



Sacred Heart Church, Oxford

Feast of the Holy Family

26th December, 2021

Balfour Road, Blackbird Leys, Oxford, OX4 6BD

(01865) 770910 • sacredheart.oxford@rcaob.org.uk • www.sacredheartoxford.com

Parish Priest: Fr. Harry Curtis

(Also serving Our Lady Help of Christians, Cowley, 01865 770910)

Email: fr.harry.curtis@rcaob.org.uk

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| Sunday, 26 th December Feast of the Holy Family | 7.45 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer 9.00 am Mass | Francisco Gomes Ximenes |
| Monday, 27 th December <i>Feast of St. John, Apostle</i> | 8.00 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer 10.00 am Mass | Private Intention |
| Tuesday, 28 th December <i>Feast of the Holy Innocents</i> | 8.00 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer (10.00 am Mass at Our Lady's) | Michael Iagoe |
| Wednesday, 29 th December <i>Feast of St. Thomas Becket, Bishop, Martyr</i> | 8.00 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer (10.00 am Mass at Our Lady's) | Mick Mullagh |
| Thursday, 30 th December <i>Sixth Day in the Christmas Octave</i> | 8.00 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer 10.00 am Mass | Jean Bradley (Anniversary) |
| Friday, 31 st December <i>Optional Commemoration of St. Sylvester I, Pope</i> | 8.00 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer 10.00 am Mass (11.15 pm Mass at Our Lady's) | Josie and Eddie Griffiths In Thanksgiving for 2021 and for blessings in 2022 |
| Saturday, 1 st January SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD | 7.45 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer 9.00 am Mass (11.00 am Mass at Our Lady's) | The Salesian Sisters Emmi Egbuonu |
| Sunday, 2 nd January SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY | 7.45 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer 9.00 am Mass 6.00 pm Mass | The People of the Parish Antero Amaral & M Minzes |

Welcome to Sacred Heart Church, especially if you are visiting our parish for the Christmas holiday.

If you are here with us for the first time today, welcome. If you are returning to Mass after a period of time away because of the pandemic, welcome back! It is lovely to see you again today.

Feast Days this week.

Because 26th December this year falls on a Sunday, I fear that the usual feast of St. Stephen, Martyr, is suppressed and instead we are celebrating the Feast of the Holy Family. Nevertheless, I wish all servers and Deacons a happy feast day. Monday is the Feast of St. John the Evangelist; Tuesday is the Feast of the Holy Innocents; Wednesday is the Feast of St. Thomas Becket.

There will be Mass Monday-Friday at 10.00 am, either here at Sacred Heart or at Our Lady's.

On Friday, New Year's Eve, there will be Mass at 11.15 PM at Our Lady's. Next Saturday is the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, and there will be Mass here at 9.00 in the morning.

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.*

Mass at Home. We are no longer streaming the Sunday morning Mass from Sacred Heart on Zoom. Alternatively, you could watch the Mass on Saturday, 5.30 pm, and/or Sunday, 11.00 am 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 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 pray for Betty Duff, Eileen McGarry, and Daniel Holdsworth and all those we know who are sick. If you are ill and you would like to ask for prayers on this newsletter, please let me know.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Sabina Hennigan, Joseph Cahill and all those who have died recently or whose anniversaries occur around this time: Mgr. Patrick O'Mahoney, Frs. Denis Murphy, Colum McCabe, James McInerney, David O'Callaghan, Francis Etherington CO, Cyril Evans and Patrick Lynch, Deacon Peter Mason, and also Cherry Judith Smith, Anacletus Prosper and Catherine Carpenter. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

Pope's Prayer Intention for January: For true human fraternity. We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognised, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

Christmas Crib. Crib Offerings this year will be divided between Friends of the Holy Land and Emmaus Oxford who try to help homeless people in Oxford. (Friends of the Holy Land is an ecumenical charity supporting the vulnerable Christian community in the West Bank, Gaza, Israel and Jordan. The pandemic has made a difficult situation much worse for Christians living in the land of Our Lord's birth. The shutdown of tourism and pilgrimage since 2020 has devastated most people's livelihoods and plunged them into debt. FHL is helping with grants towards emergency food, bills, education, and – its special focus this Christmas – medical needs.)

CAFOD is combining efforts with the DEC to launch the Afghanistan Crisis Appeal. In Afghanistan, 8 million people are on the brink of famine because of drought, collapsing economy, food shortages, conflict, and COVID. CAFOD is supporting sister Caritas agencies to reach communities most in need with food, clean water, and fuel. You can donate on the CAFOD website: cafod.org.uk/AfghanistanAppeal and please pray for the people of Afghanistan.

New Year's Eve. Are you doing anything special for New Year's Eve? Why not come to Mass at 11.15 pm next Friday night to thank God for the blessings of the last year and to pray for His blessing on the coming year?

COVID Regulations. The news about the infectiousness of the omicron variant is not good. Please consider your own actions and decisions about what keeps you AND others safe. •Face coverings are now compulsory by law. You must not enter church without one

- Sanitise hands
- Keep a 1m distance if you can
- Ventilation in church is important, so dress warmly
- Feeling ill: if you feel unwell please stay at home and do not risk passing on the virus
- Vaccination: have your jabs!

Synodal Pathway. Pope Francis has asked all Catholics to reflect and report on their experience of what it means to be the Church today. In the New Year I shall give out a list of open-ended questions and I

shall invite you to send in your thoughts.

Tailpiece. A priest was just starting his homily at the Christmas Midnight Mass when the electricity in the church failed. The ushers ran and found some candles and placed them all around the church. Then the priest re-entered the pulpit, shuffled his notes, and muttered, "Now, where was I?" A tired voice called out, "Right near the end!"

I wish you every blessing in the New Year. The church looked wonderful at Christmas. Thank you very much to all who helped in any way: the stewards and cleaners, those who cleaned and prepared the church, arranged the flowers, made stars for the tree, read, sang or played, and all the many other jobs. Above all, thanks to you for coming and joining in these celebrations.

I should also like to thank you all for your Christmas offerings and for the many individual gifts and cards that I received. May God bless you all.

Fr. Harry