

TODAY'S READINGS

Entrance Antiphon:

Drop down dew from above, you heavens,
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

Collect: Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,
your grace into our hearts,
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son
was made known by the message of an Angel,
may by his Passion and Cross
be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

First Reading:

Isaiah 7:10-14

‘Behold, the virgin shall conceive.’

In those days: The Lord spoke to Ahaz: ‘Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.’ But Ahaz said, ‘I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.’ And Isaiah said, ‘Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.’

R/ THE WORD OF THE LORD

C/ THANKS BE TO GOD

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Ps 24(23):1-6. R. 6



The Lord’s is the earth and its fullness,
the world, and those who dwell in it.
It is he who set it on the seas;
on the rivers he made it firm. **(R)**
Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?
Who shall stand in his holy place?
The clean of hands and pure of heart,
whose soul is not set on vain things. **(R)**
Blessings from the Lord shall he receive,
and right reward from the God who saves him.
Such are the people who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob. **(R)**

Second Reading:

Romans 1:1-7

Jesus Christ, descended from David, Son of God.

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an Apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name

Is 45: 8

among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

R/ THE WORD OF THE LORD

C/ THANKS BE TO GOD

Gospel Acclamation:

Matthew 1:23

(ALL STAND)

Alleluia, alleluia.

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Emmanuel — which means,
God with us
Alleluia.

Gospel:

Matthew 1:18-24

Jesus was born of Mary, who was betrothed to Joseph, son of David.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’

All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ‘Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel’ —which means, God with us.

When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife.

R/ THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD

C/ PRAISE TO YOU, LORD JESUS CHRIST

Prayer over the Offerings:

May the Holy Spirit, O Lord,
sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar,
just as he filled with his power the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Through Christ our Lord.

Communion Antiphon:

Is 7: 14

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son;
and his name will be called Emmanuel.

Prayer after Communion:

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption,
we pray, almighty God,
that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer,
so we may press forward all the more eagerly
to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son’s
Nativity.



Catholic Parish of Our Lady of Hal Camden Town

Reminder: Please turn your mobile phones OFF! Would you kindly take your weekly newsletter home with you!

21st December 2025 (Year A) | FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Welcome to all at Mass today, especially to any visitors who are here for the first time. Please take this sheet home with you which will tell you about this week's celebration and the activities in the parish during the week.



REFLECTIONS ON THE GOSPEL

Emmanuel: God-with-us.

If Jesus is our Saviour, why is the world still such a mess? If Jesus is the King of the Universe, why does the universe still seem so often shaped by violence, hatred, and evil?

That question feels especially sharp at Christmas. We’re about to celebrate the birth of Christ — “good news of great joy” — and yet the news and our own lives don’t always look like good news. Just this week, innocent people were shot dead in Sydney at Bondi Beach while celebrating Hanukkah — the Festival of Lights — a moment that should have been full of joy, prayer, and hope.

We know the heart of Jesus’ message: the Kingdom of God. A kingdom of justice and peace, forgiveness and love — the world as God intends it. Scripture dares to imagine a day when the lion and the lamb can lie down together; when tears are wiped away; when sorrow, hatred, and death no longer have the last word. That is the Kingdom we long for, and that is the Kingdom we pray for whenever we say, “Thy Kingdom come.”

But where is it? What we see is war and terrorism, prejudice and division, cruelty and fear. And closer to home there can be grief that sits heavily, illness that arrives uninvited, relationships that fracture, anxiety that won’t lift. So the question becomes personal: **If Jesus is the Saviour, where is the salvation?**

People often ask that question not as a debate, but as a cry. “Why did someone I love have to die?” “Why do I feel unsafe?” “Why has our family suffered this?” These are not faithless questions. They are the honest prayer of wounded hearts — hearts trying to trust God without pretending that evil isn’t real.

Our Christian faith does teach a future hope: that after death we are called into the fullness of life with God, and that at the end of time Christ will establish his Kingdom perfectly and finally. We do believe the Kingdom is coming.

But is the Gospel only “good news later”? What about today?

This is where Christmas becomes not cosy, but breathtaking. Isaiah speaks of a child to be born, and the Gospel makes clear who that child is. And one name matters deeply: **Emmanuel.**

Emmanuel means: **God is with us.**

Not God at a distance. Not God untouched. In Jesus, God enters our human life from the inside. God takes flesh. God shares our vulnerability. God knows sorrow and fear, rejection and pain — and therefore, when we face sorrow and fear, we do not face them alone.

So yes, we still await the full Kingdom. We keep praying and working for peace, and we stand in solidarity with all who suffer, including our Jewish brothers and sisters grieving after Bondi. But until the day when every wrong is put right, this is the Christmas good news: Christ is Emmanuel — **God with us.**

Father Mark

WHO’S WHO AT OUR LADY OF HAL:

Parish Priest: Fr. Mark Dunglinson

Email: markdunglinson@rcdow.org.uk

Also in residence:

Fr. Colin McLean *(Retired)*

Fr. John Deehan *(Retired)*

Fr. Christopher Connor *(School Chaplain)*

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Portuguese Office Tel: 020 7587 0881

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FOR YOUR PRAYERS

SICK, HOUSEBOUND, THOSE WHO RECEIVE COMMUNION AT HOME:

Mike Power, Father Anthony, Margaret Quinn, Michael O’Brien, Christine Smith, Rachel Cottrell, Alice O’Neill, Janice Davidson, Jilly Taylor, Marie Cawdery, Pauline Guthrie, Maureen Lyden, Richard Ainsworth, Francesco Sesia, Joe Owen, Doreen O’Callaghan, Wesley Gilead, Henrik Sperlich, Allan & Lynne Mackintosh, Ray Norris, Morag & Raj Puri, Stephen de Winter, George Spencer.

HAL LAMPS: THE HOLY SOULS

RECENTLY DEPARTED: We pray for all those who have died recently: Janice Davidson

DEAD ANNIVERSARIES: We pray for all that died around this time.



LITURGICAL CALENDAR & INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

SUNDAY MASS: 6pm (Saturday Vigil), 10.00am (Family) & 12 Noon (Solemn). 5pm (Portuguese).

OTHER MASS TIMES: Monday, Tuesday & Friday at 12 Noon ; Wednesday and Thursday at 9.30am

HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION: As Announced.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: Fridays: 12.30pm-1pm and Saturday: 5.15-5.45pm

CONFESSIONS: Friday 12.35-1pm, Saturday 11am-11.30 & 5.15pm-5.45pm and by appointment.

P	Sunday	21st December	Fourth Sunday of Advent	Vigil	5:15 pm 6:00 pm 10:00 am 12 Noon	Evening Prayer of the Church Phil Carroll (RIP) Anastasia Denis (RIP) & People of the Parish Aoife O’Connell (Christmas)
P	Monday	22nd December	Advent Feria		12 Noon	Margaret Meehan (Christmas)
P	Tuesday	23rd December	Advent Feria		12 Noon	Rena Pros (Christmas)
W	Wednesday	24th December	The Nativity of the Lord— Vigil Mass		6:30 pm 9:15 pm 10:00 pm	People of the Parish Congregational Carols Parish Priest’s Intentions
W	Thursday	25th December	The Nativity of the Lord— Christmas Day		12 Noon	Parish Priest’s Intentions
R	Friday	26th December	Saint Stephan, the First Martyr		12 Noon	Ignatius & Giuseppa Said (RIP)
W	Saturday	27th December	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph	Vigil	6:00 pm	Maya Stott & Violet Clerkson (Health)

NEWS AND VIEWS

WELCOME to all at Mass today, especially visitors, or to anyone who is new to the Parish.

PARISH OFFICE OPENING HOURS: Mon; Tue; Thu and Fri: 10.00 to 2.00pm; Wednesday closed.

WEEKDAY MASSES: At present, we will be able to retain most weekday Masses from Monday to Friday. The situation will be reviewed at the end of the year.

VESPERS (EVENING PRAYER): On Saturday evenings, Sung Evening Prayer is celebrated at 5:15pm before Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. All are welcome to join us.

READERS FOR CHRISTMAS MASSES. If you will be here for Christmas Mass, please indicate when you can read (24 December 6.30pm and 10pm, 25 December 12 Noon) on the notice board in the sacristy. A rota will be drawn up.

CHRISTMAS MASSES—24th December, Christmas Eve Family Mass at 6:30pm, Solemn Mass of the Nativity at 10pm preceded by carols at 9:15pm & Christmas Day, 25th December, Mass at 12 Noon (**NO MASS AT 10AM**).

First Mass of Christmas, 24th December, 6:30pm: You are cordially invited, parishioners and visitors, to join us in a glass of mulled wine after 6:30pm Mass on the 24th of December. All are welcomed.

LEGION OF MARY is planning to start a group here at Our Lady of Hal. If you are interested in joining, please sign the notice in the outer sacristy and Fr Mark will pass your names on to Lourdes who will give you more information.

Last Weekend of Christmas Stall, SPECIAL OFFERS: Please visit us at the back of the church for a variety of gifts including Our Lady of Hal calendars, children’s chocolate selection boxes, personalized mugs, and monastic wine covers suitable for stocking fillers, many of which are now on special offer. All proceeds go to the church.

‘Dive Deeper’ is a two-part course talks on the Patriarchs of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, given by Fr. John Deehan. The first part of the Talk will focus on Abraham and Isaac and will begin on Monday, 19th January over Zoom. If you are interested, please email Warren (catadmin@rcdow.org.uk) for more information and to register.

COMMON CARE OF OUR CHURCH & HALL: Please keep all areas clean. Unfortunately last Sunday, the toilet in the hall was left in an unsanitary state, mince pie foil tins were left scattered around in the hall and one of the table cloths was torn up and left on the floor. We had to

clean the hall and toilets, ready for the concert on Sunday night to raise much needed parish funds as the collection has dropped considerably despite an increase in attendance.

Newsletters: There will be no newsletters next Sunday, 28th December and it will resume on the 11th of January.

ANNUAL LOURDES MASS: The Annual Mass in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes and for the World Day of Prayer for the Sick will take place on Saturday 14th February at 2pm at Westminster Cathedral. This will be preceded by a talk at 11.30am in Westminster Cathedral Hall by Dr Kieran Moriarty on the extraordinary story of the Lourdes miracle of Jack Traynor, the man from Liverpool whose miraculous healing was declared a miracle in 2024. Tickets for the talk are £7 per person, available from this link . Donations to the Lourdes Pilgrimage 2026 are always welcome and appreciated

THANK YOU to Cathi, Ellen and Ester for so kindly giving up their Sunday afternoon and evening to support and promote the Camden choir concert, run the bar and do the clearing up afterwards. Fr. Mark is most appreciative of their efforts towards fundraising for the parish.

CHRISTMAS CRIB: When you come to pray at our Christmas crib, please consider making a donation to the Catholic Children’s Society. Use money box on the wall, below St. Anne Statue. Thank you.

PRIVATE TUTOR NEEDED for GCSE Maths. If you can help, please see Fr. Mark. Thank you.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMMES 2025

First Holy Communion 2026: Parents and FHC children to attend the 6:30pm, Christmas Mass on 24th December.

Confirmation 2026: Applications now closed. Details to follow.

RCIA Course: Now up and running.

TEAS AND COFFEES TODAY for parishioners and visitors after the 10am Sunday Mass.

COLLECTIONS LAST SUNDAY: (THANK YOU!)
Envelopes: £293.60 Loose: £237.01 Total: £530.61
Donation by Dona Card Machine on Sunday: £172.76 and £519 per week by standing order.