

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

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## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

24<sup>th</sup> December 2023



### THANK YOU

I have been overwhelmed by the many birthday greetings and gifts I received, especially the secret collection! I am most grateful for your affection and generosity and prayerful support as I ease into my 70s. Thanks especially to all those who prepared the party and all who attended the celebration. It was an evening to remember! Thank you.

### CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a feast of hope and joy and indeed wonder. God came among us as a little child, to be close to us, to be one of us. What a gracious God! With Mary his mother we ponder this wondrous mystery of God's love. At the same time, please remember in prayer the land of Our Lord's birth and the land of Ukraine where the Christmas spirit cannot be properly celebrated. Pray for these peoples and for the gift of peace which the Christ-child came to give to our broken world.

### Mass Times – St Joseph's, Bedford

Sunday	8.15am	People of the Parish
	9.30am	Emily Annetts
	11.00am	John Curley, RIP
Christmas Eve	6.30pm	<b>Children's Mass:</b> Julie Gillies, RIP
	12.00am	<b>Midnight Mass</b> People of the Parish
Monday	<b>Christmas Day</b>	
	8.15am	Denis Gilbert, RIP
	9.30am	Kathleen Elliott, RIP
	11.00am	Ethan Foley
Tuesday	<b>St Stephen</b>	
	10.45am	Bob & Joe Zak; Katy Szczurko, RIP
Wednesday	<b>St John, Apostle</b>	
	10.45am	Maria & Teodor Bazylewicz, RIP
Thursday	<b>The Holy Innocents</b>	
	10.45am	In Thanksgiving: Chanpda Family
Friday	<b>St Thomas Becket</b>	
	10.45am	David Hanley, RIP
Saturday	<b>Christmas Octave</b>	
	10.45am	Bob & Joe Zak; Katy Szczurko, RIP

### Mass Times – Our Lady's, Kempston

Saturday	6.00pm	Di Gennaro Family
Christmas Eve	6.30pm	Children's Mass: Mary Armitage
Christmas Day	9.30am	Diane Johnson, RIP

### Confessions – St Joseph's:

**Saturday 11.30am – 12.30pm (Exposition)**

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

**I will sing forever of your love, O Lord.**

**ROSARY:** Daily at 10.20am

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:** Thursday 11.30am – 7.00pm

**CLEANING:** T Ndoro, S Masih

**FLOWERS:** Mrs Redmond

**NEXT SUNDAY: The Holy Family**

**Readers & Ministers:** Rota Week 3

**Children's Liturgy:** None until January

### CRIB OFFERING

Money placed in the Crib offering box is in aid of our parish project, Headway Bedford.

### ROSARY FOR THE SANCTITY OF LIFE

The Rosary for the Sanctity of Life will be recited after the 10.45am Mass on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December.

## **CHRISTMAS DRAW**

The list of prize winners is available to see in the church porch. Winners can collect prizes from the presbytery. We made £1185.30 from the draw. Thanks to all who bought tickets and who donated prizes. A most generous response.

## **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.

## **DIOCESAN CALENDARS**

The diocese has produced a calendar for 2024 featuring various priests of the diocese to promote vocations to the priesthood and help pay for their training. I'm Mr October! They sell at £5 from the back of the church. Money can be placed in the wall-box marked Calendars.

## **QUIZ NIGHT**

A Quiz Night will be held in Christ the King Church Hall on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January at 7.30pm. Tickets are £10 which includes Fish & Chips. There will be a limited cash-only bar or bring your own drink. For tickets, please contact Rachel Kirkham on 314093.

## **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 packets 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.

## **REQUIESCANT IN PACE**

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Bevan Lewis, Thomas Tighe and Fernando Di Gennaro. May they rest in the peace of the Lord.

## **RED MISSION BOXES**

Thanks to all who handed in their red mission box which totalled £1183.67. New red boxes can be collected from the sacristy. Thank you.

## **REFLECTION BY BISHOP DAVID OAKLEY**

On this Christmas Eve our season of Advent is nearly completed, now we are going to think about the theme of love. That single English word has so many meanings and in the Greek language there are many words for love. As always with our themes during this Advent we can only begin to comprehend the meaning of love when we think about God's love for us. That is agape love; it is the complete and perfect love that is self-giving. "Greater love has no one", Jesus tells, "than that they would lay down their lives for their friends." And we are invited into that circle of the Blessed Trinity's love for all people. I love the words that we will hear at the beginning of the reading in tonight's Midnight Mass: *'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light and those who live in the land of deep shadow a light has shone.'* Love shines a light upon our world in its darkness and shadow. Love brings to birth the mystery of God's great sacrifice for us. God's word became flesh and dwelt amongst us and we saw that light in Jesus. We are invited to undertake our own personal journey of love into the heart of Christ. Our love is not to be something which is limited just to a few, those we get along with, those we feel obliged to care for, and our love for ourselves. These are all important, but above all, there should be in our hearts that deep love for what God has done for me, for us and for our world. There's no doubt about it that our world is crying out parched for love, and in these days of Advent we have been preparing for the love of Bethlehem. We make our own pilgrimage in love to the King of Love, and my prayer for you and your families is that you will experience a renewed love of what God has done for us and a renewed love for each other. Life's too short. Let's put aside all those arguments and disagreements and resentments that we have. Let's do what we can to build a world that is built upon love.

Bishop David Oakley

*Canon Seamus & Fr Galeji wish you  
God's blessing for a holy and  
peaceful Christmas.*

### **LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS**

Offertory

St Joseph's £1073.50

Our Lady's £110.85

Thank you