

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

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

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## THE HOLY FAMILY

28<sup>th</sup> December 2025



### THANKS

Our thanks to all who sent cards and gifts and for your usual generous Christmas offering. Thanks to our parish musicians, singers, altar servers, flower arrangers, children's liturgy, church cleaners and those who helped set up the Christmas Crib and trees. And thanks to all who have contributed to the life of the parish in so many ways this past year.

### CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Our Christmas Concert raised £338 for our parish project. It was a most enjoyable evening with a great wealth of talent on display, contributing to a real festive occasion. Thanks to them and to all who attended. Thanks, also, to our behind-the-scenes organisers.

### RENEWAL OF MARRIAGE VOWS

On this feast of the Holy Family, married couples are invited to renew their marriage vows at all Masses today. This will take place after the gospel and homily.

### Mass Times – St Joseph's, Bedford

Sunday 8.15am Tom McLoughlin, RIP  
9.30am People of the Parish  
11.00am Breda Egan  
6.30pm Michelle Mee, RIP

### Monday *St Thomas Becket*

10.45am Aleksandras Kausius, RIP

### Tuesday *Christmas Octave*

10.45am Yvonne Delevoye

### Wednesday *Christmas Octave*

10.45am Jovita Nsoyuni, RIP

### Thursday *Mary, Mother of God*

10.45am Jean Petts, RIP

### Friday *SS Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen*

10.45am Kenneth Kavanagh, RIP

### Saturday *The Most Holy Name of Jesus*

10.45am David Anderson, RIP

### Mass Times – Our Lady's, Kempston

Saturday 6.00pm Mary Connolly, RIP

### Confessions – St Joseph's:

Saturday 11.30am – 12.30pm (Exposition)

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

**Blessed are all who fear the Lord, and walk in his ways.**

**ROSARY:** Daily at 10.20am

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:** Resumes Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> January

**CLEANING:** S Masih, A Daniels, R Okonkwo

**FLOWERS:** Mrs Redmond.

**NEXT SUNDAY: Second Sunday after Christmas**

**Readers & Ministers:** Rota Week 4

**Children's Liturgy:** None until 25<sup>th</sup> January

### EVANGELISATION & HEALING SERVICE

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

### CRIB OFFERING

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

### FATIMA DEVOTIONS

Fatima Devotions this Saturday after the 10.45am Mass to pray for the gift of peace in our troubled world.

## **CHRISTMAS DRAW**

The list of prize winners is on display on the noticeboard in both churches. Prizes can be collected from the presbytery. Thanks to all who bought tickets and donated prizes which raised £998.70 for our parish project.

## **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.

## **SURPLUS GIFT SALE**

There will be a Surplus Gift Sale on Sunday 18th January in the Guild Room at St Joseph's and the church porch of Our Lady's, Kempston (Sat 17th) after all the Masses. Donated items for the sale can be left at the presbytery and Our Lady's church. Proceeds in aid of our parish project.

## **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, 30<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00pm in the Guild Room led by Fr Ditto. All welcome.

## **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.

## **REFLECTION**

Two words associated with the feast of Christmas are peace and joy. *"Do not fear. Behold, I bring news of great joy... Glory to God in the highest and peace to people of good will."* (Lk 2:10 & 14). Two other words come to mind: wonder and awe. The Incarnation should inspire these sentiments in us as we celebrate the mystery of Christmas. Think of it. The almighty, eternal God, creator of heaven and earth, became one of us, became the flesh and

blood reality of a little child; helpless, weak and vulnerable like any baby; needy and dependent upon his parents. Should that not strike us with wonder and awe? It can take a lot to impress us in that way. As we grow older we become somewhat jaded and cynical. Christmas jolts us out of that sense of world weariness and reclaims that child-like wonder we perhaps have lost along the way. Like Mary, the mother of Jesus, ponder this mystery in your hearts, in the silence of prayer. *"Silence is the space of this Child. Silence is the sphere where God is born. It is only when we ourselves enter the sphere of silence that we reach the place where God is born."* (Pope Benedict XVI). Christmas is a busy time, but also a time to ponder and not allow this opportunity to pass. It's a reminder of how much God really loves us and how real he is. In the words of Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement: *"Christmas, feast of the birth of Jesus, is for me the reply of God and the Church to a need of the soul: to hear repeated to me every year the commemoration of the fact so sweet, so sublime, so simple and so deep, that God loves me."* Wonder and awe! At Bethlehem, on that cold winter night, we see God as he is: humble. Not over us but with us and for us. We fall silent at mystery so bright! As we contemplate this wonder, something will begin to stir in us, something will begin to dawn. It is the dawn of hope and the realisation that we are not abandoned and alone; God is with us. This doesn't mean that all our problems and difficulties will suddenly disappear, but it does remove that sense of dread, knowing we have someone who accompanies us, who understands, because he has shared our humanity and our common lot. His presence gives us peace and joy despite what may be happening on the surface of life. Draw close to him then, who has drawn close to us, in prayer and trust. Hold him and press him to your heart as Mary did at his birth. In the tenderness of that embrace, be assured of his love and his protection in all circumstances. So, with the shepherds who heard the good news of great joy and looked upon God asleep in a manger, we gaze, too, upon the astonishing humility of God coming into our world as a small child and bow low in adoration and lift our hearts in praise and wonder, in thanksgiving and renewed hope.

*Canon Seamus & Fr Ditto wish you God's blessing for the New Year.*

## **LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS**

Offertory

St Joseph's £1657.85

Our Lady's £378.60

Thank you