

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

Sunday 31 December 2017: The Holy Family

6.30pm (Saturday) Tom Doherty RIP
 9.00am Parishioners
 11.00am Ladislav Nagy, Hilda Nagyova
 5.30pm James Pender RIP

Monday 1 January *Mary, Mother of God*
 10.00am *Our Lady of Guadalupe;*
 Friars & benefactors

Tuesday 2 January *Sts Basil the Great &*
 7.30am *Gregory Nazianzen* St Anthony

Wednesday 3 January *The Holy Name of Jesus*
 7.30am Roger Turner RIP

Thursday 4 January
 7.30am Margaret Ryan

Friday 5 January
 7.30am Maureen & Michael Stanley
 7.30pm *In honour of the Sacred Heart*

Saturday 6 January
 8.00am Austin family

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:

Christina Hogan, Julia Riordan, Patrick Brennan, Jones, Teresia James, Kyan Elliott, Joanne Rainer, Catherine Walsh, Elizabeth Warwick, John McGarron, William Veloz, Philip McArdle & Emma Pearson.

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

COLLECTIONS:

No Second Collection today

Last week's collection:

Offertory £608.57 + *Gift-aided* £221.00

Second Collection next week: Diocesan Schools Fund

SS Edmund and Frideswide Roman Catholic Church

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Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

No matter whose child you are, you are a blessing. The miracle of your existence is a gift from God.

On this Sunday, as we celebrate Christmastide with family and friends, we reflect on the meaning of family relationships, we look to the Holy Family as an example for our lives, and we thank God for the family we have received.

Our first reading today is about Abraham's family. Abraham was old. He complained that his inheritance would pass to his steward because he had no son. God told Abraham he was wrong—there would be a son. So even in his old age, Abraham put his trust in God's promise. Only then did Sarah conceive Abraham's child. The birth of Isaac was a miracle. The birth of every child is a miracle. Your birth was a miracle, too.

Do you know the circumstances of your birth? Were your parents hoping for you? Were you a surprise? Even if you surprised them, you did not surprise God, who promised you life in his eternal plan of salvation. You are part of God's holy family.



1st Reading: Genesis 15:1-6,21:1-3

Response: **O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!**

2nd Reading: Colossians 3:12-21

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

Entrance Antiphon: The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the Infant lying in a manger.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon: Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

Sunday 31 December 2017: The Holy Family

Today is the Feast of the Holy Family.

This week:

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

‘The Lord bless you and keep you.’ (Numbers 6:22-27)

We begin the New Year with hope. It is filled with possibility. Our new calendars and diaries look empty, but they will soon be filled with activity and events. We have plans for some events but others will surprise us. We realize this year will bring its measure of sorrow, but we trust it to bring its measure of joy, too. Let this day and this year be a blessing!

On New Year’s Day we hear in the first reading at Mass the words of blessing spoken by God through Moses. ‘The Lord bless you and keep you.’ They are words of protection. ‘The Lord be gracious to you.’ They are words of favour. ‘The Lord give you peace.’ They are words that wish the finest blessing—the gift of peace.

The year with all its promise gives us the opportunity of blessing. Perhaps you have withheld your blessing from someone you know. Perhaps you especially need God’s gift of peace. Perhaps you fear the absence of God’s protection. Let this blessing calm your heart. Let it inspire you to breathe God’s gift to all you meet this day and in the New Year. Let the blessing of God, first spoken through Moses and echoing throughout the ages, enter your home and warm your heart.

All the Friars wish you and your family a Happy New Year.

God Bless you all!

Monday 1 January: Mary, Mother of God. Solemnity. Mass at 10am.

The First of January has many observances. We mark the conclusion to the octave of the week-long celebration of the Feast of Christmas; it is New Year’s Day; we mark the Day of Prayer for World Peace; we celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. In 431 the Council of Ephesus declared the Virgin Mary to be the *Theotokos*, meaning ‘god-bearer’. The church has always venerated Mary as the Mother of God; it is most fitting that this particular liturgy is celebrated on the octave day of Christmas, during a season that revels in the coming of the Word, made flesh in the Virgin’s womb.

Tuesday 2 January: Sts Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Doctors of the Church

Sts Basil and Gregory, both great fourth-century theologians of the Eastern tradition, were also the best of friends from their schooldays in Athens. Basil’s monastic rule serves as the ideal for monastic life in the East. Both were bishops of the church. Basil died on 1 January 379, Gregory on 25 January 390.

From today, Tuesday, we revert to the normal weekday Mass times.

Wednesday 3 January: The Holy Name of Jesus

The invocation of the Holy Name has been a continuous practice since the earliest

days of the church. Its veneration in liturgical celebrations dates from the fourteenth century. The spread of the devotion in Italy and then throughout Europe was due to the efforts of St Bernardine of Siena and his disciples, and the liturgical feast was sanctioned in the sixteenth century. In 1530 Pope Clement VII granted to the Friars Minor permission to celebrate an Office of the Holy Name.

Friday 5 January: Rosary followed by First Friday Mass

Every Friday at 7pm, the Holy Rosary is recited in the church. All are welcome. Afterwards, at 7.30pm, we celebrate the First Friday Mass in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, followed by prayers and anointing for healing.

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Looking ahead:

Next Sunday, 7 January, we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord.

Epiphany means ‘manifestation’ or the appearance of Jesus. The significance of this day is not just the arrival of the Magi, but the coming of Gentiles to adore the newborn King of the Jews. The event recognizes Jesus’ lordship over the entire world.

First Holy Communion Classes

The First Holy Communion classes start on Sunday 14 January at 10am in the Friary chapel. The children meet in the church and will be taken to the chapel. For part of the first meeting a parent should be present. Classes are followed by the 11am Mass.

Oxford Winter Night Shelter (OWNS)

Seven local churches will be taking turns to provide overnight accommodation for homeless people each night of the week during January, February and March. This enterprise is called ‘Oxford Winter Night Shelter’ or OWNS.

One of the seven churches is St Mary and St John’s in the Cowley Road, who will be providing shelter on one night in each week in the parish hall of St Albans, Charles Street. The shelters will be supported by volunteers working in three shifts over the night. Two members of our parish’s Justice and Peace group have volunteered.

We have agreed to partner St Mary and St John’s in this work with prayerful support, and so we will be commending the work and our volunteers to Our Lord in prayer through bidding prayers and at Holy Hour during these months. The organisers of OWNS have also asked for volunteer support to do shopping for the centres and to do some laundry. If you would like to volunteer to do this please contact Beth Edwards at bethsolde@gmail.com (mobile: 07717 224036).

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Thank You!

I would like to thank all those who worked so hard to contribute to our Christmas celebrations: the organist and the choir; the altar servers; the ladies who decorated the church and all who helped enhance our celebrations. Thank you, and God bless.