

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

Parish Priest: Canon Seamus Keenan. Assistant Priest: Fr Galeji Mulupuri, MC

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FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

3rd December 2023



FIRST CONFESSIONS

A reminder to the parents of the children preparing for this sacrament that they will be celebrating their First Confession this Friday at 6.00pm in St Joseph's church. Please arrive in good time.

BIRTHDAY PARTY

Those who wish to attend my 70th birthday party on Friday 15th December at 7.30pm in Christ the King Parish Hall, Harrowden Road, Bedford, are asked to sign the list at the back of the church to give me an idea of how many to cater for. Thanks.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The feast of the Immaculate Conception is this Friday and we are invited to Northampton Cathedral for Mass at 7.00pm with refreshments afterwards in the Cathedral Centre. Our Lady is the Principal Patroness of our diocese.

Mass Times – St Joseph's, Bedford

Sunday	8.15am	K.M. Paulose & Rosakutty, RIP
	9.30am	Ben Sorae, RIP
	11.00am	Larry Conroy, RIP
	6.30pm	Maria Pavlova, RIP

Monday **Feria**

10.45am Veronica Nsoyuni, RIP

Tuesday **Feria**

10.45am Jovita Nsoyuni, RIP

Wednesday **St Nicholas**

10.45am Emanuel Bernardo de Sousa, RIP

Thursday **St Ambrose**

10.45am Junior Chanpda

Friday **Immaculate Conception of Our Lady**

10.45am Rosario da Conceicao, RIP

Saturday **St Juan Diego**

10.45am Mila Conceicao, RIP

Mass Times – Our Lady's, Kempston

Saturday 6.00pm Thomas McCarthy, RIP

Confessions – St Joseph's:

Saturday 11.30am – 12.30pm (Exposition)

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'

ROSARY: Daily at 10.20am

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: Thursday 11.30am – 7.00pm

CLEANING: T Ndoro, S Masih

FLOWERS: No flowers

NEXT SUNDAY: Second Sunday of Advent

Readers: Rota Week 4

Children's Liturgy: Rebecca Lovesey & Mila

CONFIRMATION 2024

Those wishing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation next year, i.e. Year 9 of school or older, are asked to collect an enrolment form from the sacristy. Preparation classes will start in January 2024. Any adults seeking Confirmation will be seen separately.

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE MASS

The feast day Mass is on Tuesday 12th December in St Joseph's church at 7.30pm with refreshments afterwards in the Italian Church Hall, Woburn Road. The principal celebrant will be Canon Michael Harrison, our Vicar General. All welcome to this special celebration.

FLOWER COLLECTION

There is a second collection today at all Masses in St Joseph's for flowers and decorations for the church at Christmas. Thank you.

MOTHERS' PRAYERS

Mothers' Prayers meet this Monday after the 10.45am Mass in the Reconciliation Chapel. All mothers welcome to join in prayer for their children.

PADRE PIO PRAYER GROUP

The prayer group meets this Monday at 2.30pm in Our Lady's church, Kempston. All welcome.

ONLINE ADVENT RETREAT

Mondays during Advent 7.30pm-8.30pm. The online Advent retreat this year is: "Let the Wilderness Bloom!" Join Canon John Udris and Avril Baigent as we draw on the life of St John the Baptist to explore themes of silence, solitude, dryness and vulnerability, moving towards resilience, promise and hope. Join us live on Monday evenings or access the recording at a more convenient time. To register go to: www.pastoralministryoffice.org/bloom.

BEDFORD FOODBANK

The Bedford Foodbank is looking for the following items: tinned rice pudding, long-life sponge pudding, long-life fruit juice, jars of jam, tinned fruit, tinned sweetcorn, teabags packs of 40/80, bottles of squash, cereal (child friendly), tinned meat. These can be placed in the Foodbank containers at the back of both our churches. Thank you for your continued giving.

CHRISTMAS DRAW TICKETS

These are now available for sale after each Mass at £2.50 a book. Prizes for the draw gratefully received, please. Money raised in aid of our new parish project.

WINTER NIGHT SHELTER

The Kings Arms Project is opening a Winter Night Shelter from December to February and is looking for volunteers to help with this. If interested or you wish to know more, please email: kirstie.cook@kingsarmsproject.org.

GUADALUPE VOLUNTEERS

The Guardians of the Relic Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe are looking for volunteers to help them with their work. There is a list printed as to what is needed on the parish noticeboard and by the Shrine in St Joseph's church. If interested, please contact Joan Kedward: jkguadalupebedford@outlook.com.

MASS FOR THE DISABLED

There will be a Mass for people with disabilities and their families on Sunday 10th December at 3.00pm in the Sacred Heart Church, Stopsley, Luton, LU2 9AY (about 15 mins from Junction 10 of the M1). Access to the church is step-free and there is ample parking. The Mass will be followed by refreshments. All are welcome to this joyful celebration.

REFLECTION

'The coming of our God, our thoughts must now employ.' This is the first line of an Advent hymn, the season of longing expectation. We look forward to celebrating the coming of Christ at Christmas and we become increasingly busy in preparation. This busyness must not be to the neglect of our spiritual preparation, otherwise its meaning is lost and Christmas becomes just another fraught day in the kitchen preceded by frenzied shopping! Advent invites us to calm down and reflect on the historical and spiritual significance of the birth of the Son of God into our human history. God became man! This is the wonder of our religion, this mystery so bright. So take time to ponder with Mary how God has placed himself into our hands as a vulnerable child, and be amazed! This same helpless child will come again one day, not in weakness, but in power and great glory. Until that day, we can receive him still, in the vulnerability and helplessness of the poor, the homeless, the unborn, the marginalised, the sick, and infirm. He comes to us, too, in the sacraments, especially the Mass, in his word, and we encounter him each time we pray. Christ is still with us in our world in all these different ways, so welcome him, make a home for him. Hold him close to your heart as Mary his mother did, and hear the beating of his heart for you. Then, in the words of that same hymn, *'In glory from his throne again will Christ descend, and summon all that are his own to joys that never end.'*

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

Offertory

St Joseph's £1360.91

Our Lady's £268.80

Thank you