

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)			'Gaudete' Sunday
Saturday 13 th	Monkwick	5.00 pm	Ints: Mrs Margaret Fernandes
Sunday 14 th	Church	8.00 am	Dr David Norman Bagley RIP
	Church	10.30 am	Private Intention
	Church	2.00 pm	Polish Mass
	Church	6.30 pm	Private Intention
	West Mersea	8.30 am	Richard + Bernadette and family
	Mile End	9.30 am	Victor + Kathleen Payne
Monday 15 th			Monday of the Third Week of Advent
	Church	9.30 am	Antonio Rodriguez
Tuesday 16 th			Tuesday of the Third Week of Advent
	Church	6.30 am	Polish Advent Mass (Rorate)
	Church	* 8.45 am	Mrs Joseph RIP
Wednesday 17 th			Wednesday of the Third Week of Advent
	Church	9.30 am	Anniversary: Matthew Kanippilli RIP
Thursday 18 th			Thursday of the Third Week of Advent
	Church	9.30 am	Chachy Joseph RIP
Friday 19 th			Friday of the Third Week of Advent
	Church	*10.45 am	C. T. Joseph RIP
Saturday 20 th			Saturday of the Third Week of Advent
	Church	9.30 am	Carole Conway, Gary Williams
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)			
Saturday 20 th	Monkwick	5.00 pm	George Farrell RIP
Sunday 21 st	Church	8.00 am	All the deceased of the Hong Kong fire
	Church	10.30 am	Thanksgiving: Solomon Kevin
	Church	2.00 pm	Polish Mass
	Church	6.30 pm	Private Intention
	West Mersea	8.30 am	Parishioners
	Mile End	9.30 am	Yadi Khodaverdi RIP



*** PLEASE NOTE THE MASS TIME CHANGES BELOW ***
TUESDAY 16TH DECEMBER AT 8.45am + FRIDAY 19TH DECEMBER AT 10.45am

- ❖ For Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals, please email or contact our parish office.
- ❖ Baptism Godparents: A Godparent must be fully initiated in the Catholic Church. This means they have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation. You only need one Godparent.
- ❖ Marriage Preparation: Please be aware that 6 months' notice of intention for Marriage is required especially if marrying outside the Parish. Thank you.
- ❖ Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) Saturdays after 9.30am Mass (Priory Street) to 10.30am; after 5.00pm Mass at Monkwick; And by appointment.
- ❖ Church Loop System: serves all the seats in the centre Nave but not the aisles + chancel.
- **Cardinal Bourne Hall Enquiries/Bookings:** colchester@brcdt.org
- **SVP (St Vincent de Paul Society):** Tel: 07493 439427/email: colchestersvp@gmail.com

OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM STATUE: If you would like to host the statue at home + pray the Rosary for a week. Gemma – Tel: 01206 844751/ email: olwstatue2024@gmail.com



Please check out our Facebook page for all the latest Parish/Diocese/Vatican News/ Clergy + Church photos/videos. Please remember to like and follow our page!

ST. JAMES THE LESS AND ST. HELEN

CATHOLIC CHURCH, COLCHESTER

WITH MERSEA, MILE END AND MONKWICK

1 PARISH, 4 CHURCHES, 1 COMMUNITY



St James the Less & St Helen

Parish Priest:
Assistant Priest:

Fr. Philip Okoli
 Fr Gervase K. Moo CSSp

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St James the Less and St Helen RC Church, Colchester



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A)

'Gaudete' Sunday

Week Commencing 14th December 2025

Dear friends, the readings in many ways this 3rd Sunday of Advent are simply a continuation of last week – Isaiah gives us more details about the work of the Messiah, and Paul invites us to continue to be patient until the Lord's Coming. What is slightly different is the voice of John the Baptist this week: last week in Matthew 3 he was proclaiming with utter confidence that *"someone is coming"*. Now, in Matthew 11, he asks Jesus from prison: *"Is it you?"* For us, as we listen to these scriptures, we are being offered something very particular – the prophecies of Isaiah (and indeed the prophet John the Baptist) are pinned down firmly and securely in the person of Jesus, Son of Mary – in fact, Jesus himself, in his reply to John says as much: *"I am the Messiah that Isaiah prophesied."* Again, we are invited to hold the images of the prophecies in our minds until Christmas, when we can look on the child in the manger and say *"We know who this is: it is the promised Messiah – God who comes to save us!"* Amen

Fr Gervase

PLEASE SEE MASS SCHEDULE FOR ALL CHANGES

DAILY (Mon-Fri)	Rosary/Divine Mercy	at 8.40 am
DAILY	Morning Prayer	at 9.15 am
CHRISTIAN MEDITATION	Wednesdays (Cardinal Bourne Hall)	at 8.00 pm
LEGION OF MARY	Fridays (Cardinal Bourne Hall)	at 7.30 pm



THE POPE'S INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER: *For Christians in areas of conflict.* Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation and hope.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: We continue to pray for those parishioners we know who are sick and housebound especially Jimmy Clarin, Edwina Pastor, J Brian Critchley, Ron & Margaret Griffin, Margaret Hawkins, Valerie Thurston, Grace McCartney, Diana Irven, Mrs. Maureen McKenna, Peter Wyatt, Hilda Morah, Nicollas and Adam Campbell-Vencarto. We also pray for all people who are ill or are in need.

MARRIAGE MATTERS: (Isaiah 35:1-6, 10 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11) *Cherish the gift.* John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus' coming. When Jesus came, the Magi brought gifts. We are preparing gifts for family and friends. When you married, and every day since, you have gifted yourself...entrusted yourselves ...to each other; do you still cherish the gift? How much has trust helped you on your journey together? Thank the Lord!



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION AND FIRST HOLY COMMUNION: All completed Registration forms must be received **before the closing date of 31st December 2025.** Please drop completed application forms through Presbytery door (Red door) as soon as possible.

CHRISTMAS NATIVITY MASS: Calling all children. If your child is in reception and above and would like to take part in this year's nativity, could you please email me on stressedclaire45@gmail.com. The main parts usually go to the children of the First Holy Communion course this year. It's performed during the **6.30pm Mass on Christmas eve**. Please let me know as the first meeting will be the beginning of December. Thank you.



CHRISTMAS PRAYER TREE: Please collect a red Christmas prayer tag from the box situated at the entrance of Church to decorate the tree. On one side please write your prayer request for a loved one, situation, our community, etc ... for Christmas; the other side of the tag is to remain blank. Please return your tag to the other section of box and this will be safely added to the Christmas tree when it is being decorated by our Filipino community. *Just as your tree lights shine in the darkness, so your prayers are like a candle that lights up the lives of those in need.* Thank you

CHRISTMAS OFFERING: The Offertory Collection at all the Christmas Masses is, by tradition, the parishioners' personal gift to the Clergy. In this Parish, Fr Philip and Fr Gervase are the beneficiaries, since this collection forms the main part of their personal annual income.

LECTIO DIVINA: Sundays 14th and 21st December sessions have been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. Tuesday Lectio after 9.30 Mass is as usual.

BISHOP THOMAS MCMAHON THE REQUIEM MASS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO VIEW ONLINE: Bishop Thomas' funeral on 16th December at 11.30am will be live-streamed from the Cathedral and can be viewed on this link: www.shealolin.co.uk/bishop-thomas



* **CUPPA CLUB:** We meet **every Thursday from 10.00am to 11.30am** in the Hall.
* **SUNDAY COFFEE MORNING** after 10.30am Mass in Cardinal Bourne Hall.

CHRISTMAS MASS SERVICES

Christmas Eve, Wednesday 24th December 2025

Monkwick	5.00 pm	Vigil Mass
Priory Street	6.30 pm	Vigil Mass especially for families
Priory Street	12.00 am	Midnight Mass
Monkwick	12.00 am	Polish Midnight Mass

Christmas Day, Thursday 25th December 2025

Priory Street	8.00 am	Christmas Dawn Mass
Priory Street	10.30 am	Christmas Day Mass
Priory Street	2.00 pm	Polish Christmas Day Mass
Mersea	8.30 am	Christmas Dawn Mass
Mile End	9.30 am	Christmas Day Mass

St Stephens Day (Boxing Day), Friday 26th December 2025

Priory Street	10.00 am	Mass
Priory Street	2.00 pm	Polish Mass

SAVE THE DATE! CUPPA CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY: On **Thursday 18th December** after morning mass from **10.10am to 12.30pm** in Cardinal Bourne Hall. There will be festive fun with food, mulled wine, games and music! All welcome!

JOSIE'S KITCHEN: Josie is looking for donations of various items to make her Food + Care packages for the Homeless at Christmas. If you can spare any of the following items: - For Care Packages: general toiletries: Socks, scarfs, hats + gloves; For Food Packages: Cup-a-soups, sachets of coffee drinks, hot chocolate, long life milk. Tins of ready meals e.g. Chilli-con-carne, casserole, minced beef, baked beans, tuna, corned beef or ham, tinned potatoes, tinned vegetables, tinned fruit + puddings, custard powder, mini boxes of cereal, pot noodles, crisps, biscuits, small multipack snacks. These items make a big difference to their lives and show them that they are cared for in our community. Please drop your Donations into the Presbytery. **All Donations to be received by 15th December.** Thank you

REPOSITORY - CHRISTMAS STOCK: The Repository now has a selection of single Christmas Cards & 2026 Calendars and Diaries available for sale in the Church Porch along with a new selection of Mass Intention cards. **All monies go into Repository Box.** Thank you.



60th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY: The Parish wishes Richard and Bernadette (West Mersea) continued joy as they celebrate 60 years of marriage. May God bless your days ahead with peace, laughter, and shared dreams. Congratulations from all your friends and fellow parishioners!

DONATIONS WINTER COATS / JACKETS (JOSIE'S KITCHEN): If anyone has a Winter coat, they no longer wear but is in good condition, please consider donating it. Items will be given to the homeless and those in need this Winter. Please drop into the Presbytery.

BRENTWOOD DIOCESAN DIRECTORY 2026: available for sale at £3.20 per book.

CHURCH CLEANING TEAM: Friday 19/12/25: **Team 5** / Monday 22/12/25: **Team 1** with any volunteers welcome to come in and help them.

COFFEE MORNING ROTA: 14/12/25: Yolande + 1 / 21/12/25: SVP / 28/12/25: Matthew + Mariamma