

### THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)

'Gaudete' Sunday

<b>Saturday 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Monkwick</i>	5.00 pm	Bob Barr RIP
<b>Sunday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Church</i>	8.00 am	Joe McEnaney RIP
	<i>Church</i>	10.30 am	Parishioners
	<i>Church</i>	2.00 pm	Polish Mass
	<i>Church</i>	6.30 pm	Private Intention
	<i>West Mersea</i>	8.30 am	Mary Hazel RIP
	<i>Mile End</i>	9.30 am	Private Intention
<b>Monday 18<sup>th</sup></b>			<b>Feria</b>
	<i>Church</i>	9.30 am	Canon Thomas Clarke
<b>Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup></b>			<b>Feria</b>
	<i>Church</i>	9.30 am	David Eamonn RIP
	<i>Church</i>	8.00 pm	Filipino Simbang Gabi Mass
<b>Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup></b>			<b>Feria</b>
	<i>Church</i>	9.30 am	V. Rev. Canon Joseph Whitfield
	<i>Church</i>	8.00 pm	Filipino Simbang Gabi Mass
<b>Thursday 21<sup>st</sup></b>			<b>Feria</b>
	<i>Church</i>	9.30 am	Michael + Ellen Kate Conlon RIP
	<i>Church</i>	1.00 pm	<b>Funeral Service:</b> Mr William Allison RIP
	<i>Church</i>	6.30 pm	Polish Advent Mass (Rorate)
<b>Friday 22<sup>nd</sup></b>			<b>Feria</b>
	<i>Church</i>	9.30 am	Ints: Rita + Family
	<i>Church</i>	8.00 pm	Filipino Simbang Gabi Mass
<b>Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup></b>			<b>Feria</b>
	<i>Church</i>	9.30 am	Pauline Carter RIP
			<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)</b>
			Expectant Mothers
<b>Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<i>Monkwick</i>	5.00 pm	Roger Kemp RIP
<b>Sunday 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Church</i>	8.00 am	Peter Ashenden RIP
	<i>West Mersea</i>	8.30 am	Ints: Nancy Budworth + Ken Ridge
	<i>Mile End</i>	9.30 am	Parishioners
	<i>Church</i>	10.30 am	Des Fuller RIP
	<i>Church</i>	2.00 pm	Polish Mass
			<b>THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD</b>
	<i>Church</i>	6.30 pm	Donors Intention (RM)
<i>Midnight</i>	<i>Church</i>	12.00 am	Ints: Mrs Jean Ellis
<i>Midnight</i>	<i>Monkwick</i>	12.00 am	Polish Mass

- ❖ For Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals, please email or contact our parish office.
- ❖ Marriage Preparation: Please be aware that 6 months' notice of intention for Marriage is required especially if marrying outside the Parish. Couples who are planning to get married should contact us **at least 6 months** in advance. Thank you.
- ❖ Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) Saturdays after 9.30am Mass (Priory Street) and after 5.00pm Mass (Monkwick).

- **Cardinal Bourne Hall Enquiries/Bookings:** [colchester@brcdt.org](mailto:colchester@brcdt.org)
- **SVP (St Vincent de Paul Society):** Tel: 07493 439427/email: [colchestersvp@gmail.com](mailto:colchestersvp@gmail.com)

 Please check out our Facebook page for all the latest Parish/Diocese/Vatican news, Clergy/Church photos/videos. Please remember to **like & follow** our page

# ST. JAMES THE LESS AND ST. HELEN

CATHOLIC CHURCH, COLCHESTER

WITH MERSEA, MILE END AND MONKWICK

1 PARISH, 4 CHURCHES, 1 COMMUNITY



Parish Priest:  
Assistant Priest:

Mgr. Christopher Brooks  
Fr. Philip Okoli

**Address:** 51 Priory Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2QB

**Tel:** 01206 866317

**E-Mail :** [colchester@brcdt.org](mailto:colchester@brcdt.org)

**Website:** [www.stjamesthelessandsthelen.org](http://www.stjamesthelessandsthelen.org)



St James the Less and St Helen RC Church, Colchester



## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B)

'Gaudete' Sunday

Week commencing 17<sup>th</sup> December 2023

In the second reading today, part of St. Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, there is the phrase, 'for all things give thanks to God.' At first glance perhaps we might think those words are unexceptional, but what about that little word 'all'? St. Paul meant what he wrote and didn't envisage exceptions; in his own life after his conversion, as he tells us, he was shipwrecked, flogged, often hungry yet he gave thanks to God for those moments. How do we deal with situations that don't go as we hoped, or events which come upon us surprises? We're faced again with that phrase from the Our Father, 'thy will be done on earth'. We can also note that St. Paul, in giving thanks to God for all things, was full of joy and peace. In contrast it would seem that people who don't receive what they expected end up unhappy and grumbling about life and God.

Fr. Chris

## PLEASE SEE MASS SCHEDULE FOR ALL CHANGES

<b>DAILY (Mon-Fri)</b>	Rosary/Divine Mercy	<b>at 8.45 am</b>
<b>DAILY</b>	Morning Prayer	<b>at 9.15 am</b>
<b>CHRISTIAN MEDITATION</b>	Wednesdays (Cardinal Bourne Hall)	<b>at 8.00 pm</b>



**THE POPE'S INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER:** *For persons with disabilities.* We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programmes which value their active participation.

**MARRIAGE MATTERS:** (Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11 1Thessalonians 5:16-24 John1: 6-8, 19-28). **We have been anointed by God.** A TV programme poses the question: 'Who do you think you are?' When John, baptising in the desert, was asked this question, to paraphrase he replied: "I am a voice, drawing attention to something greater than you can see or hear." Our marriages are like this! We are a 'sign' radiating God's love for all His people.

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:** We continue to pray for those parishioners we know who are sick and housebound especially Fr Francis Coveney, Grace McCartney, Margaret Brookes, Diana Irvén, Mrs. Maureen McKenna, Joyce Wrobel, Ron & Margaret Griffin, Peter Wyatt, Elizabeth Pace, Jason McLean, Hilda Morah, Nicollas and Adam Campbell-Vencarto, Maureen R. We also pray for all persons who are ill or are in need.

**CHRISTMAS OFFERING:** The Offertory Collection at all the Christmas Masses is, by tradition, the parishioners' personal gift to the Clergy. In this Parish, Fr Chris and Fr Philip are the beneficiaries, since this collection forms the main part of their personal annual income.

**CHRISTMAS CHURCH CLEANING:** Volunteers are needed to help clean the church for Christmas. Please join us on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December after 9.30am Mass to make our church resplendent for the Celebration of the birth of our Savior!

**CHRISTMAS PRAYER TREE:** Please collect a red Christmas prayer tag from the box situated at the entrance of Church to decorate the tree. On one side please write your prayer request for a loved one, situation, our community, etc ... for Christmas; the other side of the tag is to remain blank. Please return your tag to the other section of box and this will be safely added to the Christmas tree. Just as your **tree** lights shine in the darkness, so your prayers are like a candle that lights up the lives of those in need. Thank you

**CHRISTMAS CRIB COLLECTION IN AID OF THE BRENTWOOD CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S SOCIETY:** In accordance with Diocesan policy, our Crib will remain in place until the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord [February 2<sup>nd</sup>] and these offerings will go to the (BCCS) Brentwood Catholic Children's Society.

**SUNDAY COFFEE MORNING:** Anyone who has half-an-hour to spare after Mass is most welcome to stay for coffee and biscuits after 10.30am Mass on Sundays. All welcome.

**REPOSITORY:** The Repository now has a selection of boxed sets and single Christmas Cards & 2024 Diaries and Calendars available for sale in the Church Porch along with a new selection of Mass Intention cards. All monies to go into Repository Box. Thank you.

**BRENTWOOD DIOCESAN DIRECTORY 2024:** available at £2.95 per book. Please leave money in Repository box on wall in Church Porch. Thank you.

**CHURCH LOOP SYSTEM:** Please note that the Church loop system serves all the seats in the centre Nave but not the aisles or the chancel.

**CHRISTMAS CAROLS:** There will be a carol service before Midnight Mass at 11.30pm on Christmas eve.

## CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

### Christmas Eve, Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Priory Street	6.30 pm	Vigil Mass (families)
Priory Street	12.00 am	Midnight Mass / Carol Service at 11.30 pm
Monkwick	12.00 am	Polish Midnight Mass

### Christmas Day, Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Priory Street	8.00 am	Christmas Dawn Mass
Mersea	8.30 am	Christmas Dawn Mass
Mile End	9.30 am	Christmas Day Mass
Priory Street	10.30 am	Christmas Day Mass
Priory Street	2.00 pm	Polish Christmas Day Mass

### St Stephens Day, Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Priory Street	10.00 am	Mass
Priory Street	2.00 pm	Polish Mass
Priory Street	4.00 pm	Filipino Mass



**CUPPA CLUB:** The SVP will be having a **CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December from 10.00-11.30am**, everyone invited. Party snacks, mulled wine, games, Christmas music. Newcomers welcome. Free or bring a snack if wished.

**FILIPINO MASS & CHRISTMAS PARTY:** The Mass will take place on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> December at 4pm followed by Christmas party in Cardinal Bourne Hall.

**CAFOD ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CRISIS APPEAL:** Donate to CAFOD's Israeli-Palestinian Crisis Appeal at [cafod.org.uk/ipc](http://cafod.org.uk/ipc) or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and southern Israel who have been working alongside communities helping those most in need. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid including food, water and emergency shelter to those in need. Thank you for your prayers

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION COURSE:** Please note that the 2024 course registration has now closed. The next registration will take place Autumn 2024 for the course running in 2025. Registration details will be advised nearer the time.

**VOCATIONS:** Interested in a Vocation to the Priesthood? - Vocations Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Willesden on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> December, Contact Fr Mark Swires - [VocProm@brcdt.org](mailto:VocProm@brcdt.org) – for more information.

**GK CHESTERTON:** Watch The Surprise, a wonderful play by Catholic author GK Chesterton this Christmas. Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December 3.30pm online [www.ewtn.co.uk](http://www.ewtn.co.uk) or on sky 586.



**PRAYER FOR PEACE IN PALESTINE, ISRAEL & UKRAINE.** We pray for the people of all worn torn countries, for all those suffering or afraid, that you will be close to them and protect them. We pray for the laying down of all weapons.

**CHURCH CLEANING TEAM:** Monday 18/12/23: **Team 2** / 08/01/23: **Team 3**

**Friday 22/12/23: Volunteers Willing To Clean The Church For Christmas Services**

**COFFEE MORNING:** 17/12/23: **SVP** / 24/12/23: **No Coffee Morning** / 31/12/23: **Frances**