

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

Sunday 24 December 2017: 4th Sunday of Advent (Year B)

6.30pm (Saturday) João Batista Arcanjo de Sousa
 9.00am James Begley RIP
 11.00am Parishioners

6.30pm Vigil Christmas Mass

Monday 25 December **Christmas Day,
 the Nativity of Our Lord**
 12.00 midnight For those named on Christmas
 Star trees

9.00am Parishioners
 11.00am Jonney Kennedy

Tuesday 26 December **St Stephen, Martyr** Alan Inseal RIP
 10.00am

Wednesday 27 December **St John, Apostle**
 10.00am Rose O'Driscall RIP

Thursday 28 December **Holy Innocents**
 10.00am Sr Dorothy Watson, SHCT, RIP

Friday 29 December **Thomas Becket**
 10.00am Mary Higgins & Linda Maxwell

Saturday 30 December
 10.00am Kieran Hughes

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturday 11.30am-12 noon; 5.30-6.25pm

Please pray for those members of our community who are sick.

Pray, too, for those whose anniversaries occur about this time, including:

Thomas Patrick O'Boyle, Anthony Grealis, Thomas Curry, James Begley, Ellen Ruane, Phyllis Wile, Margaret O'Donnell, Edgar Woodward, Angela Murphy, Stanislaus Polubiec, Joanna Curran, Frances Greenwood & Peter Gough.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.

COLLECTIONS:

No Second Collection today

Last week's collection:

Offertory	£509.53	+ Gift-aided	£82.00
Christmas Flowers for church	£173.07	+ Gift-aided	N/A

No Second Collection next week

*SS Edmund and Frideswide
 Roman Catholic Church*

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God comes to be with us and rejoice in us!

This Christmas, God proclaims his message not just to ancient Israel through the prophet Isaiah but to all the ends of the earth.

At Christmas we reflect on our blessings but we are also disturbed by our losses. God enters these days with joy to keep us from brooding over sorrow.

In the past year, have you ever felt that God abandoned you?

If so, then the prophet Isaiah has a message for you: "You shall be called 'My delight' and your land 'Espoused'." This message goes out to the whole world, including you. You are a city that is not forsaken. You are called 'Frequented', God's delight.

God comes to be with you and to rejoice in you—in you!



1st Reading: Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11

Response: **I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.**

2nd Reading: Romans 16:25-27

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Entrance Antiphon: Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I am the handmaid of the Lord: let what you have said be done to me. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon: Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.

Sunday 24 December 2017: 4th Sunday of Advent (Year B)

Today is the 4th Sunday of Advent (Year B).

Lighting the last candle on the Advent wreath sets the full symbol ablaze with light, alerting us to the imminent celebration of the coming of Christ. For many weeks the secular culture has been celebrating 'the holidays' while we have been observing Advent. We have heard the prophecies that proclaim the coming of Jesus—not just at Bethlehem but as judge at the end of time. Today for the first time our Advent scripture readings tell the events that led to the birth of Christ.

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Please note: at today's 6.30pm Christmas Vigil Mass, as well as at Midnight Mass and the 9am and 11am Masses tomorrow (Christmas Day), the collection will be the traditional Christmas Offering to the Friars.

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Tomorrow, Monday 25 December, we celebrate the Birth of Our Lord.

The sense of wonder doesn't have to end when we grow up. God wants to give gifts to all of us. He wants to reveal his promise to each one of us. He wants to fulfil our longings and give us the deep joy St John described when he wrote, 'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory.' (John 1:14)

This promise is for us. We have the opportunity to meet Jesus, to see his glory, and to experience him, know his love, feel his presence. We can embrace him in the living bread of the Eucharist and in our prayer life. During the Christmas season, may we accept his invitation to 'come and see' and experience his loving presence—every day.

All the Friars wish you and your family and friends God's Blessings of Peace this Christmas and for the New Year.

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The rest of this week:

Tuesday 26 December: St Stephen, Martyr. Feast. Mass at 10am.

The joy of Christmas Day gives way to the shock of martyrdom. Stephen, known as the protomartyr, the 'first witness', reminds us of the price paid by those who put their faith in the new-born King. In the Gospel, Jesus predicts that his followers will suffer.

During the celebration of this Mass, the new altar servers will dedicate themselves to serving at the altar and will receive their St Stephen's Guild medal.

Please note: From today through the rest of this week, Mass is at 10am in the church.

Wednesday 27 December: St John, Apostle & Evangelist

On the Feast of St John we begin the semi-continuous reading of the first letter that bears his name. The opening words remind us of the beginning of the Fourth Gospel, also attributed to John. 'The disciple whom Jesus loved' experiences a defining

moment in today's Gospel, becoming a witness to the Resurrection. It feels odd to hear the story of Easter so soon after Christmas, but there is no more fitting memory to summon in honour of the beloved disciple. John's pure life kept him very close to Jesus and Mary. In later years, under the Emperor Domitian, John was exiled to the island of Patmos.

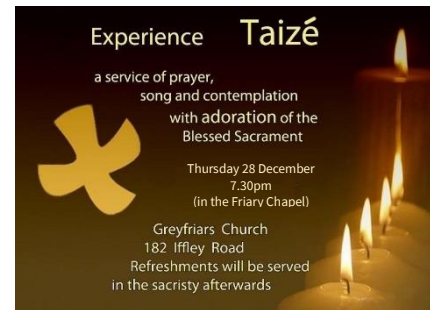
Please note: Mass today at 10am in the church.

Thursday 28 December: Feast of the Holy Innocents

The Church celebrates the memory of the small children of the neighbourhood of Bethlehem. They were put to death by Herod, who was seeking to kill Jesus. These innocent victims bear witness to Christ to a world which would not receive him.

Please note: Mass today at 10am in the church.

Also on Thursday: Taizé Prayer



On the last Thursday of each month you are invited to attend a Taizé prayer service at 7.30pm in the Friary Chapel. Taizé-style worship centres on singing, prayer, and readings from Scripture. Brother Alois from Taizé wrote: 'The exchange with God becomes real for us in prayer; by his Holy Spirit God comes to dwell with us. By his Word and by the Sacraments, Christ gives himself to us. In

return, we can surrender everything to him.'

Friday 29 December: St Thomas Becket, Bishop & Martyr. Feast.

St Thomas (1118-1170) was born in London. After studying in Paris, he first became Chancellor to the King and then in 1162 was chosen to be Archbishop of Canterbury. He challenged the King on Church/state issues, which resulted in his murder, by the King's order, in his own cathedral.

Please note: Mass at 10am in the church.

Also on Friday: Rosary at 7pm

Every Friday at 7pm, the Holy Rosary is recited in the church. All are welcome.

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Looking ahead:

Next Sunday, 31 December, we celebrate the Holy Family.

This feast comes at a time when our thoughts turn to the creation of the Holy Family at the birth of Jesus, as well as the gathering of our families and loved ones at this season of the year. Regardless of the particular feast, this is a Christmas day within the Christmas octave, and everything of this Sunday can shout the good news that Jesus Christ is born.