

The Cardiff Oratory



Yr Oratori Caerdydd

Parish Church of St. Alban's-on-the-Moors

Eglwys Plwyf Sant Alban-ar-y-Rhostiroedd

The Oratory of St. Philip Neri at Cardiff - Charity number 1170563

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NADOLIG LLAWEN I PAWB



**THE FATHERS AND BROTHERS
WISH YOU A VERY
HAPPY CHRISTMAS.**

2025

Dear Parishioner,

It seems hardly possible that 2025 has almost drawn to a close. It has been a momentous twelve months: Bro Iltyd's Ordination as a Deacon on the 27th December 2024 and his Priestly Ordination in June 2025. The number of adult Confirmations in the summer and the continuing number of enquirers about the Faith is a cause of rejoicing. The year 2025 was momentous on the international front with the election of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV. His recent visit to Turkey and Lebanon were a master class in diplomacy and pastoral care.

Today, news came of the appointment of the new Archbishop of Westminster, succeeding Cardinal Nichols, which is wonderful for the Church. I am deeply grateful that Archbishop O'Toole was not called to Westminster. His Grace's abundant gifts and holiness have been a wonderful and refreshing impetus in the renewal of the Archdiocese of Cardiff-Menevia and the Archbishop's leadership of the Church will richly improve the scope and mission of Catholicism here in Wales. We have been privileged to welcome His Grace on a number of occasions this year. I have written to wish him a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

I wish to thank you, the parishioners, for your continued dedication and support of the Parish both in your devotion, commitment to stewardship and your great loyalty and friendship to the Oratory. This relationship grows stronger with each passing year and is a model of the wonderful unity of the Church. Your support of our life is so touching whether it is in meals sent in, cakes, stewardship, kindly written notes, or the smiles we encounter in our work in the Parish, they all make an enormous difference, thank you. For some, it has been a year touched with sadness, grief and disappointment. But in all of these, let us renew our hope in Christ, Who alone is the Light of the World. I have always found profound consolation kneeling before the crib scene. The cave of presence: its simplicity, silence and the profound love so evident in the Trinity and the Holy Family, and so necessary for each one of us, and our poorly troubled world today.

May I take this moment as we prepare imminently for the celebration of the birth of Our Saviour to assure you, each one of you, of the dedication and prayers of the Fathers and Brothers for you and your loved ones in 2026. I wish to record my sincere thanks to all those who work for the Parish so devotedly throughout the year. I wish to thank the Governors, Headteacher and all the staff for their work in our school. I express my esteem and gratitude to the Fathers and Brothers for their devotion and unstinting commitment to the life of the Cardiff Oratory in the service of this Parish. I assure each one of you my daily memento at the altar, the breviary, the rosary and my own prayers in gratitude for the privilege of being your Parish Priest.

God bless you all. Fr Sebastian M.

FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT

Sunday 21st December - Fourth Sunday of Advent

(Sat) 17:00 - Holy Mass: Joan Flaherty, RIP
8:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/Ewa Glowacka, Int
10:00 - Holy Mass: Angelika Spiteri, RIP
11:15 - Holy Mass: Judge Patrick Curran, QC, RIP
16:00 - Vespers and Benediction

Monday 22nd December - Advent Feria

7:30 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/Teresa Jonker, RIP
8:30 - Oratory Morning exercises
09:00 - Adoration
09:30 - Holy Mass: Thomas Cadogan Int
17:30 - Rosary & Oratory Evening exercises

Tuesday 23rd December - Advent Feria

7:30 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/Ewa Glowacka, Int
8:30 - Oratory Morning exercises
09:00 - Adoration
09:30 - Holy Mass: Cyril & Bridget George, RIP
17:30 - Rosary & Oratory Evening exercises

Wednesday 24th December - Christmas Eve

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/ Ewa Glowacka, Int
16:30 - Christmas Carols
17:00 - Christmas Vigil: Maggie & Christy Keane, RIP/Cassie Fury & Birmingham Family, Int
23:30 - Christmas Carols

THURSDAY 25TH DECEMBER - The NATIVITY of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

00:00 Midnight Mass: Pro Populo
8:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls
10:00 - Holy Mass: Donor's Intentions
11:15 - Holy Mass: Teresa Jonker, RIP/ Leslie Jones, RIP
16:00 - Vespers

Friday 26th December - St. Stephen

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/Zurlo Family, RIP
10:00 - Holy Mass: Pauline Hawkins, RIP
***Church Closes at 11am**

Saturday 27th December - St. John the Evangelist

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/ Teresa Jonker, RIP
***Church will be closed from 9am-4pm**
17:00 - Holy Mass: Thomas & Donna Cadogan, Int

Sunday 28th December - HOLY FAMILY

8:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/ Thanksgiving (Glowacka Family)
10:00 - Holy Mass: Angelika Spiteri, RIP
11:15 - Holy Mass: Marriangela & Raffaele Zurlo, RIP
16:00 - Rosary and Benediction

Monday 29th December - Christmas Feria

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/ Donor's Int
10:00 - Holy Mass: Mary Fury, Jimmy & Mary Fury, RIP

Tuesday 30th December - Christmas Feria

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/ Donor's Int
10:00 - Holy Mass: Tony & Shelia Donovan, RIP

Wednesday 31st December - St, Sylvester

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls
10:00 - Holy Mass: Lee Taylor, RIP

Thursday 1st January 2026 - Mary, Mother of God

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls
10:00 - Holy Mass: Pro Populo

Friday 2nd January - Ss. Basil & Gregory

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls
10:00 - Holy Mass: Rose Pengelly, RIP

Saturday 3rd January - Christmas Feria

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/Ianni & Principe, RIP
17:00 - Holy Mass: Mary Beech, Int

Please note that during the Christmas Octave, the Church will close at 11am.

Sunday 4th January - THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS

8:00 - Holy Mass: Jeanette Livermore
10:00 - Holy Mass: Pro Populo
11:15 - Holy Mass: Teresa Jonker, RIP
16:00 - Rosary & Benediction

Monday 5th January - Christmas Feria

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/ Maria Michon, Int
10:00 - Holy Mass: Donor's Intentions
17:30 Vespers and Blessing of Epiphany Water

Tuesday 6th January THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls
10:00 - Holy Mass: Pro Populo
17:30 - Vespers
19:00 - Holy Mass: Donor's Intentions

Wednesday 7th January - St. Raymond of Penyafort

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls
10:00 - Holy Mass: Teresa Jonker, RIP

Thursday 8th January 2026 - Epiphany Feria

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/ Franca Ianni, RIP
10:00 - Holy Mass: Gary Marsh, RIP

Friday 9th January - Epiphany Feria

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls
10:00 - Holy Mass: Thanksgiving (Fernando Family)

Saturday 10th January - Epiphany Feria

08:00 - Holy Mass: Holy Souls/ Camilla Way, Int
17:00 - Holy Mass: Maggie & Christy Keane, RIP



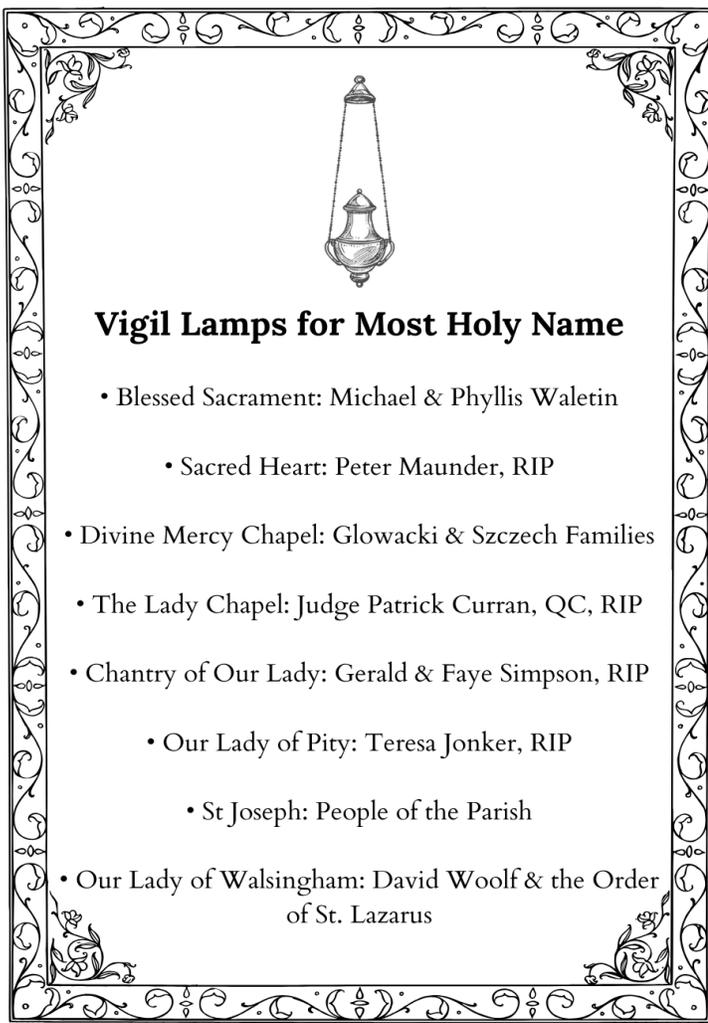
Vigil Lamps for the 4th Week of Advent

- Blessed Sacrament: Teresa & Tony Mead
- Sacred Heart: Daniel Rees, RIP
- Divine Mercy Chapel: Glowacki & Szczech Families
- The Lady Chapel: Carm & Eileen Xiberras, RIP
- Chantry of Our Lady: Judge Patrick Curran, QC, RIP
- Our Lady of Pity: David Gallivan
- St Joseph: Teresa Boyd
- Our Lady of Walsingham: David Woolf & the Order of St. Lazarus



Vigil Lamps for Holy Family

- Blessed Sacrament: Beattie Mullane (Birthday)
- Sacred Heart: Margaret Tyler
- Divine Mercy Chapel: Glowacki & Szczech Families
- The Lady Chapel: Judge Patrick Curran, QC, RIP
- Chantry of Our Lady: Vocations to the Oratory
- Our Lady of Pity: Teresa Jonker, RIP
- St Joseph: Sid Williams, RIP
- Our Lady of Walsingham: David Woolf & the Order of St. Lazarus



A Christmas Prayer

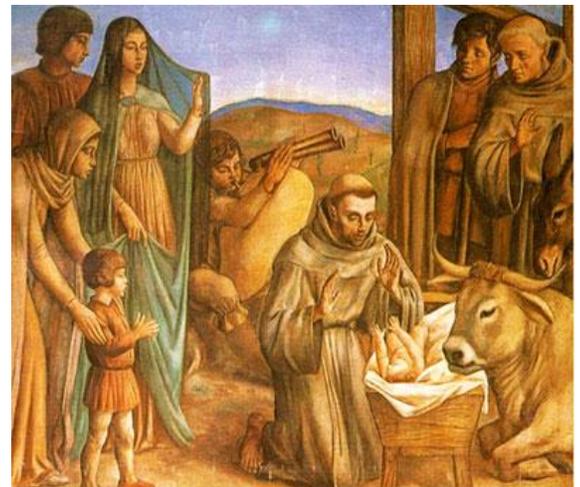
by Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving Father,
 help us remember the birth of Jesus,
 that we may share in the song of the angels,
 the gladness of the shepherds,
 and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate
 and open the door of love all over the world.
 Let kindness come with every gift
 and good desires with every greeting.
 Deliver us from evil by the blessing
 which Christ brings,
 and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning
 make us happy to be thy children,
 and Christmas evening bring us to our beds
 with grateful thoughts,
 forgiving and forgiven,
 for Jesus' sake.

St Francis of Assisi is credited with creating the first living crib scene in 1223 at Greccio, a small Italian village near the Franciscan hermitage. Desiring to rekindle devotion to the mystery of the Incarnation, Francis sought permission from Pope Honorius III to represent the birth of Christ in a vivid, tangible way. On Christmas night, a manger filled with hay was set up inside a cave, with an ox and a donkey beside it, while the faithful gathered with torches and sang hymns. No figures of Mary and Joseph were used; instead, the focus was on the poverty and humility of Christ, made present through the proclamation of the Gospel and the celebration of the Mass over the manger. This simple yet powerful act marked the beginning of the Christmas crib tradition, which quickly spread throughout Europe and became a cherished expression of popular devotion. In recognition of the spiritual fruits that flow from contemplating the mystery of Christ's birth, the Church has attached a partial indulgence to the devout visiting of the crib in churches, under the usual conditions.





The Twelve Days of Christmas - a Theological Carol hidden behind gifts.

This Christmas Carol was first published around 1780, is a nifty little catechism

A Partridge in a Pear Tree - Jesus Christ The partridge, believed to sacrifice itself for its young, represents Christ, who gives His life for humanity. The pear tree symbolizes the Cross, the “tree” upon which salvation was won.

Two Turtle Doves - The Old and New Testaments. Together they bear witness to Christ, fulfilling the unity of Scripture.

Three French Hens - The Theological Virtues; Faith, Hope, and Charity. These virtues are infused by God and orient us directly toward Him.

Four Calling Birds - The Four Gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John proclaim the Good News of salvation

Five Gold Rings - The Pentateuch (First Five Books of the Old Testament) Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy – the foundation of salvation history.

Six Geese a-Laying - The Six Days of Creation. God as Creator, whose work culminates in the creation of humanity.

Seven Swans a-Swimming - The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit (from Isaiah 11:2-3) Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of the Lord.

Eight Maids a-Milking - The Eight Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10), the heart of Christian moral life.

Nine Ladies Dancing - The Nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit (from Galatians 5:22-23) Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-control.

Ten Lords a-Leaping - The Ten Commandments The moral law given by God as a path to freedom and life.

Eleven Pipers Piping - The Eleven Faithful Apostles (Excluding Judas), sent to proclaim the Gospel to the world.

Twelve Drummers Drumming - The Twelve Articles of the Apostles' Creed. A summary of the essential truths of the Faith.



This week I have finished reading
Jesus and the Jewish roots of Mary by Brant Pitre

As part of the common life of the Oratory, the community gathers each day at 12:30 for lunch. Following the reading of Scripture, the Roman Martyrology, and a short passage from the life of St Philip Neri, a book is read aloud in the refectory. These readings vary widely in genre, from biography and history to fiction. In the past, we have listened to the life of William Wilberforce, *The History of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, and even Alan Partridge.

For the past month, our refectory reading has been an apologetic work by Dr Brant Pitre. The book arose from Pitre's own experience when, prior to marrying his Protestant wife, he was required to seek her pastor's permission. During conversations about his Catholic faith, he found himself unable to answer certain objections, which prompted him to undertake serious theological study. In the book, Dr Pitre focuses particularly on the role of Our Lady: her identity as the Mother of God, her Immaculate Conception, and her role as intercessor with both her Son and the Church. Drawing primarily on the New Testament and illuminating it through the Old, he makes extensive use of typology, showing how events and figures in the Old Testament prefigure those of the New. This approach offers a compelling Scriptural defence of Marian doctrine, especially in response to common objections. One is reminded of the words of the hymn *I'll Sing a Hymn to Mary*: "When wicked men blaspheme thee, I'll love and bless thy name."

This book is highly recommended to anyone wishing to deepen their understanding of Our Lady and to grow in confidence in defending the Faith through Scripture. Looking ahead, the next refectory reading has yet to be decided. Possible candidates include *Rubicon* by Tom Holland, a history of the final years of the Roman Republic; *Return of the God Hypothesis* by Stephen C. Meyer, which explores scientific arguments for intelligent design; or *A Thousand Ships* by Natalie Haynes, a fictional retelling of the story of Helen of Troy from her own perspective. Whichever is chosen, it promises to make for engaging listening over the Christmas period.

I Woof you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.



Joy to the World

DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.



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|--------------|---------|-------------|
| ADVENT | INFANT | MYRRH |
| ANGEL | JESUS | NATIVITY |
| BETHLEHEM | JOSEPH | REJOICE |
| BIRTH | MAGI | STABLE |
| BLESSINGS | MANGER | STAR |
| CAMELS | MARY | THREE KINGS |
| FRANKINCENSE | MIRACLE | WISE MEN |