

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 Christian faith is often wrongly understood to be about what we do for God: our prayers, our works, our striving, our holiness. We can sometimes even think that we will be saved or get to heaven because of who we are or what we have done for God. If that were true, there would not be much cause for celebration, because what Christmas day makes clear is that the Christian Faith is all about what God has done for us. God has become one of us to make us sharers and partakers in His divine nature. He has opened up heaven again and restored what was lost through the tragedy of original Sin. The wonder of God becoming man is that Jesus the eternal Word has given us a new vision of God's glory. In Jesus of Nazareth, God is made visible.

Today, the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with joy as we recognise in Christ the revelation of the Father's love. Today, God is seen as one like us. Christ the Son, before all ages, is now born in time. He came to lift up all things to himself and to restore unity, leading us from exile to our heavenly home.

PRAY FOR VOCATIONS

Most High, Glorious God, enlighten the darkness of our minds with the light that your Son's birth heralds. Give us a right faith, a firm hope, and a perfect charity, so that we may always, and in all things, act according to your Holy Will. Bless our young to give themselves for your people and their needs. Bless those who are serving now with perseverance and courage. Grant that many will be inspired by their example and faith. 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.

The Nativity of the Lord

Sunday 24 Dec.

8.45am Mass
10.15am Mass
6.30pm First Mass of Christmas
9.00pm Christmas Mass

Fourth Sunday of Advent

(A.W.G. Barson, RIP)
(Errol Midwinter, RIP)
(*Special intention*)
(*Special intention*)

Monday 25 Dec.

8.00am Christmas Mass
9.30am Christmas Mass
11.30am Christmas Mass

NATIVITY OF THE LORD

(Castle family, intentions)
(Paterson family, intentions)
(Fay Veronica McDonald, RIP)

Tuesday 26 Dec.

Rosary 9.30am
10.00am Mass

St Stephen

(Winifred, RIP)

Wednesday 27 Dec.

6.30pm Rosary
7.00pm Mass

St John, Apostle

(Paul, Stella & Simon Worrallo RIP)

Thursday 28 Dec.

9.00am Rosary
9.30am Mass

The Holy Innocents

(*Special intention*)

Friday 29 Dec.

6.30pm Rosary
7.00pm Mass

St Thomas of Canterbury

(*Special intention*)

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."