

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

What is prayer if not the raising up of one's mind and heart to God, and asking grace from our Heavenly Father? Yet, this is our greatest gift, the birth of the Saviour: "The Virgin today brings into the world the Eternal, and the earth offers a cave to the inaccessible. The Angels and shepherds praise him. And the magi advance with the star. For you are born to us. Little Child, God Eternal (KONTAKION). When we give God praise and worship, we receive a hundredfold of blessings in return. Joy, hope faith and love overflow in our hearts. Whether we realise it or not, prayer is the encounter of God's thirst with ours. God thirsts for us that we might thirst for God. But do we thirst for the Second Coming, the return of the King? Advent is a wonderful opportunity to renew our faith in this great truth of faith. We think of Advent and Christmastide as a celebration of the first coming of Christ – Jesus, humble, born in a manger, the Eternal Word made flesh. This is so, but the Church also makes present the ancient expectancy of the return of the Messiah, the Second Coming of Jesus. The season of Advent invites us to renew our heartfelt desire for the return of Christ.

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS

Holy Spirit help us to live our universal vocation to holiness, by listening to the Father's voice, and responding with sacrificial love. Grant also that each particular vocation be of service to the others as an example of Christ's love. Holy Mary, Model of vocations, teach us to hear and follow your Son. Sanctify our priests and obtain for us many more. Holy Mary Mother of the Church, pray for our families and intercede for our children. Amen.

CAROL SERVICE SUCCESS

Our parish Carol Service last Sunday afternoon was a beautiful occasion and well attended. Many thanks to the choir, organist, bell ringers and the catering team who provided the refreshments afterwards. And, most of all to those who came along to praise God at his coming to earth.

Third Sunday of Advent: Cycle 2 (B)

Sunday 17 Dec.

8.45am	Mass	Third Sunday of Advent (Ted Kelly RIP)
10.15am	Mass	(Ewart Hemmings RIP)
2.00pm	Mass in Polish	
6.30pm	Mass	(McGuirk & Moffatt Family Intentions)

Monday 18 Dec.

8.30am	Rosary	
9.00am	Mass	(<i>Special Intention</i>)

Tuesday 19 Dec.

NO Mass See: www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk/english-martyrs-vale-of-white-horse for other Masses

Wednesday 20 Dec.

6.30pm	Rosary	
7.00pm	Mass	(Francis Gilbride RIP)

Thursday 21 Dec.

9.00am	Rosary	
9.30am	Mass	(Joan & Leslie Ashton RIP)

Friday 22 Dec.

6.30pm	Rosary	
7.00pm	Mass	(John Stephen Brady RIP)

Saturday 23 Dec.

11am	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	
11-11.30am	Confessions	
12pm	Mass	(Sheila Finch RIP)

LENTEN PROJECT 2024

During the season of Advent, the PPC ask you to think about charities which we could sponsor during Lent 2024. We would ideally like to fundraise for 2 charities - one local/UK based and one worldwide. Please give this some consideration and send suggestions, with an outline of the charity, to the Parish Office **by Monday 8th January 2024**. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Sunday 24th December:

Mass	8.45am & 10.15am
First Mass of Christmas	6.30pm
Christmas Vigil with Carols	8.30pm
Mass	9.00pm

Monday 25th December:

Mass	8.00am; 9.30am & 11.30am
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Tuesday 26th December:

Mass (St Stephen)	10.00am
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CHRISTMAS TREES

We are looking for volunteers to help set up the Christmas Trees in the Church on Wednesday 20th December at 10.30am. If you can help please contact Jo Milham: 07980383417

FOLLOW ADVENT ON OUR WEBSITE

Our parish website has an interactive Advent calendar on the 'Home' page and some interactive reflections in the 'What's On' section, which you may find helpful during this Advent season and up to Christmas. Do take a look.

ADVENT PLEDGES FOR A SIMPLE CHRISTMAS

Please take home a leaflet from the back of the church with some ideas about pledges for a simple Christmas. We invite everyone to make a pledge about what action they will take. The pledges will be displayed in church – remember to bring yours and pin it to the ribbons – or leave it in the basket and somebody will pin it up for you.

HELP NEEDED ON CHRISTMAS DAY

This year on Christmas Day we will be inviting 60 people to have a two-course lunch for free with us at Peachcroft Christian Centre. We need a number of volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, please email jay.elliott@peachcroftcc.org as soon as possible. More information on the help needed is available on the News page of our parish 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.

PARISH EVENTS FOR THE WEEK

- **Sunday:** Refreshments in the parish centre after the 10.15am Mass.
- **Monday:** *Open Doors* in the parish centre from 11.30am to 2.30pm.
- **Friday:** Baby & Toddler group in the parish centre 9.30am to 11.15am in term time.

FUTURE DATES

- **Mon 8 Jan:** *Open Doors* in the parish centre from 11.30am to 2.30pm.

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS GIVING

If you have already begun your Christmas shopping – or are thinking about doing so – why not pick up the CAFOD booklet of *World Gifts* from the back of the church and in the porch. Every gift you buy helps real people and makes a massive positive difference.

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, a Teaching Assistant and a 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 OFFICE

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

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION)

This Advent season, if you are not familiar with this Sacrament, there are leaflets to help you, available at the back of the church, with separate ones for adults and children.

ABINGDON FOOD BANK

Please continue to support the Abingdon Food Bank. However, **please do not leave your contributions in our church.** 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