

Our Lady & St Edmund of Abingdon ***1 Radley Rd, Abingdon on Thames, Oxon, OX14 3PL***

We are a **LiveSimply** parish aiming to live Simply, Sustainably and in Solidarity with the Poor

Parish Priest: Fr. Jamie McGrath Tel: 01235 520375
Parish Secretary: Lisa Paterson Tel: 01235 520375
Office Hours: 8.15am - 12.15pm Tuesday to Friday
Office Email: abingdon@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

We live stream all services

Safeguarding Team: Tel. 07572 935 230
Visits Oxford Hospitals: Priest/Chaplain 01865 221732
Visits and Help: Society of Vincent de Paul Group, contact via Parish Office
Parish Website: www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk
Primary School: St. Edmund's School, Radley Road, Abingdon, OX14 3PP Tel 521558

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Reg. Charity No 1199568 www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Confessions: Saturdays 11.00 – 11.30am or by appointment

REFLECTION

The Prayer of the Spirit and the Bride is 'Come, Lord Jesus, Come' (Rev.22:17). The Scriptures too have gifted us with the ancient Aramaic Word 'Maranatha', appearing only once in the Scriptures, and meaning 'Come Lord' (1 Cor. 16:22). We don't think of Advent as a time to recall that Jesus will return, but we must be ready for it. Pope Benedict XVI expressed this beautifully, "While our hearts look forward to the celebration of Christ's birth, the liturgy directs our gaze to the final goal; our encounter with the Lord who will come in the splendour of glory."

How do we direct our gaze during such a busy and frenetic time of the year? Time seems sparse and precious; finding time to pray can be wishful thinking. And yet, when we want to, we can. 'Carpe Diem' simply; try and grab a moment here of a brief reprieve there. In these moments we lift up our hearts and praise the Lord. The early Church believed the Second Coming to be imminent. It was 'about to happen'. St Peter wrote: 'The end of all things is at hand, therefore be self-controlled and sober minded for the sake of your prayers.' (1 Peter 4:7)

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS

God our Father, we thank you for calling men and women to serve in your Son's Kingdom as priests, deacons, and consecrated persons. Send your Holy Spirit to help others to respond generously and courageously to your call. May our community of Faith support vocations of sacrificial love in our youth and young adults. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

All collections on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day are for the **Christmas offering**, which supports our priest, Fr Jamie. You can also donate online using the link on either the *Home* page or *News* pages of our website. Thank you for your generosity and support.

The **Christmas Crib** offerings will go to the *Friends of the Holy Land*, who support Christians in the Middle East.

Fourth Sunday of Advent: Cycle 2 (B)

The Nativity of the Lord

Sunday 24 Dec.

8.45am Mass (A.W.G. Barson, RIP)
10.15am Mass (Errol Midwinter, RIP)
6.30pm First Mass of Christmas (*Special intention*)
9.00pm Christmas Mass (*Special intention*)

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Monday 25 Dec.

8.00am Christmas Mass (Castle family, intentions)
9.30am Christmas Mass (Paterson family, intentions)
11.30am Christmas Mass (Fay Veronica McDonald, RIP)

NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Tuesday 26 Dec.

Rosary 9.30am
10.00am Mass (Winifred, RIP)

St Stephen

Wednesday 27 Dec.

6.30pm Rosary
7.00pm Mass (Paul, Stella & Simon Worrallo RIP)

St John, Apostle

Thursday 28 Dec.

9.00am Rosary
9.30am Mass (*Special intention*)

The Holy Innocents

Friday 29 Dec.

6.30pm Rosary
7.00pm Mass (*Special intention*)

St Thomas of Canterbury

Saturday 30 Dec.

11am Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
11-11.30am Confessions
12pm Mass (Lily & Gerry Foy, RIP)

CHRISTMAS CRIBS AND DECORATIONS

This year we are privileged to have both an indoor and outdoor crib to remind us of what this season is about. Thank you to all those who worked so hard to set them up, and also those who worked equally hard to decorate the church for this festive season.

HOMELESS COLLECTION – THANK YOU

A **huge thank you** to all that so generously donated to our collection for the homeless this Advent. Christmas cards were also made for them by the Mini Vinnies group at St Edmund's School. The presentation was made last Friday at a school assembly, with representatives from OLA also attending. Brad gratefully accepted the gifts on behalf of *Emmaus Oxford*, mentioning how *Emmaus* had helped him so much when he was homeless, and how hard he found it during the winter and Christmas period. Our donations will help *Emmaus* with their work with many homeless people at this difficult time in their lives. They provide a home for as long as it is needed, and meaningful work for people who have experienced homelessness so that they can get back on their feet. There is a picture, taken at the presentation, on the noticeboard outside our church, and also on the *News* page of our website.

OPEN DOORS/WARM SPACE

Our last *Open Doors* session of 2023 will be on Monday, 18th December, 11.30 am to 2.30 pm in the Parish Centre. There are no sessions on 25th December or 1st January. The first session of 2024 will be on Monday, 8th January. In anticipation of colder weather, *Open Doors/Warm Space* sessions will be slightly longer during January, February and March. Sessions will run from **10.30 am** until 2.30 pm. We offer a warm space, friendly conversation, refreshments and a hot lunch to anyone in the Parish or local community who is on their own or would just like more company or who would appreciate a warm space for a few hours. Do come along - you will be very welcome.

VACANCIES AT ST EDMUND'S SCHOOL

Our caring, Catholic school has been described as one which 'inspires pupils with determination to change the world' (Ofsted 2020). Now St Edmund's school is looking to welcome an enthusiastic, dynamic and committed:

- *Part time Teacher,*
- *Higher Level Teaching Assistant,*
- *Teaching Assistant*
- *Nursery Teaching Assistant*

supportive of our school mission and Catholic ethos to join our happy, motivated children. Please visit the School Website <https://st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk/> for further details of all the vacancies. **Closing date: Friday 12th January 2024 at 12.00 noon.**



PARISH EVENTS FOR THE WEEK

- No events this week.

FUTURE DATES

- **Sat 6th Jan:** Mothers' Prayers at 10.15am in the church.
- **Mon 8 Jan:** *Open Doors* in the parish centre from 11.30am to 2.30pm.
- **Fri 12th Jan:** Baby & Toddler group in the parish centre 9.30am to 11.15am in term time
- **14th Jan:** Peace Sunday. More information in the next newsletter.

PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office will be closed from Tuesday 26th December until Tuesday 2nd January.

ABINGDON FOOD BANK

Please continue to support the Abingdon Food Bank. The collection points are at:

LOCATION OF FOOD DONATION POINT	OPENING HOURS
Waitrose Abingdon, Abbey Close, OX14 3HL	7.30am to 9pm (8pm Sat)
North Foodbank, Christ Church, Northcourt Rd, OX14 1PL	Tues & Fri 10am to 1pm
South Foodbank, Preston Road community Centre, OX14 5NR	Weds 1pm to 2.30pm

CARING FOR THE PLANET

The Church in Abingdon (CiA) welcome everyone to participate in a 'Week of Prayer for Christian Unity' with the theme of 'Caring for our Planet'. This year the united service will take place at **Our Lady & St Edmund's on Sunday 21st January 2024 between 4-5pm** with a talk which it is anticipated will prove very interesting by speakers Martin and Margot Hodson. Refreshments and fellowship will follow the service. From **Monday 22nd to Friday 26th January** there will be each day a series of talks, conversations and prayer with a number of different speakers at **St Nicholas' Church from 12 to 1pm**. We do hope that you will be able to attend some or all of these events. More details, of the programme, will be available after Christmas.

POPE FRANCIS ON CHRISTMAS

"Christmas is a reminder that God loves us and wants to be with us. The Incarnation is a stupendous gift, and it brings with it another: that we may also love one another as brothers and sisters. How much we need this today, so many people, so many children suffer because of war." He added that only by loving God and loving one another "can the world rediscover the light and the peace that it needs and which was proclaimed by the angels who announced Jesus' birth."