

Saint Vincent de Paul Parish  
36 Altenburg Gardens, Battersea, London SW11 1JJ  
*One of the South Battersea Churches*

# Newsletter

## Contact us:

**Parish Priest:** Monsignor Timothy Galligan: 020 7228 2121; Email: [batterseaag@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:batterseaag@rcaos.org.uk)

**Parish Pastoral Assistant:** Brother Paulin Meba SDB

**Parish Administrator:** Ms Alison Boys 020 7228 2121; [batterseaag@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:batterseaag@rcaos.org.uk) Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9.15am – 12.15

**Parish Safeguarding Representatives:** Ed Elliot & Deborah Sherwood: [batterseaagsg3@safeguardrcaos.org.uk](mailto:batterseaagsg3@safeguardrcaos.org.uk)

## Further information:

Our Parish Website: [www.saintvincentdepaul-church.org](http://www.saintvincentdepaul-church.org) or Scan the QR Code to the right

The Archdiocese of Southwark Website: [www.rcaos.org.uk](http://www.rcaos.org.uk)

Our Diocesan Directory: [www.rcaos.org.uk/directory](http://www.rcaos.org.uk/directory).

The Catholic Church in England and Wales: [www.cbcew.org.uk](http://www.cbcew.org.uk)



Year C

## First Week of Advent

1 - 8 December 2024

### Services and Mass Intentions this week

<b>Sunday 1 December</b> <i>First Sunday of Advent</i>	<b>9am Mass</b> Holy Souls (Parish Lists) <b>11am Mass</b> Maud & Bruce Cooper RIP <b>6pm Mass</b> All Parishioners	
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>NO Mass</b>	
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>NO Mass</b>	<b>Saint Francis Xavier</b>
<b>Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9.30am Mass</b> Robert Twycross RIP (Twycross-Hills)	<b>Saint John Damascene</b>
<b>Thursday 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9.30am Mass</b> Walter & Catherine Knight RIP (F)	<b>Saint John Almond</b>
<b>Friday 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9.30am Mass</b> Schubert Family RIP (F) <b>7 – 8pm</b> <b>Service of Reconciliation and 'Holy Hour': Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament</b>	<b>Saint Nicholas</b>
<b>Saturday 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>11am</b> <u>Confessions</u>	<b>Saint Ambrose</b>
<b>Sunday 8 December</b> <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i>	<b>9am Mass</b> Steve Levesque RIP (Austen) <b>11am Mass</b> <b>6pm Mass</b> All Parishioners	



**'FLAME 2025'** the largest Catholic youth event in England and Wales. It will take place on Saturday 15 March 2025 at the OVO Wembley Arena. Filled with inspiring speakers, incredible live music, prayer, adoration and young people from across England and Wales, it's an event like no other!

We are organising a group from the Parish and call out to all young people aged between 14 and 25 to join us. Please let Fr Tim or Brother Paulin know that you are interested and we will keep you informed about the arrangements. Do check out the website for more details: <https://cymfed.org.uk/flame/>

**Next Sunday, 8 December,** there will be a voluntary **retiring Collection** to help purchase beautiful **flowers** to decorate our Church at Christmas.

**Christmas Offering envelopes** are offered to you this Sunday. If you will not be here for Christmas, please also feel free to return it before you go. You will be able to use the dedicated Christmas Offering option on our Card Reader soon.

### Advent - a New Beginning?

**A new year of grace begins as we set out afresh**



Our Christian worship gives rhythm and direction to our personal lives. Each Advent starts off another year in the life of the Christian. We may well wonder 'Is it really that time again?' We feel the effect on us of the last twelve months, as dark shadows have stretched further across the world, wars have spread and peace seems to elude us, and some people are anxious about their life and work.

In this new liturgical year, we shall be following the leading of **Saint Luke's Gospel each Sunday**. Many of the most familiar stories connected to Our Lord's Nativity come from Saint Luke's Gospel, and we shall hear them again in our Christmas celebrations shortly. Luke

is mentioned by Saint Paul in some of his Letters. He is sometimes thought to have been a physician. The Acts of the Apostles was also authored by him, meaning that Luke is responsible for nearly a quarter of what is found in the New Testament. Some traditions claim he was an artist, and that he painted the Virgin Mary (the tradition that 'El Greco' depicts, left) – hence in many European countries Artists' Guilds have had Saint Luke as patron.

**Time is God's gift to us.** Starting out on another new year in the life of the Church reminds us that the life of each of us is our journey towards God and into his gift of eternal life. Some of those we know have passed into the final stage of that journey. We too are 'further' along the way than this time last year. Have some of the difficulties of the last year drawn us closer to God? **In these first days of Advent, we have a time for taking stock;** we should not be afraid to ask ourselves, 'what are the signs of how I have lived this last year as a follower of Jesus Christ?' Can I give an answer to such a question? 'Can I draw something positive from the year just ended about how to continue forward into the



*St Luke by El Greco, 1605, Toledo Cathedral, Spain.*

coming year?' At Christmas, we will again rejoice at the coming of the Word of God in the humility of our human flesh; let's ask for the grace to recognise him in our midst now (in the Word and in the Eucharist) and to see better how to be his witnesses today (like the Christmas shepherds, and the first Apostles were), and be able to show we are full of joy that we are his followers, and to live with a hope that is contagious. **Next Friday's time of Adoration and the Sacrament of Reconciliation** is an ideal opportunity for drawing breath, taking stock, and seeking a new experience of God's ever-loving mercy.

**Our Advent liturgy points to the bigger picture** for all of us: of our ultimate future, a life with God in all eternity which is beginning for us here and now. We ought to start off Advent in a hopeful spirit, eager to see the promise fulfilled, that we shall meet Christ when he comes again or when we stand before him after our death. We are going to hear the injunctions to 'Watch', 'Stay awake', be ready to meet Jesus Christ whenever he comes. We are told on the First Sunday of Advent by Christ himself, to 'Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man'. Such a spirit should already help prepare us for entering into the Jubilee Year of Hope on 29 December.

Advent is far from being a few weeks filled by 'getting ready to celebrate Christmas'. We *will* celebrate Christmas eventually, not now but when the day itself comes – indeed, as Catholics, with the whole Church, we spend twelve days celebrating and rejoicing, until the Feast of the Epiphany on Sunday 5 January (sometimes known as 'little Christmas').

## ADVENT - starting out afresh as 'Pilgrims of Hope'

### Begin Advent in Prayer and with the Sacrament of Reconciliation at Friday's Reconciliation Service

This coming **Friday at 7pm** (6 December), we are holding another **Advent Service of Adoration Prayer and Reconciliation**. We invite you and your family and children to join us: come and adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament in prayer, receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and enjoy some time of peace, prayer and music. This Service is for all, and *particularly for our First Holy Communion and Confirmation families*. This is an **ideal moment to prepare as we start out on our Advent journey towards Christmas**, and just ahead of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. **Note the date and time and come along.**

### Journeying with 'Mary, Joseph, and the donkey' in Advent

Our parish has a longstanding Advent tradition whereby families (particularly those with smaller children) offer 'hospitality' in your homes to representations of Mary and Joseph and their donkey, journeying to Bethlehem for the birth of Christ. It's a devotional way to mark your families' Advent journey and prepare for Christmas, and a simple focus for praying together as a family.

**You can still sign up!** People sign up for one (or more) nights, and takes responsibility for passing the figures on to the next family on the list. Simple prayers are provided which might be useful while the images are in your home. **Sign-up sheets are at the back of Church.** Maggy Miclot is coordinating.

### Carols Around the Crib by Candlelight: Saturday 14 December at 4pm

Our annual Carol Service will take place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup>: Candlelit Carols and Readings will be followed by refreshments. Everyone is welcome to take part in singing, playing, reading, and behind-the-scenes organising and serving refreshments. We are blessed to have several talented musicians and singers, and **if you would like to join and perform with them**, please contact Catherine Warren: [catherine.warren@btinternet.com](mailto:catherine.warren@btinternet.com), 07866 365882. **If you would like to help with setting up and refreshments**, please contact Kristina Cooper, [kristinabcooper@gmail.com](mailto:kristinabcooper@gmail.com), 07972 119252. Otherwise, just KEEP THE DATE and join in the Carol-singing!

### 'Walk with Me'

These little books are available – with a reflection for each day from now until the end of Christmas. Price £1.

### Praying the Mass

Archbishop Wilson wants to encourage us to see better how to 'pray the Mass'. An introductory short Talk is available at: <https://youtu.be/xHnZXrIbvtw>

### Pope Francis calls a Jubilee Year: we are to be 'Pilgrims of Hope'



**Every 25 years** (and sometimes on other occasions) **the Church celebrates a 'Holy Year'** – a year-long period of renewal. Beginning on 29 December in Rome, next year will be such a Jubilee Year. Pope Francis has given it a theme: **'Pilgrims of Hope'**. He is concerned that, in the difficult times in which we live, we rekindle this great Christian virtue in our individual lives, and in the Church as a sign of hope for humanity. He writes: *'The Jubilee of 2025, a holy year that I wanted to dedicate to the theme "Pilgrims of Hope", is a propitious occasion to reflect on this fundamental and decisive Christian virtue – especially in times like the ones we are living, in which the third world war being fought "piecemeal" that is unfolding before our eyes can lead us to*

*assume attitudes of gloomy discouragement and ill-concealed cynicism.*



*'Hope, on the other hand, is a gift and a task for every Christian. It is a gift because it is God who offers it to us. Hoping, in fact, is not a mere act of optimism, like when we sometimes hope to pass an exam at university ("Let's hope we make it") or when we hope for good weather for the trip out of town on a Sunday in the spring ("Let's hope for good weather"). No, hoping is waiting for something that has already been given to us: salvation in God's eternal and infinite love. That love, that salvation that gives flavour to our lives and that constitutes the hinge on which the world remains standing, despite all the wickedness and nefariousness caused by our sins as men and women. To hope, then, is to welcome this gift that God offers us every day. To hope is to savour the wonder of being loved, sought, desired by a God who has not shut Himself away in His impenetrable heavens but has made Himself flesh and blood, history and days, to share our lot.*

*'Hope is also a task that Christians have a duty to cultivate and put to good use for the sake of all their brothers and sisters.'* Read the full text [here](#)

### Intentions for our Prayer

**Pray for Peace.** The horrific onslaught on the people of Gaza and the West Bank and Lebanon continues. The wars in Ukraine and other places are deadlocked, but the innocent still go on suffering. Pray fervently for lasting peace with justice for all, for an end to the starvation, killing, wounding, and trauma of innocents, and the unnecessary destruction of people's homes and livelihoods.

Pray for Peace in so many other troubled places across our world including: Afghanistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan, Cameroun, Chad, China, Colombia, Ethiopia, Haiti, Hong Kong, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Russia, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Yemen.... and all the other places where the innocent are caught up in the violent power struggles of others. And for the many Christians who face persecution today in so many parts of the world.

**Join with the Pope's Prayer Intention for December that we may be Pilgrims of Hope:**

'Let us pray that the coming Church Jubilee Year 2025 strengthens us in our faith; helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope.' Pray along with Pope Francis himself by clicking [on the Pope Video](#).

**For all the Faithful Departed**, particularly those loved ones named in our November List of Remembrance.

**For all who are sick and housebound**, particularly: Rosa Antonini, Rosemary Awere, Ambrose Caldecott, Mario and Mariana Cassar, Brian Connolly, Rose Egan, George Giannoukakis, Lorna Jayamanne, Joy Joseph, Betty Kilkelly, Becky Kumoji, Giuseppe and Giuseppina Morreale, Lorna Phaure, Bernard and Iris Ramsey, Vincenzo Robilotta, Gus Twycross-Hills, and all sick or housebound parishioners; and for our parishioners' elderly parents and sick relatives.

### Your Parish needs even more generous support from all

**Thank you for your donations to our parish last Sunday and to Catholic Youth Services.**

- **The most efficient way to donate regularly is with A GIFT-AIDED BANK STANDING ORDER.** Please ask us for details, or use the **Parish Pledge Form on our website [using this link](#).** To **GIVE DIRECTLY FROM YOUR BANK ACCOUNT** (please use your surname as the reference, particularly to ensure Gift Aid), you require these **BACS details**:  
**Sort Code: 50-21-01 Nat West, Clapham Junction Branch**  
**Account Number: 82117209**  
**Account Name: RCAS Battersea Altenburg Gardens**
- **Always GIFT AID YOUR OFFERING please.** Gift Aiding by UK taxpayers makes an indispensable contribution for it adds 25% to your donations from tax you already pay - [use this link to register](#). You can **GIFT AID ANY DONATION**, including Offerings for Masses. Just indicate your wish to do so, by using a special Gift Aid envelope for particular gifts and including your contact details (find the envelopes in the containers on the right-hand Church wall). You should register all card donations for Gift Aid when using the Card Readers.
- **Use the CONTACTLESS CARD READERS** as you enter or leave Mass, but **PLEASE also Gift Aid each Card you use.** Register your card the first time. Use the [same card](#) in the future, and you usually need only register once.
- You can **DONATE DIRECTLY using the Parish [JustGiving page](#)** (also on our website); **please Gift Aid the donation.**
- There is a **'DONATE BUTTON' on our website** allowing you to donate online. **This, too, lets you Gift-Aid.**
- If you **SHOP ONLINE** and start out from our [Easyfundraising Page](#) you can raise donations for the parish from some 4700 online retailers. There is *no additional cost to you.*

*May God bless you and all your loved ones, Fr Tim*

## **Statement from the Archbishop of Southwark Following the Vote on Assisted Dying in the House of Commons**

I am deeply saddened and extremely worried by the progress made in the House of Commons towards the legalisation of assisted suicide. While this is not yet the final step in enacting this legislation, it represents a seismic and concerning shift in our nation's approach to caring for the most vulnerable among us.

Compassion, rightly understood, means standing with those who suffer, sharing their burdens, and honouring their dignity until the natural end of their lives. It does not mean hastening death, even in the face of pain or despair. Every human life is of immeasurable value, and our response must always be to protect and support those who are most in need.

The experience of other countries where assisted suicide has been introduced serves as a grave warning. Promised safeguards are eroded over time, leaving the elderly, disabled, and seriously ill at risk of feeling their lives are a burden to others. The subtle, and sometimes overt, pressure this creates threatens the very fabric of a society built on care and protection for the weakest.

Legalising assisted suicide also undermines the essential trust between patients and healthcare professionals. Those who dedicate their lives to healing and comforting the sick are being placed in an untenable position. Conscientious objection – the right of medical practitioners, nursing and care staff, and institutions to refuse to participate in practices that violate their deeply held ethical or religious convictions – must be upheld and protected. Without this assurance, the ethos of our healthcare system and the integrity of those who serve within it are at serious risk.

Instead of moving towards assisted suicide, we must commit to improving palliative care, ensuring that expert pain relief, emotional support, and spiritual care are available to all who need them. No one should feel alone or abandoned in their suffering.

As we face this challenging moment, I call on Catholics and all people of goodwill to advocate for the protection of life at every stage and to stand in solidarity with those who are most vulnerable. Let us also turn to the Lord Jesus, who shared in human suffering and revealed the depth of his love through his death and resurrection. Through him, we find the strength to defend the dignity of every person and to build a society that values the gift of life from conception to natural death.

Archbishop John Wilson

29 November 2024

*Following the decision of MPs to vote in favour of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill at the Second Reading today (29 November), Bishop John Sherrington, Lead Bishop for Life Issues, said:*

“We are disappointed that MPs have voted in favour of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill progressing through parliament. We believe that this bill is flawed in principle and also contains particular clauses that are of concern. We ask the Catholic community to pray that members of parliament will have the wisdom to reject this bill at a later stage in its progress.

“In addition to being opposed to the principle of assisted suicide, we are particularly concerned with clauses in the bill that prevent doctors from properly exercising conscientious objection, provide inadequate protection to hospices and care homes that do not wish to participate in assisted suicide and allow doctors to initiate conversations about assisted suicide. We ask that these voices be heard in the next stages of the Bill to strengthen the deep concerns about this proposed legislation.

“We have expressed the view, during this debate, that genuine compassion involves walking with those who need care, especially during sickness, disability and old age. The vocation to care is at the heart of the lives of so many people who look after their loved ones and is the sign of a truly compassionate society. It is essential that we nurture and renew the innate call that many people have to compassionately care for others.

“It remains the case that improving the quality and availability of palliative care offers the best pathway to reducing suffering at the end of life. We will continue to advocate for this and support those who work tirelessly to care for the dying in our hospices, hospitals and care homes.”