



Sacred Heart Church, Oxford

Solemnity of Christ the King

22nd November, 2020

Balfour Road, Blackbird Leys, Oxford, OX4 6BD

(01865) 776903 • sacredheart.oxford@rcaob.org.uk • www.sacredheartoxford.com

Parish Priest: Fr. Harry Curtis

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

Sunday, 22 nd November <i>Solemnity of Christ the King Youth Sunday</i>	9.00 am (<i>Zoom live</i>)	<i>Michael Cullen - RIP Anniversary</i>
Monday, 23 rd November <i>Op. Mem. of St. Clement I, or St. Columban</i>	No Public Mass Today	
Tuesday, 24 th November <i>Memorial of St. Andrew Dung-Lac & Comps.</i>	No Public Mass Today	
Wednesday, 25 th November <i>Op. Mem. of St. Catherine of Alexandria</i>	No Public Mass Today	
Thursday, 26 th November	7.00 pm Mass (<i>Zoom live</i>)	<i>The People of the Parish</i>
Friday, 27 th November	No Public Mass Today	
Saturday, 28 th November	11.00 am Parish Memorial Mass (<i>Zoom live</i>)	<i>Deceased members of the Parish and friends</i>
Sunday, 29 th November <i>First Sunday of Advent</i>	9.00 am (<i>Zoom live</i>)	<i>Melly Balbag - Thanksgiving</i>

Welcome to Sacred Heart Church on the Feast of Christ the Universal King, Youth Sunday.

We cannot be together physically, but I shall broadcast the Sunday 9.00 am Mass and the Thursday 7.00 pm Mass on YouTube. Please join me if you can.

Solemnity of Christ the King. Today is the last Sunday of the Church's year and it brings to a climax the whole of the message of our salvation in Jesus by acknowledging Him as our Lord and King in every aspect of our life.

Please pray for Madrine Naijuma Ssenjombwe, Kathleen Hill, Fr. Thomas Williams who have died recently, and those whose anniversaries occur at this time, including Canons Maurice Woulfe and Augustine Emery, Frs. David Higham, Michael Connolly and Edward Neary, Deacon Pat Linthwaite, and Clare Curtis, Michael Cullen, Simeon Onyeahilan, Mary Murphy, Genista Purcell, John McWilliams. 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.

Let's reclaim Advent! Sometimes, on so-called 'inspirational' courses or in talks, we may hear the phrase, "There are no such things as problems; just opportunities." Well, most of the time I regard it as a load of rubbish (to put it politely). However, I think that our present problem with the lockdown may also be an opportunity to do something that is badly needed. The season before Christmas is called "Advent", from the Latin *adventus*, meaning "coming". It is the period of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord, at Christmas and also the period of preparation for the Second Coming of our Lord at the end of time. To me it is the most beautiful of all the Church's seasons: the prayers, the colours, the hymns and the readings combine to make it a time of joyful waiting and preparation. BUT, too often Advent gets lost. The Christmas carols blare out in the shops before Advent even starts, and Advent passes in a whirl of card-writing, present-planning, buying and wrapping, food-shopping and party-planning. A friend once went shopping on the first Saturday of December and was maddened by the crowds. When he eventually got to the front of the queue at the checkout he was in a fine temper and remarked to the cashier, "Why is it so busy today?" The reply came, "Well, it's Christmas, innit." At which point he snapped and said, "Oh, Christmas, is it? In the Catholic Church we celebrate that at the end of the month." He only got a blank stare in response. It was very unfair to take it out on the cashier, but perhaps this year when we can't go out so much we might be able to take the time to appreciate this wonderful season. You might heighten the feeling of expectancy by completing an Advent calendar (a proper one, not simply one that gives you a piece of chocolate at each window) or by making and lighting candles on an Advent wreath. You can pray each day, perhaps using the Walk With Me booklets or the Day By Day booklets. As things stand, we don't know whether the church will be open for services, but even if it is numbers will be restricted, and anyway some of you may prefer to stay away from crowds for a while longer. I shall try to stream the services on YouTube, and we might be able to arrange a carol service when you can join in wholeheartedly at home, without worrying what others are thinking. Advent starts next Sunday. Let's use this time that we have been presented with as an opportunity to reclaim this most beautiful of seasons and prepare ourselves properly for the celebration of the birth of our Saviour and Lord.

The Sunday obligation to attend Mass has, of course, been lifted for the time being. Nevertheless, you can still join in by watching a live Mass via the wonders of modern technology. Live streaming of the Mass each day is available at: <http://www.stanthonyofpadua.org.uk/>; <https://corpuschristiheadington.co.uk> <https://greyfriarsoxford.weebly.com>. 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."

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.

Each day, at 6.00 in the evening, 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 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.

National Youth Sunday. Today we celebrate the young people in our parish and all the gifts and talents they share with us. The theme for this year's NYS is 'Together'. Normally on NYS, young people would be involved in the Liturgy. Whilst the Parish Community can't be together physically, we are united in prayer. I encourage you to come together as a family if you possibly can today and pray. Follow [@NationalYouthSunday](#) and for more go to: www.nationalyouthsunday.com.

Parish Memorial Mass for those in the parish and our family/friends who have died. Next Saturday, 28th November, at 11.00 am. I hope to livestream the Mass on Zoom. We shall be praying especially for those whose names have been put into the basket under the altar. If you would like anyone's name to be included please let me know.

November Prayers for the Dead. The names of those for whom you wish to pray during November are in the basket under the altar and they will be remembered at Mass during the month. You can still add names if you wish; just post or email them to me.

Advent Reflections. During Advent the Mill Hill Missionaries will help us to pause and reflect in preparation for Christmas. Each Friday at 10.30 am you are invited to join them 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 (*this will be pre-recorded and available to view from Christmas Eve*)

Please do not worry if you cannot make every session, you are welcome to tune in whenever you can. You can join by going to the [Missio YouTube channel: youtube.com/MissioUK](#).

Confessions. At present I can't hear Confessions in church, but if you want to make your Confession we can meet outside the church (weather permitting!). Please call me before you arrive to check that I am available.

Job Opportunity. The Archdiocese of Birmingham is seeking to appoint a new Chief Operating Officer. The COO is responsible for the lay workforce, and the financial and property resources of the Catholic Church in the Diocese. Please ask me if you would like to have further details.

Christmas Crib Collection. It is a custom in some parishes (I don't know if it has been here) 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. I was thinking this year that the international charity could be Friends of the Holy Land – a charity that is based in this Diocese that seeks to help Christians living in the Holy Land. If you would like to suggest a local charity please let me know.

Walk With Me Booklets. As you know, each Advent and Lent there are booklets produced called Walk With Me. They provide prayers and reflections for each day of the season. We don't yet know how or when the church will be open, but when it is the booklets for this Advent will be available (suggested offering, £1). They are very good aids for prayer.

Tailpiece: A young priest was supposed to hold a burial service at a cemetery for a homeless man with no family or friends. Not knowing where the cemetery was, he made several wrong turns and got lost. When he eventually arrived an hour late, the hearse was nowhere in sight, but there was a pile of earth beside a hole, and the workmen were sitting under a tree eating their lunch. He went to the side of the hole and found the vault lid already in place. Feeling guilty, he preached an impassioned and lengthy service, sending the deceased to the Great Beyond in style. As he returned to his car, he overheard one workman say to the other, "Well, I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years and I ain't never seen anything like that."

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