



*Our Lady*  
**Lourdes**  
Wanstead

[ourladyoflourdeswanstead.com](http://ourladyoflourdeswanstead.com)



## **3rd Sunday of Advent - 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**14th December 2025 - 18th January 2026**

Parish Priest  
Father Martin Boland

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## GENERAL PARISH NEWS

**THE FUNERAL OF BISHOP THOMAS McMAHON** will be livestreamed from Brentwood Cathedral on Tuesday 16th December at 11.30 a.m. <https://www.shealolin.co.uk/bishop-thomas> and will also be available to view for 30 days following the funeral at the same link.

**SVP/WEDNESDAY CLUB CHRISTMAS SOCIAL** is on Wednesday 17th December from 2.00-4.00 p.m. in the parish hall where you can enjoy an afternoon of music, food and a glass of wine. If you require transport, please contact Don O'Driscoll on 07923 608074.

### **KNIGHTS OF ST COLUMBA YOUTH CHRISTMAS COMPETITION**

Invite our young parishioners to take part in the:

- ▣ **Nativity Painting Competition (Ages 4-11)** Children are invited to paint or draw their own Nativity Scene and to choose a favourite Bible passage to include with their artwork.
- ▣ **Christmas Photography Competition (Ages 8-18)** Young people are encouraged to capture a Christmas altar or Nativity scene through photography and accompany their image with a Bible passage that reflects the spirit of Christmas.

All entries will be displayed in church and selected pieces will be entered in the national competition, with the chance to win money prizes. *Remember to put your name and age on you entry.*

Use QR code on posters for more information. **Deadline: 21st December. Hand in to Clergy House.**

**Grand Christmas Raffle** will take place on 21st December 2025. Tickets are £2.00 each and a book of 5 £10.00 and will be on sale after Mass. Money will go towards the running of the Parish Centre with 25% going to our nominated charity, Cardiac Risk in the Young.

**1<sup>st</sup> Prize £150 Cash and 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize £75 Cash**

Other Prizes include two 45 min piano lessons with Ladislav Ondercin, Enigma voucher, and other incredible prizes. Thank you for supporting the Social Committee throughout the year.

## A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

God comes to us as a child: vulnerable, small and human. He comes swaddled in the blanket of night, quietly, without swagger or cavalcade. He does not wish to overwhelm us by force but to love us into freedom. He will not crow bar His way into our lives. Instead, He waits for us to slip the bolts and swing open our hearts to Him. Let Him enter the King of Glory.

God has come among us and remains with us through the life of His Church, above all, in the Eucharist. God now real to us in the forms of bread and wine. Our hands are the manger that hold His precious Body. He is our divine feed. The warm breath from our every "Amen" thaws all that is frostbitten in ourselves.

God has made His home with us, becoming a little child so that we might come to know our dignity as His adopted children. We are free men and women in Christ. Like the shepherds and kings before us, His light guides our way to the manger where we disable our cynicism and humble our sophistication by climbing down on our knees to worship Him.

And when He cries, He cries for all those who grieve and bruise and feel the hard edge of loneliness. The homeless find an eternal home in Him; the lost, a sanctuary; the weary, a place to rest and heal. Tears dry. All that is broken, mends. Angels sing in the oratory of hope.

Christ is born this day. This knowledge swells our hearts and compel us to tell others that we have seen the Saviour and to help cut a path for them to Him.

*Hodie Christus Natus est.* Christ is born this day. May Christ bless and protect you, your families and friends during these coming holy days. May He strengthen your hope and give you the courage to play your part in His mission of salvation. Let him enter the King of Glory.

May God bless you, your families and friends during this time of Christmas and may his protecting hand be over you in the new year.

*Fr. Martin*

**CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS** on the 24th/25th December are your personal gift to the parish priest.

If you normally give your Sunday offering by envelope, you may wish to use the Christmas Offering envelope in your box.

This year there is an option to give your offering using the contactless payment machine in the church entrance and use the “Christmas” option on it.

For those who are tax payers and might wish to Gift Aid their offering, envelopes are available at the entrance to the Church.

**ALTAR SERVERS** Friday 26th December is the Feast of St Stephen, Patron Saint of Altar Servers and all servers are invited to serve at the **11.00 a.m. Mass** on that day. Fr Stewart Foster will celebrate Mass that morning.

**THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY** on Tuesday 6th is a Holy Day of Obligation. Mass times at 9.00 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. On this Feast, the late Pope Francis said:

“Brothers and sisters, let us raise our eyes to the heavens! We need to lift our gaze on high, in order to be able view reality from on high. We need this on our journey through life, we need to let ourselves walk in friendship with the Lord, we need his love to sustain us, and the light of his word to guide us, like a star in the night.”

**PAX CHRISTI (Peace Sunday) 18th January** There will be a second collection after Masses this weekend. For more information go to [paxchristi.org.uk](http://paxchristi.org.uk)

**PARISH DECEASED** Please pray for the repose of the souls of: *Efren Cacayorin* whose funeral will take place on Tuesday 16th December at 10.00 a.m. followed by committal at City of London Cemetery.

*Patricia Shore* whose funeral will take place on Wednesday 17th December at 10.00 a.m. followed by committal at Manor Park Cemetery.

*Anne Mary Sanders* whose funeral will take place on Thursday 8th January at 9.30 a.m. followed by committal at Barkingside Cemetery.

May they be welcomed into the mansions of the saints.

## **GENUFLECTING WHEN WE ENTER THE CHURCH** “*At the name of Jesus every knee should bow*” Phillipians 2:10

The return of the tabernacle that houses the reserved Body of Christ to a more visible place is an opportunity to revive the practice of genuflection. This act of bending the knee is an outward bodily sign of our interior attitude; a tangible expression of reverence, worship, and submission before the presence of God.

Genuflection is a declaration of the centrality of God in our lives, the surrender of our will to His divine majesty. Before the Eucharist, our genuflection expresses our faith in His living presence.

St. Thomas Aquinas famously said that “Satan doesn’t have knees because he genuflects to no one.” This contrast highlights the power of genuflection as a visible sign of our submission to God’s authority and divinity.

Genuflection is far more than a ritual; it is a living tradition that embodies the reverence, adoration, and worship due to Christ in the Eucharist. By continuing this practice, we honour Jesus, affirming His real presence and strengthening our own faith.

**THE STENCILLING** on the back wall is not mere decoration but its symbolism reminds us of how our church is dedicated to Mary, Mother of God and Our Lady of Lourdes:

- i) the stylised “M” is the first letter of Mary’s name.
- ii) the *fleur-de-lis*, the stylised lily, represents purity and chastity and, thus, in Christian symbolism represents the Virgin Mary, the Immaculate Conception, conceived without the stain of sin.
- iii) the crown reminds us that Mary has been crowned Queen of Heaven by her Son, Jesus.
- iv) the stars recall “And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.” (Revelation 12:1). This crown of stars is a powerful symbol of Mary’s queenship, her privileges, and her maternal care for the Church.

**THE STATUES** on the restored reredos from right to left are as follows: St Thérèse of Lisieux. St Thomas More, St Edmund of Canterbury, St Basil, St Helena, St Aloysius Gonzaga.

**ALTAR FRONTALS AND TABERNACLE VEILS** were generously donated by parishioners of our community to help make our sanctuary a more beautiful setting for the celebration of Mass.

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**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT** will recommence on Friday 9th January 9.30 a.m.-11.00 a.m. and 7.00-8.00 p.m.

**SHEILA LOVELL CLUB** the last session will be the Christmas Social on Wednesday 17th December and will recommence on Wednesday 7th January at 1.30 p.m.- 3.30 p.m.

**BEREAVEMENT GROUP** meets on the last Thursday of the month starting on 29th January at 2.00-3.30 p.m.

**NEW WEEKLY EVENING MEDITATION GROUP** every Thursday 8:15 -9:15 p.m. from 8th January in the parish hall. For further information email Brendan at [brendanweakliam@gmail.com](mailto:brendanweakliam@gmail.com)

There is no need to have meditated before and some information guidance can be given on mediation practice and how you can go about embedding a practice into your daily life.

Should you be interested in further group meditation every week and are free on a Tuesday morning, there is an already established weekly daytime mediation group in the parish hall who meet for an hour from 10:50-11:50 a.m. The last session will be on Tuesday 16th December and will recommence on Thursday 6th January.

**ADULT NEURODIVERSE GROUP** The last session will be on Thursday 18th December and will recommence on Thursday 8th January from 7.30-8.30 p.m.

**OUR LADY OF LOURDES PRIMARY SCHOOL** is seeking a mid-day assistant, ad hoc, on a needs basis from 12 p.m.-1.15 p.m. Monday to Friday during term time. Please contact Mrs Neal on 0208 989 9521 for further information.

**PLEASE SUPPORT THE RUNNING, WORK AND MISSION OF THE PARISH** by giving using any of the following ways:

- The easiest way to give is by setting up a regular Standing Order: [www.ourladyoflourdeswanstead.com/offerings-and-donations/](http://www.ourladyoflourdeswanstead.com/offerings-and-donations/)
- By scanning the QR code shown here with your smartphone
- Online DONATE via the Diocesan website [www.dioceseofbrentwood.net](http://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net)
- Using the digital collection plate (DCP) in the main entrance.  
***If you are a tax payer, please gift aid your offering:***  
[www.ourladyoflourdeswanstead.com/gift-aid/](http://www.ourladyoflourdeswanstead.com/gift-aid/)



For any queries please email [wansteadfinancegiftaid@brcdt.org](mailto:wansteadfinancegiftaid@brcdt.org)

**Pastoral Assistants**

Carmel Docherty Tel: 07906 406938  
Frank Adesegha [adesegha@aol.com](mailto:adesegha@aol.com)

**Parish Secretary - Eileen Crotty**

[wanstead@brcdt.org](mailto:wanstead@brcdt.org) Tel: 0208 989 2074

**LOL Site Manager - Bernie Dando**

[BernadetteDando@brcdt.org](mailto:BernadetteDando@brcdt.org)

**Pastoral Centre Caretaker - Camille Mouquet**

Tel: 07464 313389 (Text messages preferred)

**To register as a new parishioner - Tricia Webb**

[wansteadregistrar@brcdt.org](mailto:wansteadregistrar@brcdt.org)



# CHRISTMAS WEEK MASS INTENTIONS

## Wednesday 24th December **THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**

5.00 p.m. Mass—Maria Elizabeth Falco RIP

7.00 p.m. Mass—Maura Boland RIP

9.30 p.m. CAROLS

10.00 p.m. Mass—Marzena Piotrowska & family Ints.

## Thursday 25th December **CHRISTMAS DAY**

9.30 a.m. Mass—Davis & Docherty Families  
living & deceased

11.30 a.m. Mass—Fr Patrick Sammon RIP  
*NO EVENING MASS*

## Friday 26th December— **ST STEPHEN, THE FIRST MARTYR**

11.00 a.m. Mass—Ernest John Peace RIP

## Saturday 27th December **ST JOHN**

CONFESSIONS 5.00 - 6.00 p.m.

6.30 p.m. Vigil Mass—Olga Nunes Ints.

## Sunday 28th December

## **HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**

9.30 a.m. Mass—Heather de Silva RIP

11.30 a.m. Mass—All members of the Howe family  
living & deceased

5.00 p.m. Mass—People of the Parish

**CRIB OFFERINGS support the work of the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society that cares and supports the most vulnerable children and their families in Essex and the East End of London**  
**[www.bccs.org.uk](http://www.bccs.org.uk)**