

## Catholic Church of St Anne Line

## Newsletter

**Parish Priest:** Fr Bartolomeu Blaj

**Deacon:** Rev Alan Mair

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**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

A registered charity

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## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent – Year B

### Fourth Sunday of Advent



All human lives are a story, but this story must be lived in such a way that it is worth telling. The story we tell in church is always the best story, the story of the best man who ever walked this earth, the story of the man we call, Jesus, our Lord and our Saviour. Jesus is unique.

We proclaim this gospel of the Annunciation, Luke 1:26-38, on the day of the Immaculate Conception and, on the fourth Sunday of Advent, at the gates of Christmas, we proclaim it once again.

On the day of the Immaculate Conception we talk about Mary, the wife of Joseph and the mother of Jesus “full of grace”. On this fourth Sunday of Advent, it is fair and necessary to remember that everything is the work of God, that both Mary and we are simply very dear children of the God of the impossible. Mary, the young woman from Nazareth and the wife of Joseph, is for us Catholics, the door of Christmas and the door to heaven.

The gospel of the Annunciation is the Gospel of the impossible made possible by the power of God.

As Jeremiah said, “Mary could have exclaimed ‘You seduced me Lord and I let myself be seduced.’” He who falls into the hands of God no longer looks back. Mary lived the eternal adventure of being the mother of Jesus and the mother of God.

### It is Christmas!



Christmas is God’s special gift to humankind and especially to each one of us. It is the day when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the God-man, who came into the world to save us. He was born in utter poverty and destitution yet in obedience to God that he may establish God’s kingdom on earth. Today the

Christmas message of joy is proclaimed to the entire world and the church recaptures it in three stages. First there is the anxious expectancy expressed by Prophet Isaiah that those who walked in darkness have seen a great light. The king will come and bring peace and justice to the world. The people have been given new hope and joy. Second is the actual coming expressed in the simplest narratives of a journey, the birth of a child, and the angels singing. Lowly shepherds are the first to be informed about the miraculous event. The good news given to them is shared by all. Third is the theological reflection that the child expected has come and in him the Grace of God is revealed and salvation has been made possible for all. It comes to us through the saving work of Christ. Christmas is the story of the impossible, God becomes human, the timeless enters into history, the mighty God becomes a helpless infant, Christmas is not only impossible, but it is offensive to the ordinary human reason. Christmas is the birth of a child who brings the joy of God, the light of his glory and the forgiveness of our unbelief. Jesus, made as a child, is the kind image of a close God, who smiles at us and tells us: "Do not be afraid" whether you are wise, rich, poor or young. I bring you an invitation to be collaborators in the creation of this world to perfect it and make it more just, to make it simply human. Jesus is the mark of God, the only word of God, the God always closest and most tangible. We wish each one of you a Holy and Happy Christmas!

## *Fr Barto & Rev Alan*

**Baptism of infants & RCIA** Please contact the Office or speak to Fr Barto and Rev Alan. For Baptism it is essential that you make contact with us as soon as possible to ensure that Diocesan requirements are fulfilled and a suitable date can be placed in the diary.

**Confession** is after weekday Mass (Wednesday to Saturday). Confessions can be heard in English, Italian, Spanish and Romanian.

**Marriages** We welcome the marriage of parishioners and those who regularly worship here. Please notify Fr Barto or Rev Alan **at least six months in advance** to allow adequate time for preparation.

Can we persuade you to **set up a standing order** if you don't have one? Bank details at the front of the newsletter. If you are a taxpayer, please complete a Gift Aid Declaration Form found in the porch and send it back to the church. You can donate **online** through the Diocesan donation page following this link: <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/donations?parish=south-woodford>

**Weekday Morning Prayer** Psalter Week 4

**Lectionary** Sunday Year B: Advent week 4

### **THANK YOU**

To everyone who has helped in the Christmas celebrations: the altar servers, readers, musicians, stewards, flower arrangers and cleaners.

### **CHRISTMAS COLLECTION**

As in all parishes, the Christmas collection is your personal gift to your parish priest.

**CRIB OFFERINGS** There will be no retiring collections over Christmas – you are

encouraged to make donations to Brentwood Catholic Children's Society (BCCS) through Crib Offerings. Donations can be placed in the fire extinguisher next to the crib.

**IF YOU ARE NOT RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION** If you wish to come up for a blessing instead, please indicate this by crossing both arms across your chest.

**DAILY MORNING MASS 26 DEC- 29 DEC**

From Tuesday 26 December to Friday 29 December, Mass will be celebrated at 9.30am.

### **PARISH SOCIAL EVENT DATES**

AFTERNOON CLUB- is meeting on Wednesday 3 January in the hall.

### **PRAYER GROUP MEETING DATE**

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION- This will resume in January 2024.

LECTIO DIVINA - Thursday 28 December after the morning Mass.

### **WEEKLY MASS ATTENDANCE FORMS**

Are available in the porch as you enter for the Sacraments, (FHC & Confirmation) and for nursery, primary & secondary Catholic Schools. **Attendance at weekly Sunday Mass and Holy days of obligation by your child is required** unless they are ill or isolating. Complete one per child and drop the completed form into the box provided **as you leave Church**.

### **BRENTWOOD DIRECTORY 2024**

On sale in the porch. Price £2.95. Please place money in the wall box marked 'CTS & publications'.

### **FIRST FRIDAY NOVENA – 5<sup>th</sup> JANUARY**

Monthly on the first Friday of the month until the feast of the Sacred Heart in June 2024.

### **NEWHAM DEANERY DAY of RECOLLECTION**

'The New Year - Praying for Peace with Our Lady' led by Fr. Stewart Foster on Saturday 30th December at Our Lady of Compassion Church, Upton Park E13 9BF : Mass at 9.15am, talk in the hall, Eucharistic Adoration with Benediction ending at 3pm. Please bring a packed lunch.

### **SAHARA DESERT RETREAT IN MOROCCO**

26 February – 11 March 2024. Including a day visiting Marrakesh and 9 full days in the Desert. With Fr Arnaud and Deacon Vladimir from St Antony's in Forest Gate. Designed for young adults, open to all adults able to hike 4 - 6 hours a day for 9 full days in the desert. £952 (plus flight). [www.desert-retreat.com](http://www.desert-retreat.com) or phone Catherine at 07807 348223.

### **NEW PARISHIONERS**

Welcome!! Please introduce yourself to Fr Barto and Rev Alan. Also complete a registration and GDPR form found in the porch and return to the Parish Office once completed.

### **DONATIONS FOR THE HOMELESS**

(To be left on the table by the organ loft)

- Jumpers, tee-shirts, fleeces, underwear jackets - all sizes
- Joggers, jeans, socks all sizes
- Bleach, anti-bacterial hand wash
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shower gel, monthly pads, razors, deodorant, shampoo

**NO FORMAL CLOTHES OR FORMAL SHOES AND NO CHILDREN'S CLOTHES NEEDED.**

### **SVP SUPPORT**

If you, or anyone you know in our community, could benefit from support from the SVP please contact the Parish Office (in strict confidence)

### **PARISH OFFICE (IN THE PRESBYTERY)**

The Parish secretary is in the office on Monday afternoons, Wednesdays and Friday mornings.

**Intention for the week:** "Today, with the Nativity of Christ in sight, our prayer focuses on expectant mothers. For all those going into labour now and in the next months, we pray for the safety and wellbeing of both mother and baby. Lord hear us".

**Please pray for those who are sick Anniversaries 25 - 31 December.**

Alice Doyle, Leonard German, Joseph Lavery, William J Barry, Agnes Tilley & Mrs J King. Albert Hodges, Emily Magorian, Irena Powichrowska, Mr Cassidy, Mary Healey, Joyce Collins, Mr Poulain, Celia McHugh, Fr Brian Reeves, Dr John De Lary, Margaret Delaney & Catherine McDonald

**Last weekend** Mass attendance was 230.

**Parish website** [www.saintanneline.com](http://www.saintanneline.com)

**facebook.com/SaintAnneLine**

**facebook.com/SALSocialCommitee.**

**Safeguarding Coordinator** Mary Lamb 020 8491 0970 [mary-annelamb@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mary-annelamb@hotmail.co.uk)

**Parish Gift Aid Co-ordinator** Anthony Collins 020 8989 9547

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