

This week at St Lawrence's



22nd/23rd December 2013

Fourth Sunday of Advent
(Missal Page 90 – YEAR A)



Isaiah 7:10-14; Psalm 23; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24
Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph (Missal Page 106); Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6, 12-14; Psalm 127;
Colossians 3:12-21; Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Can you imagine life without keys? How many doors have you locked or unlocked already today? How security conscious we have all become. And what a crisis and panic if we lose our keys!

In the Advent Liturgy there is a remarkable prayer, which speaks about a key: "O Key of David, you open and no man closes; you close and no man opens. Come, and deliver from the chains of prison those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." The 'Key of David' is Our Lord Jesus Christ. He can open a door before us that no other key can open; a door that leads to new hope and peace, to truth and integrity, to purity and love. And he can close and lock behind us the door through which fear and anxiety, bitterness and remorse, guilt and shame, have so often entered our lives, sometimes making our lives hell. Our Lord Jesus can close the door firmly in the face of so much from our past that comes to accuse us and mock us, to haunt us and humiliate us; and all the lies we have fed on and believed.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the 'Key of David', can break the hold that evil has on us, the tight grip of our repeated moral lapses, our sexual sins, our laziness and indifference, our cunning and hypocrisy. He can help us to rise above the strange compulsive needs that our ego often inflicts on us, the addictions that seem to dominate us. Christ can conquer death in us; the death we daily experience when we want to escape and deny the truth about our lives; or to run away from the responsibilities we know are ours in the family or at work or in society or in Church. Christ can rescue us from everything that prevents us from going out in love and compassion to others.

The Church wants each of us to meet Christ, the 'Key of David', and to experience his healing touch and his saving grace. But where? Where can we meet Christ? Where can we find him? We can meet him in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Sacrament of his Mercy and Forgiveness. The Church calls you, encourages and urges you – *you who are reading this* – to make a simple and sincere confession of your sins, without fear, without anxiety, and to place your lives under the gaze of God's love and mercy. There you can meet him! How long since your last confession? Weeks? Months? Years? **It does not matter.** What does matter is that you take this opportunity **now**. It is a very great gift of God to you. Courage, do not let this opportunity pass you by. The 'Key of David' will be turned in your favour.

Fr. Fortunato

Sunday Mass Times

Saturday 6 pm (Vigil Mass), Sunday 9 am, 11 am & 6 pm
Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) - Saturday 11am & 5pm

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR SERVICES

Masses at St Lawrence's over Christmas will be as follows:

Christmas Eve, Tuesday 24th December: 9.30am, 6pm (Family Mass),
8.30pm (Vigil Mass) and 11pm.

Christmas Day, Wednesday 25th December: 9am, 11am and 1pm (in Polish)
No Evening Mass

Feast of St Stephen, Thursday 26th December: 9.30am and 1pm (in Polish)

Normal schedule Friday 27th December to Monday 30th December

New Year's Eve, Tuesday 31st December: 9.30am and 10.30pm (led by the
African Community)

New Year's Day, Wednesday 1st January: 9.30am and 1pm (in Polish)

CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY MASS

For the 6pm Mass on Christmas Eve all children are invited to come dressed as a character from the Nativity – angel, shepherd, wise man, even an ox, ass or sheep! Please could children also prepare a birthday card for Jesus and bring it with them to the Family Mass. They will be asked to place it by the crib during the Offertory. This Mass is primarily for families and children.

CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL MASS

For this year we are starting an extra Mass at 8.30pm – The Vigil Mass.

If you are planning on attending and are an Altar Server, Reader or Eucharistic Minister please put your name on the list in the sacristy.

CHRISTMAS EVE MIDNIGHT MASS OR CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

If you would like a lift to and from the Church for the Midnight Mass which will start at 11pm (Carols at 10.30pm) or the 9am, 11am on Christmas Day, please leave your name, address and phone number at the Parish Office. We also need drivers for this. If you could offer a place in your car to someone who would not otherwise be able to get to Church at Christmas please let us have your name and number and an indication of how many places you can offer.

POLISH MASS

There will be Mass in Polish at 1pm on **Christmas Day, on 26th December, 29th December and 1 January.**

MASS LED BY THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY

There will be a special Vigil Mass to bring in the New Year which will be led by the African Community on **Tuesday 31st December** starting at 10.30pm.

CHRISTMAS CRIB APPEAL

Our Christmas Crib Appeal is for the Catholic Children's Society (Westminster)

PARISH NOTICES

THANKSGIVING MASS FOR THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

We would like to invite all families who have had their child baptised at St Lawrence's during 2013 to a special celebration on **Saturday 11th January** at 12noon. A short Mass will include a renewal of Baptismal promises and will be followed up by light refreshments. More details nearer the time.

SENIOR CITIZENS PARTY

The Parish's annual Senior Citizen's "Christmas" Party will take place on **Sunday 12th January** from 12noon to 4pm. Please put your name down on the lists in the porch if you would like to come or if you can help. Details from Philomena Franklin.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Please could you return the Church crosses and hang them in the sacristy for general use. This does not apply to those of you who have your own crosses.

REST IN PEACE

PATRICK CHALLONER RIP

We pray for the repose of the soul of Patrick Challoner RIP who passed away recently. His Funeral will take place here on **Friday 27th December** at 11.30am. Please keep in your prayers all his family who mourn him.

HAZEL COSTELLO RIP

We pray for the repose of the soul of Hazel Costello RIP who passed away last weekend. Please keep in your prayers her family and all who mourn her. Her Funeral will take place here on **Monday 13th January** at 11.30am.

PILGRIMAGES 2014

PARISH PILGRIMAGE - MALTA

There are only a handful of seats left on this pilgrimage. If you have not already done so, please return your booking forms as soon as possible as places on the pilgrimage are being filled very quickly. The cost of the pilgrimage is £667. A deposit of £200 is required with the booking form plus £29 if you require travel insurance. If you have any queries please speak to Fr Chris or Florie in the Parish Office.

LOURDES 2014

We will be travelling by coach next year to join the Westminster Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, **20th-26th July**. Full details will be available after Christmas.

ECUMENICAL PILGRIMAGE TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELLA AND FATIMA

If you have taken a brochure and booking form for this Ecumenical Pilgrimage in September and would like to come please return your booking form and deposit to Fr Chris at the presbytery, or if you have sent your form direct to Pax Travel please let Fr Chris know. The deadline for booking is January 31st 2014.

OTHER

AN OPEN AIR PASSION PLAY IN STAINES – EASTER 2014

Churches Together have a thrilling opportunity; to declare Christ's trial, death and resurrection in a vivid, open-air play that will be both a stunning visual spectacle and an arresting and thought-provoking drama. We will stage our drama in the Memorial Gardens in Staines, in the open air, on **Easter Saturday, 19th April 2014**. There will be two performances, at midday and 2.30, each running for about 90 minutes. The original concept calls for a biblically faithful re-telling of the Easter story to a high professional standard. We will need a cast of around 60 people and a team of perhaps 60 more to make costumes, construct sets, work the public address, steward the site, counsel the cast, crew and audience and pray for the blessing of God. Please see noticeboard for further details. Call John Miller on 01784 441882 or go to www.spelthornetransformation.org or e-mail: passionplay@spelthornetransformation.org

PRINCESS ALICE HOSPICE

The Chaplaincy Team at Princess Alice Hospice are looking for Pastoral and Spiritual Care Volunteers. Anyone interested in volunteering are invited to attend one of the Open Meetings planned at the Hospice (West End Lane, Esher, Surrey KT10 8NA). **Dates: Wednesday 15th January 6.30-8.30pm or Thursday 16th January 2.30-4.00pm**. Anyone interested but unable to attend the meeting call 01372 461806 for further information. Please see poster in porch.

EVANGELII GAUDIUM

Copies of Evangelii Gaudium - The Joy of the Gospel – by Pope Francis are available for sale in the repository at £4.95.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Christina Power who celebrated her 99th birthday on 19th December.

With love and prayers for you and your loved ones for a very Happy Christmas!
Fr Chris & Fr Fortunato

Mass intentions and other services this week:

Saturday 21st Advent Feria	11.00	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
	11.00	Sacrament of Reconciliation
	11.45	Benediction
	12.00	Esther Kusi-Appiah RIP
	17.00	Sacrament of Reconciliation
+ First Mass of Sunday	18.00	Deceased members of the O'Hanlon Family RIP
+ Sunday 22nd 4 th SUNDAY OF ADVENT	09.00	Brendan Ryan RIP
	11.00	Faustina Mendoza in Thanksgiving
	13.00	Mass in Polish (Msza sw.)
	14.00	Mass led by the African Community
	18.00	People of the Parish
Monday 23rd Advent Feria	09.15	Morning Prayer
	09.30	Michael Hurley RIP (Anniversary)
Tuesday 24th Advent Feria	09.15	Morning Prayer
	09.30	Frank O'Connor RIP
	10.00	Novena to Our Lady
	18.00	Children's Christmas Mass
	20.30	Vigil Mass
	22.30	Carols
23.00	Christmas Mass of the Night	
Wednesday 25th THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS DAY)	09.00	Celebrant's Intention
	11.00	Celebrant's Intention
	13.00	Mass in Polish No evening Mass
Thursday 26th ST STEPHEN	09.15	Morning Prayer
	09.30	Intentions of Brian Calmiano and Family
	13.00	Mass in Polish
Friday 27th ST JOHN	09.15	Morning Prayer
	09.30	James Stephens (Birthday Intention)
	11.30	REQUIEM MASS – PATRICK CHALLONER RIP
Saturday 28th THE HOLY INNOCENTS	11.00	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
	11.00	Sacrament of Reconciliation
	11.45	Benediction
	12.00	Inacia Dias RIP
	17.00	Sacrament of Reconciliation
+ First Mass of Sunday	18.00	Ray Palmer, Daisy & Bernard O'Neill RIP
+ Sunday 29th HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH	09.00	Bragança Family in Thanksgiving
	11.00	Derrick Juriansz RIP
	13.00	Mass in Polish (Msza sw.)
	18.00	People of the Parish

Sanctuary Lamp: Patrick Ibrahim Yahowa RIP

Thank you for your generosity in last week's Offertory Collection:

14-15 Dec: Envelopes £1000.78, Loose £612.57, Standing Orders £420.00 Total: £2033.35

Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees: Registered Charity No. 233699

Contact us:

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Parish Priest: Fr Chris Vipars

Parish Sisters: Sr. Katherine O'Reilly, Sr. Monica Killeen, Sr. Nora Gorman

Catechetical Co-ordinator: Bridget Brinkley

Assistant Priest: Fr Fortunato Pantisano

Parish Secretary: Florie Fernandes