



# Our Lady Help of Christians

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

24<sup>th</sup> December, 2023

Fr. Harry Curtis, Parish Priest

(Also serving Sacred Heart, Blackbird Leys)

Parish Secretary (also Giving and Gift Aid): Geraldine Griffin

Safeguarding Officer: Elizabeth Moran, [sg.olhoc.oxford@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:sg.olhoc.oxford@rcaob.org.uk)

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Our Lady Help of Christians Parish operates in accordance with Statutory Safeguarding Guidance and the National and Archdioceses policies and procedures at all times. Our Parish Safeguarding Representative is Elizabeth Moran who can be contacted at [sg.olhoc.oxford@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:sg.olhoc.oxford@rcaob.org.uk) or the Diocesan Safeguarding team can be contacted on 0121 230 6240 or [safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk) if you have any concern.

<p>Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> December <b>Fourth Sunday of Advent</b> Day of Prayer for Expectant Mothers</p> <p><b>Christmas Eve</b></p>	<p><b>5.30 pm Saturday Vigil Mass</b> <b>7.45 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</b> (9.00 am Mass at Sacred Heart) <b>11.00 am Mass</b> 3.00 pm Baptisms</p> <p>5.00 pm <b>Crib Service &amp; Carols</b> 5.30 pm <b>First Mass of Christmas</b> 11.30 pm <b>Carols and Readings</b> 12.00 <b>Midnight Mass</b></p>	<p>Deceased Lyons &amp; Kennedy Families</p> <p>Rita Da Silva Kathy McGurn Alessandro &amp; Jamaya</p> <p>Somtochukwu Blaise Stephen Ifemeje</p> <p>Private Intention</p>
<p>Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> December <b>CHRISTMAS DAY:</b> <b>SOLEMNITY OF THE</b> <b>NATIVITY OF THE LORD</b></p>	<p>8.00 am Morning Prayer (9.00 am Mass at Sacred Heart) <b>11.00 am Mass</b></p>	<p>John &amp; Michael Cullen All Parish helpers</p>
<p>Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> December Feast of St. Stephen, the first Martyr</p>	<p>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer (10.00 am Mass at Sacred Heart) <b>12.00 noon Mass</b></p>	<p>The People of the Parish Sr. Maureen Grigg (Intentions)</p>
<p>Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> December Feast of St. John, Apostle</p>	<p><b>No Public Mass Today</b></p>	
<p>Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> December Feast of the Holy Innocents</p>	<p>(10.00 am Mass at Sacred Heart)</p>	<p>All Parish helpers</p>
<p>Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> December Feast of St. Thomas Becket</p>	<p>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer <b>10.00 am Mass</b></p>	<p>Stephanie &amp; Christine Allen (Ints)</p>
<p>Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> December Sixth Day in the Christmas Octave</p>	<p>8.00 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer (10.00 am Mass at Sacred Heart) <b>5.30 pm Vigil Mass for Sunday</b></p>	<p>John Boyle and Family (Ints) Michael Iago</p>
<p>Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> December <b>Feast of the Holy Family</b></p>	<p><b>7.45 am Office of Readings &amp; Morning Prayer</b> (9.00 am Mass at Sacred Heart) <b>11.00 am Mass</b> (6.00 pm Mass at Sacred Heart)</p>	<p>Jean Bradley (Anniversary) Josie Coughlan (Intentions) The People of the Parish</p>

Saturday 5.30 pm Eucharistic Ministers	Sunday 11.00 am Eucharistic Ministers		Saturday 5.30 pm Readers	Sunday 11.00 am Readers
Nora	Rachel	<b>This Weekend</b>	Bernadette	Udeme
Zoja and Vitalija		<b>First Mass of Christmas</b>	Bernadette and Naomi	
Mabel and Maureen		<b>Midnight Mass</b>	Fallon and Bernadette	
Asha		<b>Christmas Day</b>	Udeme and Nalini	
Zoja	Anne-Marie and Anne	<b>Next Weekend</b>	Ann	Nalini

Welcome to Our Lady Help of Christians today, especially if you are visiting for the Christmas and New Year holidays. Happy Christmas, everyone!

*Our Parish Prayer: Help us, Lord, to receive you with an open heart this day.  
May our community receive your grace and deepen its faith in you.  
Make us lights to shine forth with your love, giving life and hope to those who have fallen away  
or who have never known you. Amen.*



### **Our Parish Christmas Trees**

*I invite you decorate our Christmas trees by writing your prayer for Christmas – for yourself, your family and friends, for the poor, for peace, and so on - on one of the paper angels and hanging it on a tree. God's messengers can help us with our prayers to God. Our trees are not just decorations: they are a focus for our hope and prayer this Advent and Christmas.*

**Please pray for the sick, especially those we know:** Claire French, John Pill, Aveen Kavanagh, Iris O'Brien, Doreen Cox, Betty Duff, Beatrice Upham, Mary Doyle, Thomas Gaughan, Jean Carpenter, Inna, and Pat Mazonowicz.

**Please pray for Anne Mullagh, Sean Jennings and Patrick Finnerty who died recently,** and all whose anniversaries occur at this time: Bishop Francis Thomas, Mgr. Canon William Flint, Mgr. Canon Thomas Gavin, Mgr. Patrick O'Mahoney, Frs. Patrick Wall, Anthony Ireland, Thomas N Meagher, Denis Murphy, Colum McCabe, James (Seamus) McInerney, David O'Callaghan and Patrick Lynch, Deacon Peter Mason, Sr. Ann Hoskison FMA, and also James Anthony Kenny, Bridie Barnes, Paul Foster and Michael Brennan. May they rest in peace.

**If you wish to join us for Mass or other services from your home go to:**

<https://www.mcn.live/Camera/our-lady-help-of-christians>

**The Sanctuary Candle is burning this week for the Barry Family.  
The Sacred Heart Candle is burning this week for John Dopson RIP.  
Our Lady's Candle is burning this week for Brenda O'Meara.  
St. Joseph's Candle is burning this week for sick people.  
St. John Bosco's Candle is burning this week for Michelle (Intentions).**

**Christmas Crib.** Crib Offerings this year will be donated to the Friends of the Holy Land. From FHL: "Overall, the situation for our Christian family in the Holy Land has gone from very difficult to critical, and we face the possibility of the last members of the ancient Christian community leaving the homeland of our faith forever. Our office in Bethlehem and contacts in Gaza, Israel and Jordan are well-placed to get urgent, direct aid to the families across the Holy Land most in need – we've done it before and we're doing it again, powered by your help. After such a major disaster, we know that our aid is going to be needed well into next year as we help the community rebuild and recover."

**Christmas Offerings.** Traditionally the collection at the Christmas Masses is your personal offering to your priest. There are envelopes available in the porch if you wish to use them. Thank you.

#### **Welcome to our visiting priests this Christmas:**

Fr. Martin Flatman will be here to celebrate the Sunday morning Mass (11.00 am).

Friar Gerard Mary will be here for the Carols and Readings (11.30 pm) and the Christmas Midnight Mass.



**Commemorative Candles.** For £5 you can buy a candle that will be blessed at Christmas and then will burn in the sanctuary or by the Sacred Heart, Our Lady, St. Joseph or St. John Bosco, for any week of your choice during the coming year. It can be to remember a loved one; for a special intention; or why not give one as a Christmas present?

**Deputy Headteacher Vacancy.** St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Headley Way, is seeking to recruit a Deputy Headteacher from April or September 2024. If interested please visit the school website [www.st-josephs-pri.oxon.sch.uk/about-us/vacancies](http://www.st-josephs-pri.oxon.sch.uk/about-us/vacancies)

**Altar Servers Retreat - "Called to Serve" 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> March 2024.** The Diocesan services are offering their first weekend retreat especially for altar servers at Alton Castle. 'Called to Serve' is for those in school years 5-13. There will be reflection, fellowship, fun and outdoor activities. The Archbishop will be celebrating Mass, and there will be a special candlelight procession. To book a place: [deacon.owen@vocations.org.uk](mailto:deacon.owen@vocations.org.uk)

**Thank you** to everyone who has helped me and our parish family over the past year: Sacristans, servers, readers, church cleaners, flower arrangers, catechists, musicians, providers of hospitality, the Finance Committee and fundraisers, the Salesian Cooperators and Sisters. I shall offer Mass for your intentions.

**Tailpiece:** As the family divided up the Christmas cake, little Billy shouted, "I want the biggest piece". "Billy," said his mother. "That's very rude. You shouldn't demand the biggest piece like that." "Well, then," said Billy, "How else do I get it?"

*I wish you all a very happy and holy Christmas. Thank you for your friendship and help this year, and may God bless you and all those who are dear to you.*

Fr. Harry