

MASS INTENTIONS
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (C)

Saturday 28 th December - The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph	6:30pm	Holy Souls
Sunday 29 th December – The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph	9:00am 11:00am	John Barry (R.I.P) Peck Geok Quah (R.I.P)
Monday 30 th December – Sixth Day within The Octave of the Nativity of the Lord	9:00am	Frank Buff (R.I.P)
Tuesday 31 st December – Seventh Day Within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord	9:00am	Onodu Family
Wednesday 1 st January – Mary, The Holy Mother of God	10:00am	Lilly & Anthony Dass
Thursday 2 nd January – Ss Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen	9:00am	Gracykuty Joseph (R.I.P)
Friday 3 rd January – Feria of Christmas Time	9:00am	Shanehan (Sick Int)
Saturday 4 th January – Feria of Christmas Time	9:00am	Dominic & Livia Paes (R.I.P)

The Epiphany of the Lord (C)

Saturday 4 th January – The Epiphany of the Lord	6:30pm	Shanehan Departed Loved ones
Sunday 5 th January – The Epiphany of the Lord	9:00am 11:00am	Alma & Tom O'Sullivan (R.I.P) Lapsed Family Members (Int)

Thought for the week: On the Family

- 'Having somewhere to go is home. Having someone to love is family. Having both is a blessing.'
- 'Family is not defined by our genes, it is built and maintained through love.' – Amalia G
- 'The bond that links your true family is not one of blood, but of respect and joy in each other's life.' – Richard Bach
- 'Family is a life jacket in the stormy sea of life.' – J.K. Rowling
- 'A family doesn't need to be perfect; it just needs to be united.'
- 'Families are like branches on a tree, we grow in different directions, yet our roots remain as one.'



ST ALBAN'S PARISH NEWSLETTER
 Langdale Gardens RM12 5LA
 PARISH PRIEST: Canon Maurice Gordon



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The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (Year C)
28th & 29th December 2024

Dear friends,

Today's Gospel is a story of growth, but it's not just about Jesus' maturation from infant, to youth, to man. It's just as much about Mary and Joseph, their growth. Me and you, and our growth.

One commentator suggests that: 'Growing up is not about how old we are ultimately. It is really about moving into deeper and more authentic relationships with God, our world, each other, and ourselves. It is Jesus, here in this story certainly, but also in our lives who grows us up. He is the one who will grow up Mary and Joseph. Children have a way of doing that to the adults in their life. They challenge us to look at our world, our lives, and ourselves, in new, different, and sometimes painful ways.'

'Why have you treated us like this?'

Mary's question, entirely relatable, is ultimately about her; as if Jesus' actions were about her, rather than about him. And isn't this a pretty honest depiction of parenthood, of personhood. Our tendency to take it personally; to define ourselves by our relationships with others; to believe that the actions of someone else have everything to do with us? That our children, yes, but also our spouses, family, friends, all orbit us; belong to us; act as extensions of us. The Holy Family, as it turns out, faced the truth that we all must face: our children are not our children; our children belong to **Someone** else. And so do we.

Bishop Alan has written a Pastoral Letter for the Feast of the Holy Family, which is read at all the Masses today.

God Bless
Canon Maurice

Please pray for all who are sick, including:

Nell Addison, Christophe Amblard, Paul & Eva Au, Michael Balfour, Doreen Banister, William Bradbury, Vincent Brady, Rose Cahill, Marlene Camay, John Carty, Macmillan Chitoma Bras-Goncalves, Sarah Content, Maureen Daly, John Detheridge, Katherine Day, Gerry Margaret Dumbrill, Eddie and Martha Dwyer, Fiona Forder, James Francis, Mary Gallet, Anna Gawlik, Ian Gilling, Maisie Glennon, Maureen Gorham, Kevin Harty, Bernadette Hedde, Peter Hemsley, Ellen Hurley, Mathew John, Julia Joseph, Kathleen Kavanagh, Rev Tom Keighley, Baby Stephen Kelly, Vicky Loik, Mary Lynes, Amaogechi Mbanu, Siobhan McKeon, Norah McLoughlin, Gladys McQuaid, John Morrison, Ann Mount, Jim Nolan, Brian Nash, Iivan Opoku-Agyemang, Baby Teegan Oakley, Dean Partleton, Michelle Pointer, Baby Teddy Rands, Dr Nikhil Rao, Jennie Reddy, Louis Russo, Dorothy Ryan, Fr Francis Coveney, Mary Sayers, Marina Scarff, Elizabeth Smith, Julia Stokes, Teresa Shorey, John Sinclair, The Salter Family (Bert, Charlie and Bert's Daughter-in-law), Joanne Gardener, Charles Stimpson, Julia Thomas, Melon Vigo, Elizabeth Wyles, Jay Spencer, Irene (Evelyn's sister) and Clara Yankey. For those we know and the many we do not know, we pray to the Lord.

PARISH FINANCES:

21st & 22nd December 2024

Loose

£374.48

Envelopes

£349.10

Right to Life:

As we celebrate this Christmas season, we pray especially for all expectant parents who are worried about the practical means of supporting their child, that they would find hope and consolation in the story of the Holy Family and, by the power of God, be able to overcome all obstacles.

Brentwood Diocese Directory 2025:

The new directories are now on sale at the repository Ring-bound books are for £4.40 and normal books are for £3.20.

Holy Communion Programme:

The next session will take place on Thursday the 16th of January 2025 at 7pm. Children will meet in the Parish hall and Parents in the Church.

Baptism Course:

The next session for the Baptism course will take place next Saturday the 11th of January at 9am in the Parish Hall.

The Jubilee Year:

The unlocking of the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve by Pope Francis — the event that kicked off the 2025 Jubilee — heralded the start of a historic event taking place every 25 years and that will end on the Christmastide 2025 on the Feast of the Epiphany. *The Jubilee companion booklets are on sale at the back of the Church for your guidance during this Jubilee Year. Please take one.*

Welcome:

We welcome Fr Spencer Nyendwa chaplain to the Zambian community to our Parish. He will be covering for Father Maurice for a few days next week as Father is away for a well-deserved break.

Confirmation Programme 24/2025:

The next session for confirmation programme will be this Saturday 4th of January 2025 at 4pm.

Journey in Faith Programme (RCIA)

Anyone who wishes to know more about the basics of the Faith or is interested in joining the Church is invited to the weekly session which is at 7:30pm in the Presbytery every Monday. **Next session will be on next Monday 6th of January 2025.**

Mother & Toddler Group:

The Baby & Toddler Group re-open next Monday 6th January. Maria and all the team wish all of the families and children that attend a blessed 2025 and look forward to you all joining us again in the New Year!

If you would like to join us in 2025, please contact Maria at stalbanstoddler@yahoo.com or 07774 719 806 for more information.

St Albans Primary School Break:

School will return back next Monday the 6th of January 2025. We wish all our families, children, teachers and all staff a very happy New Year.

Lourdes Pilgrimage 2025:

The Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage, led by Bishop Alan, will be from Friday 18th July – Friday 25th July 2025. The flights will be Southend to Lourdes. Details, including how to book, will follow. We hope you will join us.

Job Vacancies

- *Headteacher Vacancy for September 2025* -St Peter's Catholic Primary School Romford. Headteacher - St Peter's Primary School, Romford. Deadline for applications: **12:00 (noon), Friday 31st January 2025**

Parish Mission 2024 (reflection):

Fr Royston who led our Parish Mission last year sends us a reflection on the Christmas Story by St Alphonsus Liguori:

"O happy cave, that witnessed the birth of the divine Word! Happy manger, to have had the honour of receiving the Lord of heaven! Happy straw, which served as a bed to him who sits on the shoulders of the seraphim! Ah, when we think of the birth of Jesus Christ, and of the manner in which it took place, we ought all to be inflamed with love. Yes, happy was that cave, that crib, that straw; but still happier are those souls who love this amiable Lord with fervour and tenderness, and who receive him in the Holy Communion into hearts burning with love. Oh, with what desire and pleasure does Jesus Christ enter into and repose in a heart that loves him!"

Thank You

Many thanks to all who made our Christmas celebrations special, the people who decorated the church, the welcomers, the Eucharistic ministers, the readers, the choirs, the altar servers and all who contributed to the prayerful celebration of our Christmas feast. Canon Maurice would like to thank all parishioners for their kind Christmas wishes, cards and offerings.