

St Mary Magdalen Catholic Church

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Parish Priest: Fr Mathew George

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Parish school: St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Stratford Road, Ipswich, IP1 6EF

Head of School: Mrs Lucille Martin

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Catholic chaplain to the Ipswich hospitals: Fr Bineesh OCD ☎ 01473 684963
*Please contact Fr Bineesh or let Fr Mathew know if you, or any member of your family, are going into hospital. Please be aware that for reasons of patient confidentiality, the current practice in the NHS is **NOT** to inform the chaplains of any Catholics that are admitted to hospital. So unless you or your relatives inform the chaplains of your hospital stay, you will not be visited by a priest or any other member of the chaplaincy team.*

2nd Sunday of Advent: 6th December, 2020

Sunday Readings: Year B. Weekday Readings: 2nd Week of Advent Services This Week

Sunday 6 th – 2 nd Sunday of Advent	8:00 am	Holy Mass – Martin Curry RIP (Foundation Mass)
	10:00 am	Holy Mass – (Live streamed)
	12:00 pm	Baptism of baby John Connors
	6:00 pm	Holy Mass – The people of the parish
Monday 7 th	St Ambrose	
	10:00 am	Holy Mass – Janes family
Tuesday 8 th	The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	
	10:00 am	Holy Mass – Vieira family
Wednesday 9 th	Advent Feria	
	10:00 am	Holy Mass – Margaret and Frank Janes
Thursday 10 th	The Blessed Martyrs of East Anglia	
	10:00 am	Holy Mass
	1:30 pm	St Pancras School Carol Service
Friday 11 th	Advent Feria	
	10:00 am	Funeral Service for Alfred Oxley
Saturday 12 th	Advent Feria	
	10:00 am	Holy Mass – Ralph & Adrianna Turner (Foundation Mass)
Sunday 13 th – 3 rd Sunday of Advent	8:00 am	Holy Mass
	10:00 am	Holy Mass – (Live streamed) Monica Mary Ogden (Foundation Mass)
	6:00 pm	Holy Mass – The people of the parish

We are back again – the New Normal

Under the current restrictions there will be no Children's Liturgy group, no coffee after church and no hymns sung at 10:00 Mass. The bidding prayers will not be said, the homily will be kept short, the collection and offertory procession will be omitted, the sign of peace will not be exchanged and special arrangements for Holy Communion will apply.

We are committed to following the Government guidelines on social distancing.

Please ensure you maintain a 2 metre distance separation from each other whilst entering, leaving and inside church and remember that government regulations require that you wear a face covering whilst in church. Family groups from the same household may sit together. By not using some pews, the capacity of the church is inevitably reduced and whilst there is no fixed maximum number of persons allowed inside the building as long as social distancing is maintained, should it be the case that the church is full, you will need to return at another time.

Today's Gospel

Today's Gospel is taken from the beginning of Mark. Unlike Luke and Matthew, Mark does not include any details of Jesus' birth. Instead Mark begins with the appearance of John the Baptist in the desert. On this the Second Sunday of Advent, we are invited to reflect upon the role of John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Jesus and the salvation that he would bring to us.

Mark's description of the appearance of John the Baptist highlights John's continuity with the Jewish prophetic tradition. Mark combines quotations from the Old Testament books of Malachi, Isaiah, and Exodus. Mark's description of John as an ascetic, living in the desert, clothed in camel hair, and eating locusts and wild honey, is reminiscent of the description of the prophet Elijah found in Second Kings. The people of Judea and Jerusalem flock to him, listening to his message of repentance and forgiveness; they also come to him to be baptised. Mark's Gospel is clear, however, that John the Baptist's role is only to prepare the way for another who will come, one who is greater than John.

Many scholars believe that the Gospels reflect the tension that likely existed between followers of John the Baptist and disciples of Jesus. Each of the four Evangelists report on John's preaching and baptising, and they each emphasise the importance of Jesus' baptism by John. The four Gospels also explain that John was sent to preach in preparation for another. In the Gospel of Luke, the question is raised as to whether John the Baptist was himself the Messiah. Just as in today's Gospel, however, John speaks quite explicitly that the Messiah was to come after him.

In today's Gospel we hear John the Baptist contrast his baptism of repentance with the baptism that Jesus will inaugurate. John says that he has baptised with water, but that the one who is to come will baptise with the Holy Spirit. John's baptism was not yet a Christian baptism, but a preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism through which sins are forgiven and the gift of the Holy Spirit is received.

John the Baptist is presented to us as a model during Advent. We, too, are called upon to prepare a way for the Lord. Like John the Baptist, we are messengers in service to one who is greater than we are. Our Baptism commissions us to call others to life as disciples of Jesus.

Advent Wreath

Today, the second Sunday of Advent, we light the second purple candle on our Advent wreath. This candle typically represents love - some traditions call this the "Bethlehem Candle," symbolising Christ's manger:

"This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Audio Message from Bishop Alan Hopes

Bishop Alan has recorded an audio message to the people of the diocese to mark the beginning of Advent. You can listen to the message by clicking the link on the parish website news page.

Parish 150 Club

The November prize draw of the parish 150 Club, which was postponed because of the lockdown, will be made after 10:00 Mass today in the Guild Room.

Live Streamed Mass

The 10:00 Mass for the last two Sundays has been streamed live to allow parishioners to participate to the extent possible whilst unable to attend Mass in person. This has been well received and positive feedback has been received from a number of individuals. Even though the lockdown has finished, there are still a lot of people who for various reasons do not feel safe or comfortable in attending Sunday Mass in person, so we will continue to live stream the 10:00 Mass each Sunday until further notice. The link to follow to watch this service live, or the recording of it after the event, can be found on the Mass Times page of the parish web site.

St Pancras School Carol Service

On Thursday at 1:30 pm in the church, there will be a carol service by some of the Year 6 children of St Pancras school. The service will be streamed live for the benefit of the rest of the school and parents and parishioners who will be unable to attend in person as hymn singing is not permitted under the current regulations, this being the exception as the children are all in the same class bubble. The recording can be watched subsequently from both the parish and the School web sites.

CAFOD World Gifts

In the run-up to Christmas, CAFOD's World Gifts are still available to provide all your fun and ethical gift needs. What's more, they've got an exciting new look which they hope you will love!

With virtual gifts for as little as £4, you can change the lives of those living in poverty across the world, all from the comfort of your own home. They have added a delivery option to make it even easier to send World Gifts. Choose "Post Direct" when ordering your gift online and they will print your personalised message in your card of choice send it directly to your loved one. They have some inspiring new gifts to choose from this year - checkout the CAFOD web site at <https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/> or follow the link from the parish web site.

Parish Development Project

Following the news last week that we have been given planning permission for the construction of the new parish room alongside the church, anybody visiting church will have seen already that things are beginning to happen with the erection of wooden hoardings around the garage to protect the area where works will begin. The vast majority of the funding for this project has been provided by a generous, Gift Aided donation from one of our parish families, but there is a balance which we will need to raise ourselves. There is a letter from Fr Mathew to all parishioners which provides more information about this, but circulating this letter in the current lockdown will be a challenge. The letter can be seen on the parish web site and is being sent out to all parishioners for whom we have registered email addresses. Hard copies are available in the narthex should you visit church for private prayer.

Advent & Christmas

Fr Mathew writes: "As we all know, we are in tier 2 of the Covid-19 restrictions now. Assuming nothing changes, we are making plans for Christmas things may change if the government decides to place Suffolk in a different tier. As of now, there will be three Masses on Sundays: 8.00am, 10.00 am and 6.00 pm just as we had before the pandemic and the lockdown. We are not taking bookings as we never had to turn anyone away so far. However, we are taking bookings for the Christmas Masses. Our Christmas Masses are on 24th at 5.00 pm and 25th at 8.00 am and 10.00 am. Please email bookings@marymagdalens.org or use the contact form on the parish web site to book a place. IF WE HAVE SPACE at the Christmas Masses, we will not turn away anyone who has not booked. However, the best way to ensure your place is to book in advance.

Today we have the Baptism of Baby John Connors at 12.00 which is great. I encourage people who have been waiting for Baptisms, and First Holy Communions to book them. We are committed to following the government guidelines on public worship and therefore, it will be different from what we all had before. We have a wedding on 31st December and another one in February. They are all aware that they will have to adhere to the regulations of that time. We trust in God and go where he takes us."

TK (Talitha Koum)

TK (Talitha Koum) is an Ipswich based charity whose mission is to reach out with love, compassion and practical support to vulnerable women. It has two key aspects to its work, it provides supported housing for women recovering from addictions and other life challenges from its purpose-built therapeutic accommodation set on a 2-acre rural site at Witnesham known as The Hope Centre, and it runs Women Together Recovery Support groups. You will be pleased to know this is not an appeal for your funds – but an appeal for your help. A financial services organisation called Movement for Good has £120, 000 to donate to good causes and is inviting you to nominate your favoured charity to receive one of 10 daily £1000 donations during its 12 Days of Giving campaign this December. TK is asking that you go to the Movement for Good web site www.movementforgood.com/12days/index.php?cn=1135528&ct=health and register a vote for TK, so that it is in with a chance to receive one of the £1000 donations.

The Sick of the Parish

Please pray for those who are sick or housebound: John Anderson-Hurst, Margaret Arbon, William Barnes, Peggy Barron, Jason Beaumont, Michael Clarke, Monica Ford, Josephine Kalagira, Fabiana Di Mascio, Ron Green, Jo Kelly, Molly Mc Garry, Yvonne Metcalfe, Robert Mullan, Anna Nelli, Mary O'Reilly and Pippa Williamson.

Own Dear Departed

Of your charity, pray for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed and especially for Catrina Golecki, Johann Janssen, Gertrude Quinn, Ernest Allum, Casimir Carlton, Dermot O'Connell, Margaret Wright, James Finn and Fr Gerard Conlon, first priest of this parish, whose anniversaries occur this week.

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

Mass Readings: Second Sunday of Advent: 6th December, 2020

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.

Collect: Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son, but may our learning of heavenly wisdom gain us admittance to his company. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

First Reading: Isa. 40:1-5, 9-11 *Prepare a way for the Lord.*

'Console my people, console them' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.' A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low. Let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.' Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps. 84:9-14

Response to the psalm is: *Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us your saving help.*

I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people.

His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land.

Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.

Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven.

The Lord will make us prosper
And our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps.

Second Reading: 2Pet. 3:8-14 *We are waiting for the new heavens and the new earth.*

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up. Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

Gospel: Mark: 1:1-8 *Make his paths straight.*

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: *Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight* and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

Prayer over the Offerings: Be pleased, O Lord, with our humble prayers and offerings, and, since we have no merits to plead our cause, come, we pray, to our rescue with the protection of your mercy. Through Christ Our Lord.

Communion Antiphon: Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

Prayer after Communion: Replenished by the food of spiritual nourishment, we humbly beseech you, O Lord, that, through our partaking in this mystery, you may teach us to judge wisely the things of earth and hold firm to the things of heaven. Through Christ our Lord.