



Sacred Heart Church, Oxford

Fourth Sunday of Advent

22nd December, 2024

Balfour Road, Blackbird Leys, Oxford, OX4 6BD

Parish Priest: Fr. Harry Curtis

(Also serving Our Lady Help of Christians, Cowley)

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 **Onyi Anyanwu**. She can be contacted at: sg.sacredheart.oxford@rcaob.org.uk or alternatively the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240/ safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk if you have any concern.*

Sunday, 22 nd December Fourth Sunday of Advent <i>Day of Prayer for Expectant Mothers</i>	(5.30 pm Saturday Vigil Mass at Our Lady's) 7.45 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer (9.00 am Syro-Malabar Mass at Our Lady's) 9.00 am Mass (11.00 am Mass at Our Lady's) 6.00 pm Mass	The People of the Parish Private Intention Cecilia Michael Danny Lyons (Birthday) Armandina & Coltilda Montalcar
Monday, 23 rd December <i>Op. Comm. of St. John of Kanty</i>	8.00 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer (9.15 am Mass at Our Lady's)	Michael Iagoe
Tuesday, 24 th December Christmas Eve	8.00 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer 5.00 pm Crib Service followed by the First Mass of Christmas (5.00 pm Mass of Christmas at Our Lady's) (7.30 pm Syro-Malabar Mass at Our Lady's) 11.30 pm Carols and Readings 12.00 Midnight Mass (12.00 Midnight Mass at Our Lady's)	Dec'd McCann and Carey Families Harvey Beesley Private Intention Felix Saulong Jr. Private Intention
Wednesday, 25 th December CHRISTMAS DAY: SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD	7.45 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer (8.45 am Syro-Malabar Mass at Our Lady's) 9.00 am Mass (11.00 am Mass at Our Lady's)	Private Intention John and Michael Cullen The People of the Parish
Thursday, 26 th December <i>Feast of St. Stephen, the first Martyr</i>	8.00 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer 10.00 am Mass (12.00 noon Mass at Our Lady's)	Eduardo Soares Bridie Barry (Intentions)
Friday, 27 th December <i>Feast of St. John, Apostle</i>	8.00 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer (10.00 am Mass at Our Lady's)	Kelly McGurn
Saturday, 28 th December <i>Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs</i>	8.00 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer 10.00 am Mass (5.30 pm Vigil Mass for Sunday at Our Lady's)	Nuala McNally (Get Well) Anthony and Frances Cooney
Sunday, 29 th December Feast of the Holy Family	7.45 am Office of Readings & Morning Prayer (9.00 am Syro-Malabar Mass at Our Lady's) 9.00 am Mass (11.00 am Mass at Our Lady's) 6.00 pm Mass	Private Intention Jean Bradley The People of the Parish Filomena Martins & Vasco Martins

Welcome to Sacred Heart today, especially if you are visiting for the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Happy Christmas, everyone!

Upcoming Feasts. Next Sunday: Feast of the Holy Family; Wednesday, 1st January: Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God; Sunday, 5th January: the Epiphany; Sunday, 12th January: Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

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.*

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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.*



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.

Prayers for the Sick. Please pray for Keith Dolton, Barry Holland, Rosalind Ingrams, Betty Duff, Claudino Serra Vaz, Inna, Beatrice Upham, Eileen McGarry, Mely Balbag, Keelin Trahearn, Cheryl Jones, Josie Griffiths, Mary Cross, Nuala McNally, Rosa Fernandes, Maggie Durkin, Tony Davies and all those we know who are sick.

Please pray for Winifred Rodney, Desmond Hopwood, Billy Gardner, Joseph William Hutchinson who died recently, and for those whose anniversaries occur around this time: Bishop Francis Thomas, Mgr. Patrick O'Mahoney, Mgr. Canon William Flint, Mgr. Canon Thomas Gavin, Canon Gerald Patrick Breen, Frs. Brian Doolan, Patrick Wall, Anthony Ireland, Thomas N. Meagher, Denis Murphy, Colum McCabe, James (Seamus) McNerney, David O'Callaghan and Christopher Greaney, and also James Kenny, Shean Scanlon, Bridie Barnes, Cherry Judith Smith and Paul Foster. May they rest in peace.

	Counting rota	Readers' Rota (9.00 Mass)	Eucharistic Ministers' Rota		Flowers rota
This week	Kylla & Lilian	Dom & Blossom	Pat McGroarty	John Thomas	N/A
Next Sunday	Rachel and Phil		Rolly Esteban	Lilian Mwawa	Jocelyn

Remember: refreshments are available in the hall after the 9.00 am Mass on Sundays.

Crib Offerings. Some people, when they stop to say a prayer at the Crib, like to make a little offering of money (you don't have to do it). We shall be donating any crib offerings this year to Friends of the Holy Land to help the poorest Christian families there with education, employment, health and housing.

Christmas Cards. If you missed collecting a card last week, please take one from the porch for yourself and/or for your neighbours.

Christmas Masses. I shall be here on Christmas Eve to celebrate the Crib Service (5.00 pm) followed by the First Mass of Christmas. Br. Sheline from St. Edmund's will be here for the Carols and Readings (11.30 pm) and the Midnight Mass (at midnight!). I shall be back (God willing) for Mass at Dawn on Christmas Day at 9.00 am.

Christmas Offerings. Traditionally the collection at the Christmas Masses is your personal offering to your priest. There are envelopes available in the porch if you wish to use them. Thank you.

Congratulations and Prayers for Robin and Melissa Parris who were married at Our Lady's last Friday.

First Holy Communion Lessons. Parents, if your children are aged 8 or over and you wish them to receive their First Holy Communion next June, please register them with me, using the form at the back of church. Preparation lessons will start in early February. The First Holy Communion Mass will take place on Saturday, 15th June, at 11.00 am. here at Sacred Heart.

FLAME 2025.

Fan The Flame Of Hope, Saturday, 15th March

Flame is a Catholic Congress (for those 14 and over) held in London at the Wembley Arena. The event will consist of a concert with inspiring speakers, incredible live music, prayer and adoration. Catholics from all over the country head to Flame every year. Flame Passes (exclusive of travel) - £31pp. Let me know if you are interested. There are limited spaces so do it quickly.

Year Of Jubilee: Pope Francis has declared that Tuesday, 24th December 2024 to the Feast of Epiphany 2026 will be a Year of Jubilee. The theme is 'Pilgrims of Hope'. It is a time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

On New Year's Eve I shall celebrate Mass here at Sacred Heart at 6.00 pm, giving thanks to God for His blessings over the last year and for blessings on the coming year. At 11.15 pm I shall do the same at Our Lady's, followed by a party there to "see in the New Year". You are all welcome to join me for either or both occasions.

Tailpiece: A turkey farmer always donated a bird for the parish's Christmas dinner but there were never enough turkey legs for everyone who wanted one. Then one year, the farmer told the parish priest that he had finally succeeded in breeding a bird with six legs. "Wow!" the priest exclaimed. "Let me see it!" "That's the problem," the farmer said. "I can't catch the blessed thing!"

*I wish you all a very happy and holy Christmas.
Thank you for your friendship and help this year,
and may God bless you and all those you love.*
Fr. Harry