

# CATHOLIC EXETER



Parishes of Sacred Heart, Blessed Sacrament, and Holy Cross  
17 December 2023. Third Sunday of Advent Gaudete Sunday. Year B. Psalter Week 3

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Who is coming? This Sunday's readings help answer that question. John the Baptist is asked about the coming of the Messiah – is it him? He affirms his role as “a witness to speak for the light”, by pointing to the one who stands among the crowd unknown to them who is coming after him. This idea is present in the First Reading, where Isaiah proclaims what the “anointed one” (‘Messiah’ in Hebrew) will do, and the joy this will bring. The Psalm appointed for this Sunday is the Magnificat, Mary’s song of praise at the announcement that the Messiah would be born of her. She sings of the works of the coming Messiah. Paul then reminds us that we are still waiting patiently: “God has called you, and he will not fail you.” This is why, on this ‘Gaudete’ Sunday, we as God’s people rejoice in his care, made visible in his promises, fulfilled in Jesus.

# MASS TIMES BLESSED SACRAMENT



## **Sunday 17 December – Third Sunday of Advent – Gaudete Sunday**

- 8.45am *Sick & Housebound of the parish*  
10.45am *For Bishop-elect Christopher Whitehead*  
Followed by refreshments in St Richard Reynolds Centre  
3.00pm *Syro-Malabar Mass*  
6.00pm *People of the Parish*

## **Tuesday 19 December**

- 6.30pm *Hayley Barrett RIP*  
7.00-8.00pm *Exposition and Confessions*

## **Wednesday 20 December**

- 9.30am *Funeral Mass Joan Hoare RIP*  
Followed by refreshments in St Richard Reynolds Centre  
7.00-8.00pm *Exposition and Confessions*

## **Thursday 21 December**

- 9.30am *John & Stella Landers*  
7.00pm *Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament*

## **Friday 22 December**

- 6.30pm *Canon Paul Cummins*

## **Saturday 23 December**

- 9.30am *For Peace in the World*  
Followed by Confessions

## **Sunday 24 December – Fourth Sunday of Advent**

- 8.45am *Kathleen Jenkinson & Family*  
10.45am *All Expectant Mothers*  
2.00pm *Syro-Malabar Mass*

## **Christmas Masses listed below**

### **Confessions**

As detailed below.

### **Liturgy of the Word for Children**

During term time at 10.45am Mass on Sunday.

**Live stream Mass** To access the YouTube stream please [click here](#).

# MASS TIMES SACRED HEART



## **Sunday 17 December – Third Sunday of Advent – Gaudete Sunday**

- 5.30pm (Sat) *People of the Parish*  
9.15am *Michael O'Toole RIP - Mass with Liturgy of the Word for Children.*  
Followed by refreshments in the Lower Room  
11.15am *Biju Varghese RIP*  
1.15pm Mass in Polish  
5.30pm – 6.30pm Confessions with Exposition

## **Monday 18 December**

- 10.00am *Jozef Prywata RIP*

## **Tuesday 19 December**

- 10.00am *Agnes Yendell RIP*  
Followed by refreshments in the Lower Room  
5.30-6.00pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction

## **Wednesday 20 December**

- 10.00am *Biju Varghese RIP*

## **Thursday 21 December**

- 6.30pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction  
7.00pm *Jack Ryan RIP*

## **Friday 22 December**

- 10.00am *Claire Huppler RIP*

## **Saturday 23 December**

- 10.00am *Chris Lee RIP*  
Followed by CWL refreshments in the Lower Room

## **Sunday 24 December – Fourth Sunday of Advent**

- 5.30pm (Sat) *Chris Lee RIP*  
9.15am *Bernard Jaffa RIP.* Followed by refreshments in the Lower Room  
11.15am *People of the Parish*  
1.15pm Mass in Polish

## **Christmas Masses listed below**

**Confessions** Times detailed below.

**Church open** for private prayer from 9.00am until 6.00pm each day.

**Live stream Mass** To access the YouTube stream please [click here](#).

# MASS TIMES HOLY CROSS, TOPSHAM

## **Sunday 17 December Third Sunday of Advent – Gaudete Sunday**

11.15am

*People of the Parish*

## **Thursday 21 December**

10.00am

## **Sunday 24 December Fourth Sunday of Advent**

11.15am

*People of the Parish*

# CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

## **BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Sunday 24 December

6.00pm Vigil Mass

11.30pm Vigil of Readings and Carols

Followed by Mass at Midnight

Monday 25 December

8.45am, 10.45am, No evening Mass

Tuesday 26 December

9.30am

Weds 27 December

9.30am

Thursday 28 December

9.30am

Friday 29 December

6.30pm

Saturday 30 December

9.30am

Sunday 31 December

8.45am, 10.45am, 6.00pm

Monday 1 January

12.00noon *followed by drinks and nibbles*

Tuesday 2 January

6.30pm

## **SACRED HEART**

Sunday 24 December

6.00pm Vigil Mass

9.00pm Polish Mass

11.30pm Vigil of Readings and Carols

Followed by Mass at Midnight

Monday 25 December

9.15am, 11.15am, Polish Mass 1.15pm

Tuesday 26 December

10.00am

Weds 27 December

10.00am

Thursday 28 December

7.00pm

Friday 29 December

10.00am, 7.00pm Polish Carols

Saturday 30 December

10.00am

Sunday 31 December

9.15am, 11.15am, Polish Mass 1.15pm

Monday 1 January

10.00am

Tuesday 2 January

10.00am

## HOLY CROSS TOPSHAM

Monday 25 December 11.00am

Thursday 28 December 10.00am

Sunday 31 December 11.00am

## ADVENT CONFESSIONS

### BLESSED SACRAMENT

Tuesday 19 December 7.00pm

Wednesday 20 December 7.00pm

Saturday 23 December after 9.30am Mass

with Exposition

with Exposition

### SACRED HEART

Thursday 21 December 6.00pm-7.00pm

Friday 22 December 5.30pm-6.30pm

Saturday 23 December after 10am Mass

Saturday 23 December 4.00pm-5.00pm

with Exposition

with Exposition

with Exposition

with Exposition

## EXETER NEWS & EVENTS

### We have a new Bishop!

Pope Francis has appointed Canon Christopher Whitehead as the tenth Bishop of Plymouth. Bishop-elect Christopher is currently Parish Priest of St John's in Bath. Please offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God and for our bishop-elect as he prepares for his ordination to the episcopacy. Thanks be to God!

[Follow this link](#) to find out more.

### Foodbank Tree at Blessed Sacrament

Thank you for your contributions to the Foodbank this Christmas. The tree is now adorned with ribbons symbolising our prayers for our loved ones who have died.

### Christmas Offerings

Envelopes are available at Sacred Heart and Blessed Sacrament for the traditional Christmas offering for our priests.

### Blessed Sacrament Weekly Giving Envelopes

Collect your weekly gift aid and planned giving envelopes from the Parish Office.

### Chatter Café

There will be no "SVP Chatter Cafe" at Sacred Heart after daily Mass times on Wed 20 and Wed 27 December.

# Sacred Heart Church Book Club

The next meeting of the Sacred Heart Book Club will be on Thursday 4 January 2024 at 7.30pm, in the Upper Room, after evening Mass. The book that we are reading is 'Foster', by Claire Keegan. All are welcome.

## Holy Communion at home

If you know of anyone who can no longer come to Mass and would like to be added to the list for home Communion visits from Sacred Heart, please inform Fr Petroc, Fr Albert, or the parish office so that they can be added to our lists. For Blessed Sacrament please contact Fr Jonathan or the Blessed Sacrament Parish Office.

## Putting All Children First – Especially at Christmas Time

Please take time to visit the cribs in our parish churches over the Christmas period. The collection will be donated to the Catholic Children's Society as it works across the diocese spreading God's love and giving families hope in times of crisis. We continue to ask you for a combination of concern, prayer and action. May God bless all our supporters and donors.

## St Nicholas School News

The children took part in the **Reindeer Run** on Friday 8 December and raised a fantastic £620.66 for Hospiscare. The children all ran around the school field wearing homemade reindeer antlers and singing Rudolf the Red Nose Reindeer. There was a lot of laughter and even a few members of staff dressed up as reindeer!

On Wednesday we held our **annual Christmas jumper day** in support of CAFOD world gifts. This year we allowed the children to go a little more Christmassy! It was lovely to see the children all dressed up with Christmas jumpers, hats and sparkles! This definitely created a very festive atmosphere for our Christmas dinner day where the staff served the children. We raised £202 for CAFOD which will do so much to help some of the poorest families in the world.

**Year 5 trip to London** We are so excited to be taking the year 5 children on a trip to London. They are going to have an amazing time. We will begin our trip on the 4 January with a visit to parliament where the children will learn all about Government and democracy. This will be followed by dinner at Pizza Express before we go to see Matilda the Musical. After such a busy day, the children will have a good night's rest before visiting The Imperial War Museum. It will be a very busy two days!

## Exeter Foodbank

The Food Bank is under extreme pressure by increased demand from its usual clients as well as the need to support Afghan, Syrian and Ukrainian refugees. Donations of the following priority items are especially needed: tinned meat, tinned vegetables, tinned fruit, noodle & pasta snacks, small jars of coffee and rice pudding. Collection Points include – Co-Op (Heavitree/St Thomas); Tesco (Exe Vale); Sainsbury's Alphington/Pinhoe/Guildhall); Waitrose (Gladstone Rd) as well as the back

of the Blessed Sacrament and Sacred heart churches. Please email Mark at [info@exeterfoodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@exeterfoodbank.org.uk) to find out how you can help. More information about Food Bank can be found at <https://exeter.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/>

## Coffee after Sunday Mass at Blessed Sacrament

We serve refreshments after the 10.45am Mass on Sunday morning but we are in need of more volunteers. The more people helping the less frequently you will have to be put on the rota. If you can help please contact Niamh Owens on 01392 986702 or email: [niamhowens@googlemail.com](mailto:niamhowens@googlemail.com)

## WIDER NEWS

### The Jubilee 2025 & the Year of Preparation



There will be a Jubilee of the whole Church in 2025 and we are going to be spending the coming year preparing for such an event. The theme of the Jubilee (Pilgrims of Hope) is an occasion of joy and mercy. Events will be planned throughout the year, it is an occasion of grace and celebration. You can view the trailer for the Jubilee [here](#) There is also an App, available on all devices – **Iubilaeum25** – which contains latest news, the hymn for the Jubilee, and a calendar of events.

The Holy Father has asked us to focus on two things: the **Our Father**, and the four **Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council**. The Our Father as a means to focus our prayer, and the Constitutions as a means to renew catechesis in the Church.

### Diocese of Plymouth Newsletter

The diocese is publishing a regular newsletter with items of interest from across the diocese as well as further afield. [Here is the link to the latest newsletter](#) And here is [the link](#) if people would like to sign up to receive the next newsletter and weekly Advent reflections.

### Diocesan Yearbook 2024

The 2024 Diocesan Yearbook is now available at Blessed Sacrament at a cost of £4.00. It is a great source of diocesan information and news. Please put your payment in the wall box marked 'Books'.

### Diocese of Plymouth Advent Reflections

For some lovely reflections and prayers from around the diocese [follow this link](#).

# Caritas Plymouth

## Homelessness – How are we called to respond?

Online event 6-7pm Wednesday 17 January 2024

According to the charity Crisis, on a given night around 1 in 100 households in England are experiencing the worst forms of homelessness. Forecasts show homelessness rising significantly in the immediate future, with inflation squeezing real incomes and increasing poverty and destitution, alongside rising private rents and evictions. Many people in our Diocese will be affected by this housing crisis but it can be difficult to know how to help.

Why not join Caritas Diocese of Plymouth on Zoom on Wednesday 17 January from 6.00pm-7.00pm to pray and reflect on this important issue and to hear from charities across our Diocese about what they are doing and how we can respond. St Petrocs Cornwall and Routes to Roots based in Poole will be sharing their work and insights. Please register to receive the Zoom details <https://forms.office.com/e/VVp5t5qU7F>

Caritas Newsletter: With news of love in action around our diocese can be found if you [by following this link](#).

Cost of Living Signposting: information can be found [by following this link](#).

Reverse Advent Calendar: We have also created a reverse advent giving calendar to encourage donations to local foodbanks in the run up to Christmas - a great idea. Find details [by following this link](#).

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And here is [the link](#) if people would like to sign up to receive the next newsletter and weekly reflections.

## Community News

### Cost of Living Support

The rise in the cost of living means that we are all having to dig a little deeper to pay for household essentials such as food and energy. Many people in Devon are being forced to make difficult decisions, especially those on the lowest incomes. Devon County Council has put together this info on what support is available: [click here](#)

### Free Food

Updated Free Food Guide for people without a home can be found [by clicking here](#)

Note the Salvation Army meals on Saturday and Sunday will both be at lunchtime, 1.00pm – 2.00pm and St Thomas Food Fight are recommencing their in-person hot meal table in Cowick Street on Sundays at 11.30am – 12.30pm from 5 November.



# FORMING IN FAITH

## RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Is God calling you? Are you seeking to discover more about the Catholic Church? The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is an opportunity for you to learn more. These sessions are aimed at those wanting to learn more, desiring to receive Baptism or Confirmation in the Catholic Church. If you would like to discover more, join our RCIA course every Thursday at 7.30pm in the Lower Room at Sacred Heart.

## Want to learn more about the Sacraments?

Bishop Robert Barron reminds us that the great sacraments of the Church are true encounters with Christ. Through the seven sacraments of the Church, Jesus is present. The sacraments have endured for thousands of years and blessed countless lives. Everything in the Church's life comes from and returns to them. Join us every fortnight on Monday morning after the 10.00am Mass until 12.15pm in the Lower Room Sacred Heart. Next and last session for 2023 18 December. There will be a break until we meet again on Monday 15 January 2024. All welcome.

## GIFT tots Beginning in January 2024.

An hour of fun faith for pre-school age children and their parents and carers. Come together to pray, sing, explore and create the Good News as we Grow In Faith Together. Second Friday every month at St Richard Reynolds Centre, Blessed Sacrament. Fourth Friday every month at the Lower Room Sacred Heart. 10.15-11.15am. **Registration is required to attend**, please complete one registration form per child attending the group that you will find at the link below. See you there. [GIFTots Registration](#)

## GIFT Youth & Socials News

The next Gift Youth Social will be on 19 January 2024. If you have signed up for Gift Youth details of the next session will be sent out to you. We ask that the parent of any young person **MUST** have registered/re-registered them using the NEW form [use this link](#) before they come along to future Gift Youth Socials and Gift Youth Saturdays. This ensures the safety of the young people.

## GIFT families

GIFT is offered to all primary and secondary aged families and supports them to live and grow as Catholic Christians. GIFT meets monthly to worship together and learn about our Catholic faith. GIFT also enables parents to prepare their children to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation. [Click here to register for GIFT.](#)

Next GIFT Meeting **Saturday 13 January at 9.45am** at St Nicholas School, Ringswell Avenue, Exeter EX1 3EG.

## Wednesday Word Scripture Reflection

We meet online via Zoom from 2.00 – 3.00pm each Wednesday. If you would like to join us, contact Maria: [exeter-pastoral-assistant@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:exeter-pastoral-assistant@prcdtr.org.uk). Come whenever you can to explore the riches of the scriptures. You will be most welcome.

## Baptism Preparation Course

Are you expecting a baby and/or wish to have your child baptised? We look forward to supporting you in preparation for this important sacrament and welcoming you and your family into the community of the Church. Courses are over two consecutive Saturday mornings from 10.15-12.15 delivered via Zoom.

Forthcoming dates: **27 January & 3 February**, 20 & 27 April, 20 & 27 July and 12 & 19 October 2024. Godparents are especially welcome to attend the second Saturday session as the role of Godparents is explored. Click on the link at the end of this article to register. If you have any problems accessing this, contact Lesley on 01392 274724 or [exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk). We are now taking bookings for the January 2024 course. [Baptism Enquiry form](#)

## PRAYER & LITURGY

### Worship Thursday at Blessed Sacrament

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament each Thursday 7.00-8.00pm

**With Taizé** 2nd Thursday of each month: 11 January 2024.

**With Praise & Worship** Third Thursday of each month: 18 January 2024.

### Pope's December Prayer Intention

That people with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusion programmes that value their participation.

### Adoration & Taizé Prayer at Sacred Heart

Wednesday 3 January at 7.00pm. Come and join the Lord in this time of prayer.

*"The Almighty has done great things for me; holy is his name."* – *Magnificat antiphon*

### We commend to the Lord...

Joan Hoare and Jackie Coombs who have died recently. A funeral Mass for Joan will be celebrated at Blessed Sacrament on Wednesday 20 December at 9.30am. May they rest in peace and rise in glory and may their families find consolation and peace.

### Prayers for Expectant Mothers Sunday 24 December

For all who are waiting for a birth; may they be given patience and strength.

For all who work in maternity units and with mothers; may they always recognise and cherish the gift of life.

# THE WORD

## Sunday 17 December Third Sunday of Advent Gaudete Sunday

**First Reading** Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11

*He has sent me to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.*

**Psalm Response:** My soul rejoices in my God.

**Second Reading:** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

*May you all be kept safe for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*

**Gospel** John 1:6-8,19-28

*There stands among you the one coming after me.*

## Sunday 24 December Fourth Sunday of Advent

**First Reading** 2 Samuel 7:1-5.8-12.14.16

*The kingdom of David will always stand secure before the Lord.*

**Psalm Response:** I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.

**Second Reading:** Romans 16:25-27

*The mystery, which was kept secret for endless ages, is now made clear.*

**Gospel** Luke 1:26-28

*Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son.*

# MAGNIFICAT



# CONTACT US

## Sacred Heart

25 South Street, Exeter EX1 1EB  
01392 642389

[exeter-sacredheart@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:exeter-sacredheart@prcdtr.org.uk)

### Parish Priest

*Fr Petroc Cobb 01392 642388*

### Assistant Priests

*Fr Albert Lawes 01392 642378*

### Deacons

*Brian Bargent*

*Delian Bower*

*Kelvin Russell*

### Parish Secretary

*Coral Saunders-Mortier*

*Office Hours 9.00am–12.00pm &  
1.00pm–4.00pm Tuesday–Friday*

Gift Aid enquiries: [exeter-sacredheart-giftaid@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:exeter-sacredheart-giftaid@prcdtr.org.uk)

## Blessed Sacrament

29 Fore Street, Heavitree,  
Exeter EX1 2QJ  
01392 274724

[exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk)

### Parish Priest

*Fr Jonathan Stewart*

### Priest in retirement

*Fr John Watkins*

### Parish Secretary

*Lesley Hooper*

*Office hours Tuesday, Wednesday,  
Thursday 10.00am–4.00pm*

Gift Aid enquiries:  
[exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:exeter-heavitree@prcdtr.org.uk)

## Parish School

St Nicholas Catholic Primary School  
Ringswell Avenue, Exeter EX1 3EG  
01392 445403

[admin@stnics.uk](mailto:admin@stnics.uk)

[www.st-nicholas-exeter.devon.sch.uk](http://www.st-nicholas-exeter.devon.sch.uk)

### Executive Head Teacher

*Cathy Blatchford*

## Pastoral Assistant

*Maria Quinn*

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## Safeguarding

### Sacred Heart

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*Coral Saunders-Mortier*

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### Blessed Sacrament

*Lesley Hooper*

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*Maria Edwards*

07870 696530

## Useful links

[Bishops' Conference Updates](#)

[Churches Together Devon News](#)

[Churches Together Exeter News](#)

[Churches Together England News](#)

*Catholic Exeter is part of the Roman  
Catholic Diocese of Plymouth.*