



EAST HENDRED CATHOLIC PARISH

ST. MARY'S, EAST HENDRED
ST. PATRICK'S, EAST ILSLEY
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4th WEEK OF ADVENT & CHRISTMASTIDE 24th – 30th December 2023

SUNDAY	4TH OF ADVENT	<i>The Vigil of the Nativity / Christmas Eve</i>	
24th Dec.	9.30am	Parish Mass	<i>PRO POPULO</i>
	11.15am	Holy Mass	(St. Patrick's)
		THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST	
	4pm	'Crib' Mass	
	8pm	Vigil & Mass 'in the Night'	
Monday	9.30am	Parish Mass 'in the Day'	
25th Dec.	11.15am	Holy Mass	(St. Patrick's)
Tuesday	S. STEPHEN, PROTOMARTYR		
26th Dec.	9am	Holy Mass	
Wednesday	S. JOHN THE DIVINE, APOSTLE		
27th Dec.	9am	Holy Mass	
Thursday	THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS		
28th Dec.	9am	Holy Mass	
Friday	S. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY, BISHOP & MARTYR		
29th Dec.	8.30am	Holy Mass (Hendred House Chapel)	
	3pm-4pm	Adoration (Hendred House Chapel)	
Saturday	Day VI in the Octave of the Nativity		
30th Dec.	9am	Holy Mass	
	10am-11am	Adoration & Confessions	
	5pm-6pm	Adoration & Confessions	

Priest: Fr. Matthew Topham, 01235 835038 or 07901634731
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THE FOUR LAST THINGS

Traditionally, in Advent, Catholics meditate on the Four Last Things: DEATH, JUDGEMENT, HEAVEN, and HELL. Today: Hell.

HELL

“ *Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; [...] And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’*” Matt. 25:41, 46

Talking about hell is spectacularly unpopular these days. There are two fashionable heresies about hell which are current even among Catholics today:

1. That hell does not exist; and
2. That hell is empty.

Neither of these is true: to believe either of them is to make Our Lord out to be a liar, for He preached often about hell, and warned His hearers to avoid it; neither of which He would have done were hell not *both* real *and* a real danger.

The best antidote to these heresies, or false beliefs, is to know what the Church teaches. We are obliged to believe that those who die cut off from the Body of Christ, either through original sin or mortal sin, descend to hell, where they experience suffering.

There are two forms of suffering in hell: The Pain of Loss and the Pain of Sense. Both are consequences of the way the damned lived in this world: avoiding God and turning instead to created things.

The Pain of Loss is the absence of God: those who have avoided God in this life will lack Him in the next, as Our Lord says, “*whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father*” (Matt 10:33). This pain corresponds to the ‘darkness’ which the Scripture ascribes to the reprobate.

The Pain of Sense – the ‘fire’ of hell – is a consequence of the disordered love of the damned for the things of this world: having gratified their sense here on earth, they are punished in the senses in hell.

The punishments of hell are eternal, because of the infinite wickedness of sin against God, Who is infinitely good. We must reject the idea that hell is

temporary, or that the damned will ever leave it. Abraham, in Christ's parable of the Rich Man & Lazarus, says: "*between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, [...] and none may cross from there to us.*" (Luke 16:26)

That said: God is infinitely merciful. It is open to Him to pardon anyone: if He does so, we have not been told it, and therefore we cannot presume it. Contrariwise, we cannot *ever* presume to know who is and who is not damned. The Church has never declared an individual to be certainly damned, and we have no business doing so either.

S. Philip Neri said: "*He who does not go down into hell while he is alive, runs a great risk of going there after he is dead.*" Reflecting on hell will help us avoid it!

"if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go to hell to the unquenchable fire. [...] And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched." Mark 9:43-48

CHRISTMAS 2023 – MASS TIMES

SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER

- 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
9.30am Parish Mass
11.15am Mass *at S. Patrick's*
- CHRISTMAS EVE
- 4pm Vigil ("Crib") Mass
The first Mass of Christmas
- 8pm Mass during the Night

MONDAY 25TH DECEMBER

- CHRISTMAS DAY
9.30am Parish Mass
11.15am Mass *at S. Patrick's*

SUNDAY 31ST DECEMBER

- THE HOLY FAMILY
9.30am Parish Mass
11.15am Mass *at S. Patrick's*
6pm Mass & Te Deum
In thanksgiving for the past year

MONDAY 1ST JANUARY

- MARY, MOTHER OF GOD
9am Mass

NOTICES

STANDING

✠ **WELCOME** to Mass, especially to those who are new or visiting. Do join us for refreshments after the 9.30 Mass in the Parish Rooms (left at the church gate, first right after the bridge).

✠ **ST. MARY'S YOUTH GROUP** meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays in the parish rooms during Term time. Years 7-13 (11-18 year-olds).

✠ **COFFEE** after Mass is an **important** part of our common life: more volunteers are needed. Speak to Francia if you can help.

✠ **VOLUNTEERS** are needed for Children's Liturgy. Speak to Veronica or Libby, or email safeguarding@hendredcatholicparish.org.uk.

✠ **CONFESSIONS:** Saturdays, 10-11am and 5-6pm, in the Sacristy of the Church.

✠ **CONFIRMATION** class resumes on January 14th.

✠ **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION** classes resume on January 13th.

✠ **GIVING TO THE PARISH** by standing order or online:

CDP East Hendred, St Mary
Acc. No. 00877183

Sort Code: 30-93-04

Or via the **DONA MACHINE** by the door!

NEWS

✠ **MERRY CHRISTMAS** to one and all! May the Lord Who came in weakness grant you strength, grace, and peace now and always.

✠ There will be a service of **EPIPHANY LESSONS & CAROLS** on Saturday 6th January, at 6pm. Come and sing some glorious hymns to mark this oft-overlooked feast, older than Christmas!

✠ **CHILDREN'S LITURGY** is on vacation from Sunday 17th Dec, restarting on Jan. 7th.

✠ **'LATIN IN THE LITURGY'** may return in the New Year. Wath this space!

✠ **FOR YOUR PRAYERS:** Annie Furlong, Gwenda, Martha, Helen Lewis, John Castle, Daniel Cuevas, John Stringer, Louise Woodhouse, Brenda Paddon, Karen Greig, Mary McNichol, Des McNichol, Meg Clark, Madeline Brand, Mary Dorothy Ruple, Graham Titchener, Anne-Marie Kershaw.

✠ **YEAR'S MINDS:** John Stibbs, Winifred Anns, Thomas Eyston, John Champ, Kathleen Cavan, Sybil Clerk, May Mulford, Mary Throckmorton, Beatrice Scrope, Patrick Rush, Joseph Leahy. **R·I·P·**