

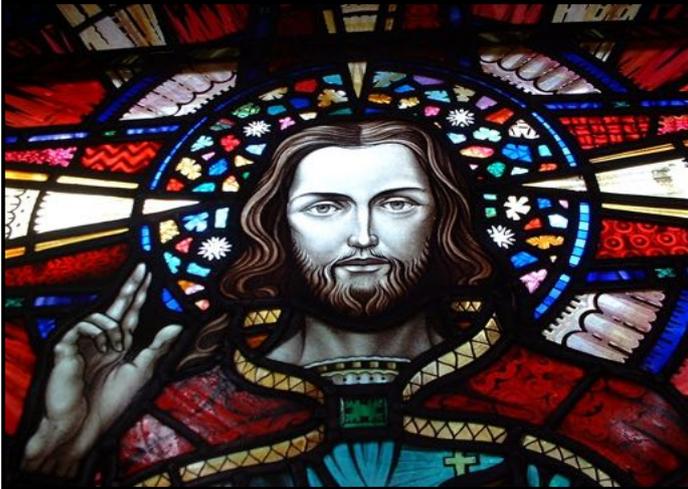


newsletter



3 and 4 December 2016

2nd Sunday of Advent – Year A



Catholic Parish of The Sacred Heart *Our Mission*

Through the power of the Holy Spirit we will be a parish renewed in our knowledge and understanding of the love of Jesus Christ, to enable each of us to fulfil our Christian mission



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The Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is part of our long-standing Catholic tradition, however, the actual origins are uncertain. There is evidence of pre-Christian Germanic peoples using wreaths with lit candles during the cold and dark December days, as a sign of hope for the warm and extended-sunlight days of spring. By the Middle Ages, the Christians adapted this tradition and used Advent wreaths as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas.



The symbolism of the Advent wreath is beautiful. The wreath is made of various evergreens, signifying continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, represents the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul and the everlasting life found in Christ.

The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. A tradition is that each week is one thousand years, to sum to the 4,000 years from Adam and Eve until the birth of the Saviour. Three candles are purple and one is rose. The purple candles in particular symbolise the prayer, penance, and preparatory sacrifices and good works undertaken at this time. The rose candle is lit on the third Sunday, Gaudete Sunday, when the priest also wears rose vestments at Mass; Gaudete Sunday is the Sunday of rejoicing, because the faithful have arrived at the midpoint of Advent, when their preparation is now half-over and they are close to Christmas. The progressive lighting of the candles symbolises the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's first coming into the world, and the anticipation of his second coming to judge the living and the dead.

The light again signifies Christ, the Light of the world. Some modern adaptations include a white candle placed in the middle of the wreath, which represents Christ and is lit on Christmas Eve.

Adapted from <http://www.catholiceducation.org/>

8 December – Feast of the Immaculate Conception

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is that the Virgin Mary was conceived without *original sin*, that twist in our nature that makes our will tend not to follow what it knows to be right. It was this grace that enabled Mary to give a true and considered 'Yes' to the request, conveyed by the Angel Gabriel, that she should consent to be the mother of the incarnate God.



The doctrine was almost universally believed over the centuries, but was only formally defined as a doctrine of the Church by Pope Pius IX in 1854. Because it is so old, it is one of the Marian doctrines that Islam shares with the Catholic Church, though of course the theological details are very different.

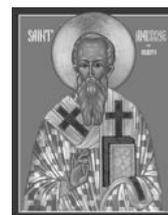
Adapted from Catholic Calendar app by Universalis Publishing

We welcome Sophie, daughter of Vicki and Steven Davies, who will be baptised into the Catholic community today. We ask the whole parish to pray for her and her whole family on this special day, and wish her and her family all God's blessings on their journey of faith.



7 December – Feast of St Ambrose of Milan (c.340-397AD)

He was born in Trier between 337 and 340, to a Roman family; his father was praetorian prefect of Gaul. Ambrose was educated at Rome. In about 372 he was made prefect of Liguria and Emilia, whose capital was Milan.



In 374, the bishopric of Milan fell vacant and when Ambrose tried to pacify the conflict between the Catholics and Arians over the appointment of a new bishop, the people turned on him and demanded that he become the bishop himself. He was a layman and not yet baptised. Coerced by the people and by the emperor, he was baptised, ordained, and installed as bishop within a week, on 7 December 374.

He immediately gave his money to the poor and his land to the Church and set about learning theology. He had the advantage of knowing Greek, and so he was able to read the Eastern theologians and philosophers as well as those of the West.

He was assiduous in carrying out his office, acting with charity to all, a true shepherd and teacher of the faithful. He defended the rights of the Church and attacked the Arian heresy with learning, firmness and gentleness. He also wrote a number of hymns which are still in use today.

Adapted from Catholic Calendar app by Universalis Publishing

THERE WILL BE A SECOND COLLECTION FOR HOME MISSION SUNDAY ON 10 AND 11 DECEMBER 2016

Supporting the work of evangelisation in England and Wales

We will celebrate Home Mission Sunday on 12 and 13 December and this year the theme is *Proclaim the Joy of Love*. On this day we are encouraged to pray for the work of evangelisation in England and Wales, remembering in our prayers especially those whom we know are distant from the life of faith. Please support the second collection which funds the bishops' national work of evangelisation. The collection also ensures that the Catholic Faith Centre is resourced to respond to those who have questions about the Catholic faith.



FOODBANK – The last collection will be **16 December**. Tin, tomatoes, tin potatoes, instant mash potatoes and bottles of squash are needed.

ADVENT EXPOSITION

Our Advent period of Exposition will be on **Wednesday 7 December**. It will commence at 7.00 pm and end with benediction at 8.45 pm. This period of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will offer an opportunity to be with Our Lord in silent vigil and could form an important part of our Advent preparations.



Please feel free to come for as long as you like. Even if you can manage only a few minutes of prayer in a busy day, it will be worth it to experience peace and tranquillity in Our Lord's presence.

We thank you for your weekly contribution to the parish. For 26 and 27 November the total was £590; this is £40.00 more than what is needed to meet the parish running costs. With thanks, Finance Committee.

There is an opportunity for **prayer ministry** straight after both Masses this weekend. Please come forward to bring to the Lord your needs, and the team will pray with you – this is always confidential.

THE GIVING TREE

As usual, last Sunday saw the appearance of the SVP Giving Tree in our church. The stickers that cover it bear the name of an item needed at the Prebend Day Centre in Bedford to support the homeless and rootless. If you can help, please take some of the stickers, purchase the items named and return them to the church by **Monday 12 December**.

The items we are seeking are toothpaste and toothbrushes, deodorant, shaving foam and gel, disposable razors, shampoo and shower gel. We would also like men's pants and ladies' knickers, along with socks, scarves, hats and gloves. In the food line we would like some tins of corned beef, packets of biscuits and small bars of chocolate.

When buying items, please avoid expensive ones – value- and store-own brands are much better and are less likely to be stolen from the recipients; not a nice thought but a real one when we want to help those in need hang on to the few possessions they might have.

Thanks in advance for your generosity. Everything that you give will reach those in need in time for Christmas.



CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP

The next meeting is on **7 December** 7.30 pm till 9.30 pm. For information contact Nicky Paterson on 01525 750 654



The next meeting of the Sewing Group will be on **12 December** from 2.00 pm till 4.00 pm. For information contact Clare Bevan 01525 403 589.



MOTHERS' PRAYERS will meet on **5 December**. We will have a time of Christmas fellowship after our prayers so please bring some seasonal refreshments for us to share.



Tea and coffee will be available after 11.00 am Mass. All welcome

Lighting of the Advent Wreath – Candle Two

Celebrant: For God will guide Israel with joy, by the light of his glory with his mercy and integrity for escort.

Deacon: Come, Lord Jesus, to our rescue with the protection of your mercy

The Second Candle on the Wreath is lit.

ALL: PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.



2ND SUNDAY @ Advent

ADVENT SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION WEDNESDAY 15 DECEMBER AT 7.30 PM

Prepare for the season of Christmas by joining us for the service of reconciliation. After a short liturgy of prayer, readings and preparation there is the opportunity for a personal act of confession with our local priests.



Today is **Bible Sunday** and it is the day we commission all our readers. This year we are also dedicating a book of the Gospels which is presented to all at Sacred Heart by the family of Mary Bray. The dedication reads

In Memory of Mary Bray
24 February 1929–11 November 2015
who cherished the Word of God
and proclaimed it as a reader in the parish
for many years.

Circle of Prayer for December Refugees and Migrants

Lord God, no one is a stranger to you and no one is ever far from your loving care. In your kindness, watch over refugees, migrants and victims of war. Bring them safely to the place where they long to be and help us always to show your kindness to strangers and to all in need.



CHRISTMAS MASSES 2016 AT SACRED HEART

Saturday 24 December Christmas Eve	7.00 pm	Children's and Family Mass
	9.00 pm	Midnight Mass
Sunday 25 December Christmas Day	11.00 am	Mass during the Day

INFORMATION

CONFESSION

Confession will be on Saturday evening at 5.30 pm and NEXT Wednesday at 7.00 pm.

PRAYER LINE

Please ring for intercessory prayer on 01525 634 186. We have some wonderful answers to prayers. Be assured of full confidentiality.

CARDS, GIFTS, etc.

Are available for sale in Sacred Heart church after Mass. All are priced. Please put money in the repository box at the back of the church.

SAFEGUARDING

For information contact Paula Bates on 07834 715 978 or safeguarding@sacredheartflitwick.co.uk

CHURCH NEWSLETTER ONLINE

at <http://www.sacredheartflitwick.co.uk>

IN HOSPITAL, SICK OR HOUSE-BOUND?

Please let us know of anyone who needs a visit or requires Holy Communion at home.

THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL GROUP

meets every Monday at 7.30 pm. If you would to join us or would like more details or if you know of anyone who needs a visit, help with transport or any other need, contact John Flanagan on 01525 406 810.

LITTLE 'UNS

Meet every Friday 10.15 am to 11.45 am in term time, in the church hall. This is a group for babies and preschoolers. For further information please contact Deacon Philip on deaconphilip@sacredheartflitwick.co.uk.

MASS INTENTIONS

For Mass intentions contact Deacon Philip who will arrange for Canon Bennie or another local priest to say a Mass.

Mass Times at Sacred Heart

Saturday	3 December	6.00 pm	Private Intentions
Sunday	4 December	11.00 am	Private Intentions
Monday	5 December	9.30 am	Alex Moore-Martin, Recently Deceased
Tuesday	6 December		No Service
Wednesday	7 December	7.30 pm	Service of the Word and Communion
Thursday	8 December		No Service
Friday	9 December	9.30 am	George and Pat Petersen, RIP

Newsletter copy deadline – Tuesday midday. Newsletter contact: Suzanne Yates; 01525 840 661; suz_yates@btinternet.com

Readers, Eucharistic Ministers and Drivers for this week, 3 and 4 December		
Mass	6.00 pm	11.00 am
1 st Reading	Dee Brady	Pat Rees
2 nd Reading	Alison Braniff	Pauline Chambers
Eucharistic Minister	Deacon Philip Pugh	Deacon Philip Pugh
Eucharistic Minister	C./M. Rincon	C./H. Davies
Driver		Ros Penn
Readers, Eucharistic Ministers and Drivers for next week, 10 and 11 December		
Mass	6.00 pm	11.00 am
1 st Reader	Angela Bartlett	Dennis Horner
2 nd Reader	Maggie Dullaghan	Brendan Spillane
Eucharistic Minister	Deacon Peter Hyde	Deacon Peter Hyde
Eucharistic Minister	Deacon Philip Pugh	Nicky Paterson
Driver		C./J. Gallagher