

**THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY
Old Harlow, Essex CM17 0HA**

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**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Year C)
(*Gaudete* Sunday)**

15th December 2024

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ADVENT CAROL SERVICE

At 4pm this afternoon, we join together to listen to Advent scripture readings, chronicling the prophesy and arrival of our Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. These will be bookended (*please forgive the pun*) with a selection of favourite carols.

It also an opportunity for the children of our parish to dress up. Some may want to be Mary or Joseph. Some may come dressed as angels (*which, of course, we all know they are*), or shepherds, or sheep, or Inn keepers. Some may want to pre-empt Epiphany and come as Wise Men, or whom ever else they want to portray. Parents may also want to dress up. – Donkeys spring to mind. – In any event, I promise not to come as King Herod!

To follow this most special of commemorative services, mince pies and mulled wine will be served in the parish hall. And so, come one, come all!

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FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

If your child would like to make his or her First Holy Communion on the Solemnity of *Corpus Christi* next year (22nd June) please collect a registration form from the office. Kindly complete the form and return it to Fr. Jon as soon as possible. Thank you!

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SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE

I am looking for someone to take on the role of Parish Safeguarding Representative here at The Assumption of Our Lady.

Every parish is legally required to have their own, dedicated volunteer representative, who works closely with their Parish Priest, to provide assistance and support to their parish in safeguarding matters. The person appointed to this important role will be guided through a recruitment process with the Diocesan Safeguarding Office. They will be fully trained in current safeguarding policies, and forms, and will receive ongoing support from the Safeguarding Office to help them in fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of their role.

This essential, voluntary work within the Parish is a key role, not least, because it raises awareness in safeguarding, and helps to keep our parish communities safe from harm.

If you think you might be interested, or would like more information, then please feel free to speak to me, without any obligation. Fr Jon.

CHRISTMAS MARANATHA

at The Sion Community, Sawyers Hall Lane,
Brentwood, CM15 9BX, on Thursday 18th December.

The evening begins with Mass at 7pm followed by
Prayer and Praise and Exposition of the Blessed
Sacrament.

The Celebrant will be Fr. Arnaud from St Anthony's,
Forest Gate. – All are very welcome.



MASS TIMES THIS WEEK

Sunday 15 th Dec	10:00 Solemn Mass	3 rd Sunday of Advent	
	16:00 Carol Service		
	18:00 Solemn Mass		<i>People of the Parish</i>
Tuesday 17 th	10:00 Mass – Feria in Advent		
Wednesday 18 th	10:00 Mass – Feria in Advent		
Sunday 22 nd	10:00 Solemn Mass	4 th Sunday of Advent	
	18:00 Solemn Mass		<i>People of the Parish</i>

GOSPEL REFLECTION

« John was to be the very last testimony before Jesus' arrival »

Today, the liturgy of this Sunday, known as "Gaudete" Sunday, is a special invitation to us to joyfulness, to a vigilance that is not sad but happy. "Gaudete in Domino semper", St Paul wrote: "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil 4:4).

Today, furthermore, God's word introduces us to Jesus Christ's precursor: Saint John the Baptist. God the Father is preparing the arrival, that is, the Advent, of His Son, born of the Virgin Mary, in many different ways, as the beginning of the Letter to the Hebrews (1.1), says: Patriarchs, Prophets and Kings prepared Jesus' arrival... But Saint John the Baptist, as can be seen in his liturgy, would be the one to point him out to the world, and the privilege of Baptizing our Lord went — mysteriously!— to him. His was to be the very last testimony before Jesus' arrival. And he gave it with his life, with his death and with his word.

—Let us listen today to his word, exhorting us to share what we have and to respect the justice and dignity everybody deserves.