIP
Saturday 13	Vigil, 3rd Sunday Advent
6:30pm	Terry & Mary Spaczynski RIP
Sunday 14	3rd Sunday of Advent
9am	John Fonseca RIP
11am	Peter, Matta & Cecilia RIP

READERS:

	6th/7th	13th/14th
6:30pm	Liane	Ann
9am	Daniel	Savio/Elisa
11am	Juliana?Melba	Sinead/Jessica
Eucharistic Ministers		
6:30pm	Annabel	Russel
9am	Albertina	Lawrence
11am	Yvonne	Kereine

Church Cleaning:

Chika/Patience/Juliane Cathe/Noelie/Hugo

The Season of Advent - Advent has a twofold character, for it is a time of preparation for the Solemnities of Christmas, in which the First Coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered, and likewise a time when, by remembrance of this, minds and hearts are led to look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. For these two reasons, Advent is a period of devout and expectant delight.

CYCLE OF PRAYER - Intentions for Advent and Christmas Time:

Migrants & Refugees (especially on Migrants' Day 3rd December)

Expectant Mothers (especially on Fourth Sunday of Advent)

WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS THOSE WHO HAVE RECENTLY DIED IN OUR PARISH COMMUNITY , AND THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARY OF DEATH OCCUR AROUND THIS TIME, MAY THEY REST IN PEACE. AMEN.

HOSPITAL CONTACTS: If you or a member of your family are admitted to our local hospitals, do please let the hospital's Catholic chaplain know.

St George's Hospital: 02087253069 / 02086721255)

Kings Hospital: If outside hospital—02032993522. inside the hospital call extension 33522

Croydon University Hospital: 02084013105

St Thomas' Hospital: 02071881187/02071881186

Guy's Hospital: 02071881185/02071889576



PARISH SCHEDULES

Sunday Mass Times :

6:30pm (Sat), 9am and 11am

Week Day Mass Times:

Tuesday ; 7pm

Wednesday & Friday; 9:30am

Thursday; 11am @ British Home

First Fridays; 12noon.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

Tuesdays; 6:00pm

Baptisms, Marriage, Funerals: Contact the Parish Office.

Youth Club:

4:30pm Every 3rd Saturday

RCIA: Contact Parish Office

RECONCILIATION/CONFESSIONS

Saturdays: 5:30pm to 6:15pm and on call.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Open Office: Fridays 10am to 12:30pm and 2:30pm to 4:30pm.

Other days with appointment, please.

UCM:

12noon Every First Friday

CHOIR REHEARSALS:

Wednesdays; 7:30pm @ the Church.

DIVINE MERCY GROUP

Sundays; after 11am mass @ the Divine Mercy Altar

We are grateful for all you do to support the parish.

Setting up a Standing Order is the most efficient way to make a donation to the parish without incurring fees. You can use the following details for one-off donation or to set up a Standing Order or Direct Debit. NatWest Bank: Account Name: RCAS Norwood West, Sort Code: 60-23-19; Account Number: 44115369. Thank You!