



THE MESSENGER

The weekly review of the Parish of

St Michael and All Angels

Watford

ADVENT 4

23 December 2007

A warm welcome to our services today.

At the 9.30 am Eucharist, Fr John celebrates, Martin Heath preaches and Phil Gough leads the intercessions. A crèche is available.

Hymns: 49, 24, 238 and 58

Setting: Missa Seraphica

Coffee and tea will be served in church after the 9.30 service – please stay on.

Rehearsal for Nativity presentation from 11.15 to 1.15pm.

Our Service of Lessons and Carols is at 6.00 pm this evening and will be followed by mince pies and coffee.

For your prayers this week:

The Church: The Church in Sudan, Benjamin Mamur, Bishop of Yirol.
Susan Pope, the Diocesan Secretary, and all the staff at Diocesan office.

The World: Peace in Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan.
All who work for aid agencies – their safety.
The continuing worries in the “money markets”, and those who have control over the future of our economic system.

The Community and Parish: All those who will attend our Christmas Services – that they may be inspired by the Christmas message throughout the year.

All overseas Christians in our Parish who will miss the company of their families back in their own countries.

The Ill and the Housebound: Especially Ray Angles, Monica Batt, Ellen Benoy, Günter Bouché, John Burn, Marjorie Carlisle, Jennifer Coley, Bill Craddock-Jones, Jean Crouch, Ifagaani Desiderio, June Dickinson, Kate Dickinson, Jocelyn Harewood, Jenny Houghton, Mary Kearns, Lesley Kinch, Loretta Lynch, Maggie Maguire, Stella Meager, Eva Portas, Myrtle Powell, Ann Reed, Gladys Robertson, Maureen Swann, June Tatnall, Bill Widdowson, Anne Wightman, Maureen Williams and Sue Winterbotham.

The Departed:

Collect

God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son:
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Isaiah 7.10–16

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

- ¹⁰ The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying,
¹¹ ‘Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.’
¹² But Ahaz said, ‘I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.’
¹³ Then Isaiah said: ‘Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also?’
¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.
¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.
¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.’

SECOND READING Romans 1.1–7

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

- ¹ Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,
² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures,
³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh

4 and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the
spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our
Lord.
5 Through Christ we have received grace and apostleship to bring
about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his
name,
6 including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,
7 To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to
you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL Matthew 1.18–25

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

18 The birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his
mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived
together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.
19 Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose
her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.
20 But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord
appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be
afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is
from the Holy Spirit.
21 She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save
his people from their sins.'
22 All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through
the prophet:
23 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name
him Emmanuel,' which means, 'God is with us.'
24 When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord
commanded him; he took her as his wife,
25 but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and
he named him Jesus.

THIS WEEK

Mon	24	Dec	CHRISTMAS EVE Crib Service with Nativity play and presentation of gifts MIDNIGHT MASS	4.00pm 11.30pm
Tue	25	Dec	CHRISTMAS DAY Holy Communion (Order One in Traditional Language) SUNG EUCHARIST	8.00am 9.30am
Wed	26	Dec	<i>Bank Holiday (NB No coffee in Church)</i>	
Thu	27	Dec	Holy Communion (Order One in Traditional Language)	10.00am
Sun	30	Dec	<u>CHRISTMAS 1</u> Holy Communion (Order One in Traditional Language) SUNG EUCHARIST (crèche available) Evensong in Lady Chapel	8.00am 9.30am 6.30pm

NOTICES

SINCERE THANKS to all who have done so much to prepare for Christmas – the decorations, the Christmas tree, the almost 100% coverage of the parish with the Christmas leaflets. Your help is greatly appreciated. (Fr John)

CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION: This will be part of the Crib Service which is at 4 pm on Christmas Eve and there will be rehearsals after the 9.30 service on the 23rd December. There are still a few gift tags on the tree at the back of the church – please take one if you would like to bring a present to the Crib Service.

BRING-&-SHARE LUNCHES: Please note that the next one will be on Ash Wednesday, 6 February (NO Lunch in January).

SWORD: The Christmas/New Year edition is available to take and distribute.

CHRISTMAS CARDS (see tables in north aisle):

Personal Greetings Cards: The tables for our internal mail are available now. Please check for your own cards and take any for your neighbours.

The 'large' card: As last year, there is a card which may be signed by anyone who wishes to send their Christmas greetings to all church members and make a donation to a worthy cause. This year the money donated will go to BLISS – the premature baby charity – further information about Bliss is given on the table with the 'large' card..

FLOWER FUND: Any contributions towards the Christmas flowers will be gratefully received. If you are able to gift aid your contribution, please use a white gift aid envelope.

VISIT BY AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS: This group is coming to Watford from 4-8 January 2008 and staying at homes in the parish. On Monday, 7 January, at 4 pm they will be playing jazz in church for anyone (children and adults) who like to come and listen. Please tell your friends and neighbours.