

English Martyrs' Newsletter

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

24th DECEMBER 2023

ENGLISH MARTYRS CATHOLIC CHURCH, 64, LIEBENROOD ROAD, READING, RG30 2EB:

Registered Charity No. 1199568

Parish website: www.englishmartyrsrdg.com

Livestream link on You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCulqb5ncxASpguMmd_0MNtA

Parish Priest: Fr. Gaston Forbah gforbah@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Retired Priest: Fr Richard Maniak

Secretary: Barbara Poole. Tel: 0118 957 2149

Parish Office: Closed. Re opens Tuesday 2nd January 2024

Schools: English Martyrs Catholic Primary

Dee Road, Reading RG30 4BE.

Head: Mrs C. Doberska

0118 937 5466

<https://www.englishmartyrs.reading.sch.uk/home>

You can leave an urgent telephone message as all calls and e-mails are always monitored. Email: office@englishmartyrsrdg.com

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Yvonne Newman. Contact via parish office.

Blessed Hugh Faringdon

Fawley Road, Reading RG30 3EP

Head: Dr Simon Uttley

0118 957 4730

DONATE TO OUR PARISH:

Parish Bank Details: A/C Name: CDP Reading English Martyrs. Sort Code: 30 – 93 – 04. Account No. 00885666

You can also use Direct Debit (forms available in colonnade) and the Dona(te) machine in the church.

MASS TIMES Week commencing 24th DECEMBER:

Sunday at 9.00am; 11.30am; 5.00pm; 7.00pm; 12.00am

Monday at 9.00am; 11.30am

Tuesday at 10.00am

Wednesday to Friday at 9.30am

Saturday at 10.00am

Saturday at 6.00pm (Vigil Mass for Sunday)

Week commencing 24th DECEMBER:

Confessions will be celebrated as follows:

Sunday 30 mins before 9.00am & 11.30am Masses.

Monday NO CONFESSIONS

Tuesday to Friday: 15 mins before Mass.

Saturday after 10am Mass and at 5.30pm:



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: every Friday from 10.00am to 6.00pm.

From 5.00pm, Praise and Worship featuring music, scripture reading, guided reflection, a time of silence and concluding with Benediction.

God Stoops Low by Being Born in Human Likeness

Dear friends, advent this year is indeed quite short. This weekend, we celebrate the fourth Sunday of Advent and move straight to the Christmas Eve ceremonies on Sunday.

We thank God for all the spiritual preparations we have made. Right from the first Sunday of Advent, we heard the clarion call from Jesus, inviting us to stay awake for His coming. He comes to each one of us with blessings at Christmas, but He will come in His glory at the end of time. The invitation to stay awake is a call for us to be always conscious of what God wants us to do and keep our hearts open at all times to receive God's peace which must reflect in our words and actions.

On the second Sunday of advent, we heard John the Baptist declaring that he has only come to prepare the way for Jesus. He was categorical that Jesus is indeed great. According to John, Jesus was coming to effect an internal transformation of lives - spiritual cleansing which he refers to as Baptism with the Holy Spirit. In other words, Jesus' mission is to bring radical renewal in body, mind and soul, opening us once more to the light of God's grace which sustains us and leads us back to heaven, our true home.

On the third Sunday of Advent, John the Baptist continued to invite us to prepare the way for the Lord. This was an invitation for us to examine our lives and try to get rid of the things that do not reflect the faith we profess. These are the things that make our hearts not clean enough to be filled with the love of God.


On this the 4th Sunday of Advent, we will listen to the account of the annunciation in which Mary is told that she will conceive and give birth to Jesus, the Son of God. Mary embraces this announcement with faith and trust. She indeed gave birth to our Saviour, who comes to save us from our sins.




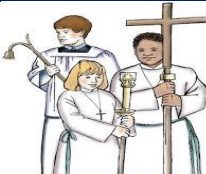





Our advent Journey towards Christmas has given us the opportunity to humble our hearts so that God who comes in total humility may find us ready to be led on the path of virtue.

God stoops low in utter humility to be born again in our hearts this Christmas. He wants to be close to us and He wants us to realize that He is truly close to us. He gives up everything to unite with our lowliness so that we can be elevated to a new level of virtue and life. I pray that Christmas this year will lead each one of us to a higher level of love, humility, tolerance, reconciliation, truth and peace.

A very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year to us all.

Fr. Gaston

	<p>“Do not be afraid, for you have found favour with God.” Consider following Christ more closely as a priest or in consecrated life. Talk to your priest or contact Cn. John Cooke. vocations@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk or call 01329 318 869.</p>
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<div style="text-align: center;">  PARISH NOTICES  </div>					
<p>Sunday Readings for:</p> 	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px;">4th Sunday of Advent Year B</td> <td style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px;">The Holy Family Year B</td> </tr> <tr> <td>First: 2 Samuel 7:1-5.8-12.14.16. Psalm: 88/89 Second: Romans 16: 25-27. Gospel: Luke 1:26-38.</td> <td>First: Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6.12-14. Psalm: 127 Second: Colossians 3: 12-21. Gospel: Luke 2:22-40.</td> </tr> </table>	4th Sunday of Advent Year B	The Holy Family Year B	First: 2 Samuel 7:1-5.8-12.14.16. Psalm: 88/89 Second: Romans 16: 25-27. Gospel: Luke 1:26-38.	First: Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6.12-14. Psalm: 127 Second: Colossians 3: 12-21. Gospel: Luke 2:22-40.
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<p>Every week, you can find helpful background information and guidance on the Sunday readings here: https://stbeunosoutreach.wordpress.com/prego/</p>					
	<p>Altar Servers Feast Day: We sincerely thank all our Altar Servers for their cherished services at our parish Masses. We are invited to join them and their families to celebrate the feast of St. Stephen, Patron Saint of Altar Servers, on Tuesday 26th December. Mass begins at 10a.m. There will be a special blessing of All our Altar Servers at this Mass. Refreshments will follow in the parish Hall.</p>				
	<p>The Bookstall will be closed on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Re-opens on Sunday 7th January</p>				
	<p>Baptisms: Congratulations to Baby Martin Christopher McDonagh, who will be baptised on Saturday 23rd. Pray for Gabriel Cloud Adriosula who will be baptised on Thursday December 28th at 11a.m.</p>				
	<p>Birthday Blessings for December: Next weekend after the homily, there will be a birthday blessing at all Masses for those celebrating their birthdays during the month of December.</p>				
	<p>Congratulations to Bruce & Marisa Hayes who will be celebrating their 62nd Wedding Anniversary on 30th December. They will receive a Special Blessing at 11.30am Mass on Sunday 31st December.</p>				
	<p>Please pray for the repose of the soul of James Farragher RIP who died recently. His requiem will be at English Martyrs on Monday 8th January at 1.00pm.</p>				

Rest In Peace

Please keep his family and loved ones in your prayers at this difficult time.



WISHING EVERYONE A VERY
HAPPY AND HOLY CHRISTMAS



CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS Traditionally, your offerings at Christmas are for the personal use of the priest serving the parish and form a major part of his annual income. Parishioners should use the pink envelopes provided, the card reader, or online.

Here is the link to the Clergy Christmas Collection fundraising page for our parish: <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/reading-english-martyrs-parish-christmas-collection-2023>

CAN YOU GIFT AID YOUR OFFERING TO THE PARISH?

Donating through Gift Aid means the parish can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you give. It will not cost you any extra.

The Parish needs to be able to identify your payments.

- With Direct Debits or Standing Orders this is easy. **BUT** you do need to complete a GIFT AID FORM (green forms in the colonnade)
- If you make your offering with cash then we ask that you use the white envelopes provided in the colonnade.

You must be a UK Taxpayer.

You will need to tell us if you stop paying Tax.

EXISTING GIFT AIDERS

Our Charitable Name and Charity No. changed at the beginning of 2023.

WE NEED A NEW GIFT AID FORM FROM YOU.

Thank you if you have completed this already.

Please complete a green form (Colonnade) and give it back to us.

Without a new form we cannot claim Gift Aid on your offerings.

Gift Aid forms are also available from our website

<https://englishmartyrsrdg.com/give-financially/>

In the 2021/22 Tax Year we claimed about £16,000 back from HMRC

PARISH ORGAN RESTORATION PROJECT

CURRENT TOTAL: £2,586.00

Donate via DONA Machine or direct to

CDP Reading English Martyrs.

Sort Code: 30 – 93 – 04.

Account No. 00885666

Ref; Organ Restoration Project

NEXT FUNDRAISING EVENT EVENING OF FOOD FROM GOA

Saturday 3rd February 2024 at 7pm.

See Poster in Colonnade

You can book tickets via the Parish Office

Please try and support this event

MASS INTENTIONS: Saturday 23rd to Sunday 31st Dec 2023

4th Sunday in Advent and Christmas Masses

Saturday 23rd <i>(Vigil Mass for Sunday)</i>	6.00pm	Jim Pickering RIP
Sunday 24th	9.00am	Michael & Mickey Heneghan, Martin & Kathleen Gaynard & John Nevin RIP
	11.30am <i>Livestreamed</i>	Kevin & Patrick Kilbane RIP
Sunday 24th		
Children's Nativity Mass	5.00pm	Stanley & Margaret Morse RIP
Christmas Vigil Mass	7.00pm	For the Priests of our Parish
Carols	11.15pm <i>Livestreamed</i>	--
Monday 25th		
Midnight Mass	12.00am <i>Livestreamed</i>	People of the Parish
Christmas Day Mass	9.00am	Mary & Joseph Meredith RIP
	11.30am <i>Livestreamed</i>	Marian & Joe Hickey RIP
	NO EVENING MASS	
Tuesday 26th <i>St Stephen's Day</i>	10.00am	Terence John Morse RIP
Wednesday 27th <i>St John, Apostle.</i>	9.30am	Louie Fearn's RIP
Thursday 28th <i>The Holy Innocents.</i>	9.30am	Andrew Antonet Rosario RIP
Friday 29th <i>St Thomas of Canterbury.</i>	9.30am	Paul & Eleanor Fanning RIP
Saturday 30th	10.00am	Patrick & Ciara Grimley RIP

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Saturday 30th <i>(Vigil Mass for Sunday)</i>	6.00pm	Mr & Mrs De Silva RIP
Sunday 31st	9.00am	Thomasina Fernandes, Thanksgiving
	11.30am	Martin Sheehan RIP
	5.00pm	Vocations
	11.00pm	Adoration
	12.00am	People of the Parish

