

ST MARGARET'S PAGE

2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 10 December 2023 - Year B



In Peter writes:

Christmas decorations have now long been positioned along Crown Road, and carol services have begun, and yes Christmas Day is just two weeks away. St Mary's University is festooned with Christmas decorations and the Chaplaincy crib will be installed next week. As always, in all this frenetic pre-Christmas activity, something of the silence of Advent is being lost. The voice crying in the wilderness about consolation has been drowned out by the sounds of competing festive voices.

This Sunday, the Second Sunday of Advent, the Church steps back, metaphorically into the silence of the desert, and the voice in the wilderness, crying, 'Prepare a way for the Lord.' St Mark's Gospel begins with the description of St John the Baptist's mission, undertaken in conscious imitation of the prophet Elijah, announcing the last days but also that the Prophet Isaiah. St Mark's Gospel contains none of the details to be found in St Matthew's or St Luke's Gospels. Instead he begins mid-stream. Jesus was already thirty years old, but what connects them, as well as St John's Gospel is the figure of St John the Baptist. This beginning complements what every Christian knows, the story of the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem. This beginning, though, with the figure of St John the Baptist, may confront us at any moment in our lives, and therefore the figure of St John the Baptist, becomes the response to those who think Christmas is for children only. This is our 'adult' reading through which we may reflect on what joys the coming of Jesus will bring to our lives. Decluttering might be a hashtag for our dwellings but it the same process can be extended to our spiritual lives too.

St John the Baptist raises questions about the meaning and direction of our own lives, and where we may rediscover this purpose once again. The repentance demanded by John the Baptist refers to individual wrongdoing but also to the many grey cluttered areas of lives; obsessive checking of mobile phones; aimless surfing of the internet; nurturing your favourite conspiracy theories; aimless expenditure; and much else besides. The Baptist is barging into our world, into its most unprepossessing parts, the spiritual wilderness of mediocrity in which we

have found ourselves wandering. Thus, the penitential season of Advent has a different complexion to that of Lent, more concerned with the direction of our lives than just with individual sin, through both are obviously intimately connected.

Throughout his public life, St John the Baptist pointed beyond himself towards Jesus Christ, as 'the one who is to come', but even he had difficulty in recognising the signs of Jesus' ministry in his own lifetime. During his final incarceration John sent his disciples to ask Jesus whether he really was 'the one who was to come' into the world. The Baptist's disciples bring back evidence of small-scale outbreaks of the final times, to the healings and outpouring of joy occurring at the lowest levels of society. These outbreaks of the kingdom are not of cinematic proportions where there could only be passive spectators. The kingdom breaks out in the small scale within participating hearts, and hence the need to prepare during the season of Advent to discern where this is happening now in my own life, or those around me.

John the Baptist's command to repentance is the invitation to reflect on how we embrace our responsibilities, our care for ourselves, our care for each other, and be extension the common home which we all share. St John the Baptist's preaching raises questions but also prepares us for someone who will supplement our newly discovered desire to renew of faith and its practice with His powerful spiritual energy.

The mission of John the Baptist helps, through our self-examination, to glimpse the power of the one who is to come, Jesus Christ. He came once in history. He will come again at the end of time, but is arriving now continually whenever we answer the Baptist's preaching and begin the road of conversion. The Holy Spirit can break into our lives, indeed is breaking into our lives, the consequence of Jesus Christ being born in a stable in Bethlehem. The joy of Christmas is not just once a year, but exists potentially available every day of the year too.

St Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church

• E-mail: stmargaretsonthames@rcdow.org.uk • Website: www.stmargaretsrcchurch.co.uk • Phone - 020 8892 3902

Parish Priest: Canon Peter Newby; Deacon Joseph Estorninho; Parish Administrator: Cynthia Souza; Bookkeeper: Ann Edes

Mass Intentions: 9/12 – 17/12

9/12	Sat	10.00am	James Gallagher RIP	Mary Gal- lagher
10/12	Sun	8.30am	Thanksgiving - Joyce Event	Gogarty
		10.30am	Intentions of Helen Douglas	Rita John- ston
		6.30pm	In thanksgiving for Mira Kalmar'S birthday	
11/12	Mon	10.00am	Nelson Nwosu RIP	Chioma Nwosu
12/12	Tue	10.00am	For you the people	
13/12	Wed	10.00am	The families of St Margarets Par- ish	
14/12	Thu	10.00am	Eucharistic Service	
15/12	Fri	10.00am	Missionary spirit of the Parish and the Church	
16/12	Sat	10.00am	Works of charity in the neigh- bourhood	
17/12	Sun	8.30am	John Winter RIP anniversary	Winter
		10.30am	Tulia Vergara RIP & Edna McCaw RIP	Lily McCaw
		6.30pm	For you the people	

Entrance Antiphon:

O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard
in the joy of your heart.

Response to the Psalm:

Let us see, O Lord, your mercy
And give us your saving help.

Mass Times & Liturgical Services (11/12-17/12)

Weekend	Saturday	10.00 am
	Sunday	8.30 am, 10.30 am
Weekday	Mon, Tue, Wed & Fri	10.00 am
Eucharistic Service	Thu	10.00 am
Confessions	Saturday	10:30-11:00am
		10.00–10.20am

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Girda Kerrigan, John Forsyth, Rose Blackman, Ursula van der Westhuizen, Cathy McKendry, Rose Blackman, Rachel Rose, Arthur Mathewson, Pat Friel, Mary Regan, Pauline Slawson, Ben, Carol Samba, Colin Bartram, Gerry McEntee, Rose Williams, Peter Coughlan, Hilary Sudell, Rose Lorden, William Hamilton, Mary Arnold, Cesar Juan Urrutigoity, Mary Ethel Arnolda, Sydney Parkes, Christopher Browne, Antonella Sesta, Margaret Masterson, Carmen Ruibal, Chris McLoughlin (son of Olga), Tony Tucker, Dr Christopher Khoo, John Wood-Collins, Jim Poland, Theresa Bulpitt, Sue Rolph & Dick Cotter.

Anniversaries - Jack Halligan, Alison Noble, Rose Polland, Angela Crowley, Nessa Sweetman, Dennis Leillot, Syd Pascoe, William Cowell, Patrick Farrell, Frederick Morgan

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. ~Amen~

December Prayer Intention

For persons with disabilities : We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society and that institutions may offer inclusive programmes which value their active participation.

Baptism - God's blessings to Munachi Felix Chinonso Iwunze who was Baptised today. May the light of Christ guide and protect him always. Congratulations to the family.

Advent Giving Tree

This Advent we will be giving to the homeless of our diocese working in partnership with the Passage, the charity of the archbishop, Cardinal Vincent Nichols.



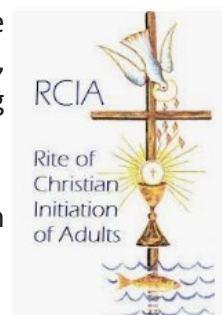
Children will also be involved this year. While adults can select a label with an essential item (clothing/toiletries) requested by the Passage, children can select labels with a task for them to perform to help others together with a prayer intention.

Items should be returned to church, by 17th December, when they will be collected for distribution to those in need.

PLEASE BRING YOUR GIFTS UNWRAPPED.

On Sunday, 17th December, at the 10.30 am Mass, Alex, Caroline, Kathryn and Marco will be receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

We wish them many blessings on their journey of faith.



2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 10 DEC 2023

Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11

Psalm 84

2 Peter 3:8-14

Mark 1:1-8

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT—17 DEC 2023

Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11

Luke 1

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Advent Penance Service



WEDNESDAY 13TH DECEMBER
at 7pm in the Church

Join us at St Margaret's Church for a prayerful opportunity to prepare for Christmas. The Sacrament of Reconciliation, with guest Confessors, will be available.

The parish received this lovely message from Sr Josefine; whose community school was a recipient of this year's Lenten project donations.

Dear Christian community of St Margarets,
Once again, I write to thank you for all your efforts of solidarity with Madagascar. Your generous donation arrived safely - the money is being very well used and will help many children and teenagers eat well and therefore benefit more fully from an education.

God bless you in abundance for your generosity.

Blessings

Sister Josefina



Come join us!!!!

Sing at Christmas Eve Mass, 9.30 pm

Come and join us to sing and proclaim the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Please contact Gavin for further information on rehearsals and other arrangements. Gavin can be reached by email on gavin.evenhuis@gmail.com.

**"The Mustard Seed Presenting
"Shine your Light"**

On
Saturday
16th December 2023 at
8.00 pm
in the Church Hall,



On Saturday 16 December the Mustard Seed prayer group will present, "Shine your Light." An initiative of the National day of Prayer and Worship which is all denominations joining together for praise and worship and to spread the Gospel.

Please see www.shineyourlight.org.uk

We will have an evening of praise and worship music suitable for Advent with readings and reflections. We will offer hospitality and, an opportunity for prayer ministry. A great opportunity to get in the right Spiritual place for the birth of our Saviour Jesus!

Call out for any young children (4+ years) to be part of our Christmas Tableau taking place during Mass on **Christmas Eve at 5.00 pm**. We need shepherds & angels to join us for the Nativity story. If your child would like to take part, please contact the parish office. Adult helpers also needed to serve hot chocolate and refreshments after the Mass. Thank you.



Also, Singers needed for the Children's choir, Christmas Eve Mass 5.00 pm.



Pizza & Prayer - For those aged 12 - 18

An evening to reconnect with friends, together with opportunity for quiet reflection or reconciliation.

Friday 22nd December 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Adoration available in the chapel

6:30 - 7:30 pm; come for just a few minutes or stay longer. Opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation in the library.

Pizza served in the hall from 7:30 pm.

Come and catch up with other teens, reconnect with those from your Confirmation group or make new friends.

The evening is free, but please sign up in advance so we can plan accordingly. [Link to join - <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/stmargaretonthames/events/984/>]



Used stamps for Medical Missionaries of Mary

Please collect all the stamps from your Christmas post. In January we will be collecting used stamps for the MMM, as we did last year; the sisters sell these to raise money for their work in Africa and other countries.



Recollection for Women 13th December 2023 10.00—12.30 at St Margarets Church Hall

- 10.00 – Holy Mass
- 10.30 – First Meditation
- 11.15 – Rosary
- 11.45 Examination of Conscience
- 12.00 – Second Meditation



The priest will be available for confessions from 11.00 – 12.00

Join us !

Westminster Cathedral the mother Church of our diocese has improved the lighting of its main sanctuary. The previous aged and inefficient system had to be replaced as spare parts were no longer available. The improved lighting is of great benefit on major occasions particularly if they are being broadcast or live streamed. The improvements are being funded by the Friends of Westminster Cathedral. They are asking for our help by supporting their Big Give Campaign with online donations. For donations made from 12.00 noon on Tuesday 28 November and before 12.00 noon on Tuesday 5 December every £1 given is worth £2 with matched funding and £2.25 if you can tick the Gift Aid box. The link to the donation site is <https://bit.ly/FriendsBG23>



Let there be peace on earth: Young Adult Advent Retreat

Come and take time aside with other young adults aged 18-35 this Advent. We will have time to reflect and pray to prepare ourselves for the coming of the Prince of Peace.

When: Saturday 16th December 2023, 10:30am-2:30pm

Where: FCJ Spirituality Centre, 32 Phoenix Road, London NW1 1TA (a short walk from London's Euston station)

Who: facilitated by Sr Anouska Robinson-Biggin fcj (The Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ) are an International Congregation of Catholic Sisters founded by Marie Madeleine d'Houët in France in 1820)

Cost: By Donation

For more information book your place

email: bookings.fcjcentre@fcjhouse-somerstown.co.uk

Car Parking

Over the last few months, I have noticed that parishioners are double parking in the car park. That is making it difficult to access the disabled parking bay near the front of the church.

May I remind you that double parking is not good practice as neither a car with a disabled sticker nor an ambulance would be able to reach the front of the Church.

Please park on street instead of double parking. Fr Peter



SAVE THE DATE—THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Our parish Epiphany Supper will take place on Saturday 6th January 2024 at 6.00 pm. Further details will follow shortly.

Helpers needed on the night.
Contact the parish office.



*Enjoy warmth and good company here at
St Margaret's at our much loved
"Tea & Chat"*

*Join us for our last tea this year on
Wednesday, 13th December
from
1:45 pm – 3:15 pm*

*All are welcome.
Please feel free to bring along a friend or a
neighbour.*

