



# Sacred Heart Church, Oxford

## *Third Sunday of Advent*

*17<sup>th</sup> December, 2023*

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

Parish Priest: Fr. Harry Curtis

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

Parish Secretary: Reena Bartrip

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*This Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdioceses policies & procedures at all times. At present, our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Margaret Lawes. She can be contacted at: [sg.sacredheart.oxford@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:sg.sacredheart.oxford@rcaob.org.uk) or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240/ [safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk) if you have any concern.*

Sunday, 17 <sup>th</sup> December <b>Third Sunday of Advent</b>	<i>(5.30 pm Vigil Mass at Our Lady's)</i> <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>	Cecilia Smith (1 <sup>st</sup> Anniversary)  Conoco Eilis Kirwan (Get Well) The People of the Parish
Monday, 18 <sup>th</sup> December	<i>(7.00 am Mass at Our Lady's)</i> <b>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</b>	Special Intention (LP)
Tuesday, 19 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</b> <i>(9.15 am Mass at Our Lady's)</i>	Mary and Patrick Bailey
Wednesday, 20 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>No Public Mass Today</b> <i>(6.00 pm Reception of Anne Mullagh at Our Lady's)</i>	Bridie Barry (Intentions)
Thursday, 21 <sup>st</sup> December <i>Comm. of St. Peter Canisius</i>	<i>(2.00 pm Requiem Mass at Our Lady's)</i> <b>6.00 pm Exposition and Benediction</b> <b>7.00 pm Mass</b>	Anne Mullagh  Sr. Monica (Birthday)
Friday, 22 <sup>nd</sup> December	<b>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</b> <i>(7.00 pm Mass at Our Lady's)</i>	Sean Jennings
Saturday, 23 <sup>rd</sup> December <i>Comm. of St. John of Kanty, Priest</i>	<b>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</b> <b>10.00 am Mass</b> <i>(5.30 pm Vigil Mass at Our Lady's)</i>	Mary O'Mahoney (Get Well) Deceased Lyons & Kennedy Families
Sunday, 24 <sup>th</sup> December <b>Fourth Sunday of Advent</b> <i>Day of Prayer for Expectant Mothers</i>  <b>Christmas Eve</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> <i>(2.00 pm Baptisms at Our Lady's)</i>  <b>6.00 pm Crib Service, followed by the First Mass of Christmas</b> <b>11.30 pm Carols and Readings</b> <b>12.00 Midnight Mass</b>	Rita Da Silva Kathy McGurn Alessandro & Jamaya  Harvey Beesley  Dec'd members of the McCann & Carey families
Confessions: Thursday, 6.00 – 6.45 pm; Saturday, 10.30-11.30 am. <i>(Friday, 6.00 – 6.45 pm at Our Lady's)</i>		

Welcome to Sacred Heart for Mass today, especially if you are visiting for the first time. Today is traditionally known as “Gaudete Sunday”, which means, “Rejoice, Sunday”. It is a slightly different day of Advent, when we remember that the birth of Jesus is news of great joy.

*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.*

## Christmas Stars



*As we prepare for Christmas we probably can't help but think of stars and in particular the Star of Bethlehem that led the Wise Men to the Baby Jesus. This Advent I invite you to decorate our Christmas tree by writing your prayer for Christmas – for yourself, your family and friends, for the poor, for peace, and so on - on one of the paper stars that have been specially made for us, and hanging it on the tree. The stars can help us with our prayers to God. Our tree is not just a decoration: it is a focus for our hope and prayer this Advent and Christmas.*

If you are unable to come to church and wish to watch the Mass at your home, go to

<https://www.mcn.live/Camera/our-lady-help-of-christians>

**Prayers for the Sick.** Please pray for Iris O'Brien, Mary Doyle, Thomas Gaughan, Barry Holland, Rosalind Ingrams, Betty Duff, Inna, Beatrice Upham and Eileen McGarry and all those we know who are sick. If someone is sick and would like to be prayed for, please let me know.

**Please pray for Anne Mullagh, Patrick Finnerty and Sean Jennings who died recently,** and all those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Canon Gerald Breen, Frs. Daniel O'Connor, Michael O'Meara, Edmund Motherway and Brian Doolan, Sr. Veronica Lindsay FMA, and also Robert Craig. May they rest in peace.

### 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.**

**First Holy Communion Lessons.** Parents, if your children are aged 8 or over and you wish them to receive their First Holy Communion next May, please register them with me, using the form in the church porch. Lessons will begin in January.

**All handmade Christmas cards and Scripture quotes** are now available at Elmthorpe Convent at 20p each or £1.00 for any 6. Contact Sr. Margaret.

**Heating in the church and hall.** Be of good cheer! Work is going on to get a new boiler installed as soon as possible. Until then, as I said last week, please wrap up warm when you come to church.

**The new Diocesan Directories** are available from the Piety Stall, £4.50. If you want to know anything about the Birmingham Archdiocese – what time Mass is being said in any church, where priests are, etc. – this is the book you need.



**Commemorative Candles.** For £5 you can buy a candle that will be blessed at Christmas and then will burn in the sanctuary, by the Sacred Heart or Our Lady, for any week of your choice during the coming year. It can be to remember a loved one; for a special intention; or why not give one as a Christmas present?

**Congratulations** to Eugenio and Nelia Francisca Pinto who were married here yesterday. May God bless them now and always.

**There are weddings in the air!** Please pray for Rogers Ssejjombwe and Martha Naiga from this parish who are being married in Kampala, Uganda, next Tuesday. May God bless them.

**Christmas Flowers.** There will be a retiring collection after Masses next Sunday 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.

**Crib Offerings.** As you can see, our Crib has been put up. As usual, your crib offerings will be divided between a local charity and an international charity. This year we are supporting Emmaus (Oxford) and the Friends of the Holy Land.

**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.

**Next weekend** I shall be grateful for the help of Fr. Martin Flatman who will be here to celebrate the Sunday evening Mass (6.00 pm). This will be the first Mass of Christmas. Mass will begin with a Crib Service, so please aim to be here ready to start at 6.00 pm. I shall be here (God willing!) for the other services on Christmas Eve and Christmas morning.

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