



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

“Gaudete Sunday”

Mass Intentions 13th December – 21st December

Our Lady of Fatima (OLF)

St Thomas More (STM)

Saturday	9.00am 6.00pm	Genowefa Gawel Gregorian Mass (3) Ann Mary Jacob (RIP)		
Polish	10.30am 12.15pm	Agnes Ruby (RIP, Ann.) Damian Kazek (Birthday)	8.30am	Genowefa Gawel Gregorian Mass (4)
Monday	9.00am 11.00am	Genowefa Gawel Gregorian Mass (5) Funeral Mass of Margaret Murphy		
Tuesday	9.00am	Thomas Mulligan (Recently dead) Genowefa Gawel Gregorian Mass (6)		
Wednesday	7pm- 8pm	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	10.00am	Genowefa Gawel Gregorian Mass (7) John Burke (RIP)
Thursday	9.00am	Genowefa Gawel Gregorian Mass (8) David Creak (Sick)		
Friday			10.00am	Genowefa Gawel - Gregorian Mass (9) Bogdan (Birthday, SI)
Saturday	9.00am 6.00pm	Genowefa Gawel Gregorian Mass (10) Wendy Brand & Family (RIP)		
Sunday Polish	10.30am 12.15pm	Barbara Vernem (RIP) People of the Parish	8.30am	Genowefa Gawel Gregorian Mass (11)



Today's liturgy encourages us to believe that with Christ a new age has been set in motion that offers hope to people. All three readings speak of such new beginnings.

Isaiah 35: 1 – 6 With poetic imagery, Isaiah speaks of the desert blooming, and the sick and the feeble, the lame and the blind being cured and of the great rejoicing that the new age will usher in. Joy and gladness will replace the sorrow and lament of past ages.

James 5: 7-10 The Christian community to whom St. James was writing was under pressure from persecution and inner dissension. He tells them that they must be patient; that the new age of Christ will not happen overnight, and certainly not without intense opposition. And he was reflecting the belief held by many at the time that the end of the world, the second coming of Christ, was imminent.

Matthew 11: 2 – 11 With John the Baptist's arrest, his followers were confused; John had

denied that he was the Messiah and so interest now centred on the new face on the block - Jesus. Jesus confirms what John had said - the new age was beginning even as they spoke and the prophecies of Isaiah were being fulfilled as the blind, the lame, the sick and the deaf were healed.

Prayer for Lighting the Third Candle - Joy: "Gracious God, as we light the third Advent candle of joy, may the joy of your salvation fill us with gladness. Help us to share this joy with others, especially those in need. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette:

Fr Boguslaw Kot MS: Parish Priest, Fr Leszek Gamracy MS: Assistant Priest

The Presbytery, Howard Way, Harlow, Essex CM20 2NS • Tel:01279 426017

Email: harlowolf@brcdt.org

Our Lady of Fatima Hall olfharlow@gmail.com 07425633193

St Thomas More Hall cruzblessen@gmail.com 07399846607

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

Advent Reconciliation Service: Sunday 21st December at 5pm in Our Lady Fatima Church.

CHURCH CLEANING: OLF Church - Friday 19th December at 6.00pm – Holy Communion English Group D

OLF Church – Monday 22nd December at 11.00am – Team A and all Volunteers

STM Church - Saturday 20th December at 10.00am (Volunteers)

A BIG THANK YOU to all those who supported this year's Christmas Bazaar! It raised £3650. Thank you to those who organised, helped set up, run a stall, cooked, entertained and cleaned up after. Please know we appreciate all your hard work.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

First Holy Communion meetings will continue for children on Wednesday 17th December at **5.30pm in the church**.

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 16th December at 6pm in the Presbytery.

Social Event: STM are hosting a breakfast after mass on **Sunday 28th December**. Please bring and share items or just bring what you would like to eat. Everyone is welcome.

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.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

ST. THOMAS MORE RC CHURCH

Christmas Eve (24th of December 2025)

10.00 pm The Office of Readings & Carols

10.30 pm Early-Midnight Mass of Christmas

Christmas Day (25th of December 2025)

8.30 am Mass

OUR LADY OF FATIMA RC CHURCH

Christmas Eve (24th of December 2025)

5. 45pm First Mass of Christmas (For Children)

11.30pm Midnight Mass in Polish

Christmas Day (25th of December 2025)

10.30 am Mass

12.15 pm Mass in Polish

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: Fr Władysław Wichniarz MS, 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.

FUNERAL DETAILS FOR BISHOP THOMAS McMAHON at Brentwood Cathedral.

Monday 15 December at 5.00 pm Reception of the body of Bishop Thomas

Tuesday 16 December 2025 at 11.30am - Live Streaming the Requiem Mass for Bishop Thomas McMahon

[https:// www.shealolin.co.uk/ bishop-thomas](https://www.shealolin.co.uk/bishop-thomas).

Condolences

Our deepest sympathy to the family of Margaret Murphy who recently died. The funeral will be held on Monday 15th December at 11am in Our Lady of Fatima Church.



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.

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HODINGS ROAD, HARLOW, CM20 1TN

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HAPPY CHRISTMAS