



*Parish of Our Lady Help of Christians &  
St Lawrence*

39-41 West Street, Olney MK46 5HH  
**Diocese of Northampton**

Parish Priest: Fr David B Barrett  
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Parish Website: [www.ourladysoley.co.uk](http://www.ourladysoley.co.uk)

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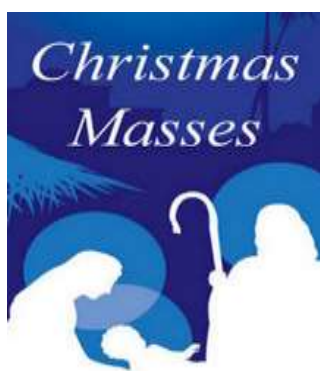
<b>12<sup>th</sup> December 2021</b> <i>Psalter Week: 3</i>	<i>Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete)</i> <b>Sunday Lectionary – Year of Luke (C)</b>	
<b>First Reading</b>	<b>Zephaniah 3:14-18</b> <i>The Lord will dance with shouts of joy for you as on a day of festival.</i>	
<b>Responsorial Psalm</b>	<b>Sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel</b>	
<b>Second Reading</b>	<b>St Paul to the Philippians 4:4-7</b> <i>The Lord is very near</i>	
<b>Gospel Acclamation</b>	<b>Alleluia, alleluia! The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor. Alleluia!</b>	
<b>Gospel</b>	<b>Luke 3:10-18</b> <i>What must we do?</i>	
<b>Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> December+</b>	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Vigil Mass (For the Parish)</b>
<b>Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November+</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Mass (Irene Wilson RIP)</b>
<b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>St Lucy, Virgin &amp; Martyr - memoria</i>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mass (Bruce Kelly RIP)</b>
<b>Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>St John of the Cross, Priest &amp; Doctor</i>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Mass (Kathleen Burrowes RIP)</b>
<b>Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Feria</i>		<b>No Parish Mass today</b>
<b>Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Feria</i>	<b>9.15am</b> <b>10.00am</b>	<b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</b> <b>Mass (Deceased members of the Abbott family)</b>
<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Feria – O Wisdom</i>	<b>9.15am</b> <b>10.00am</b> <b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</b> <b>Mass (Edith Pilling RIP)</b> <b>Advent Candlelit Service – Our Lady</b>
<b>Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December</b> <i>Feria – O Adonai</i>	<b>10.00am</b> <b>10.30am</b>	<b>Mass (Padraig Mulvey Int)</b> <b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</b>
<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>		
<b>Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December+ O Root of Jesse</b>	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Mass (For the Parish)</b>
<b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December+ O Root of Jesse</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Mass (Raymond Whysall RIP)</b>

Please note we have a new camera for livestreaming our Masses!! The stream is on 24/7, so you can virtually visit our church at any time: You can go through to this via the website. Masses and other services will continue to be individually recorded each day as well: links will continue to be sent out

**Note: Please remember to contact Denise (01234 711212) to reserve your place for all Masses & Services – particularly over the Advent/Christmas Season**



**REVISED GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES ONCE AGAIN REQUIRE ALL VISITORS TO PLACES OF WORSHIP TO WEAR AN APPROPRIATE FACE COVERING (UNLESS EXCEMPT)**



24 <sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Vigil Mass	6.30pm
24 <sup>th</sup> December – Mass During the Night	9.30pm
25 <sup>th</sup> December - Mass at Dawn	8.00am
25 <sup>th</sup> December – Mass during the day	10.30am

**IMPORTANT:** If you are planning to attend one of the Christmas Masses here at Our Lady's, please book your place(s) with Denise in plenty of time. For now, please can you only book for one of the four Masses above, until we have a better sense of the numbers attending.



The last of our Advent Candlelit Services will be held in the church this coming Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm when we will be reflecting on **Our Lady**. The reflection will end with Compline (Night Prayer). The services are very beautiful and prayerful – please do come along!

**If you would like to come, please contact Denise for a seat.**

### **Parish Carol Service**

The annual Parish Christmas Carol Service, which was to be held next Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December, has **now sadly been cancelled**.



The Food Bank is very grateful for the continuing and extraordinary generosity of our Parish. Donations of specifically Christmas items such as mince pies and Christmas Pudding and Christmas gift boxes should stop this week.

**The Depot in Milton Keynes will be closed from 23rd December until 4th January 2022**

so please make your kind donations by **next Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December** so they can be delivered to Milton Keynes in time to be distributed. Thank you.

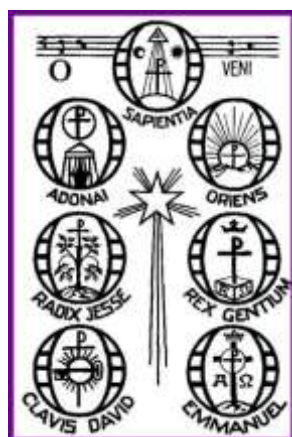
**PASTORAL LETTER – THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – ‘On Expectation’** – Bishop David’s Pastoral Letter will be read at both Masses and copies are available in the Narthex and also on the Parish Website under the ‘Pastoral Letters’ tab on the homepage.



As is customary, Christmas is the time for giving something to Father David to show our appreciation for everything he has done for our parish, particularly during these difficult times. It can be done in several ways; planned giving envelopes; standing order with a reference of Fr David; plain envelope clearly marked ‘Fr David Christmas Offering’. If by cheque please make payable to **Our Lady Help of Christians**. The diocese is also opening the phone lines between **20th and 24th December** and have asked that the following is included into the newsletter.

**A Message from The Diocesan Finance Team**

As the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have decided to continue to offer a dispensation of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass, we know that many people will not be returning to churches this Christmas. We also know that many people still wish to offer a gift to their priests for the sacrifices they make throughout the year. If you would like to offer a gift to your priest this Christmas, please call 01604 712065 between 9am-5pm from Monday 20<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> and 9.00am-1pm on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> December. A member of the team would love to hear from you.



**THE ‘O ANTIPHONS’** refer to the seven antiphons that are recited or chanted preceding the Magnificat during Vespers of the Liturgy of the Hours. They cover the special period of Advent preparation known as the ‘**Octave before Christmas**’ – 17<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

The importance of the ‘O Antiphons’ is twofold: Each one highlights a title for the Messiah: *O Sapientia* (O Wisdom); *O Adonai* (O Lord); *O Radix Jesse* (O Root of Jesse); *O Clavis David* (O Key of David); *O Oriens* (O Rising Sun); *O Rex Gentium* (O King of Nations); and *O Emmanuel* (O God with Us) – each one refers to the prophecy of Isaiah of the coming of the Messiah. If you would like to follow the Liturgy of Hours you can find this on <https://universalis.com/>



**ST LUCY, Virgin & Martyr**

St Lucy suffered martyrdom at Syracuse (Sicily) probably during the persecution of Diocletian. Devotion spread almost throughout the whole Church and dates back to the earliest times. Her name was inserted into the Roman Canon. Due in part to the manner of her death, St Lucy is a Patron Saint of the Blind.



**JOHN OF THE CROSS - Priest & Doctor**

Born at Fontiveros in Old Castile, Spain about the year 1542. He was a Carmelite friar and about the year 1568 he was persuaded by St Teresa of Avila to be the first to undertake the reform of his Order, which cost him much hard work and many trials. He died at Ubeda in Andalusia in 1591. He was outstanding in holiness and knowledge as his many spiritual writings testify:

*‘Never give up prayer, and should you find dryness and difficulty, persevere in it for this very reason. God often desires to see what love your soul has and*

*love is not tried by ease and satisfaction’ – St John of the Cross*

Advent is a beautiful season in the Church's life. But you may not notice that it has two parts to it. The first part runs up to and includes 16<sup>th</sup> December – these are the ordinary days of Advent. But from 17<sup>th</sup> December there is an Octave of days which leads right up to Christmas Eve. Advent changes gear and this is shown in a number of ways.

First of all, the Gospel readings at Mass: in the first period they are taken from various places in the Gospel, dealing first with the future Second Coming of Christ and then various ways in which we approach Christ, and finally in the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Advent they change gear again and all mention John the Baptist in one way or another. Then, from 17<sup>th</sup> December, the Gospel readings are taken from the Infancy Narratives of either Matthew's or Luke's Gospel, going up to the point before Jesus is born in Bethlehem. So, 17<sup>th</sup> December marks a change in gear: we increase the sense of expectation for celebrating the Lord's Nativity: our salvation is at hand – and when we say that we mean Jesus is at hand, because the name *Jesus* means *God saves*.

Secondly, from 17<sup>th</sup> December we begin the Great O Antiphons. These are recited before and after the *Magnificat* at Evening Prayer (Vespers) every day from 17<sup>th</sup> December. They are also used for the *Alleluia* verse before the Gospel at every Mass during the Octave. They take their name from the fact that each one begins with the exclamation *O!* There follows a title inspired by the Old Testament which is applied to Christ. There is a different one each day and they each help us understand the many sides of the salvation which Jesus is. We call on Jesus under these different titles to come and save us in all the many ways we need to be saved. They are as follows:

17<sup>th</sup> December: *O Sapientia*: O Wisdom, O holy Word of God, you govern all creation with your strong yet tender care. Come and show your people the way to salvation.

18<sup>th</sup> December: *O Adonai*: O sacred Lord of ancient Israel, who showed yourself to Moses in the burning bush, who gave him the holy law on Sinai mountain: come, stretch out your mighty hand to set us free.

19<sup>th</sup> December: *O Radix Jesse*: O Flower of Jesse's stem, you have been raised up as a sign for all peoples; kings stand silent in your presence; the nations bow down in worship before you. Come, let nothing keep you from coming to our aid.

20<sup>th</sup> December: *O Clavis David*: O Key of David, O royal Power of Israel controlling at your will the gate of Heaven: Come, break down the prison walls of death for those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death; and lead your captive people into freedom.

21<sup>st</sup> December: *O Oriens*: O Radiant Dawn, splendour of eternal light, sun of justice: come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

22<sup>nd</sup> December: *O Rex Gentium*: O King of all the nations, the only joy of every human heart; O Keystone of the mighty arch of man, come and save the creature you fashioned from the dust.

23<sup>rd</sup> December: *O Emmanuel*: O Emmanuel, king and lawgiver, desire of the nations, Saviour of all people, come and set us free, Lord our God.

The hymn *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* is based on these antiphons and is properly sung during this period.

May Our Lady, Help of Christians, Our Lady Immaculate, St Joseph, St Lawrence, St Edmund, St Rita, St Lucy, St John of the Cross pray for us all.

With our love and prayers,

Fr David and Deacon Peter