**CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION & SAINT JOSEPH**

**23 ST JOHN’S STREET, HERTFORD SG14 1RX**

[**https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hertford**](https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hertford) **Email:** **hertford@rcdow.org.uk** **Tel: 01992 582109**

**Parish Priest: Monsignor Séamus O’Boyle**

**FOURTH Sunday of Advent – CHristmas eve 24th December 2023**

**Prayers & Readings for this Sunday’s Mass can be found on p. 90 in the Parish Mass Book.**

**Please note that there is a Loop system in the Church.**

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View from the Presbytery

*O*

*King of the peoples, whom they long for,*

*the cornerstone, who make the two into one:*

*come and save us, whom you made from the clay.*

In the final countdown to Christmas there are so-called ‘Great O’ antiphons each day during the Evening Prayer of the Church. Today’s – I am writing this on Friday 22nd – ‘O *Rex gentium’* in the original Latin, tells us that Jesus is not just the King of Israel – but of all peoples, longing to be united under his rule. We are reminded that we are given life by our God who sends his Son to save us.

The eagle-eyed among you may have noticed that we have now installed a ‘contactless’ machine in the cloister of the Church. We had to extend the office Wi-Fi for it to work – and a couple of members of the Parish Finance Committee have made trial payments via the machine to make sure it is up and running! Many churches began installing such machines during the Covid restrictions – and they have proved to be very practical. It’s another, up-to-date, way to make your offering to the Church.

During the week Fr Terry paid a visit. He is looking a good deal better than he did when I last saw him a couple of months ago, and is in good spirits. We have now set a date for the belated combined celebration of his Fortieth Anniversary of Ordination and Farewell from the Parish. This will be on Sunday 28th January 2024 beginning with Mass celebrated by Fr Terry at 10.30am followed by a buffet lunch in the Church Hall. Please save the date! Fr Terry is very much looking forward to the gathering.

It is unusual for the Fourth Sunday of Advent to also be Christmas Eve – it won’t happen again until 2028 – so our Advent this year has been cut short. I hope you feel prepared and that you have a blessed and peaceful celebration of the Incarnation!

*Fr Séamus*

**A NEW YEAR’S PARTY** will be in the church hall on Monday 1st January 2024 after the 12noon Mass. If you would like to come please bring a plate of food if possible. There will be a list at the back of the church for you to put your name down so that we will have an idea of numbers. Thank you!

**MISSIO RED BOXES:** Would all parishioners in possession of red Missio boxes please return them as soon as possible to the sacristy?
Once all boxes have been handed in and contributions counted, the empty boxes will be placed with names attached on the table in the cloister to be picked up and used for the 2024 process. Thank you. Peter Mahoney

**IF YOU GO IN TO HOSPITAL**: If someone is sick in hospital, please let us know here at the Presbytery, and/or ask the staff on the ward, so that your loved one can be visited whilst in hospital, and receive Holy Communion and any other Sacraments from the Chaplain.

At the Lister & QE2 hospitals, the Chaplain is: John O’Neill 01438 314333

**ROSARY GROUP:**  Come and join us in thechurch hall on **Tuesday evenings** at 7pm for recital of the Rosary and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

**THE SVP** 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 for your support

**PRAYERS ASKED PLEASE –**

**FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:** Elizabeth Barnes, Ursula Partner, Jan Kracinski, Stephen Carey, Norene Hristov, Paul Cox, Malcolm Gilbert, Enzo Andrean, Miriam Matthews, Ruth Featherstone, Stephen Judd, Mary Ward, John Sweeney, Pam Gates, Juliet Davis, Phyllis Read, Jo Black, Robbie Robinson, Fr Terry, Angela White, Manuel Lopez, Lyn Carroll, Linda Abeysundera.

 **FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY:** Christine Smith, Maureen Harris, Fr Terry Murray OMI. May they rest in peace and rise in glory

MASS INTENTIONS:

**Saturday 23rd**

**6pm:**  Shaughnessy Family (Ints)

**Sunday 24th *Fourth Sunday of Advent***

**8.30am:** People of the Parish

**10.30am:** Bob Chanin RIP

***Christmas Eve***

**4.00pm:** Children of the Parish

**9.00pm** People of the Parish

**Monday 25th *Christmas Day***

**8.30am** Jan Kracinski (Ints)

**10.30am** George Robert Emmett RIP

**Tuesday 26th *St Stephen***

**11.00am:** Alf Rossi RIP

**Wednesday 27th *St John***

**11.00am:** Mary & Michael Fahy RIP

**Thursday 28th CHURCH CLOSED**

**Friday 29th *St Thomas Becket***

**11.00am:** Emily Dorsett RIP

**Saturday 30th**

**6.00pm:** Ann & Frank Clayden RIP

**Confessions**

Saturday: 5.15-5.45pm