



# Sacred Heart Church, Oxford

## *Fourth Sunday of Advent*

*18<sup>th</sup> December, 2022*

**Balfour Road, Blackbird Leys, Oxford, OX4 6BD**

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Parish Priest: Fr. Harry Curtis

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Sunday, 18 <sup>th</sup> December <b>Fourth Sunday of Advent</b>	<b>7.45 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</b> <b>9.00 am Mass</b> <i>(11.00 am Mass at Our Lady's)</i> <b>6.00 pm Mass</b>	<i>Edith Brunnarius</i> <i>Sean McMahon (Anniversary)</i> <i>Rolly &amp; Jocelyn (Thanksgiving)</i>
Monday, 19 <sup>th</sup> December	<i>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</i> <i>9.15 am Mass</i>	<i>Jean Bradley</i>
Tuesday, 20 <sup>th</sup> December	<i>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</i> <i>(9.15 am Mass at Our Lady's)</i>	<i>Patrick &amp; Mary Bailey</i>
Wednesday, 21 <sup>st</sup> December <i>Comm. of St. Peter Canisius, Priest</i>	<i>No Public Mass Today</i>	<i>The People of the Parish</i>
Thursday, 22 <sup>nd</sup> December	<i>6.00 pm Exposition and Benediction</i> <i>7.00 pm Mass</i>	<i>Ellen and Marie Gaughan (Ints.)</i>
Friday, 23 <sup>rd</sup> December <i>Comm. of St. John of Kanty, Priest</i>	<i>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</i> <i>(7.00 pm Mass at Our Lady's)</i>	<i>Michael Iagoe</i>
Saturday, 24 <sup>th</sup> December <b>Christmas Eve</b>	<i>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</i> <b>4.00 pm Crib Service &amp; Carols</b> <b>4.30 pm First Mass of Christmas</b> <b>11.30 pm Carols and Readings</b> <b>12.00 Midnight Mass</b>	<i>Harvey Beesley</i>  <i>Private Intention</i>
Sunday, 25 <sup>th</sup> December <b>CHRISTMAS DAY:</b> <b>SOLEMNITY OF THE</b> <b>NATIVITY OF THE LORD</b>	<i>7.45 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</i> <i>9.00 am Mass at Dawn</i> <i>(11.00 am Mass During the Day at Our Lady's)</i> <b>PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NO</b> <b>EVENING MASS HERE TODAY</b>	<i>John and Michael Cullen</i> <i>The People of the Parish</i>
Sacrament of Reconciliation: Thursday, 6.00 – 6.45 pm		

**Welcome to Sacred Heart Church for Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, especially if you are visiting our parish for the Christmas and New Year holidays.**

*Our Parish Prayer: Help us, Lord, to receive you with an open heart this day.*

*May our community receive your grace and deepen its faith in you.*

*Make us lights to shine forth with your love, giving life and hope to those who have fallen away or who have never known you. Amen.*

**Feasts in the next couple of weeks.** Of course, next Sunday is Christmas Day. Hoorah! When Christmas Day falls on Sunday some adjustments have to be made to the usual calendar: St. Stephen's Day (a day of especial importance for Altar Servers) will be on Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> December as usual; Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> December, will be the Feast of the Holy Family; Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> January, will be the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God; the Epiphany will be on Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> January; and the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which closes the Christmas season, will be on Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> January.

**Prayers for the Sick.** Please pray for Felix Saulong, Jr., Jean Carpenter, Brenda O'Meara, Claudino Serra Vaz, Bridie Barry, Pat Mazonowicz, David, Thomas Gaughan, Ella Dawson and all those we know who are sick.

**Please pray for the soul of Paul O'Connor, Michael Hodgetts and all who have died recently,** and all whose anniversaries occur around this time: Mgr. Canon William Flint, Canon Gerald Patrick Breen, Frs. Daniel O'Connor, Michael O'Meara, Edmund Motherway, Brian Doolan and Patrick Wall, and also Robert Craig. May they rest in peace.

**Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2023.** Why not do something amazing next year and volunteer your skills to look after our Accueil (assisted) pilgrims on our Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, France (Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> May to Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June)? Applications to join the Lourdes Nursing and Medical Team, or the Handmaids and Brancardiers, are now open. Go to [www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news/medical-and-non-medical-volunteer-applications-now-open-for-lourdes-2023](http://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/news/medical-and-non-medical-volunteer-applications-now-open-for-lourdes-2023)

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## Christmas Stars



*Our Christmas tree has arrived. Instead of it being just a decoration we are trying to use it symbolically to represent something of the message of Christmas. Christmas is all about God's love for us, as we can see when we think about the birth of Jesus. It is also demonstrated in the way we receive and pass on that love.*

*All members of the parish and our visitors are invited to write, on one of the paper stars, the name(s) of anyone who has shown them love and who holds a special place in their hearts. The star will then be hung on the tree. The many stars will then become a testament to the presence of love in the world – and the way in which, individually, our lives have been enriched by love.*

*Our Christmas tree will then become a testimony to love in the world, and in our own local community.*

**Mass at Home.** If you are not able to come to Mass you could watch it on Saturday, 5.30 pm, and/or Sunday, 11.00 am from Our Lady's where it is livestreamed at <https://www.mcnmedia.tv/camera/our-lady-help-of-christians>. Here is a prayer that you can say when you watch the 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."*

### 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.*

**Remember: refreshments are available in the hall after the 9.00 am Mass on Sundays. Come and have a chat with friends.**

**Crib Offerings.** Our Crib will be assembled in front of the altar this week. As usual, your crib offerings will be divided between a local charity and an international charity. This year we are supporting Emmaus (Oxford) and Bethlehem University.

**Christmas Flowers.** There will be a retiring collection after the Masses today to help pay for Christmas flowers for the Church. If you would like to sponsor the flowers any Sunday of the year in memory of someone or for a special occasion please speak to me or send me an email.

**Christmas Offerings.** Traditionally the collection at the Christmas Masses is your personal offering to your priest. There are envelopes at the back of Church to use if you wish. Thank you.

**Christmas Cards.** I hope you like our parish Christmas cards. If you haven't found one on your seat, please take one from the back of the church, and take a few and drop them off to your neighbours. Thank you.

**Times of Mass at Christmas:** The times of our Christmas services are on the parish Christmas cards.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE NO MASS AT 6.00pm ON CHRISTMAS DAY**

**"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!"** The second part of Advent is marked by the "O Antiphons" which highlight a different title each day for the Messiah and invite Him into our hearts: **O Sapientia** (O Wisdom), **O Adonai** (O Lord), **O Radix Jesse** (O Root of Jesse), **O Clavis David** (O Key of David), **O Oriens** (O Rising Sun), **O Rex Gentium** (O King of the Nations), and **O Emmanuel**.

**Prayers, please.** You have probably heard about the events at Babbs Mill Lake in Kingshurst, Birmingham, last Sunday when four children died after they fell through the ice. It was a tragedy for their families and for the whole community, including St. Anthony's Catholic School where one of the children was a pupil. Archbishop Bernard Longley issued a message: *"My heart goes out to all those affected by this tragedy and on behalf of the Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham I offer my deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Kingshurst community at this deeply distressing time."*

**Next weekend,** I shall celebrate the Crib Service (4.00 pm) and the First Mass of Christmas (4.30 pm) on Christmas Eve here at Sacred Heart, and also the Mass at Dawn (9.00 am) on Christmas morning. For the Carols and Readings (11.30 pm) and the Midnight Mass (at midnight!), Fr Frank Turner SJ will be coming to celebrate. **WOULD ANYONE BE ABLE TO OFFER HIM A LIFT FROM CAMPION HALL IN THE CITY CENTRE AT AROUND 10.30 PM AND TAKE HIM BACK AFTER THE MIDNIGHT MASS, PLEASE?**

**Tailpiece:** A mother passed on this Christmas message: *When my daughters were little I always told them Christmas is Jesus' birthday and that He only received 3 things when He was born, so they shouldn't be disappointed at what they may or may not find under the tree. When it came time for Mass on Christmas morning, I asked the children what they thought Jesus would think of Santa and all the hype. Would He ask Santa a question? My youngest daughter replied, "I think Jesus would ask, 'How come I only got three presents and none of them were toys?'"*

**May God bless you and all those whom you love. If you are away for Christmas, travel safely and have a lovely Christmas.**  
**Fr. Harry**