



Sacred Heart Church, Oxford

First Sunday of Advent

29th November, 2020

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Sunday, 29 th November <i>First Sunday of Advent</i>	9.00 am (Zoom live)	Melly Balbag - Thanksgiving
Monday, 30 th November <i>Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle</i>	No Public Mass Today	Deceased Deacons
Tuesday, 1 st December <i>Feast of St. Edmund Campion, Martyr</i>	No Public Mass Today	
Wednesday, 2 nd December	No Public Mass Today	
Thursday, 3 rd December <i>Memorial of St. Francis Xavier, Priest</i>	7.00 pm Mass (Zoom live)	The People of the Parish
Friday, 4 th December <i>Optional Memorial of St. John Damascene</i>	No Public Mass Today	Joseph McGarry
Saturday, 5 th December <i>Feast of St. Birinus, Bishop</i>	No Public Mass Today	
Sunday, 6 th December <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i>	9.00 am 6.00 pm	John Cullen (Anniversary) The People of the Parish

Welcome to Sacred Heart Church on the First Sunday of Advent.

Happy New Year, everyone! No, that is not a misprint or a mistake. Today we enter into Advent and the Church's new year. The Sunday Mass Lectionary Cycle is Year B, and the Weekday Cycle is Year 1.

We cannot be together physically yet, but I shall broadcast the 9.00 am Mass today and the 7.00 pm Mass next Thursday on Zoom. Please join me if you can. Furthermore, each evening, at 6.00, please pause and pray for the people that you normally would see at Mass on Sundays. That way we can be united in prayer.

Please pray for Madrine Naijuma Ssenjombwe, Roderick Chapelle and all who have died recently, and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time, including Archbishops Joseph Masterson and Edward Ilsley, Frs. Reginald Anwyl, Joseph du Moulin Browne CO, Norman Millard, Peter Rogers and Liam MacFarlane, and also John McWilliams and Kathleen Duffy. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. May they rest in peace. We pray especially for John and Salome and their family at this time, and we offer them our sympathy and support.

Please pray for those we know who are sick. If you or family members are ill and you would like to ask for prayers on this newsletter, let me know (in writing, please). Thank you.

New publications. The Advent *Walk With Me* booklet, the Advent *Day By Day* booklet, and the latest edition of *The Sower* (the Diocesan magazine) will be available when you come to Mass next weekend. If you are shielding at home and would like to have a copy of any of these, please let me know.

Prayer at the end of Mass:

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus, O merciful, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary! *Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

CAFOD World Gifts. World Gifts, CAFOD's range of virtual gifts, make a real difference to families living in poverty across the world. While we have the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown here, we can still be good neighbours to our sisters and brothers overseas by giving World Gifts as Christmas presents to family and friends. The Keep Clean Kit gift for £6 and the Vegetable Garden gift for £10 are just two gifts that will help vulnerable families affected by the pandemic to protect and feed themselves. Let's spread joy and hope around the world this Christmas. Visit cafod.org.uk/worldgifts.

Re-opening the church. There is some great news this week! The church may once more be re-opened for the public celebration of Mass, starting with the 9.00 am and 6.00 pm Masses next Sunday.

Unfortunately, as before this lockdown, we are being hedged around with so many rules and regulations that it threatens to take away all the fun of the occasion. I think that the best way we can approach this great occasion is to see it as an enormous adventure. When I was a child, reading Enid Blyton's many books, it seemed to me that the only worthy ambition for a child was to have an adventure. It didn't matter what it was, the fun lay in trying something new (although I did draw the line at eating cabbage or Brussels sprouts!). It might be an uncomfortable experience, but oh! the *adventure!*

We are invited to return to Mass, to be fed by our Lord with His word and His Body. We are once again able to meet as a family, the living Body of Christ, with our brothers and sisters from whom we have been separated. Our church is once again going to be the symbol of a living Christian community. Those are the constants, the things that remain the same. Let us regard the new elements that we must practise as adventures to enjoy and celebrate.

- Those attending Mass must
 - Wear a mask or face covering and remain 1 metre+ apart
 - Sanitise hands on entering and leaving the Church
 - Follow the signs and listen to the stewards
 - Remain seated throughout Mass to ensure we can maintain social distancing
- During Mass there will be no
 - Altar servers or Children's liturgy
 - Eucharistic ministers or Chalice distribution
 - Offertory procession or physical sign of peace
 - Congregational singing or congregating outside
- Holy Communion
 - Before Holy Communion is distributed, I shall hold up the Host while I am at the altar and announce, "The Body of Christ". Everyone will reply together, "Amen."
 - Communion will only be given on the hand. Hold your hands as far as you can towards me. Receive in silence.
- The church will be thoroughly cleaned after each Mass.
- All parish meetings remain suspended until further notice.
- The toilets will not be available, except for emergencies.

Finally, there is still no obligation to attend Mass on Sundays, although I encourage you at least to watch Sunday Mass as it is streamed live, if that is possible for you. We shall continue to show our Sunday Mass on Zoom. Livestreaming of the Mass each day is also available at: <http://www.stanthonyofpadua.org.uk/>; <https://corpuschristiheadington.co.uk> <https://greyfriarsoxford.weebly.com>. Here is an Act of Spiritual Communion to say as you watch a Livestream Mass:

"My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You."

Please stay at home if...

- **You suspect you may be ill with Covid 19 or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for it;**
- You have a sick family member at home.

Advent Reflections. Each Friday during Advent at 10.30 am you are invited to join the Mill Hill Missionaries online for about 20 minutes to reflect on the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday.

4 December - Fr Gerry Hastie MHM

11 December - Fr Dermot Byrne MHM

18 December - Fr Vincent Oates MHM

Christmas Day - Fr Anthony Chantry MHM

You can join by going to the [Missio YouTube channel: youtube.com/MissioUK](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMissioUK).

Gift Aid Coordinator. I am very grateful to Sally McVeigh for all the hard work she has done and continues to do for the Parish as the GA Coordinator (among other things). I am happy to say that she is not intending to step down from it just yet, but it would be useful to have someone who could start to work alongside her who could then take over whenever Sally does wish to pack up. I should very much like to hear from volunteers, please.

Christmas Crib Collection. It is a custom to have a basket in the Christmas Crib for any donations that people

wish to make. The donations go to a specified charity. I always like to have two charities – one local and one international. The international charity will be Friends of the Holy Land – a charity that is based in this Diocese that seeks to help Christians living in the Holy Land. Please call me with suggestions for a local charity.

Tailpiece: On Christmas Eve, a man realised he ought to buy his wife a gift for the next day. So he went to a well-known shop and in the cosmetics section he asked the sales girl, 'How about some perfume?' She showed him a bottle costing £75. 'Too expensive,' he muttered. She returned with a smaller bottle for £50. 'Oh dear,' he grumbled, 'still far too much.' The girl brought out a tiny £10 bottle and offered it to him. He became really agitated, 'What I mean is,' he whined, 'I'd like to see something really cheap.' The girl handed him a mirror.

**May God bless you and all those whom you love,
and keep you safe. Fr. Harry.**