

St Joseph's, Bedford & Our Lady's, Kempston

Parish Priest: Canon Seamus Keenan

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**FOURTH SUNDAY
OF ADVENT**
20th December 2020



CHRISTMAS

The yearly feast of Christmas invites us to stop and gaze with wonder at this great mystery of God as a little baby in the arms of Mary his mother. It should take our breath away! *“Man was full of joy and gladness; God was weeping, weak and lone. Ne’er before throughout the ages had so strange a thing been known.”* This is the wonder and joy of our faith. This faith tells us that God came into our world to be close to us and that he understands, that he is the light and the hope we need in our lives which remain lost and without meaning devoid of his presence. All fear and sadness give way to this mystery so bright.

PENITENTIAL SERVICE

There will be a Penitential Service with individual Confessions on Monday 21st December at 7.00pm in St Joseph's. Confessions in Our Lady's available after the vigil Mass today (Sat).

CHRISTMAS DRAW

The draw will take place after the 6.30pm Mass today.

Mass Times – St Joseph's, Bedford

Sunday 8.15am John King, RIP
9.30am People of the Parish
11.00am Special Intention
6.30pm James Foy, RIP

Monday *O Rising Sun*

10.45am Catherine Lloyd, RIP

Tuesday *O King*

10.45am Sandy Grove, RIP

Wednesday *O Emmanuel*

10.45am Michael Keenan, RIP

Thursday *Christmas Eve*

10.45am Heidi Billingham

8.00pm Vigil Mass: Emma Moloney, RIP

12.00am Midnight Mass: People of the Parish

Friday *Christmas Day*

8.15am Rosalind Richardson, RIP

9.30am Fr Michael Horrax, RIP

11.00am Louise Baldrey

Saturday *St Stephen*

10.45am Joan White, RIP

Mass Times – Our Lady's, Kempston

Saturday 6.00pm Kathleen Keenan, RIP

Christmas Eve 6.00pm Alick & Rita Hellmund, RIP

Christmas Day 9.30am David Huxley, RIP

**Confessions: Saturday 11.30am – 12.30pm (Exposition)
St Joseph's:**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

I will sing forever of your love, O Lord.

ROSARY: Daily at 10.20am

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: Thursday 11.30am–5.00pm

CLEANING: Kahari, Ngoro

FLOWERS: All flower arrangers

NEXT SUNDAY: Feast of the Holy Family

Readers & Ministers: Rota Week 2

Children's Liturgy: None for the present

CONTACT TRACING

You are encouraged to volunteer your contact details (name and phone number or email address) as you enter the church on the sheet provided at the entrance. **Alternatively**, if you have downloaded the NHS COVID-19 app you can scan the QR Code which you will find on the blue poster as you enter St Joseph's or the noticeboard and on the noticeboard in Our Lady's.

PLEASE NOTE

There will be no Children's Christmas Mass this year. Please see the front page of this newsletter for the Mass times for Christmas.

CRIB OFFERING

Money placed in the Crib Offering box this year is in aid of poor families in the Holy Land affected by the corona virus.

FLOWER COLLECTION

There is a retiring collection in St Joseph's today to purchase flowers for the Christmas season.

CHRISTMAS POSTERS

The Knights of St Columba have produced Christmas posters available at the back of the church to display in your windows.

MEDJUGORJE PILGRIMAGE

There will be a parish pilgrimage to Medjugorje from 18th to 25th May 2021. Anyone interested in going, please contact, as soon as possible, Mary Frost on 304014 or 07708 264054.

APPEAL

The SVP is appealing for financial contributions to enable the purchasing of under garments for users of the Prebend Day Centre and other homeless people in Bedford. Please do not donate clothing. Donations can be made online to NatWest, Account no: 46087796. Sort code: 60 60 04. Account name: E140101 SVP St Joseph and the Holy Child, Bedford. Cash or cheque donation can be handed into the presbytery. Thank you.

Be not afraid

"The angel said to the shepherds: "Do not be afraid!" And I also repeat to all: do not be afraid!

Our Father is patient, he loves us, he gives us Jesus to guide us on our way which leads to the promised land. Jesus is the light who brightens the darkness. He is our peace.'

Pope Francis

REFLECTION Luke 1:26-38

'You have heard that you shall conceive and bear a Son; you have heard that you shall conceive, not by man, but of the Holy Spirit. The angel is waiting for your answer: it is time for him to return to God who sent him. We too are waiting, O Lady, for the word of pity... Behold, to you the price of our salvation is offered. If you consent, straightway shall we be freed. In the eternal Word of God were we all made, and lo! we die; by one little word of yours in answer shall we all be made alive. Adam asks this of you, O loving Virgin, poor Adam exiled as he is from paradise with all his poor wretched children. Abraham begs this of you, and David; who themselves are dwelling in the valley of the shadow of death; this the world is waiting for, kneeling at your feet. And rightly so, for on your lips is hanging the consolation of the wretched, the redemption of the captive, the speedy deliverance of all who otherwise are lost; in a word, the salvation of all Adam's children, of all your race. Answer, O Virgin, answer the angel speedily; rather through the angel, answer your Lord. Speak the word, and receive the Word; offer what is yours and conceive what is of God; give what is temporal and embrace what is eternal. Why delay? Why tremble? Believe, speak, receive! Let your humility put on boldness and your modesty be clothed with trust. In this one thing alone, O prudent Virgin, fear not presumption; for although modesty that is silent is pleasing, more needful now is the loving-kindness of your word. Open, O Blessed Virgin, your heart to faith; open your lips to speak; open your bosom to your Maker. Behold! the Desired of all nations is outside, knocking at your door. Oh! If by your delay he should pass by, and again in sorrow you should have to begin to seek for him whom your soul loves! Arise, then, run and open. Arise by faith, run by the devotion of your heart, open by your word. "And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me according to your word."

St Bernard of Clairvaux

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

Offertory

St Joseph's £1165.50

Our Lady's £235.00

Thank you.