



Drop down, ye heavens, from above

The Catholic Parish of Our Lady & St John, Goring-on-Thames & Christ the King, Woodcote

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SUNDAY 18 DECEMBER 2022

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (*O Adonai*)

Monday 19	Feria	<i>O radix Jesse</i>	Goring	Sat 6pm	Ray Lynch RIP
Tuesday 20	Feria	<i>O clavis David</i>	Goring	8.00am	Parish & people
Wednesday 21	Feria	<i>O oriens</i>	Goring	10.00am	Private intention
			Woodcote	11.30am	Christopher Quinton RIP
Thursday 22	Feria	<i>O rex gentium</i>	Goring	7.30am	James Molloy RIP
			Goring	6.00pm	A child waiting for an operation
			Woodcote	NB 7.00am	<i>Rorate Mass by candlelight</i> M. Hodgetts RIP
Friday 23	Feria	<i>O Emmanuel</i>	Goring	3.30pm	<i>Reception into church, Office of the Dead</i>
			Goring	7.00pm	<i>Penitential Service with Confessions</i>
			Woodcote	8.00am	Requiem for George Wallace (Latin)
			Goring	10.30am	Funeral Liturgy & Burial
Saturday 24	Feria		Woodcote	NB 12.30pm	Ollie RIP and Lily
			Goring	9.00am	<i>Holy Hour</i>
			Goring	10.00am	Mary's Meals
			Woodcote	12.00pm	<i>Confessions</i>
			Goring	6.00pm	<i>Confessions</i>
			Goring	5.00pm	Vigil Mass (carols from 4.40)
			Woodcote	8.00pm	Mass of the Night (carols from 7.40)
			Goring	10.00pm	Tina Rapinet (anniv.) (carols from 9.40)
Sunday 25	THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD		Goring (Latin)	7.00am	Mass of the Dawn Parish & people
			Goring	8.00am	Mass of the Dawn Parish & people
			Goring	10.00am	Mass of the Day Parish & people
			Woodcote	11.30am	Mass of the Day Parish & people

The priests are always delighted to receive requests for Mass intentions. Please let us know about the ill, the housebound and those who need the Sacraments at home. The Rosary is prayed 15 minutes before Mass. Mass is streamed on the Goring and Woodcote Catholic Parish page on Facebook. Thank you for your generosity to the Catholic Church in so many ways, not least financial.

ADVENT CHANGES GEAR

For the week leading up to Christmas Eve the Church sings the seven "O antiphons" at Vespers, using Old Testament images to address Christ. The final one on the 23rd is "O Emmanuel." The famous Advent hymn which we will sing loudly today uses most of them. The first, O Wisdom, was last Friday, the 17th. The CTS has published a little book called "Praying the O antiphons" which I heartily recommend.

CHURCH CLEANING & DECORATING

Woodcote—Wednesday 21st from 2pm.
Goring—Christmas Eve from 10.30am. Younger parishioners may like to come along and decorate the outdoor Christmas tree. It is a big one this year!

IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER

The Galilee is now equipped for celebrating midweek Masses using the altar which Fr Sammons first installed in 1951 at the shrine of St Joseph under the tower as part of his thanksgiving for 50 years as a priest. The dates are in the stained glass window and also carved into the oak near the altar stone. This will make for a more intimate, warmer and—it must be said—cheaper arrangement for the coldest winter months. The modern insulation in the Galilee makes a huge difference and we can heat the Galilee without heating the whole church. There is an environmental side to this too as we will not be pumping lots of hot air out into the Oxfordshire skies for the benefit of the pigeons.

C.T.K. HEATING

As the huge congregation at Christ the King may have noticed last Sunday, we have done our best. The windows and doors are now fitted with heavy-duty draught excluder and we have an industrial heater which will burn before Rosary to take the edge off. Sadly it is on the noisy side. The missing ceiling panels will be replaced as soon as possible.

COFFEE AFTER MASS

Please stay if you can for a cup of coffee after the 10am Mass to warm yourself up and meet fellow parishioners.

FLOWERS AT CHRISTMAS

I am very grateful to all the volunteers and generous friends. One or two friends have asked if they can make a donation. Gratefully received!

PLEASE PRAY ...

... among the sick for William, Margaret, Jeanie, Rosemary, Anne-Marie, Elizabeth, Mary, John, Gill, Joan, Lavinia, Lyall, Tony, Kevin, John, Linda, Patsy, baby Annabelle, John, Emily, Rose, Ilene, Richard, Catherine, Patrick, Anne, Malcolm, Ida, Charlotte, Denis, Henry, Teresa, Peter, Paul, Jemima, Barry, Oliver, Crispin, Cordelia, Peter, Monica, John, Eva Maria, Tom, Charlie, Sophie, Bob, Paul, Bob, Jacob, Justin, Victoria, Maureen, Eva, Gary, Bob & 10 others.
... for the dead, among them George Wallace, Debbie Lee and Michael Hodgetts.

... for those whose anniversaries fall at this time: Monica Bur-nand, Francis Price, Gladys Evans, Mary Browne, Francis Etherington, Tina Rapinet.

.....New parish forms are available, now GDPR compliant. Our records are a little eccentric; please fill one in so we are up to date and legal.

WEDNESDAY: A BUSY DAY

On the shortest day of the year the Rorate Mass (the votive Mass of Our Lady for Advent) will be offered at 7.00am, lit by candle-light before dawn. Please note that this is half an hour earlier than first advertised. GORING.

That evening: Penitential Service at 7pm with visiting priests. A perfect opportunity to make your confession to someone other than the parish priest. I am very grateful to priests from the deanery for helping at these Penitential services. Fr David Hartley is driving all the way from Thame on a dark winter night. Please make his journey worthwhile! WOODCOTE.

READERS AT MASS TODAY

6pm: Monique Wilkinson 10am: the Singleton family; 11.30: the Hart family.

VOTIVE LAMPS

These burn during December for the Beckett, Brown and Moffett families, for David and Lindsay Goddard and for Tina Rapinet. Please ask for January.

GRAVE LIGHTS

... are available at the back of both churches if you would like one to place on a family grave. I will put one on Fr Antony's on Christmas Day. As you may know, he absolutely loved this time of year. Donation £5.

SAFEGUARDING NEWS

I am very grateful to Mrs Lucy Bonnett for taking over from Kim Walker as our Safeguarding Representative. The formalities have now been processed by the diocese. This is, of course, an essential part in the life of any parish. Full details of Lucy's role and her contact details will be posted very soon.

LOOKING FORWARD: OLSJ AT 125

Pentecost 2023 marks the 125th anniversary of the opening of the church in Goring. To mark the occasion, the Archbishop will be with us on Trinity Sunday, 4 June, which will also be our traditional First Communion Mass. There will be other celebrations.

LIVE ON THE GALILEE WEBSITE

(1) Friday 10 February: the tenor David De Winter and baroque specialists *The Brook Street Band* present a concert of music by Heinrich Schutz in his 350th anniversary year featuring virtuoso music from Venice which the German master visited twice. David is a member of the choir of Westminster Cathedral and Opus Anglicanum, among many other groups, and sang here last year.

(2) *Posting Letters to the Moon*—a dramatized presentation of the wartime letters of Celia Johnson and her husband Peter Fleming on 21 April. An evening of great charm with Lucy Fleming and her husband Simon Williams reading from her parents' wartime letters, the author Peter being in India and the great actress Celia at home in Nettlebed.

A NEW ARRIVAL

Last week a print of Alonso Cano's painting of St John giving Our Lady Holy Communion arrived from Austria and it has been beautifully framed by Dee and Richard Singleton at Reeds' Gallery in the Arcade. This is the kind gift of a friend. It always struck me that it is a bit odd that we do not have an image of our co-patron other than the image in the 12th Station of the Cross. This scene became a popular one in Counter Reformation art and the original now hangs in a gallery in Padua. My thanks to Dee and Richard for their help.

THE YEW HEDGE

You may be thinking that the hedge along the path leading to the main door in Goring is looking rather bald. I have spent some time this week wrestling with the ivy which is threatening to swamp the little yew trees completely. The Holliday family recently gave me some of Charlie's photographs and it is clear that as late as 1998 the hedge was 100% yew. The good news is that it is difficult to kill a yew and given a bit of time the hedge should be back to its best.

TEN MILLION PRAYERS

During the week I hope that some prayer cards will arrive from SPUC. There is a campaign at the moment for people of faith to pray 10 million prayers for life. This is not, of course, just a Catholic or Christian priority. It would be good if we can play our part. We will start on Holy Innocents' Day

MAGNIFICAT & BENEDICTUS

Many of us already use *Magnificat* which comes monthly and contains the prayers and reading not only for Mass but for large parts of the Daily Office and other meditations. I recommend it highly. Why not subscribe for 2023? Details are available through the Catholic Herald website: catholicherald.co.uk/magnificat There is a parallel publication called *Benedictus* with similar provision for the older use and the Latin Mass. Details are at praybenedictus.com

HAVING A PARTY?

The Galilee kitchen has hundreds of glasses, lots of china, cutlery, table linen and other things, available to borrow if you wish. And as a bonus, the parish commercial dishwasher makes slight work of the washing-up. Do ask. The service is free but donations are always welcome, particularly to cover the cost of firing up the Hobart dishwasher. It is also possible to borrow the 10 x 4m awning.

G.D.P.R.

The modern legislation about storing people's data has made significant changes. If you wonder why I do not type the names of the sick in full, this is part of the issue. Some friends, perfectly understandably, wish to be remembered privately and discreetly.

CONFESSIONS BEFORE THE FEAST

Confession should be part of every Christian's routine but particularly in preparation for the great feasts of the year. There will be several opportunities this week:

- the usual penitential service at St Michael's, Sonning Common on Monday 19 December
- our own penitential service at Woodcote on Wednesday 21 December at 7pm.
- Friday 23 December at noon at CTK and 6pm at OLSJ.

ADVENT COURSE ON PRAYER

Our friend Fr John Osman and his parish at Dorchester have developed a fascinating course looking at — and doing — prayer through the lens of St Teresa of Avila, one of the greatest saints of the mystical tradition. This will conclude on Tuesday night at 7pm via Zoom led by a Carmelite sister from an enclosed community.

1. Introduction to St Teresa
2. Finding Christ in prayer
3. Transformation in prayer
4. Prayer and the Church

ZOOM ID code: 5017884510 Passcode: 734516

If you have been intrigued by this but have not been in a position to watch - or to make the technology work! - there are links to the talks and accompanying handouts on the home page of the St Birinus parish web site.

A CONFIRMATION CHANGE

Owing to a combination of circumstances, not just in our own parish, we have taken the decision to postpone the Confirmation to next year. A nice sunny day in the summer may well be easier to arrange.

THE NEEDS BOX

... has been very busy recently. Many of the things which are donated make their way down to the ecumenical Churches Drop-in Centre in Reading where they are put to very good use with people who can give them a good home. With the weather turning much colder and the financial situation really beginning to bite for so many the needs certainly will not be going away. Thank you for everything you do.

A FINAL EMBARRASSED WORD

I have put out the Christmas Offering envelopes as usual. I cannot say how embarrassed I am in drawing these to friends' attention. Perhaps uniquely in the world of 2022 (the Church of England ironed out the idiosyncrasies decades ago) a Catholic priest is supported and has an income (to use an awful word) in unusual and sometimes rather random ways. The Christmas and Easter Offerings are the most significant part of this by far. I cannot tell you how much your kindness means both symbolically and practically. Thank you and God bless you. Fr Jacob and I will say Mass for you all.