



**The Parishes of  
Our Lady of the Assumption, Maryvale  
and  
Christ the King, Kingstanding**

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr. The-Quang Nguyen  
124 Warren Farm Road, Kingstanding, Birmingham B44 0QN



Monastery: 99 Old Oscott Hill  
Kingstanding, Birmingham, B44 9SR  
Email: sistersofthebvm@gmail.com

Fr. The-Quang Nguyen:  
[fr.the.quang.nguyen@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:fr.the.quang.nguyen@rcaob.org.uk)  
Tel: 0121 373 0988. Email: Admin:  
[christ-theking.bham@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:christ-theking.bham@rcaob.org.uk)

Convent: 192 Hawthorn Road  
Kingstanding B44 8PU  
Phone +44 121 3500 716  
Email: smsfbirmingham@gmail.com

Parish Deacons: Rev. Mr. Dominic Fahey, Rev. Mr. Gary O'Brien  
Websites: [www.christ-theking.org.uk](http://www.christ-theking.org.uk) & <http://www.maryvale.org.uk>

The Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and National and Archdiocesan policies and procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Stephen Clarke. He can be contacted at [sg.christ-theking.bham@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:sg.christ-theking.bham@rcaob.org.uk)

Alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240 or [safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk)

Hymns: E: 94; O: 160; C: 593; R: 473

**MASSES THIS WEEK**

**SUNDAY OBLIGATION HAS BEEN REINSTATED BY THE BISHOPS**

<b>Sat</b> 16/12/23	Advent Feria	10:00 Mon.	Joseph Tho & Maria Tam (RIP)
	3 <sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>O Sapientia</i>	12:30 CTK	James Cunningham
<b>Sun</b> 17/12/23		18:00 OLAM†	Bob Thompson (Ann.)
	10:00 CTK	Henry Byrne & Tommy Judge (Ann.)	
<b>Mon</b> 18/12/23	Advent Feria – <i>O Adonai</i>	11:30 OLAM	Andrew Deane (RIP)
		08:00 Con.†	Joseph Van The & Maria Ly (RIP)
<b>Tue</b> 19/12/23	Advent Feria – <i>O Radix Iesse</i>	09:30 Mon.	Joseph Nghia (RIP)
		09:00 OLAM	Cardinal Wiseman School
<b>Wed</b> 20/12/23	Advent Feria – <i>O Clavis David</i>	09:30 Mon.†	David Cotton (RIP)
		11:30 OLAM	Cardinal Wiseman School
<b>Thu</b> 21/12/23	Advent Feria – <i>O Oriens</i>	12:00 CTK	Pat Comerford (RIP)
		08:00 Con.†	Kim Wilkes (RIP)
<b>Fri</b> 22/12/23	Advent Feria – <i>O Rex Gentium</i>	09:30 Mon.	Maria Doan (RIP)
		09:30 Mon.†	Joseph Binh & Joseph Hung (RIP)
<b>Sat</b> 23/12/23	Advent Feria - <i>O Emmanuel</i>	12:00 CTK	Robert Connolly (RIP)
		09:00 CTK	PEOPLE OF THE PARISHES
<b>Sun</b> 24/12/23	4 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>Day of Prayer for Expectant Mother</i>	09:30 Mon. <sup>o</sup>	Beatrice & Gerry (SI)
		10:00 Mon.	Michael Quinn (RIP)
<b>Sun</b> 24/12/23	4 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>Day of Prayer for Expectant Mother</i>	12:30 CTK	Jane Walsh (Anni.)
		18:00 OLAM	Rita Maxwell
<b>Sun</b> 24/12/23	4 <sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>Day of Prayer for Expectant Mother</i>	10:00 CTK†	Margaret Ngina (RIP)
		11:30 OLAM	John Roche (RIP)

**Bible Study** with Deacon Dominic Fahey in the Guild Room at Christ The King **every Tuesday** at 7:00pm.

**Rosary Group:** meeting **every Wednesday** in Christ the King Church at 1:30pm.

**PRAYER GROUP IN SUPPORT OF THE PARISH MISSION:** A new prayer group has been set up to focus specifically on praying for the forthcoming Parish Mission. It will meet on the First Friday of each month from January to June 2024 inclusive at 2.30 pm at 82 Dunedin Road. The next meeting will be on **5<sup>th</sup> January**.

**Please Pray For The Sick:** Monique Hunt, Luke Byrne, Jean McCabe, Muriel/Paul Cowan, Gerald, Sr Marie, Mary McGee, John/Sandra Mageean, Sarah McCallion, John, Sadie Pulido, Claire/Mark, Carole Smith, Alan Rowan, Arjun Paul, Mary Ann Gniadkowski, Jo Teece, Niamh O' Reilly, Alberto Bolongaro, Kyle Billing, Nicola Jones, Daniel Kelly, Patricia Nash, Teresa Webb, Angela Madigan, Carol Timmis, Elizabeth Teague, Joanne Fields, Caitlin Hodgetts, Joan & Alan Horton, Yvonne Cowman, Fr Michael Ho, Debbie Davis, Peggy O'Donovan, Pauline O'Brien, Edward Bridger, Annette Molloy, David & Josephine Brown.

**RIP:** Please pray for the repose of the soul of Prem Lata Sharma (Akash Paul's granny), Ron Hunt, who died recently. May they rest in peace. Funeral: Ron Hunt: CTK, Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> January, at 11:00.

**THE SANCTUARY LAMP**, which burns to indicate the presence of the Blessed Sacrament on the Altar, is dedicated throughout December for the **deceased members of the Canavan/Stapleton/Hayden families** at Christ The King and for the **Collins/Rattigan Family Circle** at Maryvale.

**Last Weeks' Collection CTK**

Loose: £ 271.18  
 Envelopes: £ 171.00  
 Standing Orders: £ 278.65  
**Total: £ 720.83**

**Thank you for  
 your generous support**

**Last Weeks' Collection OLAM**

Loose: £ 115.64  
 Envelopes: £ 191.00  
 Standing Orders: £ 94.69  
**Total: £ 401.33**

Christ the King		16 <sup>th</sup> / 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec	23 <sup>rd</sup> / 24 <sup>th</sup> Dec
Sat 12:30	Minister of the Word	Kathleen Foxall	Kathleen Foxall
	Minister of Holy Communion	Theresa Wilkin	Sue Nugent
Sun 10.00	Minister of the Word	Theresa	John
	Minister of Holy Communion	Joyce	Marianne

**Mass of Thanksgiving for Altar Servers:** Tue 26<sup>th</sup> Dec 23 - the Feast of St. Stephen - there will be a Mass of Thanksgiving at Christ The King at 10:30am for all our Altar Servers and the excellent work they do. Altar Servers planning to attend are asked to let Sam Dosumu know.

**Retrouvaille** is a Catholic programme open to married couples of any faith or none. It is offered as a gift from the Church to any married couple who wishes to heal difficulties they may be experiencing in their marriage. The programme is presented by trained volunteers who themselves have experienced the course and want to share the benefits they experienced in their own relationships. The presenting team on the weekend also includes a priest who has experienced the programme and believes it has something to offer couples in difficulties. All priests are invited to come and experience the programme for themselves for free, as we need them to help present the weekend - their presence is highly valued by the couples on the weekend. Please consider coming to one of our course. For further information, please visit the 'Retrouvaille' website [www.retrouvaille.org.uk](http://www.retrouvaille.org.uk).

**Year of Jubilee 2025:** The Holy Father has decided that 2025 will be a year of Jubilee, something which happens every 25 years. The theme is "Pilgrims of Hope", and it will be a year of hope for a world suffering the impacts of war, the on-going effects of the man-made pandemic, and a climate crisis. Preparation for the 2025 Year of Jubilee will begin in Advent 2023, which will mark the start of a year of prayer. The Bishops' Conference will be producing resources for the preparatory year of prayer, focusing on the Our Father, as well as resources about Jubilee in the Catholic Church. For use by parishes, priests, religious, laypeople, and more, these resources will help guide you as you ready yourself for this most vital year in the Church's life.

**Escorted Pilgrimage to Knock & Co Mayo, 14/04/24.** £899.00 pp. Price includes flight, 10kg hold luggage, 5 nights' in 4\* Castlecourt Hotel, Westport with Dinner, Bed & B & B and Lunch on 3 days. All entertainment, excursions & transport included. Visit Knock, Galway City, Kylemore Abbey, Croagh Patrick & Ashford Castle. Single supplement on Enquiry. Contact Patricia or Natali on 01268 762 278 or 07740 175557 or email [knockpilgrimages@gmail.com](mailto:knockpilgrimages@gmail.com).

**GOSPEL COMMENTARY: FR DONAGH O'SHEA:** The first line of last Sunday's Gospel reading introduced "Jesus Christ, Son of God." Today's readings (particularly the first, and also the Responsorial Psalm) show him as "Saviour". These together were the earliest affirmation of faith in Jesus: "Jesus Christ, Son of God and Saviour," in Greek, Ἰησοῦς Χριστός Θεοῦ Υἱός Σωτήρ - *Iesous Christos Theou Uios Soter*. The initial letters of these words taken together - ICHTHUS - happen to mean 'fish'. And so the fish became the secret sign of being a Christian in the times of persecution. It can be seen scratched on the walls of the catacombs in Rome.

John the Baptist was a rough-cut individual, appearing from the desert, fulminating against sinners, and offering a "baptism of repentance". We mustn't think yet of Christian baptism. John's was a kind of moral baptism. They were turbulent times, and people were looking for a powerful and charismatic leader. John could be the one. The people thronged to him, wanting to ally themselves with him through a symbolic cleansing of sin: immersion in the Jordan (the word 'baptism' means 'plunging'). But John was clear about the limits of his own message. He pointed to another and greater leader to come. "I baptise with water... he baptises with the Holy Spirit" (Jn 1:26, 33). In other words, I plunge you in water, but he will plunge you in God's Spirit.

There is a world of difference between what we might call 'salvation from below' and 'salvation from above'. Today, there is a great attraction in the first: our world has countless self-improvement programmes, and it is true many people are greatly helped by this one or that. However, there is some built-in limitation in all of these. What if I were to succeed in improving myself, according to own view? It is always in danger of being a Pyrrhic victory, because the 'I' that is improving itself may be entrenching itself even more deeply in itself. In Zen, they call it 'polishing the tile', after an anecdote about a monk who was attempting to turn a tile into a mirror by polishing it. The best things, we discover, are *given*, not *produced*. In Christian terms, we speak of the "grace of God". The word 'grace' means 'gift'. A gift is from beyond, so I can receive it in simplicity of heart, without the ego's double-binds. This is 'salvation from above'. Far from excluding the other, it comes most often when the other has been taken to its limit and has run aground. If I improve myself, I can experience a certain *satisfaction*, but when the grace of God floods me, I know what is meant by *joy*. Joy is from beyond.

The contrast between John the Baptist and Jesus is fascinating, and the Liturgy gives us many opportunities throughout the year to study it. Jesus said of him, "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no-one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (John 11:11; Luke 7:28). See Dec. 14.