



Parish newsletter

CATHOLIC PARISH OF
ST EDWARD THE CONFESSOR

Sunday 3rd December 2023

First Sunday of Advent (B)

Sunday 10th December 2023

Second Sunday of Advent (B)

Parish Priest: Fr Dominic Howarth

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Parish Website www.stedwards-romford.org.uk

Parish Livestream: <https://stream.seccomgroup.com/channel/st-edward>

Parish Facebook Page: @RomfordRC

Mass Times: see back page. Reconciliation: Saturday 5.45 – 6.15pm, or on request

St. Peter's Primary School 01708 745506

Head Teacher

Mrs Jenny Waterfield

“Stay awake!” says Jesus in today’s Gospel, and he is speaking to all of us. Stay awake! I have no doubt that those in busy jobs, or with lively families, have no trouble being awake – it is finding a couple of hours to sleep that is the challenge! And Jesus understands that very well. So what does he mean when he says, “Stay awake”?

Jesus wants us to be alert and active to what he is trying to say to us. In Advent, this means keeping at the heart and centre of our lives **Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and Faith**. It means not being lulled into sleep by the promises of the High Street, or what is on our screens – the things that dull us to what is truly important. Remember last week’s Gospel – Give food to the hungry, Clothes to the naked. This is the greatest practical focus for Christmas; look at Cafod’s website, or the S.M.I.L.E. charity at 52 North Street, to bring the message of Jesus Christ off the page and into the lives of those with the greatest need. If we can stay awake – stay alert in our prayers, and awake to Jesus present in the poorest in the community and in the world – then we will be awake and ready when the Christ Child is born amongst us, on Christmas Eve.

What should we name the new Parish Centre, and the rooms inside?

The new Parish Centre will have a main hall, seating approximately 80 people around tables, and 110 theatre-style. It will also have a meeting room, seating approx. 14-16 people. But surely we can do better than “Parish Centre”, “Main Hall” and “Meeting Room”?! Are there Saints names we could use? Or aspects of our faith? **Do you have suggestions?** Drop a note in to Fr Dominic or email frdominic@brcdt.org

Building works – we are on the home stretch!

Everything is now taking shape; during the week much of the parish hall was carefully taken down; this is the area that will become car parking in January. The new stone doorway to the church is all but complete, and will be usable at Christmas, with finishing touches in January. The parish centre flooring is soon to be laid, and we will be able to use the toilets over Christmas. Please keep our builders, and all those working hard at the project, very much in your prayers.

Thank you to those who responded to the appeal for parish donations; if you are not yet contributing to the building project, could you make a donation or begin a Standing Order? Forms are at the back of church or on the website.

We know it is not possible for everyone, so just do what you can.

Could you even leave the parish a legacy in your will?

If so, please speak with Fr Dominic.

Parish Centre Co-ordinator – could it be YOU? Or a friend of yours? Our wonderfully refurbished parish centre is due to open in early 2024; could you be the person to co-ordinate bookings, keep the centre clean and tidy, and welcome those interested in hiring the place? 7 hours/week, £11.95/hour, with the potential for additional hours as usage grows. For more information email frdominic@brcdt.org, call 01708740308, or look at <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/diocese/working-for-us/>. Start: January 2024. Closing date for applications: 8th December 2023.

There remains an ongoing need for Foodbank Donations, Donations can be left in bags in the side chapel any time the church is open.

***If there is anything else we can do** – or any other local sources of support you come across which we can share with parishioners – please let us know. Just email or call.*

Quiz Night Thank you to everyone who supported the recent parish quiz, raising £500 for the building project.

There is a Youth Mass suitable for anyone in Year 9 and above
THIS Thursday 7th December 2023, 7.30pm at Brentwood Cathedral

Beginning with pizza & refreshments from 6pm, and an Advent Reconciliation service in the Cathedral before Mass. Absolutely everyone is welcome; come and meet young people from across Essex and East London.

SAVE THE DATE: 18th December, 6-7pm. An oasis of peace in Advent. At the start of the week before Christmas, come for an **Advent Holy Hour**, a time of peace and tranquillity in the presence of the Lord. Come for ten minutes, or the full hour. Come when you can. Come as you are. The Holy Hour will be immediately before the Reconciliation Service.

Special Note – There will be ONE Morning Mass on
Sunday 24th December, at 10.30am.

Christmas Masses – stewards needed, please. We are very hopeful that the back of the church, and the toilets in the new parish centre, will be available for Christmas Masses. Last year we welcomed **over 1200 people to Mass at Christmas**; during the year the numbers attending Mass are regularly 650 – 700 at a weekend. Even with two extra Masses at Christmas, every Mass is likely to be quite busy. This is excellent, of course – better a full church than an empty one! – but we do need a lot of help.

With the new layout at the back of the church, and such numbers attending, we want to be sure:

People are warmly welcomed. For some, Christmas is a time of re-connecting with Church; for others, it can be a lonely or difficult time. The welcome we give matters.

Everyone is safe, and well looked after, especially in any emergency.

To achieve this, we need your help. Ideally each Mass would have four or five stewards, so that if someone needs special help or care, they can be offered it. Could you help – either as a one off, at Christmas, or more regularly at a weekend Mass? You need to be reasonably fit and able to stand; happy to deal with a range of people; ready with a bright smile! Thank you to everyone who put their names on the sign-up sheet last weekend; if anyone else can volunteer then please email romford@brcdt.org so we can be sure the Christmas Masses flow as smoothly as possible.

We will be able to see the new entrance, and the routes people can use to the toilets, etc., on 22nd December. Therefore if at all possible, if you are stewarding at Christmas (whether a new or an existing steward) please could you come to a short briefing meeting on Friday 22nd December at 2.30pm in the church.

Advent Carols at St Edwards in the Market Place Sunday 3rd December, 6.30pm. We are invited us to share in the service of Nine Lessons and Carols. The readings take us through the Christmas story, complemented by carols between each reading. A beautiful and prayerful way to begin Advent – everyone is welcome.

Home visits. Each Advent and Lent – and at any other time when there is emergency need – Fr Dominic visits housebound parishioners in their homes, or care homes within the parish. If you, or a friend or relative, would like a visit, please speak with Fr Dominic or contact Julia in the parish office. All through the year Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist can visit with Holy Communion each week, or whenever suits you. Visits can also be arranged, - just let us know, so that no-one is alone.

Celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation for those in school Year 11. We learnt in previous years that running Confirmation while you are studying for GCSEs is a great pressure. So we ask those in Year 11 to register during November, so we can have a couple of social events at Christmas / Easter. Then the main programme will run June – November 2024, with Confirmations on World Youth Sunday (the Feast of Christ the King) 2024. Registration forms are at the back of the church, or email frdominic@brcdt.org. **The final deadline to apply is THIS FRIDAY, 8th December.** Fr Dominic will then be in touch with everyone with a date to meet over Christmas, as the journey begins.

Certificate of Catholic Practice – Primary Schools

For those applying to **Catholic Primary Schools** for admission in September 2024 your application should be supported by a Certificate of Catholic Practice. This indicates that you attend Mass regularly; if that applies to you please bring your child's Baptism Certificate and Fr Dominic will have copies of the Certificate, to sign for you **after any of the weekend Masses 9th /10th December and 6th /7th January.**

During these two weeks we celebrate:

Thursday 7th St Ambrose
Friday 8th The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Wednesday 13th St Lucy
Thursday 14th St John of the Cross
Sunday 17th Third Sunday of Advent (B) (Gaudete Sunday)

Mass Intentions

Saturday 2 nd	6.30pm	Ints of Miriam Lobo (Gillooly)
Sunday 3 rd	9.30am	Kathleen Merritt RIP (Rickard)
	11.30am	People of the Parish
Monday 4 th	8.20am	Moina Keenan RIP <i>In <u>Campion School</u></i>
Wednesday 6 th	12.15pm	Holy Souls (Herbert)
Thursday 7 th	9.00am	William, Wilfred, Rosanna, Linus & Ada Reade (F)
Friday 8 th		No Mass today – Fr Dominic at a Funeral in Wales
Saturday 9 th	6.30pm	Aliermo Gonzales & Terry Ruelos RIP (Ruelus)
Sunday 10 th	9.30am	Terry O'Connor RIP (O'Connor)
	11.30am	Veronica Oddi RIP (Oddi)
Monday 11 th	8.20am	Maura Cognolato RIP (Valeron) <i>In <u>Campion School</u></i>
Wednesday 13 th	12.15pm	John O'Shea RIP (O'Shea)
Thursday 14 th	9.00am	Mary Catt RIP (F)
Friday 15 th	9.00am	Dec'd Members of Murnane Family (Murnane)
Saturday 16 th	6.30pm	Ints Jobitla & Jibitla (Jose)
Sunday 17 th	9.30am	Peter Gjoka RIP (Filipi)
	11.30am	People of the Parish

Advent Reconciliation Services

At St Edward the Confessor:

Wednesday 13th December, 11.00am and Monday 18th December, 7.00pm

At Corpus Christi, Collier Row: Wednesday 13th December, 7.00pm

Please pray for all who are sick in hospital, our nursing homes and at home.

Especially we pray for:

Margaret Alake, Joe Bellotti, Mgr Arthur Barrow, Fr Michael Butler, Mark Dalton, Dyllis Dangerfield, Agnes Danielka, Genevieve Geary, Pauline Gillooly, Irene Girling, Jim Griffin, Evelyn Hughes, Joseph, Benjamin Joseph, Paula Lam, Matty, Fr John McKeon, Harry McKinley, Brendan O'Connor, Eileen O'Connor, Jacqueline O'Neill, Agnes O'Sullivan, Shamus Pierce, Michael Scullion, Peggy Squires, Maureen Symes, Fr John Taylor, Andrew Todd, Danny Toye, Stephen Toye, Betty Walsh, Joyce & Vince Willshere and Trudy Wijeyeratnam

Diocese of Brentwood Registered Charity No. 234092.

Website: www.dioceseofbrentwood.net