



ST ERCONWALD'S PARISH WALTON-ON-THAMES

Date	Time	What	Where
First three Sundays in Advent	9.15am	Children's liturgy with advent activity	Church
First week of Advent (1/12)			
Saturday 30 November	10.30am-12pm	Children's liturgy with advent activity Advent wreath making	Hall
Second week of Advent (8/12)			
Friday 6 December	10-11.30am	Toddler Play and Praise with Advent activities	Hall
Sunday 8 December	9.15am	Giving Tree	Church
Third week of Advent (15/12)			
Friday 13 December	10-11.30am	Toddler Play and Praise with Advent activities. Note, this is the last one until January.	Hall
Saturday 14 December	TBC	Church decorating	Church
Saturday 14 December	6pm	Advent Youth-led Mass	Church
Sunday 15 December	12.15pm	Parish lunch	Parish hall
Wednesday 18 December	7.00-7.45pm	Parish penitential service followed by post-retreat reflection and social	Church
Fourth week of Advent (22/12)			
Sunday 22 December	3.00pm	Celebration of carols and readings; refreshments	Church
Christmas eve Tuesday 24 December	3.00pm	Christmas eve family mass	Church
	5.30-6.00pm	Carols followed by Vigil mass at 6.00pm	Church
	10.00pm	Early midnight mass	Church
Christmas day Wednesday 25 December	9.15am	Christmas day mass	Church
	11.15am	Christmas day mass	Church
	1 pm	Polish mass	Church



Advent and Christmas 2024

St Erconwald's Catholic Church
 22 Esher Avenue Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 2TA
 Tel. 01932 22110
 WhatsApp/Mob. 07494 749833
 Office email: walton@abdiocese.org.uk



The first Sunday of Advent signals the beginning of a new Church year, a time filled with anticipation and reflection. Advent serves as a wonderful opportunity for everyone to start afresh and rejuvenate their spirits. It invites us to reflect on our past, offering our experiences and mistakes to God.

During this time, we can release our burdens, including sins and emotional pain, and open our hearts to welcome Jesus into our lives. This period encourages us to seek a new beginning with hope and trust in the transformative work that God wishes to accomplish within us. It truly is a moment to embark on a new journey!

As we move through Advent, we contemplate the promise of our Saviour, who will one day return in all His majestic glory. We look forward to this moment with great hope and enthusiasm. Additionally, we take time to reflect deeply on the miraculous birth of Jesus, who came into the world through the humble Virgin Mary.

The Christmas season ultimately brings to fulfilment the hope ignited during Advent, revealing the profound promise of God. In an act of incredible humility, God chose to become a small child, fully reliant on the care and love of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Nazareth. In this extraordinary role, she became not only the Mother of God but also a guiding light and nurturing figure for all of us as our Mother in Grace.

With prayers and all the blessings for this Advent
Fr. Ruslan

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ADVENT/CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

Please see the calendar overleaf for all the dates

Advent wreath making

Come along on **30 November** to create a wreath as a centrepiece for your table. Find out about the symbolism of its various components and some prayers for your family. All are welcome (individuals, families), but please sign up in the porch/online by **Monday 25 November** to enable us to purchase sufficient supplies - and spaces are limited by the size of our hall! <https://sterconwalds.churchsuite.com/events/ljuhuzpi> Cost: £11.

Church decorating

Come along to help decorate our church for the Advent and Christmas season on **Saturday 14 December**. Check the newsletter nearer the date for the time.

Toddlers Play and Praise

Our weekly toddler's group on **Fridays from 10-11.30 am** for children and their parents/grandparents continues with Advent activities for our littlest parishioners. The last one before Christmas will be on 13 December.

Children's liturgy

Our children meet as usual **during the 9.15 mass** for their children's liturgy. All children are welcome to join in - just come along to the 9.15 mass. Advent activities will include making Christmas cards for the housebound and elderly of the parish, and learning about the candles on the Advent wreath.

Young people

The young people of our parish are invited to join in our **monthly youth-led mass on 14 December** and a social. Please contact the office if you'd like to participate/come along.

Celebrating the diversity of our parish

In our porch you will find a **map of the world**, where you can mark the country you're from and add in Christmas greetings in your own language. Let's see how many nationalities we can celebrate by the time we get to Christmas!

Walk with me

All parishioners are encouraged and invited to participate in "Walk with me", which is a **personal prayer and scripture journey** for the season of Advent, with daily readings and reflections, taking us on a journey to Christmas and to the Jubilee year 'Pilgrims of Hope 2025. There are booklets for adults and separate ones aimed at primary school children. Please take a booklet from the back of church, and do join in - either on your own or in your families. Booklets will be available in the porch from Saturday 30 November.

Parish Christmas outreach

Our outreach this year is two-fold, and, focusses on babies and children, and women facing unexpected pregnancies. For our overseas outreach, we invite children in our parish to write to children in an **orphanage in Ukraine** run by Sr Inna Vyshpolska, of the Congregation of Sisters "Daughters of the purest Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a personal friend of Fr Ruslan. Any donations received will go towards providing the children with a Christmas lunch. Secondly, local support will go to **Life**. Life is a UK charity for women facing unexpected pregnancy, offering help, counselling and skills. Life has two houses locally for young women and their babies who would otherwise be homeless. A Giving Tree for Life will be set up on the altar during Advent; further details will follow in our parish newsletter.

Parish Christmas lunch

All parishioners are invited to a traditional Christmas lunch on **15 December** with all the trimmings provided by our StEPS (parish support) team. If you'd like to come along, please sign up in the porch or contact Emma Simpkin: emma@simpkin.net by **Monday 9 December**.

Parish penitential service

This is an opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at a special Advent service on **Wednesday 18 December**, followed by a social time with the opportunity to reflect with others on our recent parish retreat. All are welcome.

Celebration of carols and readings

Please come along on **Sunday 22 December** to sing carols, listen to some readings about the Christmas story, and meet as a parish community afterwards for refreshments and mince pies. All are welcome.

... and of course our **Christmas masses**,
as detailed in the calendar.

We look forward to welcoming you at
St Erconwald's this Advent and Christmas season.