



Sacred Heart Church, Oxford

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

24th January, 2021

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Sunday, 24 th January Third Sunday in Ordinary Time Sunday of the Word of God <i>Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity</i>	9.00 am 6.00 pm	<i>Ena Maguire</i> <i>Brendon Kelly</i>
Monday, 25 th January <i>Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul</i> <i>Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity</i>	9.15 am Mass	<i>The People of the Parish</i>
Tuesday, 26 th January <i>Mem. of St. Timothy & St. Titus, Bishops</i>	No Public Mass Today	
Wednesday, 27 th January <i>Op. Mem. of Blessed Edward Oldcorne,</i> <i>or of St. Angela Merici</i>	No Public Mass Today	
Thursday, 28 th January <i>Memorial of St. Thomas Aquinas, Priest,</i> <i>Doctor of the Church</i>	6.00 pm Exposition & Benediction 7.00 pm Mass	<i>Ena Maguire</i>
Friday, 29 th January	No Public Mass Today	
Saturday, 30 th January	No Public Mass Today	
Sunday, 31 st January Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Racial Justice Sunday	9.00 am 6.00 pm	<i>The People of the Parish</i> <i>Fr. John Ellis</i>
Sacrament of Reconciliation: Thursday, 6.00-6.45 pm		

Welcome to Sacred Heart Church for Mass today,

Please pray for Helen Towey, Winnie Gildea, Fr. Patrick Joyce and all who have died recently, and for all those whose anniversaries occur at this time Mgr. Peter Dao-Duc-Diem, Canons Thomas Copey and Kevin Good, Frs. Anthony Timlin, Vincent Joseph Royles, Richard Roche, James Heneghan, Charles Smith, Mortimer Loftus, John Berry, and Deacon Michael Ainsworth, and also Sarah McVeigh and Anne Marie Kelly. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. May they rest in peace.

Mass at Home. You are still welcome to come to Sacred Heart for Mass, but if you wish to join us for Mass from your home, we can Zoom the Mass to you. Alternatively you could watch the Mass from Our Lady's where we are now live and can be viewed at <https://www.mcnmedia.tv/camera/our-lady-help-of-christians>

Here is a prayer, **an Act of Spiritual Communion**, which you can say as you watch the Mass at home:

"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."

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. Amen.

Please pray for John Flanagan and all 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.

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The Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity began last Monday and ends tomorrow, the feast of the Conversion of St Paul. This year the theme is based on *John 15:1-17: Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit.*

Feast of the Presentation (Candlemas), 2nd February. This will be a week on Tuesday.

Lent. Three weeks on Wednesday will be the start of Lent. It's not too early to start thinking what you can do to make this season of grace fruitful.

Ashes for Ash Wednesday (17th February). Do you know where the ashes come from for Ash Wednesday? They are made by burning the palms that we waved on Palm Sunday to welcome the Lord into His City. Of course, last Palm Sunday we were under lockdown and the church was closed, so we didn't have any palms. Nevertheless, I am hoping that we can make our own ashes for Ash Wednesday. If you have palms from earlier Palm Sundays that we could use for this, please bring them to church over the next few weeks.

Sunday of the Word of God. Pope Francis has decreed that the third Sunday of Ordinary Time should be the Sunday of the Word of God. "Devoting a specific Sunday of the liturgical year to the word of God can enable the Church to experience anew how the risen Lord opens up for us the treasury of his word and enables us to proclaim its unfathomable riches before the world." (Pope Francis). So, ...

1 If you have brought a Bible/Missal/New Testament to Mass today I shall bless it during Mass.

2 During Mass today I shall also re-commission and ask God's blessing of our readers.

3 **Echoes of God: Journeying with the word of God.** Today we begin a journey through the whole Bible in a 7-week course written by David McLoughlin. These weekly reflections are perfect for us to read through and chew over at home during this period of lockdown. Each week takes a fundamental core teaching of Scripture and together the sessions help us get a sense of the Scriptures as a whole; to see the unfolding of God's liberating and creative love in the history of Israel and in the Church. Today, week one, we start with Exodus. The materials, which are very easy and enjoyable to read, are available to take away, but you can access the materials any time at <https://www.godwhospeaks.uk/thegod-who-speaks/focus/sunday-of-the-word-of-god/echoes-of-god-journeying-with-the-word-of-god/>

Parish Finance Committee. There will be a meeting on Zoom of the Parish Finance Committee tomorrow at 8.00 pm. We need to consider the annual accounts for the past year and also to look ahead towards the coming year. I am very grateful to Rachel Breward who has been the Parish Treasurer for the last several years and who has now asked to step down from this role. The Parish owes her a great debt of gratitude for her hard work and skills. I am very pleased to be able to announce that Kylla Abrigo has offered to take up the reins as Treasurer. Many thanks and best wishes to them both.

COVID-19. We continue to be able to open the churches for communal Worship, but this may change if restrictions are tightened. The Government has asked us not to celebrate baptisms and weddings until further notice. I am sorry if this causes some disruption. I shall keep you up to date with any other changes required. We all know that there will be a few more difficult months ahead and it is important that we are sensible, and we do our best to protect each other. We are very fortunate to have the opportunity to come to Mass and to be able to celebrate the Sacraments, even with some restrictions. Please continue to be sensible and to make wise decisions concerning you and your family. For your protection and that of everyone else, when you come to Sacred Heart, please remember to wear a face-covering, to sanitise your hands on arrival and departure, to check in for the track and trace, and to keep your distance from others who are not in your "bubble. Thank you.

Missionary Parishes, Missionary Disciples. The Diocesan Evangelisation Team is hosting a Zoom meeting on Tuesday, 26th January. for those who wish to pray, share & reflect on how God is calling us to nurture missionary parishes and disciples in this challenging new context. There is a choice of two meetings repeated during the day (1-2pm and 7.30- 8.30pm). Contact natalie.oreface@rcaob.org.uk for log in details.

Holocaust Memorial Day is held on 27th January each year, marking the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. It's a time for everyone to pause to remember the millions of people who have been murdered or whose lives have been changed during the Holocaust, and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. The theme of this year's HMD is 'Be the light in the darkness'.

Next Sunday is Racial Justice Sunday. This year Racial Justice Sunday (31 January) is more important than ever. The effects of the pandemic, the killing of George Floyd, and the powerful message on fraternity and equality by Pope Francis in *Fratelli Tutti* speak of the need to actively oppose racism and pursue racial justice with renewed vigour. We are all children of God. The Bishops' Conference has commissioned a series of videos to share the thoughts of Black Catholics about the events of the past year, how we can build a better society and the important role that our Church can play. These are available at: cbcew.org.uk/home/events/racial-justicesunday-2021.

Tailpiece: Now that Christmas is over for another year I hope it is safe to tell this one: Two parents took their three-year-old daughter to church for the first time for the parish Christmas Carol Service. The church lights were lowered, and then the choir came down the aisle, carrying lighted candles. All was quiet until the little one started to sing in a loud voice, "Happy Birthday to you, happy birthday to you...."

May God bless you and all those dear to you.
Fr. Harry