

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

Parish Priest: Canon Seamus Keenan. Assistant Priest: Fr Ditto Devassy

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

21st December 2025



CHRISTMAS

Christmas is the feast of hope and joy and wonder. God came among us as a little child, to be close to us, to be one with us. What a gracious God! With Mary his mother and St Joseph, we ponder this wondrous mystery of God's love and give thanks.

PENITENTIAL SERVICE

There will be a Penitential Service with individual Confessions this Tuesday at 7.00pm in St Joseph's.

CONFIRMATION 2026

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 2026. Any adults seeking Confirmation will be seen separately.

CRIB OFFERING

Money placed in the Crib offering box is in aid of our parish project, St John's Hospice, Moggerhanger.

Mass Times – St Joseph's, Bedford

Sunday	8.15am	Bernie Blackburn, RIP
	9.30am	John Michael D'Souza, RIP
	11.00am	John Bush, RIP
	6.30pm	Bernard Atkins, RIP
Monday	O King	
	10.45am	John & Hannah Chegwyn
Tuesday	O Emmanuel	
	10.45am	Pasquale & Angela Pagliuca
Wednesday	Christmas Eve	
	10.45am	Girhild Osborn, RIP
	6.30pm	Children's Mass: Mike O'Hara RIP
	12.00am	Midnight Mass People of the Parish
Thursday	Christmas Day	
	8.15am	Danny Ferry & Family
	9.30am	Christy Meehan, RIP
	11.00am	Agnes Innes
Friday	St Stephen	
	10.45am	Sarro Family
Saturday	St John	
	10.45am	Mary & Alan Wright, RIP

Mass Times – Our Lady's, Kempston

Saturday	6.00pm	Bernard Atkins, RIP
Christmas Eve	6.30pm	Children's Mass Edmond Connolly
Christmas Day	9.30am	Hanrahan Family

Confessions – St Joseph's:

Saturday 11.30am – 12.30pm (Exposition)

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Let the Lord enter; he is the king of glory.

ROSARY: Daily at 10.20am

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION: None this week.

CLEANING: S Masih, E Aoko, M Golomingi

FLOWERS: All flower arrangers

NEXT SUNDAY: The Holy Family

Readers & Ministers: Rota Week 3

Children's Liturgy: None until January

EVANGELISATION & HEALING SERVICE

We are invited to the above in Our Lady's, Kempston, on Saturday 3rd January from 1pm to 4pm. Includes praise and worship, talks, prayer ministry, Holy Mass, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Healing Service. All welcome.

CHRISTMAS DRAW

The Draw will take place after the evening Mass today. Thanks to all who bought tickets and donated prizes. The list of prize winners will be on display on the notice board next weekend.

CHRISTMAS POSTERS

The Christmas posters produced by the Knights of St Columba are available at the back of the church. Please take one to display in your window.

ROSARY FOR THE SANCTITY OF LIFE

This Rosary intention will be recited this Saturday after the 10.45am Mass. All are invited to join in prayer for the protection of human life from conception to natural death.

BEDFORD FOODBANK

The following items are needed for the Foodbank: Tins of tuna, potatoes, fruit, and sweetcorn, 500g bags of rice, cuppa soups, bars of chocolate and bottles of fruit squash. These can be left in the green bin in St Joseph's and the box at Our Lady's church.

SCRIPTURAL STUDIES

These will continue on Tuesday, 30th December at 7.00pm in the Guild Room led by Fr Ditto. All welcome.

RED MISSION BOXES

To all parishioners who have a Red Missio Box. Please return the boxes to any Mass in both churches by today. If you are Gift Aided, please write your name on the bottom of the box, as we can claim 25p in every pound donated. Please take another box home to start again for 2026. Many thanks for your support.

HOSPITAL MASS

Mass will be celebrated in Bedford Hospital Chapel (Multi-faith Prayer Room), every second and fourth Tuesday at 2.00pm. All welcome to attend.

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

REFLECTION

If it were announced that God was coming to the earth, one would perhaps expect that he would do so in power, majesty and great glory. Maybe on a mountain or some important city and country. The people of Israel, over many centuries, were expecting such an appearance. But they did not expect his coming into the world as a helpless baby, born of poor parents in an ill-smelling cave acting as a shelter for animals in a backwater town called Bethlehem, in a small occupied country. Such a notion would have been fanciful and outrageous. But this is the story of Christmas, which enchants us year by year and warms our hearts. It is no fairy story, though. This is real. It reveals a God who wants to draw close to us and wants us to draw close to him without fear. This is the charm and attraction of Christmas, and what it teaches us is that God can be found in the most unexpected places and situations, like that cave in Bethlehem. There was no room for them in the inn. We must make room for him in our lives. God is where we let him in. He wants to be part of our lives in a lived relationship. We, therefore, open the door to him, making space for him. He is always trying to gain entrance, sometimes in unexpected ways. It could be through some grief we have suffered, a loss or an illness or through a joyful experience of some kind, or just walking the pathways of nature and so on. God can and does use these experiences to make himself known, but we need to keep the door of our lives open; open and sensitive to the possibility of his visitation and an encounter that could change our lives. Christmas is an old story, but ever new and fresh because it speaks to us and every generation of the eternal love of God revealed in a tiny babe. What genius! Only God could have invented such a way that can reach and touch the human heart; so ordinary and yet so amazing and wondrous. No other world religion can compete. Christmas speaks to the truth of the human condition, which is in need of a saviour, who bestows upon us meaning, dignity and a destiny which stretches into eternity. There, the beauty and majesty hidden in the Christ-child will be fully revealed, and the charm of the Christmas mystery will never fade. *'How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.'*

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

Offertory

St Joseph's £1628.49

Our Lady's £360.65

Thank you