



## THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF ST. WILLIAM OF YORK

4 Brockley Park, Forest Hill, SE23 1PS

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### Mass Times

Saturdays 10.30am, 6.00pm Vigil Mass

Sundays 9.30am, 11.30am Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday - 9.30am

*(Please note on Thursdays the church will be open for private prayer from 9.30am-10.00am except on Holydays of Obligations & special occasions)*

**Reconciliations** - Saturdays 11-12 noon

**Benediction & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**

1st & last Friday of the month after Mass & 3rd Sunday of the month at 5pm

## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)

**17 December 2023**

**Gaudete Sunday**

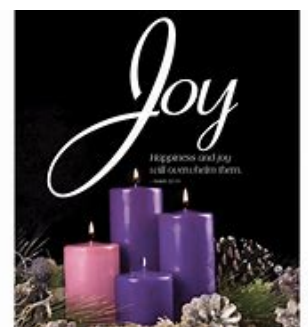
Dear Parishioners

On the third Sunday of Advent, we celebrate Gaudete Sunday, we are invited to be witnesses of joy for two reasons: first, because God our Father sent his beloved Son Jesus Christ who "is the light of the world" The second reason for our joy is, through Jesus' mission, God has poured out the Holy Spirit in each of us and inviting us to be a church, an outgoing and open to all.

This Sunday's Word of God invites us to be this bright sign of joy, despite wars, injustices, ecological disasters, which leave us worried and without much hope of an authentic change in the world situation and of an effective conversion of ourselves and others.

We pray that the imminent feast of our Lords birth, may bring us true and lasting peace to our world and to all affected by the lack of it. May it also experience God's peace through the healing we receive in this time of conversion.

God Bless  
Fr Habte



**TODAY'S READINGS** - Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24, John 1:6-8, 19-28

**SCRIPTURE REFLECTION** - In today's Gospel John the Baptist is questioned about who he is. Who is this man, drawing crowds in the desert? Is he the Christ? John explains he is not, he is a forerunner and a witness. He tells them that the one they seek stands unrecognised amongst them.

This Gospel reading poses the two challenges which are at the heart of Advent: Firstly, like John the Baptist, we are challenged to humbly point to Christ. As individuals and as a community of faith we are called to lives of love and service, witnessing to our God. This is how we point to Jesus and direct the hearts of all we know to meet our God of love.

Secondly John's words challenge us, as much as his questioners, to discern the presence of God, standing unrecognised in the midst of us. We are challenged to recognise our God in the features, minds and hearts of the poorest and the unpopular, the unassuming and quiet, those who we find hardest to love and even recognise Him in our own hearts. God is with us, Emmanuel, but the chances are that we won't recognise Him unless we stay alert.

Our mission as Christians is to point to a God who is in the midst of His people, but who is incognito. To fulfil this vocation we need to embrace the self-effacing humility of John the Baptist and have faith in the wonderful and mysterious presence of God in our world. JD

**NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS** - 2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16, Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38

**ADVENT LEAFLET** - Please take an leaflet from the Narthex or click here to download a copy here [ADVENT LEAFLET](#) Advent is a busy time for all of us at church at home and work. Keep the leaflet handy so you know what we'll be doing together in our Church and Parish Community.

**PARISH CAROL SERVICE** - Our Carol Service will take place on **Sunday 17th December at 4.00pm** followed by refreshments in the school hall.

Come and enjoy this great celebration for everyone.

(Please note there will be no Benediction on Sunday 17th December)

**POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER** - We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

## **SOUTH EAST PASTORAL AREA, CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE**

Canon Victor Darlington, Episcopal Vicar for the South East warmly invites you to the Christmas Carol Service of the South East Pastoral Area, Archdiocese of Southwark on **Sunday 17th December 2023 Gaudete Sunday at 7.30pm** at Corpus Christi Catholic Church, Brixton Hill 11 Trent Road, London, SW2 5BJ. All are welcome.

**ADVENT PARISH PENITENTIAL SERVICE & EUCHARISTIC ADORATION** - We will have Eucharistic Adoration and our Penitential Service on **Wednesday December 20th at 7:30pm**. It is a good way to make our confession before Christmas, if you can't make it on this day, please come to the weekly Saturday Confession times or please book the date and time with Fr Habte.

**CHRISTMAS MASSES** - Please take a Christmas card so that you and your family have the Mass times at hand over the Christmas season or download a copy here

### **CHRISTMAS CARD**

Please note there will not be a vigil Mass on Christmas eve

- There will be three masses over Christmas: (Sunday) 11.30pm Carols leading into Christmas Midnight Mass and Christmas Day 9.30am & 11.30am
- The Christmas Day 9.30am Mass will be specifically dedicated for families. Children will be involved in leading and animating the liturgy.
- Midnight Mass and 11.30am Mass on Christmas day will be live streamed on our parish Facebook page [www.facebook.com/swoyse23/live/](https://www.facebook.com/swoyse23/live/)

**If there is any parishioner in need of transportation to Church for Midnight or Christmas Day Masses. please let Mary in the office or Fr Habte know.**

**CHRISTMAS OFFERING TO FR HABTE** - The offering at all Christmas Masses is your personal offering to Fr Habte. Fr Habte thanks you in anticipation for your generosity. Please use the red envelopes provided and Gift Aid where possible as the parish will benefit. Offerings may also be given via the Contactless device in the Narthex or via the secure link on our webpage <https://donate.mydona.com/st-william-of-york-rc-church> or directly to our parish bank account details below:-

NatWest Bank, Sort Code 60-50-01, Account number 79124437

Account name RCAS Forest Hill, Ref - Your surname/Gift Aid no/Christmas Offering

If you will be away at Christmas, please use the red envelope and put it through the letter box of the presbytery whenever you can. Many thanks

## **SECOND COLLECTIONS DURING ADVENT WILL BE FOR THE HOMELESS**

Please give generously! THANK YOU.

Please pray for the Peaceful Repose of the Soul of

**Veronica Lambert RIP**

(A long standing parishioner in the late 1980's and through the 1990's who sadly died on Wednesday 6 December)

Please remember the friends and family of Veronica in your prayers

Funeral at St Edmund of Canterbury, Beckenham on Wednesday 10 January 2024 at 11.45am followed by burial at Grove Park Cemetery

The family welcome any parish friends who may wish to attend the celebration of Veronica's life.

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon her, May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, Rest in Peace. Amen

**MASS ATTENDEES**

**25/26 November - 293 2/3 December -375 9/10 December - 277**

**PARISH DIARY**

<b>Sun 17 Dec 4pm</b>	<b>Parish Carol Service followed by refreshments</b>	<b>Church School hall</b>
<b>Sun 17 Dec 7.30pm</b>	<b>SE Pastoral Area, Carol Service</b>	<b>Corpus Christi , Brixton Hill</b>
<b>Wed 20 Dec 7.30pm</b>	<b>Parish Penitential Service &amp; Eucharistic Adoration</b>	<b>Church</b>
<b>Thurs 21 Dec 8pm</b>	<b>Singing Practice</b>	<b>Church</b>
<b>Sat 23 Dec 9.15am</b>	<b>Instrumentalists</b>	<b>Church</b>



**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)**

**Gaudete Sunday**

**Saturday 16 December 2023**

**18:00** Fr John Pledger (FM)

**Sunday 17 December 2023**

**09:30** For the Parishioners

**11:30** Herrientta Ighabedua RIP

**Monday 18 December 2023 - Feria**

**09:30** Mr & Mrs Mary & Basti Mariampillai

**Tuesday 19 December 2023 - Feria**

**09:30** Dr. Antoinette Peters RIP 6th Anniversary

**Wednesday 20 December 2023 - Feria**

**09:30** Sue Hepworth RIP

**Thursday 21 December 2023 - Feria**

**09:30** Private Prayer

**Friday 22 December 2023 - Feria**

**09:30** Gertrude Thompson (FM)

**Saturday 23 December 2023 - Feria**

**10:30** Mercy Ibini

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)**

**Day of prayer for Expectant Mothers**

**Saturday 23 December 2023**

**18:00** Peter Hann RIP

**Sunday 24 December 2023**

**09:30** Adrian & Matthew McGurran RIP

**11:30** For the Parishioners

(FM) Foundation Mass

Please access the live streaming by visiting our parish Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/swoyse23/live/](https://www.facebook.com/swoyse23/live/)