



St. Edmund and St. Frideswide R.C. Church
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3rd Sunday of Advent (Year C) – 12th December 2021

1st Reading – Zephaniah 3:14-18

Psalm – Sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

2nd Reading – Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel – Luke 3:10-18

The call to rejoice and being happy is what strikes us in the first two readings this Sunday. We are called to rejoice, not being slightly happy or content with things but to shout for joy and aloud! Be happy, not just on a few occasions, or most of the time, but always! What do Zephaniah or St. Paul wish us to do? Is it possible to live like this at all in the midst of pain and suffering and uncertainty like the one we're facing right now with the latest mutation of the virus causing numerous countries to impose various restrictions once again?

The answer to the question surely has to be a resounding "Yes", it is possible to live like this. What many of us usually struggle with is how to get to that state. This is the question that different groups of people we asking of St. John the Baptist – what must we do to be saved and live like the Lord is asking us to do? It is a question that each of us needs to ask as well, in our unique circumstances: what must I do? The people were looking for an answer, they were searching. We have to search but we need to be careful where we do our searching and whose answers we listen.

John always pointed the way to someone greater than he was, the one who was to come, the Saviour. He is the answer to our searching. We may have many questions, but there is only one answer that God gives to us, and that is His Word. The answer is the person of Jesus, the Lord who has died and is risen. If you want to be saved, ask Him to tell you what you need to do. If you want to always be happy, ask Him to tell you how you can live that way. If you seek joy, ask Him to fill you with it. Too often we walk away feeling that God is not listening or answering, but the answer is always standing there in front of us. During this season of Advent, let us make the effort to pause a bit longer in order to look a bit more closely at the answer that God gives us. Let us learn to listen to what the Lord is saying to us, and thank Him for always speaking to us.

Advent Prayer Group – Next meeting is on Tuesday 14th December. We meet every Tuesday of Advent 7pm – 8.30pm in the church to pray and meditate on the message of the Word of God for us this Advent. The theme this week is Joseph’s obedience to God’s promises: “When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him” (Mt. 1:18-25). The sessions will be led by Cláudia Azevedo, one of our parishioners - do join us if you can during this holy season.

Parish Penitential Service – In case you missed the date, please put **Friday 17th December at 7.30pm** in your diary. It is a chance for us to reflect on our spiritual journey this Advent and be reconciled with God and with one another through the Sacrament of Penance.

Carol Service – Next **Sunday 19th December at 3pm** we will be having a service of lessons and carols sung by Greyfriars Choir. Do join us on that afternoon as part of our preparation for Christmas, and afterwards you are invited for some refreshments in the parish hall next door.

Church & Hall Update – I’m happy to say that the planned repairs on our church and hall are due to begin any time soon. It’s been a long wait to begin the process of ensuring that our buildings are protected from damage caused by leaks, but at least if you keep praying long enough, things might be sorted soon. That means we can start looking ahead towards the details of what will be done with the parish hall. As soon as we have an update on those, we will let you know. We are planning on refreshing our space in the porch as you enter the church.

If you would like to make a specific donation towards the renovation of the parish hall, please specify that you wish that donation to go for that purpose. You can write a cheque made out to Capuchin Oxford Parish, or donate via bank transfer to the Capuchin Oxford Parish Account (Acc. No. 50154109 Sort Code 60-70-03). Thank you for your support and generosity.

House Visits / Blessings – An important part of my service to you as your parish priest is to come to know you, pray with you, and bless you. That is why I would like to invite myself into your homes! – not for a 3-course meal, not even a cup of tea required, but to meet you, chat, and pray. Don’t be afraid – I won’t turn up uninvited. If you’d like a visit, just get in touch in any way you can – speak to me after Mass in the sacristy, email, phone, fill out the form on the website, or fill in a card that should be available at the back of the church.

Oxford Street Pastors - We are now recruiting more volunteers. It is great fun to be out in a team of four, enjoying the night-time atmosphere and feeling fully prepared to offer help. We have highly experienced team leaders on each shift and volunteers usually go out once every 3-4 weeks. Full training is provided and we are accredited by the Ascension Trust, meeting their high standards for operating as Street Pastors. Many of our volunteers choose to come out on a shift as an "Observer" as their first step, so they can see first-hand what it is like. Then they apply to join and start their training. The application process is simple and includes getting a reference from your minister / vicar. The first thing to do is to contact Petra, the Coordinator of the Oxford Street Pastors.

Email her on streetpastorsoxford@gmail.com

Accommodation for a family – A young family of four are in urgent need of accommodation in Oxford. They require two bedrooms and a rent of preferably no more than £1000 per month. Please contact the parish office if you can help them.

Coffee morning – We continue having our coffee morning after our 9am and 11am Masses on Sunday. Please come in to the church hall next door for a chance to chat with your fellow parishioners and warm up with a hot drink.

Altar servers – If your child would like to serve at the altar, please get in touch with Br. Martin M or Br. Martin S. This is for children who have made their 1st Holy Communion and older. Training will be provided once we have a list of interested children.

Cleaning the church volunteers – This week we thank Maria and Michele for coming in to clean the church. If you would like to volunteer and give a helping hand, please contact the parish office with your details so you could be added to the rota.

Rosary Prayer Group Fridays 7.00p.m. – We meet every week in church to ask Our Lady's protection over our parishioners and the whole world. Join us.

1st Holy Communion / Confirmation 2022 – If you would like your child to receive the Sacraments of Holy Communion or Confirmation, please get in touch in order to sign your child for the relevant course. Please fill in the relevant form on the website or speak to me in person. You have until mid-December to ensure your child is signed up.

Mass Times and Intentions

Sunday 12th December 2021 3rd Sunday of Advent (Year C)

6.30 p.m. (Sat)	Sylvia & Davy Collins & Family
9.00 a.m.	Alfredo Pereira, Celestine Soares, Tharcizio lemos, Thatyana lemos
11.00 a.m.	Kieran Hughes
5.30 p.m.	Parishioners

Monday 13th

St. Lucy

7.30 a.m.	Michael O'Shea
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Tuesday 14th

7.30 a.m.	Helen, Johnny Boy Collins & Family	<i>St. John of the Cross</i>
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Wednesday 15th

7.30 a.m.	Friars & Benefactors
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Thursday 16th

7.30 a.m.	Geraldine & Jimmy O'Leary & Family
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Friday 17th

7.30 a.m.	Mary O'Shea
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Saturday 18th

8.00 a.m.	Franciscan Missionaries of Mary & Benefactors
6.30 p.m.	Mary Gaffey R.I.P.

Please pray for those members of our community who are sick, especially **Therese O'Malley, Linda Parrott, Aline Beaupiere, Margaret Corcoran, Oonagh Clarkson**. If you are aware of somebody in our community who is sick and in need of our prayers, please ask them to contact the parish or let us have their contact details.