

Sacred Heart Church, Berkhamsted

Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God, Year A, 1st January 2023



'When the appointed time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born subject of the Law... to enable us to be adopted as sons.' (Gal. 4:4)

On first day of every New Year, we begin the year with the great feast of the celebration of Mary, the holy Mother of God. Why? It is by accept to be the Mother of the Saviour that the gates of heaven, which the sins of Adam and Eve shut, was once again opened for us. More so, because Mary said YES to God, not only was the Son of God born to us, it brought us through her Son Jesus, the spiritual benefits of adoption as sons and daughters of God and heirs to the Kingdom of heaven.

As we focus on the Motherhood of Mary at the start of a New Year, we are invited to emulate her courage and trust in God. This liturgical focus on the motherhood of Mary and the emphasis on her cooperation with God's plan of salvation shows that we too can become fruit if we treasure and follow God's plan as we look into the weeks and months ahead of us. If we follow her example our world will change for the better; rancour, fighting and destruction of lives will give way to love and peace.

As we extol the virtues of the Most Holy Mother of God, and celebrate her faithful obedience to God, let us remember also how patiently she bore everything that was said about the future of her Son as the one who will save his people from their sin. We will do well to cling on to her to learn how to be patient in times of trials. Her experience teaches that God can still be trusted even when everything in life may seem turbulent. Her intercessions and maternal protection are always helpful in times of trial. So let us learn to ask for her prayers.

She is the reliable teacher that we can go to, to learn how to plunge into the weeks and months ahead, with all the uncertainties there maybe. As Elizabeth her cousin said of her, 'Blessed is she who believed that what God promised her will be fulfilled. God's plan for us is a plan for good and peace.

As we begin this New Year: "May the Lord bless us and keep us. May the Lord let his face shine on us and be gracious to us. May the Lord uncover his face to us and bring us peace." Amen.

Wishing you all every blessings for a happy and fruitful New Year.

Fr Joseph

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CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR AT SACRED HEART, 2022

Saturday 24th Dec – Christmas Eve

Morning Mass of Advent - 10am

Paul Strickland and all Holy Souls RIP

Family Vigil Mass of Christmas – 5pm

People of the Parish

Carols and Readings begin at 4:35pm

Christmas Mass of the Night - 10pm

Dominic Dieseru Special Int

Sunday 25th Dec - CHRISTMAS DAY

Mass of the Nativity of the Lord - 8.30am

People of the Parish

10am

The deceased members of the Finucane family

Masses during the Octave of CHRISTMAS

Monday 26th – St Stephen, The First Martyr – 12noon

Cecilia Okeke RIP

Tuesday 27th – St John, Apostle & Evangelist – 10am

Deceased members of the Doran family and all Holy Souls RIP

Thursday 29th – St Thomas Becket, Bishop & Martyr –

12noon

Mary and Tom Joe O'Connor and all Holy Souls RIP

Friday 30th - ✠ The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph -

10am

Harry Fitzgerald and all Holy Souls RIP

Saturday 31st – 10am (*Apologies - No Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament*)

Geoffrey Tomlin and all Holy Souls RIP

5pm – Vigil Mass

Derek Faulconer and all Holy Souls RIP

Sunday 1st Jan. ✠ Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God – 8:30am

William and Louisa Nuttgens and all Holy Souls RIP

10am

Patrick and Marie Nuttgens and all Holy Souls RIP

NO MASS – MON – THURS (2ND - 5TH JAN)

Friday 6th - ✠ The Epiphany of the Lord – 10am

John Desmond and all Holy Souls RIP

Thank You – What makes a parish a real place of encounter and worship isn't only what the priest brings, but also the generosity of parishioners with their gifts and talents which they also put to the service of their brothers and sisters in Christ. May I take this opportunity to recognise and thank everyone for their generous service since my arrival in the parish and for the preparations that went into organising the senior citizens' Christmas lunch, the carol service and the Christmas Masses. Thank you to Laura, our parish administrator, Josie, who ensures that everywhere is neat and tidy, our parish finance committee, the flower arrangers, the sacristans, the choir, readers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, the catechists, altar servers, those who look after and prepare our young parishioners for the liturgy, the counters, volunteers in the parish office, the Sunday teas and coffees band, and the social team. Whatever you do to make our parish community a jolly community, you do to the glory of God and for the growth of his Kingdom, here in Sacred Heart Parish.

May God bless and keep you.

Fr Joseph.

Offertory Collections – 18/12

Weekly loose plate - £261.83

Weekly Contactless - £41.00

Thank you to every one of you for your generosity to our Parish.

Online Giving – Should you wish to become a regular online donor please use the Parish bank details below.

WRCDT Berkhamsted

Sort Code 40-05-20

Ac. Number 31264354

Please do include your name as your reference and if you would like to gift-aid please ask Fr Joseph or Laura for a form. Thank you for your continued generosity and support to our parish. It is greatly appreciated.

Mass Intentions – Please call or visit the parish office to book Masses for your intentions, email Laura or use the blue envelopes at the back of the church.

The Diocesan suggested donation is £10.00. Thank you.

If making a donation online, please use 'MASS STIPEND' and the date of the mass as your reference.

Parishes Celebrations / Dates for your Diaries –

9th Jan Walking Football

22nd Jan Start of the Holy Communion programme

29th Jan Start of Confirmation programme

23rd Jan Walking Football

5th Feb Sunday Lunch Club

Contactless Donation Machine – We are grateful for your continuing support to the parish, which means that we are able to pay for the running costs of the parish, pay staff salaries and maintain parish property. Donations for Christmas Gift can also be made by using your contactless debit or credit card at the contactless giving machine at the church entrance. To use the machine, please tap the dona tablet and select the amount you would like to give. Then, tap your contactless card on the small card reader by the side of the tablet to give your selected amount. You can also gift-aid your donation if you are a UK taxpayer. THANK YOU

Sunday Lunch Club - was due to take place on Sunday 8th Jan, but given that it falls very early on in the new year, we have decided to reschedule. The next event will therefore take place on Sunday 5th February. The sign-up sheet can be found at the back of the church.

Car Park – The car park monitoring system will be switched on on the 20th January. Could all Parishioners please ensure they have registered their cars by the 3rd of January.

Walking Football - 9pm on Monday 9th and 23rd of January, start the new year with a kickaround at Ashlyns indoor 5 a side courts, contact Ed Murray (07743 844257) if interested.

Give Us This Day, Our Daily Bread - Thank you if you are able to bring some non-perishable food for our Food Bank Box. Your kind donations, which can be placed in the food collection box at the church entrance, are going directly to help local people via the Open Door and DENS Food Bank. Thank you.