



ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH HEREFORD

Parish Priest Dom James Hood. Assistant Priest Dom John George.
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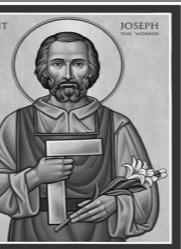


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Dear All, As we enter the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our journey of waiting draws very close to its fulfilment. The Advent wreath candles are almost fully lit, the days are heavy with expectation, and the Church invites us to pause and reflect on how God chooses to come among us. This Sunday's Gospel turns our attention to Joseph—a quiet, faithful man who listens, trusts, and acts with courage. Through his obedience and compassion, God's plan unfolds in a way that is humble, unexpected, and deeply human. Advent reminds us that God often works, not through noise or spectacle, but through faithfulness, kindness, and a willingness to say "yes" even when the path ahead is unclear. Saint Matthew is concerned to keep in balance two truths about Jesus: that he is Son of David and that he is Son of God. Each is essential for understanding who Jesus is. And both Mary and Joseph play a role in accomplishing this harmonious grasp of the mystery. As we prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth, may these final days of Advent help us to make room in our hearts, our homes, and our community for Emmanuel—God with us—who comes to bring hope, peace, and new life to the world.



Fr John

Liturgical Calendar December 2025 Yr A Psalter Wk 4

Sat 20th	10.30am	3rd Week of Advent	Our Lady's Intention
Sat 20th	11.00am	Confessions & Adoration	
Sat 20th	6.00pm	4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Thanksgiving (V. Jose)
Sun 21st	8.00am	4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Tony Colley RIP
Sun 21st	10.00am	4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Gella Sykes RIP
Mon 22nd	9.30am	4th week of Advent	Thanksgiving
Mon 22nd	12.30pm	Carols on the steps - All Welcome	
Tue 23rd	NO public Mass. Mass at Our Lady's 9.30		
Wed 24th	No 1.00pm Mass		
Wed 24th	5.00pm	CHRISTMAS MASS	Kathryn & Andy Morison
	9.30pm & 10pm	CAROLS & MASS OF THE NIGHT (MIDNIGHT)	Jim & Sylvia Philips RIP
Thur 25th	8.00am	CHRISTMAS MASS AT DAWN	The Parish
Thurs 25th	10.00am	CHRISTMAS DAY MASS	Gerard & Jeanie Livingstone RIP & daughter Joan RIP
Fri 26th	1.00pm	ST STEPHEN PROTOMARTYR	Souls in Purgatory
Sat 27th	10.30am	ST JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST NO CONFESSIONS	Alena RIP
	<u>NB</u>		



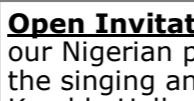
Volunteers needed to prepare the Church for Christmas

If you can spare an hour or two please come along on **Wednesday 24th December at 9.00am to help clean and decorate the church for Christmas.** All are welcome, the more the merrier!



To decorate the Church for Christmas.

Please could parishioners bring in some holly, especially holly with red berries or variegated holly. You can leave at the back of Church.



Open Invitation This Sunday at the 10.00am Mass our Nigerian parishioners will be leading some of the singing and then providing refreshments in the Kemble Hall afterwards. Do come and join us.

We remember all who have died

Anniversaries: David Lyons, Timothy O'Connor, Winifred Setterfield, Thomas Morgan, Francis Dullehan, Bill Mills, Anna Stevens, Patrick Jeffers, Pierina Gallagher, Alena Liskova.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.



The pink concertina for your Christmas cards has made its annual appearance on the baptismal font! Please check it to see if you have any cards in it!

Pray for the Sick: Ania Kuzba, Jan Beavan, Robbie Bell, Meg Furber, Ann Currie, Midad Jasari, Lynne Howells, Katherine Melia, Christina James, Sarah, Ana Rudnicki, Nicola Merrick, Martin O'Connor, Patricia Moroney, Margaret Davis, Carola Morton, Margaret Skelding, James Spradberry, Teresa Bord, Patricia Marongiu, Sarah James, Vera McHale, Pauline and David Day, Mark Edmunds, Kath Feely, Ann Marie Hughson, Ann Orchard.

THE O ANTIPHONS

In the days leading up to Christmas the Church offers us a series of beautiful antiphons or ancient chants. From 17 December to 23 December these antiphons are sung and read in Evening Prayer (Vespers) framing the Magnificat and as Gospel acclamations during Mass. These texts most probably originated in Rome before the 6th century. Each text in Latin begins with "O" hence they are known as 'The O Antiphons'. Each antiphon is a name of Christ, taken from one of his attributes such as root, light and key mentioned in Scripture and refers to the prophecy of Isaiah of the coming of the Messiah. In these antiphons we are reminded that we live between the two comings that give Advent its central theme: Jesus' birth and his Second Coming. Since the expulsion from Eden, we have cried out for salvation and justice. A way has opened up for us through Jesus' birth, his ministry on earth, and beyond death and resurrection, of his promise of a new kingdom. These beautiful antiphons are Advent's brightest jewels shining in the darkness of our night. They lead us to the light of Christ just as the Star led the wise men from the East to Bethlehem. Each title for Christ focuses on one aspect of his identity and is followed by further qualities flowing from that title. Each antiphon ends with a petition asking for a specific request from Christ appropriate to the title by which He was just invoked.

O Wisdom, you come forth from the mouth of the Most High. You fill the universe and hold all things together in a strong yet gentle manner. O come to teach us the way of truth.

O Adonai and leader of Israel, you appeared to Moses in a burning bush and you gave him the Law on Sinai. O come and save us with your mighty power.

O stock of Jesse, you stand as a signal for the nations; kings fall silent before you whom the peoples acclaim. O come to deliver us, and do not delay.

O key of David and sceptre of Israel, what you open no one else can close again; what you close no one can open. O come to lead the captive from prison; free those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

O Rising Sun, you are the splendour of eternal light and the sun of justice. O come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

O King whom all the peoples desire, you are the cornerstone which makes all one. O come and save man whom you made from clay.

O Emmanuel, you are our king and judge, the One whom the peoples await and their Saviour. O come and save us, Lord our God.

Fr James

Ministers of the Eucharist

6pm Kathy Weston
Angela Holmes
Vigeetha Joseph

8am Cecilia Balestra
Frances Hetterley

10am Thomas Kottuppallil
Mary Cook
Moses Obanimoh

Ministers of the Word

6pm Fiona Stokes
Helen Booth

8am Dorothy Kennedy

10am The Gillick Family



Parish Pilgrimage to Rome.

Monday 5th–Friday 9th October 2026
5 days/4 nights.

Cost: £1,029 pp. half board;
coach return fare to Heathrow is extra.
Travel insurance included.

There will a presentation evening in January with a cut-off date of 14th February 2026 for signing up.

Spiritual leader: **Fr. John George**

Fully guided tour to include the following highlights:
Papal Audience; visit to St Peter's Basilica with Mass, tour & visit to the Dome; visit to and Mass in the Catacombs. Visit to the Trevi fountain and the Venerable English College.

Booking forms are now available from the office



In the Narthex we have plenty of the Christmas Mass cards from Fr James and Fr John in the basket which have all the details of different Mass times and services. Rather than just leave them could you take a couple and pass on to friends or family?

The Sound System in Church

A sound engineer has made some adjustments to our sound system this week and hopefully you can hear a bit more volume. We will be looking at a more extensive refit of some of the sound system in the New Year.



St Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him we humbly pray:
and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, By the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

The collection at the Christmas Masses is your gift to Fr James and Fr John. Thank you.



Welcome to new parishioners and visitors. Do introduce yourselves to the welcomers and **come along after 10.00am Mass for coffee and cake.**



Collections 14/12/2025
The Parish £793.30
Flowers £436.52



What's on in December 2025

Sun 21st	10.00am	Nigerian choir at Mass Refreshments after.
Mon 22nd	12.30pm	Carols on the Steps Please anyone do come and join in.
Wed 24th	9.00am	Church Cleaning All welcome.