

CONFESSIONS Saturday after morning mass until 11:15am and
before the vigil mass from 5:30-6:15pm

MASS INTENTIONS 2nd–10th December 2023

Saturday 2nd	6.30pm	(vigil) People of the Parish
Sunday 3rd December 2023—First Sunday of Advent B	8.30am	Myrna Collins-Nuttall Intentions
	10.00am	Helen Hambley RIP
	12 Noon	Margaret Edwards RIP
	3.00pm	Spanish Mass
	6.30pm	Solemn Holy Hour
	7.30pm	Mass
Monday 4th	7.45am	Sandra Intentions
Feria	10.00am	Daniel Olufowobi Intentions & Thanksgiving Claire Talty Thanksgiving
Tuesday 5th Feria	7.45am	John Tan RIP
	10.00am	Kevin D'Silva Intentions Stanley Antony
	8.00pm	St Anthony's Novena
Wednesday 6th Feria	7.45am	Pauline Bermingham RIP
	10.00am	Madeline Tan RIP John Anthony Dias RIP
Thursday 7th St Ambrose	7.45am	Maria B Rodrigues RIP
	10.00am	Paul Cunningham Intentions Talty Family Intentions
Friday 8th - The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	7.45am	Ursuline Sisters Intention
	10.00am	Madeline Tan RIP
	7.30pm	Charlett & Aloceyes RIP
Saturday 9th Feria	10.00am	Padre Pio Prayer Goup Intentions Josephine Moloney Monaghan RIP
	6.30pm	(Vigil) Rita Rajakariar RIP
Sunday 10th December 2023—Second Sunday of Advent B	8.30am	People of the Parish
	10.00am	Edith Obi & Family Thanksgiving
	12 Noon	Bill, Joan & Mark Bennett RIP
	3.00pm	Spanish Mass
	6.30pm	Solemn Holy Hour
	7.30pm	Mass

We pray for the **SICK** of our Parish, Families & Friends— and all at home or in hospital, and all who care for our sick.

ST ANTONY'S CHURCH FOREST GATE
First Sunday of Advent B - 3rd December 2023

Our First Reading is **Isaiah 63:16-17,19;64:2-7**: Isaiah prays for the Lord's forgiveness of the people. The Responsorial Psalm is from **Psalms 80**: A prayer for the Lord's protection. Our Second Reading is taken from **1 Corinthians 1:3-9**: Paul gives thanks to God for the faith of the Corinthians. This Sunday's Gospel Reading is **Mark 13:33-37**: Jesus warns his disciples to be watchful so that they will be ready when the Son of Man comes.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, the 1st Sunday of Advent is already here and the Christmas season is fast approaching. Advent is a unique and a grace filled time, don't let it slip by without receiving the graces of the season.

Advent is a season of HOPE. Probably the greatest spiritual illnesses in our western society today is despair. Its icy hands knock on the door of all of our hearts. Advent offers the antidote to despair. A well lived Advent season offers us a hope that nothing can shake, a hope that is stronger than anything life can throw at us. An Anchor in times of storm.

What is real Hope? First of all it is not Optimism. Mother Teresa was once asked if she was an optimist. She said; *"I am not an optimist, I hope!"*. Optimism and pessimism are mostly a question of individual temperament, being upbeat. Optimism is a natural disposition one can have. Hope is a gift from above, the power of God to allow you face any obstacle, even defeat and know deep down, with a deep inner peace, its all going to be ok!

Lighting the Advent candle is a beautiful tradition and more than just lighting a decorative candle, its lighting a fire of Hope that nobody or nothing can take away. ***"Jesus taught his followers that they should always pray and never lose hope."*** Luke 18:1

Symbolism of the Advent candle

- 1st Candle (Purple)**, is the candle of Hope, sometimes called the Prophecy Candle.
 - 2nd Candle (Purple)**, is the candle of Faith, sometimes called the Bethlehem Candle.
 - 3rd Candle (Rose)**, is the candle of Joy (Gaudete Sunday), called the Shepherd's Candle.
 - 4th Candle (Purple)**, is the candle of Peace, sometimes called the Angel's Candle.
- The White candle placed in the middle of the wreath and lit on Christmas Eve, is called the Christ candle and represents the presence of Christ in our midst.

Prayer for Advent

"Lord Jesus, You alone can satisfy the deepest longings of the human heart. Through baptism, You have claimed us for Yourself, but too often we live as if we belong only to ourselves.

May this season of Advent remind us that You have blessed us, so that, in gratitude, we may live the gospel more faithfully. As we prepare to celebrate the miracle of Your Incarnation, may we attend to the needs of our suffering brothers and sisters, the body of Christ in our midst. Amen.

Immaculate Conception—8th December

Friday 8th December, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception there will be three Masses (7.45am, 10am, 7.30pm) and at the end of the evening mass at 7.30pm there will be a candle lit procession in honour of our Blessed Mother. **For those who would like to offer flowers for the bier of Our Lady please bring donations of flowers to the church on Thursday morning (7th Dec) after the morning mass. Thank you.**

Posada Celebration on **Friday 15th at 7:30pm**, following on last year's fun and very much enjoyable Posada Celebration, we will be once again celebrating the beautiful Mexican tradition of following the footsteps of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. This celebration re-enacts the journey of Mary and Joseph, their rejection along the way and finally finding a place to welcome the child Jesus into the world. The journey will take us outside the Church initially and finish in St Francis Hall with a warm drink, some food and the singing of Christmas Carols together. This is something that children will enjoy and there will be a *Pinata* for the children to open also. I hope you can join us.
Please bring food and drinks to share.

Blessing of the Bambinelli (Baby Jesus) - On the **3rd Sunday of Advent (December 17th)** we will be having the traditional Blessing of the Bambinelli. If you would like the baby Jesus that you will be putting in your crib at your home blessed, please bring it to mass on Sunday December 19th. At each mass the priest will bless the statues.

The Origin of the Tradition: This is a beloved annual tradition in preparation for Christmas that we would like to continue here at St Antony's. The Blessing of the Bambinelli was first instituted by St. John Paul II. On the 3rd or 4th Sunday of Advent, the children of Rome are encouraged to bring the baby Jesus (Bambinelli) from each of their Nativity sets to St. Peter's Square. Following the Sunday Angelus address, the Pope blesses the figurines. Now celebrated in other churches around the world, this Advent tradition is a way for children and their families to connect their Nativity scene at home to the celebration of Christmas at their church.

Sr. Mary Ita O'Riordan RIP - The Ursuline sisters ask your prayers for the repose of the soul of Sr. Mary Ita O'Riordan who died this week. For many years she was Chaplain at Newham Hospital and was a founder member of St. Mark's Church, Beckton.

Brentwood Diocesan Trust Registered Charity Number 234092
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Fr John's next surgery for anyone who like to meet with him will be on Tuesday 5th December 2023 4pm-5pm.

2023 Parish Dates for Advent and Christmas

Friday December 8th –

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

There will be a candle-lit procession after the 7:30pm mass

Friday 15th -

Posada 7.30pm

Sunday 17th

Blessing of the Bambinelli at all Masses

Saturday 23rd

Confessions 10:30am to 1pm

Sunday December 24th -

4th Sunday of Advent

- Usual Sunday Masses
- 6:30pm Children's Christmas Mass
- 9:30pm to 11:15pm - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
- 11:30pm Carol Singing
- Midnight Mass

Monday December 25th - Christmas Day

Usual Sunday Mass Times

Tuesday December 26th -

St Stephen's Day

10:30am St Stephen's Day Mass (Altar Servers Mass)

Wednesday December 27th - St John

- 11:30am Mass for the Feast of St John
- 12:45 Gathering in St Clare's Hall (please bring along food to share)

From **December 28th to January 1st** there will be no daily 7:45am mass, with one **daily mass at 10:30am**

Sunday December 31st -

Feast of the Holy Family

- Usual Sunday Mass Times
- 7:30pm Mass will be a Mass with the Sunday readings and prayers for New Year
- Midnight mass in Tamil

Monday January 1st

10:30am mass

Tuesday January 2nd

Back to usual daily mass times

Brentwood Diocesan Trust Registered Charity Number 234092

Thank you for your continued support

- **online donations link:** <https://stream.seccomgroup.com/donations/saop>
- **Donations can be made parish web-site** www.stantonysforestgate.com
- Payment direct into the parish bank account using online banking
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