



St Nicholas of Tolentino RC Church, Lawford's Gate, Bristol BS5 ORE

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Download this Bulletin from the Parish Website: www.tolentino.org.uk

Parish Priest - Rev Richard McKay (tel: 0117-909-8810 / mob: 07779677370)

Catechesis: Mary Hopper (01275-830788) Caretaking of our buildings: Eddie Mgbeoduru

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Parish Administration & Hall/Room Bookings: Astrid Fagon and Team (0117-909-0419)

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B (Gaudete - Rejoicing Sunday)



REJOICING IN THE LIGHT!

The light of the Advent wreath is growing, the pink candle is lit and we touch joy! The incomparable joy of walking as Children of the Light, giving witness to the Light of the World that is Jesus Christ.

We are called not to curse the darkness, however much of it there is - economic crisis around the world, violence in the Congo and Syria, wars and global warming: yes, there is plenty to make us curse. But instead we are 'witnesses to the light', to break the power of darkness by holding aloft the candle flame of divine love that is in our hearts, by singing a New Song of Joyful Love that will bring healing to our world.

We have much to be joyful about, for we are re-born in the Light, we carry the flame of undying love within us and we have the joy of walking with all humanity in their griefs and hopes, their joys and sorrows, in Jesus' Name!

DAYS OF THE GREAT 'O' ANTIPHONS - PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS

SUNDAY: PARISH MASS with Rite of Adult Catechumen at 10am (*streamed on website*)

'O WISDOM'

MONDAY: *No Liturgy today* 'O ADONAI' (Lord)

TUESDAY: 'O RADIX' (Root of Jesse)

Adoration at 6.00pm

Mass at 6.30pm

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions) at 7.15 - 7.45pm

WEDNESDAY: 'O CLAVIS DAVID' (Key of David')

Adoration at 5.45pm

Mass at 6.15pm

ADVENT SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION AT 7.30pm (at St Augustine's, Downend)

***The Gospel says: 'John came as a witness, to speak for the Light
Who is Christ Jesus - that all might believe in Him' - will we witness to the Light?***

THURSDAY: 'O ORIENS' ('Morning Star')*Adoration* at 11.30am **Mass at 12 noon*****Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions) at 12.45 - 1.15pm*****FRIDAY: 'O REX GENTIUM' (King of the Peoples')***Adoration* at 8.30am **Mass at 9.00am*****Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions) at 9.45 - 10.15am*****SATURDAY: 'O EMMANUEL' (God-is-with-us)***Adoration* at 11.30am **Mass at 12.00 noon*****Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions):* after Mass and 4.00-4.30pm****SUNDAY: FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - CHRISTMAS EVE****PARISH MASS with Blessing the Christmas Tree at 10am** (*streamed on website*)**CHRISTMAS EVE MIDNIGHT MASS OF CHRISTMAS at 10.30am****CHRISTMAS DAY SOLEMN MASS OF CHRISTMAS DAY at 10.00am**

TODAY: [1] The **Third Sunday of Advent ('Gaudete' or 'Rejoicing' Sunday)** celebrates with Joy the Coming of He who brings the Spirit of God that liberates the poor and heals the broken hearted. John is the 'Voice' that prepares the way for the 'Word' and the era of the Holy Spirit. Will we also be witnesses, speaking for the Light that is Jesus?

[2] We rejoice to celebrate the **Rite of Adult Catechumen** with Gabe and Gray who are journeying towards Full Communion with the Universal Church.

[3] A **Retiring Collection** for our **Parish Caritas (Destitution) Fund**, supporting those most afflicted by fuel and food poverty and other needs. Please be as generous as possible.

NEXT SUNDAY: [1] With the **Fourth Sunday of Advent**, we prepare for the celebration of the Birth of Jesus with reflecting on that monumental moment when God invites a young girl, Mary of poor Nazareth, to bring Divine Love into human flesh. She risks deadly condemnation as she embraces God's Word and Will ... and the Word was made Flesh in her!

[2] **We bless our Christmas Tree - the Paradise Tree** that expresses both the fall of humanity and the Redemption of Humanity on a tree.

[3] Please note that Midnight Mass of Christmas does not fulfil our Sunday Responsibility to participate in Mass - it celebrates Christmas, not the final Sunday of Advent. **I hope our love for God and our yearning for Christ Jesus will lead us to participate in both Masses - the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas.**

THOUGHT FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE GOD WHO WAITS UPON OUR 'YES' The Almighty God waits! God does not demand obedience, but rather invites a loving response, a 'Yes' from the depth of Mary's being. Sure, God had prepared her from her conception for this moment, enabled her to taste of divine love. But Mary had to be free!

If her response was not free, then there could be no salvation flowing from this meeting of the Divine Spirit and the human heart. Only love can yield to love; only love can give birth to Love made Flesh; only love's freedom could bring forth the One Who would set all peoples free with the Freedom of the Children of God.

So God waited ... waited for her 'Yes' ... waited for human freedom to embrace lovingly the Divine Will so that human will and Divine Will be one. Nothing could be forced, all had to be free and so God waits - it is Love's waiting. Love is so often a matter of doing -

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but most often it is a matter of waiting. And with God, all creation waits upon this young girl's answer - YES!

DIOCESAN PRAYER The Diocese prays today for the Parishes in Communion for Mission of St Benet, Kemerton, St Joseph, Tewkesbury, St Nicholas, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire, served by Fr Francis Hughes OSB, Fr Joby Lukose CST, Parish Administrator Christine Davies and all their communities.

PRAY FOR THIS WEEK'S PARISH MINISTRY OR MISSION We pray for our **Borderlands Charity** serving an increasing number of sisters and brothers seeking safe among us. The staff and volunteers provide a safe space to meet, with a hot meal each Tuesday, their own foodbank (social supermarket style) and throughout the week opportunities to learn English and participate in a range of activities as well as outreach into the hotels where so many are now housed by the Home Office. Two parishioners serve as Trustees and a former parishioner is the new Chair of Trustees. If you would like to volunteer in this life-giving mission, please contact via the Borderlands website www.borderlands.org.uk

COLLECTION LAST WEEK

G.A.Env £75.00 + Loose £287.10 + Card Reader £55.00 + S/O £165.88 = £512.98 - thanks!

CAFOD for Gaza £681.59 (includes £222.64 from LGBTQ+ Mass) - **FoodBank** £100

DATES FOR THE DIARY 2023

19th Dec Advent Reconciliation Service at Holy Family Church Patchway at 7.00pm
 20th Dec Advent Reconciliation Service at St Augustine's Church, Downend at 7.00pm
 24th Dec **Christmas Eve - Midnight Mass at 10.30pm**
 25th Dec **Christmas Day - Solemn Day Mass of Christmas at 10.00am**
 31st Dec 'Watchnight' Mass to pray the New Year in at 10.30pm

2024

1st Jan **Feast of Mary, Mother of God - Mass for Peace** at 10.00am
 5th Jan First Parents Baptismal Session at 6.30pm (Assisi Centre)
 7th Jan **Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord with Rite of Child Catechumen**
 12th Jan Second Parents Baptismal Session at 6.30pm (Assisi Centre)
 14th Jan **Feast of the Baptism of the Lord - Baptismal Sunday**
 17th Jan St Nick's School Governors meet
 18th Jan First Eucharist Programme begins at 4.00pm (Assisi Centre) also Parents session
 18th Jan Parish Pastoral Council meets at 7.30pm (Assisi Centre)
 19th Jan First Reconciliation Programme begins at 4pm (Assisi Centre) also Parents session
 21st Jan United Service for Christian unity Week at Parkway Methodist Church 4.00pm
 26th Jan Holocaust memorial Day - Civic Event in City Hall 12noon
 27th Jan Meeting of Joint Committees (PPC, PFC, Legacy Group) 9.30am-12noon
 1st Feb Parish Finance Committee meets on Zoom 7.30pm
 7th Feb St Edmund of Abingdon Pastoral Area Clergy meeting
 11th Feb Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes - World Day of the Sick
 13th Feb Parish pastoral Council meets at 7.30pm (Assisi Centre)
 14th Feb **Ash-Wednesday - Lent begins**
 21st Feb Safeguarding Training for Clergy

POPE CALLS A YEAR OF PRAYER PREPARING FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE 2025

Pope Francis invites us to hold a 'Year of Prayer' 2024, to deepen our prayer life as individuals and as the Church as we prepare for the **Jubilee Year 2025 - a Jubilee of Hope**, building towards a more Synodal Church. Pope Francis emphasises especially the Prayer of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the 'Lectio Divina', prayer reflection upon the Word of God. Let us reflect how as a parish community we might embrace this call to deeper prayer, seeking personal and communal renewal.

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BAPTISMAL PREPARATION FOR PARENTS

Our next Baptismal Sunday will be the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, 14th January.

First Parents Baptismal Session Friday 5th January at 6.30pm (Assisi Centre)

Rite of Child Catechumen - Feast of the Epiphany 7th January at 10.00am Mass

Second Parents Baptismal Session Friday 12th January at 6.30pm (Assisi Centre)

Parents seeking the baptism of their child on that day please contact Eustace Tameh or Richard soon as possible.

THE PARISH DATABASE

If you have not filled our Parish Data forms (perhaps for the second time!), please do so after Mass today. The purpose of this is to enable effective pastoral care, community building and effective communication. *The information given will be used solely for internal parish and pastoral reasons and will not be divulged to any other party. Please sign the forms giving your permission for us to hold your details on our database - this is essential for compliance with GDPR (Data Protection legislation). THANKS!*

SERVICES OF RECONCILIATION FOR OUR PASTORAL AREA

Advent is a 'Penitential Season' during which the Church strongly encourages us to open our hearts to the healing and renewing mercy and forgiveness of God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There will be **two Services of Reconciliation in our St Edmund of Abingdon Pastoral Area:**

a] Tuesday 19th December at 7.00pm (Holy Family, Patchway Bristol BS34 5DP)

b] Wednesday 20th December at 7.30pm (St Augustine's, Downend Bristol, BS16 6QR)

A number of priests will be available for individual confession at these services.

STARTING SCHOOL?

If you have a child born between **1 Sept 2019 & 31 August 2020**, now is the time to apply for a place at a primary school for admission from **September 2024** onwards. You must complete an application form available from the school admissions team of the Local Council (Bristol/North Glos, Banes etc). If your child has been baptised and you are applying for a Catholic school, you **must** also provide a copy of the baptism certificate to the school. Please ensure you apply by the closing date of **15 January 2024**.

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star - Shafts of Light, Shafts of Hope in Advent

Advent is a time of light, of waiting and hope, of light and joy. Join us as we reflect on these great themes with music, art, and scripture. A mini retreat to give some focus in this busy time of present buying, **food** shopping, baking and wrapping of gifts.

The same mini retreat will be run twice online, just click on your chosen session link below:

Tuesday 19th December 3-4pm: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/e1cc27ee-0fba-403e-a6a4-86c34a930b1a@f10b8f13-604e-4fa2-9e12-04a7fad22e94>

ANY OFFERS FOR A VENUE AND CONVENER FOR AREA HOUSE MASSES?

We want to encourage these in the coming months as a way of bringing the Eucharist into the centre of our Christian lives and build our diverse, widespread community as one Eucharistic Community in Mission. We hope to celebrate a number of House Masses in December, January and February. Contact Richard or Margaret as soon as possible. Thank you.

ALTAR SERVERS PRACTICE FOR CHRISTMAS

All altar servers are asked to attend the practice for Christmas Midnight Mass on Friday 22nd December at 10.00am - parents please ensure your child or young person arrives on time - thank you.

RECRUITING NEW ALTAR SERVERS

Training starts on Saturday 13th Jan 10.30am - any young person who wishes to serve God and our community in this way please contact Richard or Mary as soon as possible. This is an important ministry in our community, serving God and serving our community to pray and worship God with joy and celebration.

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