



CLERGY
 Rev. Fr. Francis Olaseni, MSP – Parish Priest & Hospital Chaplain
 Rev. Fr. Peter Akor, MSP – Assistant Priest & Hospital Chaplain
 Rev. Robert Beresford – Deacon

St. Agatha's Catholic Church
 1 Wyndham Road
 Kingston upon Thames
 Surrey, KT2 5JR
 Tel: 020 8546 4633
www.stagathaschurch.org.uk
kingston@rcaos.org.uk

The parish office should be your first port of call for all enquiries, including appointments, and arrangements for all sacraments (e.g. baptisms, weddings, funerals). Please email Karin Rattray, the Parish Secretary, at kingston@rcaos.org.uk or call on 020 8546 4633. The office is open from 10am to 3pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday (closed Wednesdays). Could you please limit telephone calls outside these hours to emergencies only. Thank You.

FEAST DAYS, MEMORIALS AND MASSES	
SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER 2023	
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT/THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD	
Saturday 23rd	
6.30pm	Natalino Evangelista RIP
Sunday 24th 4th Sunday of Advent	
9am	Joyce & Edward Golomb RIP
10.30am	Keith & Alan Fraser RIP
Sunday 24th The Nativity of the Lord	
6.30pm	Intentions for Gorczyńska Family
11pm (Carols at 10.30pm)	Jo & Mary Walsh RIP
Monday 25th The Nativity of the Lord	
9am	Margaret Sanders
10.30am	Wellbeing of Doris Monteiro
Tuesday 26th St Stephen, First Martyr, Feast	
12pm	Intentions of Antony Nighil
Wednesday 27th St John, Apostle, Evangelist, Feast	
9.30am	Louis Martin Cronin RIP
Thursday 28th The Holy Innocents, Feast	
9.30am	Elpidina Francisco RIP
Friday 29th St Thomas of Canterbury, Bishop, Martyr, Feast	
9.30am	Holy Souls
Saturday 30th	
9.30am	Noelle Forbes – Birthday Thanksgiving

FEAST DAYS, MEMORIALS AND MASSES	
SUNDAY 31ST DECEMBER 2023	
THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH	
Saturday 30th	
6.30pm	Clara Parker RIP
Sunday 31st The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph	
9am	Vincent Arendse RIP
10.30am	Keith & Alan Fraser RIP
6.30pm	Gaenor Mary Moore RIP
Monday 1st Mary, Holy Mother of God, Solemnity	
12pm	Private Intentions
Tuesday 2nd Ss Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops, Memorial	
9.30am	Birthday Intentions for Noel Roycroft
Wednesday 3rd	
9.30am	Hannah Ruth Mennis RIP
Thursday 4th The Beatified Martyrs of the Diocese, Memorial	
9.30am	Wellbeing of Catherine Bennett
Friday 5th	
9.30am	Rev Fr Peter Akor – Birthday Thanksgiving
Saturday 6th	
9.30am	Benita Pullen

FEAST DAYS, MEMORIALS AND MASSES	
SUNDAY 7TH JANUARY 2024	
THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD	
Saturday 6th	
6.30pm	John Monteiro RIP
Sunday 7th The Epiphany of the Lord	
9am	Paddy & Jo O'Keefe
10.30am	Keith & Alan Fraser RIP
6.30pm	Barbara Mack
Monday 8th Baptism of the Lord, Feast	
9.30am	Alfred Knight RIP
Tuesday 9th	
9.30am	Rosa Vitolo RIP
Wednesday 10th	
9.30am	Sergio Giusti RIP
Thursday 11th	
9.30am	Anthony Cronin
Friday 12th	
9.30am	Wellbeing of the Reiz-Bennett Family
Saturday 13th	
9.30am	Wellbeing of Maura Hickey
Exposition:	Monday to Saturday 8.30 – 9.20am.
Morning Prayer:	Monday to Saturday 9am.
Mass Times:	Monday to Friday: 09:30 Saturday: 09:30, 18:30 (Vigil Mass) Sunday: 09:00, 10:30, 18:30

CHRISTMAS MASSES AT ST AGATHA'S

The obligation to attend Mass for the 4th Sunday of Advent and the Solemnity of Christmas are two separate obligations, which cannot be fulfilled by attending one Mass. The normal Sunday Masses at 6.30pm (Sat), 9am, 10.30am will be said as usual. Christmas Eve this year falls on a Sunday; and the Vigil Mass is at 6.30pm and the Midnight Mass at 11pm, preceded by carols at 10.30pm. Please note that the Vigil Mass is a Mass of Christmas Day; it does not fulfil the Sunday obligation. Christmas Day Masses will be at 9am and 10.30am. there will not be an Evening Mass. Boxing Day Mass will be 12pm.

PARISH OFFERINGS

SUNDAY COLLECTION: 17/12/2023

Collection Gift Aid £173.50 Loose £531.70

TOTAL £705.20

Thank you for your continued generosity to your parish.

CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS

Christmas Offering envelopes are available at the back of the church for those who wish to make a Christmas Offering to our Clergy at this special time of the year. Thank you.

CRIB OFFERINGS

At the request of Archbishop John Wilson, this year's crib offerings will be donated to a local homeless charity: Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness (KCAH). KCAH work with people facing housing crisis in the Kingston Borough. Their aim is help them secure a safe and stable home and to help them start rebuilding their lives. Please offer your support if you can; your kind donations made at the manger scene this Christmastide will go to support homeless in our Borough. Further details about KCAH can be found at: <https://kcah.org.uk/>



ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO DONATE TO YOUR PARISH

MAKE A DONATION ONLINE:

Donate to St Agatha's Church online via Bank Transfer using the following details: **Account Name: RCAS Kingston**

Account number: 10317821 Sort code: 60-60-02 (NB. The details may come up as RCAOS or Southwark – these are also correct)



VIA OUR QR CODE:

The QR code will take you to our parish's 'Give A Little' web donation page.

CHRISTINGLE 2023!!

Our amazing Christingle Service is held on Christmas Eve at 4pm. Everyone is welcome. This Service is a special Church Service that is held for children and celebrates Christ, who is the Light of the World.



MIDNIGHT MASS

Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve starts at 11pm. It will be preceded by Carols from 10.30pm.

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS AND CLEANING

A huge Thank You to everyone who kindly gave up their time to help decorate the church. Ours thanks also to everyone for your assistance with the Christmas cleaning day. A special thank you to those who helped organise these events. The church is looking magnificent again and very festive for this special time of the year. There are dozens and dozens of people involved in making everything run smoothly at St. Agatha's, especially during the festive periods; we thank you one and all!



**THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
MONDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2023**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 98:1-6

A prayer of praise for God's salvation.

GOSPEL READING

John 1:1-18 (shorter form, John 1:1-5, 9-14) John announces that in Jesus, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

There are four Masses that are celebrated for the Feast of Christmas and each is given its own set of readings to help us contemplate Christ's birth. The Gospel for the Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve is taken from the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew. The Mass at midnight proclaims the birth of Jesus through the Gospel of Luke. The Mass at dawn on Christmas morning continues the story of the birth of Jesus as found in Luke's Gospel, ending with the shepherds' visit to the infant Jesus. In each of these Gospel readings, we hear portions of the infancy narratives with which we are familiar.

The Gospel for the Christmas Mass during the day is taken from the beginning of John's Gospel, but this part of John's Gospel is not an infancy narrative like those found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Instead, John's Gospel starts at the very beginning and presents the Creation story as the framework for announcing the Incarnation. John's opening words echo the first verse in the Book of Genesis. This framework invites us to view Jesus' birth from God's perspective. Each of the Gospels makes clear that Jesus' birth was the result of God's initiative. John's Gospel, however, emphasizes that Jesus' birth was the divine intention from the moment of Creation.

As we observe in today's reading, the Gospel of John includes highly philosophical and theological language. One example that particularly stands out in this Gospel is John's repeated references to "the Word" in the opening verse. This expression (logos in the Greek) borrows from a concept found in both Jewish and Greek thought. Jews used this phrase to describe God's action in the Creation story, for example, and in the Wisdom literature. In Greek thought, the logos was understood as an intermediary between God and humanity. John and others in the early Church adopted this language to describe God's incarnation in Jesus. As the term was used to express the Trinitarian faith of Christians, the Word came to be equated with the Second Person of the Trinity.

In this prologue to the Gospel of John, we also hear the main themes that will be developed in his Gospel. These are often presented as dualities: light and dark, truth and falsehood, life and death, and belief and unbelief. We also hear in this prologue a unique aspect of John's Gospel, the theme of testimony. John the Baptist was sent by God to testify to Jesus, the light. Others in this Gospel will also offer testimony about Jesus. The reader is invited to accept this testimony, which bears witness to Jesus, the Son of God. But even more directly, Jesus' action and words will testify to Jesus' identity as God's Incarnate Word.

Thinking about Jesus' birth in these theological and cosmological terms is particularly appropriate as we celebrate the Feast of Christmas in the darkness of winter. At this time, nature itself seems to remind us of the darkness of sin. Into this darkness, in the midst of our sinfulness, God comes to dwell among us. John's Gospel reminds us that through the Incarnation, God saves us from the darkness of sin and makes us his children.



FAMILY REFLECTION

At Christmas we celebrate the great mystery that God became flesh and dwelt among us. We call this mystery the Incarnation (the word means "to take on flesh"), and it changes everything. Today's Gospel reminds us that we can also look upon the Nativity from God's perspective to better appreciate the significance of the Incarnation. The mystery we proclaim at Christmas is that God, the very God who created all things from nothing and who is light itself, took on our humanity in order to transform us. Through his birth among us, we have seen the face of God and have become nothing less than God's own children. At this awesome mystery, we adore.

Gather as a family around your Nativity set. Keep this image before you and talk about how familiar we are with this scene. Invite members of the family to recall the details of Jesus' birth that we hear in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Observe that the Gospel of John invites us to consider Jesus' birth from a different perspective. Read together today's Gospel, John 1:1-14.

John's Gospel reminds us that the image we see in our Nativity set is a most remarkable sight: God made himself at home with us by taking on flesh and becoming a human person. We call this mystery the Incarnation. What are some of the things that John's Gospel says happened for us because Jesus came to dwell among us? (Light overcame darkness; we see God's glory in Jesus; we became children of God.) Together thank God for this mystery of the Incarnation and the salvation that we received because Jesus was born among us. Sing together a Christmas hymn, such as "O Come, All Ye Faithful" or "Silent Night."

Sunday Connection, Loyola Press

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, CYCLE B

SUNDAY, 24 DECEMBER 2023

RESPONSE: THAT WE MAY BE MADE WORTHY OF THE PROMISES OF CHRIST

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD, CYCLE B

MONDAY, 25 DECEMBER 2023

RESPONSE: CHRIST, THE LORD

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

THE HOLY FAMILY, CYCLE B

SUNDAY, 31 DECEMBER 2023

RESPONSE: AND DO NOT FORBID THEM

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, CYCLE B

SUNDAY, 7 JANUARY 2024

RESPONSE: SINCE WE ARE ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

**EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 2024**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 72:1-2,7-8,10-11,12-13

Every nation on earth shall worship the Lord.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 2:1-12

The Magi seek out Jesus and do him homage.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

The visit of the Magi occurs directly before the story of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. Matthew's Gospel tells a version of Jesus' birth that is different than the one in Luke. Of the actual birth of Jesus, Matthew tells us little more than, "When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod . . ." The story of the census is found only in Luke's Gospel, but we hear about the visit of the Magi only in Matthew's Gospel.

We know little about the Magi. They come from the East and journey to Bethlehem, following an astrological sign, so we believe them to be astrologers. We assume that there were three Magi based upon the naming of their three gifts. The Gospel does not say how many Magi paid homage to Jesus. In Matthew's Gospel, they represent the Gentiles' search for a saviour. Because the Magi represent the entire world, they also represent our search for Jesus.

We have come to consider the gifts they bring as a foreshadowing of Jesus' role in salvation. We believe the meaning of the gifts to be Christological. Gold is presented as representative of Jesus' kingship. Frankincense is a symbol of his divinity because priests burned the substance in the Temple. Myrrh, which was used to prepare the dead for burial, is offered in anticipation of Jesus' death.

The word Epiphany means "manifestation" or "showing forth." Historically several moments in Christ's early life and ministry have been celebrated as "epiphanies," including his birth in Bethlehem, the visit of the Magi, his baptism by John, and his first miracle at Cana.

FAMILY REFLECTION

The tradition of giving gifts at Christmas is thought by some to be rooted in the gift giving of the Magi. In many cultures, gifts are not exchanged at Christmas, but rather on the feast of the Epiphany. Whenever you exchange your Christmas gifts, take some time to reflect on this tradition of gift giving at Christmas. Think of the best gift you have received. What was it? What made it special? Was it the gift itself, the thought that went into it, or the person who gave it to you?

Read today's Gospel, Matthew 2:1-12. The gifts of the Magi—gold, frankincense, and myrrh—have come to be understood as symbols of Christ's royalty, divinity, and eventual suffering and death. They are special because in giving them, the Magi acknowledge who Jesus was to be: our Savior. We pray that we will acknowledge Jesus as Savior in all that we do and say. Conclude by singing together "We Three Kings."

Sunday Connection, Loyola Press

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

Please pray for the sick and housebound of our Parish: Trish Taylor, Ryan Morrison, Philip Cockle.

Please let the Parish Office know, in writing, if either you or your relatives would like to be mentioned on our sick list.

LET US REMEMBER

Let us remember those who have died recently or those whose anniversaries occur at this time, and all their families, with love and affection during this time of grief. May the Christ grant eternal rest to all who have died.

ANNIVERSARIES

David McDonald, William Christopher Game, Natalino Evangelista, Bernard McArdle, Barbara McArdle, Margaret Brennan, William Albert Robinson, John Cullinane, Maud Adams, Percy Smith, Alice Rigby, Richard Browne, Henry Talbot, Catherine Boulter, Ellen McDonnell, Annie Jardine, Joseph Rankin, Millicent Prince, Ellen Jarvis, Keith Perkins, Georgina Darnell, Mary Absalom, Arthur Norris, William Dorsett, Monica Brennan, Rose Mary Irgolith, Elizabeth McKenna, Astor Charles Henchy, Antonietta Ambruso, Lionel Jones, Bertram Woodhouse Currie, John McDonnell, Alfred North, Nora Cremin, Henry Desmond, Kathleen Anderson, Kevin Smith, John McCormack, Marguerite Hards, Moyra McCullagh, Lillian Teresa Cullen, Violet Palmeri, Francis Cardinal Bourne, Michael Cooney, Mary Angela Gilbert, John Williamson, Patricia Crump, John Pereira, Olga Paine, Peter Kelly, Jeremiah O'Dowd, Rose Wilson, Mary Westhead, Anna Hanson, John Stevenson, Stanley Bays, Jack Allen, Hannah Ruth Mennis, Edgar Duckett, Fredrick Thomas, Dorothy Eley, Vincent Raymond, Olive Bryden, Tony Green, Mary Josephine Edwards, Sarah Kelly, Helena Collins, Michael Frain, Ellen Merritt, Patrick Connolly, John Crehan, Michael Jordan. Teresa Buller, Clara Cunningham, Joan Culme, Daniel Quaid, Maurice Woolger, Azzopardi Twins, Joseph Kiernan, Mary Johnston, Sr. Lucy Proctor, William Finn, Nicholas Power, Constance Neve, Joan Marie Jackson, Keith Alexander Fraser, Colin Patrick McCarthy, Mary Ann Jelley, Walter Padberg, Rosa Vitolo, Jerzy Henryk Kopicki, Douglas Carter, Teresa Scott, Annie Burton, Mary Dobson, Frederick Fear, Bridget Cumiskey, Alfred Mulcahy, Joseph Rice, Eileen Wharton, George Winnen, Charles Woogar, Alexander Paterson, Balbina Saiz Agudin. **+++May They Rest In Peace+++**



PPARISH OFFICE

Karin, our Parish Secretary, will be on annual leave from Friday 22nd December 2023 until Monday 8th January 2024, therefore the parish office will be closed. Please only call the Presbytery in case of an emergency or for a pressing enquiry during this time. For non-urgent enquiries please email kingston@rcaos.org.uk and Karin will respond when the office reopens. Thank you.



IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY IN JANUARY 2024!!

- Monday 8th January 2024 – Parish Office Reopens
- Monday 8th January 2024 – Canasta Club Restarts
- Wednesday 10th January – RCIA Class
- Thursday 11th January 2024 – Scrabble Club Restarts
- Sunday 14th January 2024 – FHC Session 2 at 11.45am
- Wednesday 17th January – RCIA Class
- Sunday 21st January 2024 – FHC Session 3 at 11.45am
- Wednesday 24th January – RCIA Class
- Friday 26th January 2024 – Annual MSP Celebration
(St George's Cathedral, Southwark)
- Saturday 27th January 2024 – FHC Reconciliation Service 11am
- Saturday 27th January 2024 – Parish Novena Begins
(Further details in the New Year)
- Sunday 28th January 2024 – Baptism Preparation Class
- Monday 5th February 2024 – St Agatha's Day, Parish Gathering
(Further details in the New Year)

NEW TO THE PARISH?

A very warm welcome to our Parish; we hope that you are settling down in your new home and will soon feel part of our community. If you are new to the parish, please do introduce yourself to a member of the clergy, and please complete a family registration form which can be found in the church porch and is also on the parish website. If you have any questions or enquiries, please contact the Parish Office.



SUPPORTING DONS LOCAL ACTION GROUP THIS CHRISTMAS

The previously advised delivery of 19th December to the Dons saw an excellent response; gratefully received by their team. Our friends at the Dons advised how they have been active across the local hospitals. Monday to Wednesday saw them at Kingston, St George's and St Hellier Hospitals respectively. These visits saw the distribution of toys for the children inpatients (some 80 children are presently in St George's for example), and Christmas fare for the staff e.g. mince pies, seasonal biscuit packs and all things chocolate. Further to the above, this Christmas the Dons will be continuing to support local charities, such as Brite Box, Crest and KCHA amongst others, in addition to the 100+ families. On behalf of the Dons Local Action Group, we thank you all for your continued generosity and support.



"MY PLACES" EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS BY BOB MEECHAM
Bob Meecham wishes to thank everyone in the parish who came to visit the exhibition "My Places" and especially those who bought paintings and cards, particularly with the present financial situation as it is. "Due to the success of the exhibition, I have donated £250 to the Church fund and £250 to the fantastic RNLI. A Big Thankyou to all."

SCHOOL FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

St Agatha's Catholic Primary School is looking to appoint a Foundation Governor to join their dedicated Governing body.

The core responsibilities include:

- Ensuring accountability
- Monitoring and evaluating the school's progress
- Budgetary allocation and control
- Shaping plans for school improvement and overseeing their implementation
- Setting the school's aims and values
- Appointing senior members of staff including the Head Teacher



Please contact office@stagathas.school for further details. We look forward to hearing from you.

St Agatha's School vision is to nurture children's holistic development, guided by catholic values in partnership with parents and the community. Our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children. All appointments are subject to a satisfactory enhanced DBS check and other Safe Recruitment employment checks. We are an equal opportunities employer.



"Learning together in God's love"

St Agatha's Catholic Primary School
St Agatha's Drive, Kingston Upon Thames, KT2 5TY

THE CATHOLIC UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN

"Shocking" impact of church lockdowns revealed by [Catholic Union](https://catholicunion.org.uk/2023/12/shocking-impact-of-church-lockdowns-revealed/)

The impact of closing churches and other places of worship during the Covid-19 pandemic has been revealed in a major new study.

A survey carried out by the Catholic Union found that 62 percent of people said that their physical or mental health had been affected by church closures.

The survey also found that 90 percent of people thought that places of worship should be treated as "essential" services alongside food shops and healthcare facilities in any future pandemic, meaning they would not be forced to close.

Further details of the report can be found at: <https://catholicunion.org.uk/2023/12/shocking-impact-of-church-lockdowns-revealed/>



"In its genuine poverty, the Nativity Scene helps us rediscover the true richness of Christmas and purify ourselves from many aspects that pollute the Christmas landscape. It speaks to us of the birth of the son of God, who became man to be close to each of us." ~

Pope Francis