



Sacred Heart Church, Berkhamsted



✠ First Sunday of Advent, Year B, 3rd December 2023 – Psalter Week 1

This Sunday, we begin the season of Advent. It is the season of the joyful expectation of the coming Jesus Christ at Christmas, but also a time of holy preparation for his Second Coming. He enjoins us to stay awake for that time unknown to none, not with wide open eyes, but with our heart and mind attuned to his ways and the things of heaven.

The **first reading** opens this Advent Season with words that resonate with the sentiments and experience of many around the world today calling for God's intervention and salvation. "*Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down! – at your Presence the mountains would melt.*" In his prayer, the prophet acknowledges the sovereignty of God over all, and expresses great faith in God's power to rescue humanity from its failings and sufferings.

This desperate cry for help did not go unanswered; for God at Christmas intervened by sending his Son, Jesus Christ, who saves the human race from its sinfulness. Even as we await his Second Coming, God never stops intervening, but keeps this stream of divine help flowing into our lives by joining us to his Son Jesus Christ, through Baptism and the Sacraments – **seconding reading**.

By insisting that we "**stay awake**", Jesus asks us to show ourselves to be faithful and virtuous stewards of the gift of life that God entrusted to us to nurture in his ways; and for which accountability will be demanded of us. One way of staying awake is by rediscovering prayer in our lives, as this Advent, we begin the **Year of Prayer 2024**, designated by Pope Francis. "The Year of Prayer is not a year *about* prayer, but a year *for* prayer. The image of Christ in the manger speaks of a God who wants an intimate relationship with His creation." "'Come therefore,' my heart says, 'seek his face!'" (Ps. 27:8)

Mass Intentions:

Sun 3 Dec	✠ 1 st Sunday of Advent	8:30am	Kathleen Murray, RIP Ann
		10:00am	Frank Furlong, RIP Ann
Mon 4 Dec	Advent Feria	10:00am	People of the Parish
Tue 5 Dec	Advent Feria	10:00am	Stanislaw Pawlowicz and Louise Deacon, RIP Ann
Thu 7 Dec	St Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor	10:00am	Eddie Gancke, RIP **Mass time changed**
Fri 8 Dec	The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patron of the Diocese	10:00am	Mary Agnes Worricker RIP and Holy Souls
Sat 9 Dec	Advent Feria	10:00am	All Members of the Wall's Family - Int
	Sunday Vigil	5:00pm	Jerry Twomey, RIP Ann
Sun 10 Dec	✠ 2 nd Sunday of Advent	8:30am	People of the Parish
		10:00am*	Martin West RIP and Family Int

* Livestream Mass

Saturday - 9:00am – Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (and confession alongside) with Benediction at 9:45am

Confessions can also be arranged outside of these times, please contact Fr Joseph

We Pray for:

The Sick and the Housebound

We pray especially for: Lin Thomas, Edith Dicom, Caroline Butler, Ann McDonnell, Tom Jackson, Tess Hennessy, Anthony Doolan, William Campbell, Alice Danladi, Fr John Boland, Canon Jane Bannister, Ron Harper, Tom Kemplen, Joe Quinn, Rosemary Goacher, Jane Blayney, Dympna O'Connor, Lucy Chapman, Hilary Sweetman, Gerry and Michael Earls.

We commend them to God's healing.

The Recently Deceased & Anniversaries

We pray for those who have died recently or those whose anniversaries occur at this time including: Baby Lily Angel Brinklow, Arthur Murray, Peter Ariokiasamy, Imelda Hodkinson, Peter Hammond, Fr Timothy O'Connor, Tom O'Reilly, Bernard Gray, Fidelia Maduforo, Kerry Prendergast.

Eternal rest granted onto them oh Lord and let the perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.

The Blessed Sacrament Lamp

is sponsored this week for Pam Masini Int.

Sacred Heart Church
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Email: berkhamsted@rcdow.org.uk

Website: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/berkhamsted/>

(Office Hours: 10:00am-2.00pm, Mon, Tue and Thurs.)

Parish Priest - Fr Joseph Okoro: josephokoro@rcdow.org.uk

Administrator – Laura Etson: berkhamsted@rcdow.org.uk

Parish Safeguarding Representatives (PSRs)

Carmella Perkins – Sacred Heart PSR:

berkhamstedsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

St Andrew, Apostle and Patron of Scotland – Last Thursday, we celebrated the feast of St Andrew. We wish all our Scottish Parishioners the blessings of the glorious intercession and protection of St Andrew, the first to recognise and follow the Lamb of God; and that learning the lessons of the Cross in your own lives, you too may lead other to Jesus Christ.

Donations for Christmas Flowers – You can either give as you leave the Church, put your donation in an envelope indicating Christmas Flowers on it or use the contactless machine at the back of the Church. Thank you for your generosity.

Advent Giving Calendar – Please could you consider those who might need support this Christmas and give either dry food items, (excluding chocolates) or financial assistance. All donations received will be sent to those in need and foodbanks. Thank you for thinking of Jesus and coming to his aid in those most in need.

Wintershall Nativity Story -14th -18th December - Discover the true meaning of Christmas for all families. A Nativity like no other, placing you in the middle of an immersive theatre experience. Stand with the shepherds, walk with Mary, Joseph and the donkey, journey with Roman soldiers and enter the stable to watch the miracle unfold. To book tickets go to: <https://www.wintershall.org.uk/nativity-journey-0>

Advent and Christmas - Fr John Deehan will be giving four online talks focusing on the Prayers and Gospels of the Christmas Masses. To register, go to: [Agency Events Page](#)

The Secrets of Paul: A Ten Week Course on Zoom - An opportunity to reflect on the life of St. Paul, as a model missionary disciple run by Mission Northampton from Wednesday 10th January 2024 to Wednesday 20th March 2024 (7.30-9pm) For more information, go to: <https://northamptondiocese.org/courses/secrets-of-paul-online/>

Car Park – ParkingEye, as a goodwill gesture has removed the £20 clause for any tickets cancelled following appeal till 31st Dec, and cancelled any outstanding admin fee fines. This fee will be applied from the 1st January 2024. If we do not have your registration number on the system and you forget to input it into the terminal from this date, the admin fee cannot be revoked and unfortunately the Parish office will be unable to assist.

Tea and coffee - after Sunday 10am Mass. All are invited to join us in the parish hall for teas, coffees and chats.

Senior Christmas Lunch – Saturday 9th December 12:00pm. Please join us for a full Turkey and Ham roast with all the trimmings followed by Christmas carols. A sign-us sheet can be found at the back of the Church.

Our Annual Carol Concert – In aid of The Hospice of St Francis takes place on the 16th December at 6:30pm at Sacred Heart Berkhamsted. All are welcomed. Entry/donations on the door. We would be grateful for extra singers to join our choir (men and women). For further details of choir rehearsals please contact Caroline McLoone cazandpatrick@live.co.uk Thank you.

Child Minding Assistant Paid Job – For more details contact Caroline Reid on 07904477813 or email caroline.m.reid@live.co.uk

Stop the 14-day Limit on Experimenting on Embryos Being Removed - The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) is pushing to remove the 14-day limit for experimenting on embryos, despite 97% of submissions from the general public to their consultation objecting to these plans. Right To Life UK has launched an easy-to-use tool on its website that makes it easy for you to email your MP asking them to oppose a change to legislation that, if passed, would pave the way for the removal of the 14-day limit. Please visit www.righttolife.org.uk/14days to contact your MP now. It only takes 30 seconds.

Offertory Collections – 26/11/23

Weekly Loose Plate - £225.05

Weekly Contactless - £44.26

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

Contactless Donation Machine – We are grateful for your continuing support to the parish. Donations for Mass stipends, votive candles, building maintenance fund, flowers for the Church and offertory can also be made using the contactless machine. You can also gift-aid your donation if you are a UK taxpayer. THANK YOU

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 –

2nd Dec	Celebrate Event (St Thomas More)
2nd Dec	Holy Communion Parents Session 10:00-11:30am
9th Dec	Seniors Christmas Lunch
9th Dec	St Thomas More Christmas Fair 2:00-5:00pm
16th Dec	Hospice of St Francis Carol Concert 6:30pm
24th Dec	Christmas Eve Mass – 5pm
25th Dec	Christmas Day Mass – 8:30am & 10:00am
14th Jan	Sunday Lunch 12:00pm

Blessed Sacrament Lamp - If you would like to sponsor the Blessed Sacrament Lamp, for a week, the diary is open. To sponsor costs just £5 for a whole week. Just let the office know your preferred week and your intention.

Berkhamsted Choral Society – Will be holding a concert of Christmas Music and Carols at St Peter's Church in Berkhamsted on Sunday 10th December at 7pm. Please see poster at the back of the church for more information.

To purchase a ticket please visit <https://tktp.as/EORKAT>.

COP28 London March - In solidarity with people on the frontlines of the climate crisis and bring Pope Francis' COP28 message to the streets of London. Sat, 9 Dec 2023 11:45 - 14:00 GMT Central London. Location to be confirmed - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cop28-london-march-tickets> **Sign the petition to the president of COP28** prepared by Laudato Si: <https://laudatosimovement.org/cop28/>

St Thomas More Annual Christmas Fair – Will take place on Saturday 9th December, 2:00pm-5:00pm, Everyone welcome. Raffle tickets will be available to purchase after Mass at the back of the Church.

Vinnie Packs - The Society of St Vincent de Paul are distributing **over 10,000 Vinnie Packs** containing cold weather essentials to the homeless this winter. Please could you consider sponsoring packs at a suggested donation of £4.20 per pack? Donations can be sent to **Vinnie Packs, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ** with cheques made out to SVP or by bank transfer to Nat West **sort code 60-60-04, account no. 4608 8237** Thank you so much.