



Saint Bartholomew's Catholic Church, Norbury

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The Parish Office is open from 9.30am - 3.30pm Monday to Friday (except for Bank Holidays)

A parish of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark CIO – Registered Incorporated Charity No. 1173050

SUNDAY 17th DECEMBER 2017

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

YEAR B

When seeing life through the eyes of the news media, one may well feel tempted to despair. In contrast to that view, today is, for us, *Gaudete* (rejoicing) *Sunday*. The **Entrance Antiphon (Philippians 4: 4-5)**, “*Rejoice in the Lord always...the Lord is near*”, the rose-coloured Advent Candle and Father’s vestments remind us that, amidst the trials and tribulations of life and the penitential purple of Advent with its imperative to be cleansed of our sins, we must also look with joyful hope towards not only our celebration of the arrival of the promised Saviour two thousand years ago but also, the day when “*Christ will come again*” as our Loving and Merciful Judge. On that day, the ravages of Sin will be swept away and perseverance in faithfulness to God will carry us into Heaven!

Isaiah (61:1-2, 10-11) rejoices in the Good News he is called to bring of Christ’s coming to heal the wounds of Original Sin, news which moves him to “*...exult for joy in the Lord..*”.

Through the **response to the Psalm (Luke 1:46-50, 53-54, response Isaiah 61:10)** “*My soul rejoices in my God*”, we join in with Our Lady’s joyous Magnificat, a hymn of praise of God, uttered in response to her cousin, Elizabeth’s, praise of “*... she who believed...*” in the Father’s promise of a Saviour.

Saint Paul (1 Thessalonians 5:16-24) exhorts his readers to constant prayer of petition and thanks, to “*Be happy at all times.....hold on to what is good and avoid...evil...*” with the salutary reminder that, in order to be fit for Heaven, we must, “*... all be kept safe and blameless...*”. Our efforts to prepare for Eternal Life will not go unrewarded by God.



Following the **Alleluia verse** (also from **Isaiah 61:1**) we then hear in the **Gospel (John 1:6-8, 19-28)** from the last of the Prophets, Saint John the Baptist, who is to announce Christ to the waiting people, calling them to, “*Behold the Lamb of God*”.

As we shall recall, John the Baptist, being unencumbered by so-called ‘Political Correctness’, was to shed his blood as a witness to the Truth. Throughout the history of the Church, we hear of many who laid down their lives rather than deny God. Among them is Saint Thomas More, to whom we should pray earnestly for our politicians. As regular news reports testify, this list of Martyrs for the Faith is still being added to! Tragically some of their killers seem to believe that they are doing God’s Will!

We each need to examine our conscience and see where *we* stand when, in the media, out and about, at work or even among friends and Family, we may hear the Church’s Teachings ‘watered down’ or opposed outright. Today, one may not, in this country, lose one’s life but one’s livelihood or freedom might well be at stake if one stands up, for instance, for God’s Created Order! Living according to our Faith and, in charity, correcting error might even, alarmingly, see us accused of being in breach of the laws of the land! Our Holy Father, though, has made our duty abundantly clear to us!

Just in case we feel unsure as to how to tackle such issues, here is another book well worth adding to your Catholic library. It is called “*A Shepherd Speaks*”, written by Fabian Bruskewitz, Bishop Emeritus of Lincoln, Nebraska. This book is published by Ignatius Press, a faithful Catholic publisher. It is, as the covernote by another feisty Catholic writer, Scott Hahn, says, about “*...the meaning of the Catholic faith in today’s world and how to live it.*” Well recommended and very readable.

“Holy Michael, Archangel, defend us in the day of battle...”

Thank you for your generosity

Last week's collection came to **£1678.00** (£1033.00 in baskets; £645.00 in standing orders)

Sick and Housebound: *If you know of anybody who is sick or housebound, or in a local care home, who is unable to come to Mass, and who would like to receive Holy Communion, Reconciliation, an Anointing or a Blessing, please contact the parish office. Dedicated chaplains meet the pastoral needs of Catholic patients in hospitals.*

Please pray for our Sick and Housebound parishioners:

Jessica Anane, Lilian Armstrong, Mrs Austin, Juliette Blake, Alan Blaquiére, Anita Blaquiére, Barry Breese, Erna Breese, Frances Caulfield, Audrey Draude, Teresa Florek-Smail, Raffaella Forte, Giovanni Franco, Rachel Gadd, Eamon Gillespie, Elaine Gunther, Anne Harris, Agnes Healy, Evelyn Hyland, Mary Kenny, Elsie McCleave, James McDonald, Breda McDonagh, Michael Madigan, Ajitha Mahatantila, Gerard Mascarenhas, Mary Meyern, Janina Miller, Edgar Ming, Maria Parnis, Marion Robertson, Parwar Saib, Frederic Saint-Rose, Alice Scott, Elizabeth Scott, Maggie Sunich, Edythe Thirlwall, Monica Vergara, Mary White, Ethelda Williams, Carole Winch, John Windsor, Charmaine Wise, Georgette Yoo Foo, Tony Zammit.

TODAY IS GAUDATE SUNDAY

This word means "Rejoice!", which is the very first word spoken in the entry antiphon. See the "Thought" on the first page.

WELCOME

We Welcome into the family of the Church,
Colette Agnes Grogan, who was Baptised here last weekend.

PARISH CHRISTMAS CARD AND CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Please take away with you one of our Parish Christmas cards, which you will find in all porch areas. They carry greetings from all the clergy. Inside you will find a complete list of all Masses and services commencing next Sunday, the 3rd Sunday in Advent, right through to Christmas Day itself. Please don't forget our Advent Day of Penance on Tuesday 19th December. You will also find some Christmas Offering envelopes in which you are invited to place your traditional Christmas Offering to your priests, Father Deo and Father Innocent. Please would all those with Gift Aid Boxes use the special blue envelope, which is contained in your boxes and is specifically marked for this purpose. If you give by Standing Order, kindly take your box from the Gift Aid office, so that you may use the special envelope. In any event, if you wish to use one of the unmarked envelopes provided, and you also wish to Gift Aid your offering, please just write your Gift Aid number clearly on the front.

CHURCH CLEANING IN THE COMING WEEK - GROUP 1 PLEASE:

Ena Holland, Mary Icheke, Eileen McCarthy, Nancy McNamara, Kathleen O'Toole, Nwamaka Offor, Polin Rajaratnam, Irene Reynolds, Christiana Muoghalu. To join our cleaners, please contact the Parish Office.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME 2018

Would all parents, guardians and carers please note that the First Holy Communion Masses for 2018 have now been allocated. Please see the list which you will find posted on the notice board in the main porch, and make a note of the date allocated to your child. Please make a careful check to ensure the spelling is correct. If any amendments are required, please let the parish office know.

There will be a very important meeting for all parents at 8pm on Tuesday 9th January 2018, in the lower hall. At this meeting, vital information will be given to you.

CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME 2018

Bishop Patrick Lynch will be visiting our parish on Pentecost Sunday, 20th May 2018, to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation at a special Mass to be held at 12 Noon. This Sacrament is open to **students currently in Year 8 and above**. Please would all potential candidates collect an application form, which is a requirement to take part. Forms are to be found in the main porch.

Please make sure that you return your form to the parish office no later than 7th January 2018.

Please would all parents, guardians and candidates mark in their diaries the date of the Introductory Meeting, which takes place in the lower hall on Wednesday 17th January 2018 at 7.30pm. The meeting should last about one hour. Please be prompt. Please also diarise the dates of all the sessions in your 2018 diaries.

CRIB OFFERINGS

You are invited to make an offering at the Crib. This year, your offerings will go to the Southwark Crisis Fund, to help needy families. This fund is managed by the Westminster Catholic Children's Society.

Please place your offerings in the basket provided.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND READINGS WITH THE POLYPHONY CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA

This takes place this afternoon at 2.30pm in the church. Entry will be by Programme at a cost of just £3.00. Programmes may be purchased from Choir Members after all morning Masses today, and they are available from the Repository. They may also be purchased on the door before the concert begins.

A retiring collection will be taken on behalf of the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP). Please give generously.

YOUR CHRISTMAS MASS ATTENDANCE OBLIGATIONS

With Christmas Eve being on a Sunday, and Christmas Day, itself a Holy Day of Obligation, on a Monday, it can be hard to work out when you should attend Mass between Saturday 23rd December/Sunday 24th December and Sunday 24th December/Monday 25th December. Here is a guide showing the various options you have here:

1. 6.15 Vigil Mass of 4th Sunday of Advent, Saturday 23rd December
PLUS 6.15 Vigil Mass of Christmas Sunday 24th December;
2. 6.15 Vigil Mass of 4th Sunday of Advent, Saturday 23rd December
PLUS Midnight Mass of Christmas, Sunday 24th December;
3. 6.15 Vigil Mass of 4th Sunday of Advent, Saturday 23rd December
PLUS 08:30 or 10:00 or 11:30 Mass of Christmas Day, Monday 25th December;
4. 08:30 or 10:00 or 11:30 Mass of 4th Sunday of Advent, Sunday 24th December
PLUS 6.15 Vigil Mass of Christmas Sunday 24th December;
5. 08:30 or 10:00 or 11:30 Mass of 4th Sunday of Advent, Sunday 24th December
PLUS Midnight Mass of Christmas, Sunday 24th December;
6. 08:30 or 10:00 or 11:30 Mass of 4th Sunday of Advent, Sunday 24th December
PLUS 08:30 or 10:00 or 11:30 Mass of Christmas Day, Monday 25th December.

ADVENT DAY OF PENTITENCE

This takes place this coming Tuesday, 19th December. Confessions will be available all day, following the 10am Mass, until Benediction at 7pm, giving a great opportunity to prepare for Christmas.

ALTAR SERVERS CHRISTMAS ROTA

The sign-up sheet for Altar Serving at Christmas may be found in the Sacristy. In particular we need Servers for the Christmas Eve Family Mass at 6.00pm as well as Midnight Mass. Please note: NO 5pm Mass on either Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. The usual Morning Masses will take place on Christmas Day.

Practices for: Family Mass - Tonight 6.00pm (30 minutes); Midnight Mass - Tonight at 6.30pm (30 minutes)

BAPTISM PREPARATION COURSES 2018 AND ARRANGING BAPTISM

The first course is expected to be run on both Saturdays 13th and 20th January 2018. To join these sessions, and/or to book a date for your child's Baptism, please complete a Baptism Details Form, available from the Church porch, and hand this in to the parish office. Further sessions are planned for April and July 2018.

IMPORTANT NEWS! A DAY WITH MARY IS COMING TO ST BARTHOLOMEW'S!

This most popular day of devotion to Our Lady will take place here on Saturday 17th February 2018.

MASS INTENTIONS

Please note that there are no further Masses available for Mass Intentions for 2017. If you do wish to secure a specific date and time, you are strongly advised to do so well in advance, in order to avoid disappointment. As ever, please use a Mass Intentions Envelope. We suggest an offering of £10, but please remember that this is not a charge, and nobody should feel obliged if they cannot manage it. Those of you who Gift Aid their weekly offering are encouraged to write their Gift Aid number in the bottom right hand corner of the envelope.

READERS AND EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

The next rota will run for the four weekends of 3rd/4th February to 24th/25th February 2018. Please check these dates, and kindly contact the Parish Office as soon as possible. Please try not to leave this until the last minute.

TRANSPORT REQUIRED

Could you bring an elderly gentleman to 6:15 Mass on Saturday evenings? Please contact the parish office.

THE PILGRIM

The December edition of our diocesan newspaper is now available in the main porch. Whilst we make it available free of charge, please consider making a donation in the newspaper wall box, which will help keep our costs down.

Apologies to those who expected it to appear last week. It's arrival was wrongly anticipated.

LIVING FAITH

The January-March 2018 edition is now available in the main porch. Again, whilst we make this publication available free of charge, please consider making a contribution of £1 in the wall box in the main porch.



Parish Masses This Week

Sunday Masses:	Vigil, Saturday 6.15pm; Sunday: 8.30am, 10am, 11.30am and 5pm	
	Parish Mass Book: This Sunday - p.87	
Weekday Masses:	Mon - Fri: 7.30am; Mon – Sat 10am	
Morning Prayer of the Church:	Monday - Saturday 9.15am	
Adoration and Benediction:	Monday - Saturday 9.30am; Sunday 4pm (<i>Rosary & Benediction in May & October</i>) <i>On First Fridays - Adoration after 10am Mass, closing with Benediction at 2pm</i>	
Rosary:	Monday - Saturday after the 10am Mass	
Confessions:	Saturday, after the 10am Mass, until 11am; then in the afternoon from 5pm to 6pm	
Date	Time	Intention
Sunday 17th December 2017		
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	6.15pm (Sat 16th December)	People of the parish
	8.30am	Eugene Lopez RIP
	10am	Welfare of Fr Paul Antwi-Boasiako CSSp
	11.30am (Plainchant Choir)	Marie Savery RIP
<i>Carol Concert with Choir & Orchestra</i>	2.30pm	
	5pm	Welfare of Elizabeth Power
<i>Third Week of Advent</i>		
Monday 18th December 2017	7.30am	Welfare of Gus & Wenjing Gannon and family
	10am	Welfare of Elizabeth Asubonteng
Tuesday 19th December 2017	7.30am	Welfare of Ellen & Liza Coppinger
Advent Day of Penitence - Confessions after 10am Mass - Benediction at 7pm	10am	Welfare of Jordan Desa on his 21st birthday
Wednesday 20th December 2017	7.30am	Thanksgiving (private intention)
	10am	Hervé Yoo Foo RIP
Thursday 21st December 2017	7.30am	Mario Rodrigues RIP
	10am	Pietro Mobile RIP
Friday 22nd December 2017	7.30am	Welfare of Willie & Marie Gannon & family
	10am	Elizabeth Kilduff RIP
Saturday 23rd December 2017	10am	Holy Souls
Next Sunday 24th December 2017		
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	6.15pm (Sat 23rd December)	Christopher Nawrat RIP
	8.30am	Welfare of Delphine Desa on her 80th birthday
	10am	Welfare of Margaret Mensah
	11.30am	John Armstrong RIP
	(NB - There is NO 5pm Mass	
	6pm Carols	
CHRISTMAS EVE	6.15 pm Christmas Vigil Mass	People of the parish
Children's Nativity Tableau	11.30pm Carols (Polyphony Choir)	
	12 Midnight Christmas Mass	People of the parish