

# SUNDAY Plus

4th Sunday of Advent **Divine Office Week IV** Year A

*A happy and blessed Christmas to you and yours* from all of us at Redemptorist Publications



## The Annunciation

And yet the quiet here  
retains no trace of great Archangel wings...  
A moment came, and that is all, a moment  
came and passed, and in the passing left  
a young girl here who was not now alone.  
This was not she who lifted up her head,  
and yet it was, and crowded days that stretch  
beyond will still be bound for her in sun  
and in the dark. Her steps will fall upon  
the dust and leave an imprint there, and tasks  
will weary her. Delicate, and now  
so utterly bequeathed, her strengths are yet  
her strengths.  
This is God's chosen way with men,  
to take men's way; and so, the streets she walks  
and all the roads, the shepherds and the shepherds'  
sheep, the winds, the firelight, Israel's hills,  
will find just this, no more, a woman plain  
upon the earth, and in her arms, a child.

John Lynch, A Woman Wrapped in Silence



*The Annunciation* fresco in church St Anton by Fritz Kunz (1921). Renata Sedmakova / Shutterstock.com

Our Mother Mary always wants to walk at  
our side, to remain close to us, to help us  
with her intercession and her love.

Pope Leo

## Just a Little Donkey

Just a little donkey,  
but on my back I bore  
the one and only Saviour  
the world was waiting for.  
Just a little donkey,  
but I was strong and proud;  
I gladly carried Mary  
through the chaos of the crowd.  
I brought her to a stable  
where she made a tiny bed...  
a place for Baby Jesus  
to lay his little head.  
I pray the world remembers  
that special Christmas night,  
when just a little donkey  
carried Heaven's precious light.



Author unknown

## Mince pies and Christmas pudding

Christmas and mince pies go together, but before the Reformation, they were oblong or oval in shape. The pastry base symbolised the manger, whilst the filling was the straw and the top the swaddling clothes in which Mary wrapped the Baby Jesus.

Today's Christmas pudding is sweet and served with brandy sauce or brandy butter, but this was not always so. In medieval times, the pudding often

included rabbit, poultry, pheasant and partridge in its list of ingredients. By the end of the sixteenth century, eggs, dried fruit, breadcrumbs and brandy were added to thicken and flavour the mixture. The Christmas pudding traditionally had thirteen ingredients to represent Jesus and the twelve apostles. It was only in 1714, during the reign of King George I, that meat disappeared from the recipe. He also introduced the custom of pouring brandy over the pudding and setting it alight, apparently reminding the eaters of Jesus' passion, while the holly decoration represents the crown of thorns.

## READINGS

Today:	Mass at Dawn:
Isaiah 7:10-14	Isaiah 62:1-7
Romans 1:1-7	12
Matthew 1:18-24	Titus 3:4-7
	Luke 2:15-20
Monday:	Mass During the Day:
1 Samuel 1:24-28	Isaiah 52:7-10
Luke 1:46-56	Hebrews 1:1-6
	John 1:1-18
Tuesday:	Friday:
Malachi 3:1-4.	Acts 6:8-10;
4:5-6	7: 54-59
Luke 1:57-66	Matthew 10:17-22
	Saturday:
Wednesday:	1 John 1:1-4
Mass in the Morning:	John 20:1. 2-8
2 Samuel 7:1-5.	Next Sunday:
8-12. 14. 16	Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6. 12-14
Luke 1:67-79	Colossians 3:12-21
	Isaiah 62:1-5
Thursday:	Acts 13:16-17.
Vigil Mass:	22-25
Isaiah 9:1-7	Matthew 1:1-25
Matthew 1:1-25	
	Mass During the Night:
	Isaiah 9:1-7
	Titus 2:11-14
	Luke 2:1-14

Lord God, be with us as we prepare to welcome your Son Jesus into our hearts and lives at Christmas. Watch over, protect and bless our families and all those whom we love. **+** Amen.





**PRAYERS FOR THE BLESSING  
OF THE ADVENT WREATH**  
**WEEK 4**

**Lighting Advent Candles: Week 3**

Priest: Our help is in the name of the Lord.  
All: Who hath made Heaven and earth.  
  
Priest: "And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)  
  
All: Pray the Advent Wreath Prayer for Week 4:  
"Dear Jesus, may the light of your love always shine in our hearts. As Christmas draws closer, we marvel at your great love for us. Let your love transform every aspect of our lives and touch everyone we encounter. Our hearts are open to you, Jesus. Amen."

*(The Candles of **HOPE**, **PEACE** **JOY** and **LOVE**  
will now be lit)*



**Prayers for the Sick and Housebound:**

Please keep in your prayers the wellbeing of: D.H, Adelaide Cotter, Paul Fairhall, Amy Bradbury (nee Mckenzie), Marie Goti, Michael Christou, John Rosenow, Mary Silva, Michael Hoskins & Dorothy Upton.

**Home Visits** If you, a relative or neighbour is housebound, home visits can be arranged via Fr Ben to receive Holy Communion. It is important Pastoral Care is maintained and/or for the Sacrament of the Sick.



**December Birthdays** We pray for all those celebrating a birthday this month. Many Happy Returns of the Month. God bless you.

**Christmas Break** Our Parish Secretary will be on annual leave from Monday 22nd December until Monday 5th January 2026. For non urgent enquiries please email [northcheam@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:northcheam@rcaos.org.uk) and these will be addressed on her return. Please only call the Presbytery in the cases of emergency.

**All parish groups are closed now until the new year.**

**The Crib Offering** Our crib offerings this year will go to support three chosen charitable organisations: UK based Crown of Thorns, The Catholic Children's Society and for our selected international charity Friends of the Holy Land.

**Christmas Offering** The Christmas offering is our personal gift in gratitude for our clergy and is a major part of their personal income. Our Catholic priests do not receive a paid salary in the traditional way. Please ensure your gift is clearly marked for our priest so it is received as intended. Remember, pray for our priests.

**CHRISTMAS CALENDAR 2026**



**Wednesday 31st December**  
Solumn Vespers & Benediction  
at 7.30pm



**Thursday 1st January, New Years Day**  
Feast of Mary Mother of God at 10am



**A HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION**  
**Monday 5th January**  
Vigil Mass of Epiphany at 7pm



**Tuesday 6th January**  
Mass of the Epiphany at 10am

***'Sing to Him a new song, sing to Him with joyful melody .....' Saint Cecilia***

**Chorus:**

Raise your eyes, the wind is blowing,  
For our God is born in time.  
Son made man for You and many  
who will find the way in Him.

**Chorus:**



## Parish Life

Last weekend we had the pleasure of hosting the Nigerian Choir at our parish. The Choristers from universities across Nigeria and further afield, come together once a year to sing liturgical music and sang at the 11am Mass. We were truly blessed to hear their angelic voices and grateful to witness to their powerful ministry, which brought joy and impacted our faith and community.



## St Cecilia's Christmas Concert!

A big thank you to everyone who was able to support the parish Christmas Concert in some way or means; through sharing their talents, selling or purchasing event tickets, buying and selling raffle tickets, contributing prizes or mince pies and cakes, setting up in the hall or church, help with technical support, by making sure no one went home thirsty or by coming along. Everyone's contribution no matter how big or small made a difference in making it a success on the day .....and a very good time was had by all!

The Raffle Prize tickets are:

**Red** Ticket numbers:

91 to 95  
101 to 105  
131 to 135  
161 to 165  
171 to 175  
551 to 555  
741 to 745  
776 to 780  
791 to 795  
801 to 805  
811 to 815  
851 to 855  
876 to 880  
936 to 940  
946 to 950

On the Yellow Ticket numbers: 76 to 80  
111 to 115  
226 to 230  
341 to 345  
351 to 355  
766 to 770

To claim your prizes please meet with Louise in the Narthex after Mass.

*'Arise soldiers of Christ, throw away the works of darkness and put on the amour of light ...'*

**Saint Cecilia**



## Christmas Vigil Mass and Nativity

The children of the parish will be retelling the story of the birth of Jesus in a tableau during the Christmas Vigil Mass on Wednesday 24th December at 6.30pm.

**Church Cleaning** All hands to the helm for church cleaning and tidy up on Monday 22nd December 2026 at 9am until 11.30am. If you are free to lend a hand please come along. Join the team afterwards for a Christmas celebratory lunch.

**Little Church** will be back at Church on Sunday the 11th January.

**The Thursday Club** returns on Thursday 8th January 2026 after the 10am Mass.

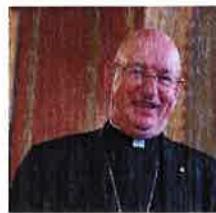
**Knit and Natter** returns the 8th January following on from the Thursday Club

**The Canon Beausang Parish Room** Gentle reminder: if you are using the Canon Beausang Room to please clean and tidy up after you have used the room, wipe down the tables, put tables and chairs back in place, wash, dry and put away in the cupboards any crockery and cups used. Please don't leave it for someone else to do, that someone else is busy too.

**Youth Group** Youth Group member going ice skating at Somerset House (Strand, WC2R 1LA) on Saturday 27th December. Meet at church in the Canon Beausang Room at 10am, and returning to the church at 2:30pm for hot chocolate and games. The day will end at 3:30pm.

The next meeting will be meeting up again on Thursday 13th January 2026 at 5pm.

**OCIA/RCIA** starts up again on Saturday 10th January 2026 at 11am.



## A New Cardinal for Westminster Bishop Richard Moth

We have a new Archbishop elect. The Holy Father appointed the Bishop of Arundale and Brighton as the next Archbishop of Westminster. He will succeed Cardinal Vincent Nichols on his retirement, as the 12th Archbishop of Westminster on Saturday 14th February 2026. Please ask the Holy Spirit to guide and lead the Bishop in his new role as head of the Church in England and Wales.

You may enjoy the Christmas Parade from New York  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MT8uqtbit6U>

## Urgent Appeal

We are still in need of accommodation to rent or purchase with two or more bedrooms if possible. If anyone knows of somewhere suitable to in the local area, please speak to Fr Ben or Linda Mamedy. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.