



Parish Newsletter **First Sunday of Advent Year A 2025**

Mass Intentions 29th November – 7th December

Our Lady of Fatima (OLF)

St Thomas More (STM)

Saturday	9.00am 6.00pm	Fr Bogdan (Birthday, SI) O zdrowie (w rocznicę urodzin)		
Polish	10.30am 12.15pm	Vivian Agbeve (Thanksgiving for academic achievements) Adelajda Górczyńska (RIP)	8.30am	Dusze w czyśćcu cierpiące (Holy Souls)
Monday	9.00am	Kevin Doyle (RIP, Ann.)		
Tuesday	9.00am	No Mass intention		
Wednesday	7pm- 8pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	10.00am	Edith Fox (RIP)
Thursday	9.00am	No Mass intention		
Friday			10.00am	No Mass intention
Saturday	9.00am 6.00pm	People of the Parish Frank Taliana (Recently dead)		
Sunday Polish	10.30am 12.15pm	Hayley Wright (RIP) Ireneusz and Barbara Zolcik (RIP)	8.30am	Dusze w czyśćcu cierpiące (Holy Souls)



Those of us who are familiar with the Scouting Movement founded by Robert Baden Powell in 1907 will recall its motto - "Be Prepared". Today marks the commencement of Advent when the Church's liturgy asks us to do a spiritual stock-take as a lead up to Christmas; a time to ask ourselves who is Christ and why are we, His followers.

Isaiah 2: 1-5 - The mountain to which Isaiah invites all people to come symbolises the place of God's presence on earth. It is a place of peace and harmony "where nations will not lift sword against nation and there will be no more training for war". Obviously, there is a long way to go before the ideal is achieved.

Romans 13: 11-14 - The decadence of ancient Rome disturbed Paul greatly; in common with many of that time, he believed that the second coming of Christ was imminent. His urgent message to "Be prepared" to be "on guard" so as not to be taken by surprise when the day of the Lord arrived.

Matthew 24: 37-44 - This passage of Scripture reminds us that Advent is a time in which to think of the "last things", namely, death, judgment, heaven or hell and the return of Christ at the end of the world. To ask ourselves - "are we ready"?

Prayer for Lighting the First Candle - Hope: "Loving God, as we light the first Advent candle of hope, we ask for your presence to fill our hearts and homes. May the hope of Christ's coming bring light to our darkness and renew our spirits. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette:

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SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION - STM: Wednesday, Friday 9.30am-10am OLF: Saturday 5pm - 5.50pm

CHURCH CLEANING: OLF Friday 5th November at 6.00pm – Polish Team B

ADVENT is a time of preparation and joyful expectation. As we prepare for the birth of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, these weeks provide a wonderful opportunity to slow down and reflect. We look forward to the coming of Christ: celebrating His birth, His renewed coming into our lives this Christmas, especially through the Eucharist, and His second coming at the end of time. Advent marks the start of the Church's liturgical year. In 2025, we enter Cycle A. It's a key time in which we prepare ourselves to celebrate the Lord coming into the world as the incarnate God of love.

FEASTS of the Week:

Wednesday 5th December – St Francis Xavier, Pr. Memorial

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

First Holy Communion meetings will continue for children on Wednesday each week at **5.30pm** in the church hall.

RCIA: The Catholic Church's process for adults to be introduced to the Catholic faith, learn its teachings, and become full members by receiving sacraments like Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. The next meeting is on Tuesday **2nd December at 6pm** in the Presbytery.

LITURGY MEETING Monday 1st December at 7.00pm in The Presbytery.

COUNSELLING Service for OLF & STM

The service is free to parishioners. Clients are requested to donate £15 for each session towards the church. Further details and business cards are available in the porch or from Fr Bogdan or Dr Ray Aldridge-Morris on 07946 854632.

Essex County Council: Set a young person up for success by becoming a Supported Lodgings Carer. Your experience is just what a young person needs. Supported Lodgings Carers encourage independence by teaching skills like cooking, cleaning and budgeting. Share a safe home to help a young person plan their future. Supported Lodgings is flexible too; you can continue your career while caring. We are working with EEC to change people lives. Find out more: essex.gov.uk/supported-lodgings. They will visit us on **Sunday 30th November** after the 10.30am mass

SOCIAL & FUND RAISING:

The **Christmas Bazaar** opens at 12.00 midday on Saturday **6th December** 2025. We are still collecting bottles, particularly **Coke/ Lemonade/ Water, and Squash**. If you would like to bake a cake or cupcakes for the Tea/Coffee refreshment stall, it will be very much appreciated (please provide a list of ingredients), please confirm to Clara or Kay. Raffle tickets will be on sale every Sunday and most weekday masses. The raffle draw will be held at approximately 4.00pm on the day of the Bazaar. Please see the notice board for prizes. Thank you for your donations.

Learn To Pray Course Online

Would you like some tips to help your prayer life each day? The Diocesan Service Team are offering an online course running from Friday 14th November for six weeks until Friday 19th December from 7.30 to 9.00 pm. If you are interested in signing up for this course, please follow this link: <https://wkf.ms/3VcDEgi?text0=>

Pray for the sick: Keith Harris, Pam Barnard, Ivan Pirnak, J.C. Nkosa, Teresa Lamb, Noreen Wright, Romualda Ratajczyk, Grace Fisher, Kathleen Evans, Fr Bernard Grogan, Angela Walsh, Jeremy Collins, Peter Kelly, Mary Kelly, Pam Matthews, Władysław Borecki, Ewa Samborska, Peter Ryan, Adele Ryan, Nial Briody, Maria Lunnon, Fabian Andrade, Eileen Rowan, John Brickley, Helen Doherty, Philip Ketedzi, Caroline Berry, Anna Sweeney, Stanislaw Kostecki, Carmel Delaney, Donnah Dris, Conrado Shea, Ryan Tomlin, Mat Quinlan, Krystyna, Josie Cronin, Mary Quinlan, Anna Borsuk, Ruby Antony, Eileen Jolly, Anna Slota, Monica, John O'Donnell and their children, Neil, Anna Gawlik, Eileen, Kathleen Kidney, Andrew Sinclair, Pauline, Alica and Rodney Bill, Valda, sick parishioners from Ashlyn, Alexandra and Abbot Care Home.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of: Bishop Thomas McMahon, Thomas Mulligan, May Aitken, Frank Taliana, Maria Cooper, Alice (Dow) Insch, Nick Cronin, Tony Poole, Mathew Joseph, Helen Noyo Owie, Br Wojciech Durlak MS, Fr Augustyn Hamielec MS, Giona Nkunim Botchway-Adjei, Christopher Keenan, Denis Grogan, Kathleen Thompson, Fr Andrzej Kuder MS, Fr Z. Pałys MS, Hayley Wright, Mary Sage, Patricia Carter, Radosław Iwańczyk, Billy Lomasney, Kenneth Samuels, Terry Farrington, Kevin McGrath, Julie Bush, Janina Zdrojewska, Zbigniew Piątek, Józef Chapski, Peter Mwangi Gekonyo, Joby Joy, PJ Thomas, Eveline Falzon, Dolores Lawless, John Cywinski, Maria Cristina Galagala, Thomas Nelson, Paul Gaize, Bridget Minihane, Barbara Vernem, Romie Quinn, and all those whose anniversaries occur this month.



What is Advent?

Advent is a season in the Church's life intended to renew the experience of waiting, and longing, for the Messiah. Though Christ has already come into the world, the Church invites us to renew our desire for the Lord more deeply into our lives, and to renew our desire for Christ's triumphant second coming into the world.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says the goal of Advent is to make present for ourselves and our families the "ancient expectancy of the Messiah...by sharing in the long preparation for the Savior's first coming."

What does the word Advent mean?

Advent comes from the Latin ad+venire, which means, essentially "To come to," or "to come toward." Ad+venire is the root of the Latin "Adventus" which means "arrival."

So, Advent is the season of arrival: The arrival of Christ in our hearts, in the world, and into God's extraordinary plan for our salvation.

Is Advent the "new year"?

Advent is before Christmas. What's the deal?

The Church's feasts and celebrations run on a year-long cycle, which we call the "liturgical year." The "liturgical year" starts on the first Sunday of Advent. So, it's a new liturgical year when Advent starts.

Advent wreaths.

Where do they come from? Is it true that they're just pagan wreaths borrowed by the Church?

The Catholic Church has been using advent wreaths since the Middle Ages. Lighting candles as we prepare for Christmas reminds us that Christ is the light of the world. And the evergreen boughs remind us of new and eternal life in Christ, the eternal son of the Father.

It is definitely true that Germanic people were lighting up candle wreaths in wintertime long before the Gospel arrived in their homeland. They did so because, well, candle wreaths in winter are beautiful and warm. That a Christian symbol emerged from that tradition is an indication that the Gospel can be expressed through the language, customs, and symbols of cultures that come to believe that Christ Jesus is Lord.

One candle is pink. Why?

There are four candles on the Advent wreath. Three are purple, and they are first lit on the first, second, and fourth Sundays of Advent. The pink candle is lit on the third Sunday of Advent, which we call Gaudete Sunday. On that Sunday, in addition to the pink candle, the priest wears a pink vestment, which he might refer to as rose. But rose, from this writer's perspective, is a shade of pink.

Gaudete is a word that means "Rejoice!" and we rejoice on Gaudete Sunday, because we are halfway through Advent. The three purple candles are sometimes said to represent prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, the three spiritual disciplines that are key to a fruitful Advent.