

ST BONS NEWSLETTER - Christmas edition:

22nd & 29th December 2024

MONSIGNOR BERNARD'S MESSAGE

So it's only a few days to go until we celebrate Christmas on Wednesday. Personally, my favourite day to celebrate Christmas is Sunday and the worst days are Saturdays or Mondays, because it gets very complicated in working out which Mass you are putting on, and what you're celebrating, but when it's mid-week, it's pretty clear as to what is what.

On Saturday, we have church cleaning in the morning and then a Christingle service in the afternoon so we have a general tidy up the church followed by a somewhat messy church service. It's amazing, isn't it, how at this time of the year we plan things, and then realise that actually they should've been the other way round?!

Let's be honest, it wouldn't really be Christmas if there wasn't at least a bit of chaos. However, it's nothing to the chaos of the first Christmas where a pregnant woman bouncing up and down on a donkey travels hundreds of miles to a place where there's no accommodation. You see, it shows us that God is in the middle of the mess of our lives. When everything is perfectly organised then God often becomes a spectator, and we don't call on His name.

In every refugee camp around the world people will be calling on the name of God, sometimes just so they can survive until tomorrow. In other parts of our world people are waiting for Christmas to be over so that they can go to the January sales. So whatever you're doing over the next week, this year I wish you not a merry Christmas, but a messy Christmas.

EVENTS, PARISH & COMMUNITY

Please Pray For: Enzo Maniglia. Peter Sewell. Eddie Williams. Paul Tooze. Margaret Rogers. Rosemary Hatherly. Sheelagh Gaines. Ninette Bateman. Madeline Walsh. Giovanni Maniglia. Liz Baldwin. We also pray for Diana Charlesworth who died recently. If you would like to be named in the Newsletter, please contact the Parish Office.

Baptism: We welcome Isabelle Bodvin baptised into the family of the Church on 4th January.

Thank you to everyone who supported the CAFOD Cake Sale last Sunday. We raised £230.00 to support refugee families who have fled conflict or disaster, and to provide children's 'stockings' containing hats, scarves and gloves to keep warm, plus toys, books and sweets for Christmas.

Last call for the First Holy Communion 2025: Closing date for FHC applications is Friday, 3rd January. Application form can be found on our website. Parents' meeting will be on 12th January after the morning Mass.

Parish Open Morning: You are warmly invited to a Parish Open Morning on **Saturday 11th January 2025**. We will start with Mass at 9.30 followed by refreshments. Representatives from our parish groups will speak briefly about what they do, then afterwards there will be time to talk informally and find out more about what goes on at St Bons. We are holding this event to mark the beginning of the Church's Jubilee Year in 2025. In keeping with the theme of Pilgrimage, we are inviting parishioners from neighbouring churches in our Pastoral Area (formerly Deanery) to join us, and hoping for invitations to visit their parishes later in the year.

Senior Citizens' Christmas party: This year's Christmas party for our senior citizens will be on Saturday 18th January. It will start with the Mass at 11.00am - remember to put this date in your diaries! To reserve a place, please call Veronica Swann on 01179427018.

Livesimply Thought for the Week: As we sing "Oh little town of Bethlehem" this Christmas, let us remember the suffering and destruction occurring in the Holy Land and other parts of our war-torn world. Let such thoughts inspire us to be grateful for all we have and to share what we can. This is the season of hope - let us put our trust in a God who became human to share our troubles, challenges and joys. He calls on us to play our part in building a peaceful, hope-filled world - let us spend time listening to Him and saying 'yes' as Mary did.

Community Food Pantry Update:

Please donate: Christmas treats - selection boxes or other Christmassy things, Tinned vegan meals, Tinned meat meals, Cereal, Pesto, Tomato purée, Dried lentils, Shampoo

Please DO NOT donate: Fresh food (we can't safely store it and it will go to waste)

Parent & Baby/Toddler Group: Monday, 10am - 12pm. For more info or if you'd like to be added to the WhatsApp group please contact Claire on 07871627928.

Rosary Prayer Group: Rosary group meets every Tuesday in St Elizabeth dining room in Presbytery at 2pm. All welcome. Prayer requests welcome. Telephone Julia 07746101030

Drop in Coffee Morning: Everyone is welcome on 2nd Wednesday of the month 10.30-12.00. Come along to the presbytery to meet up with old friends or make new ones while enjoying a cuppa. People living with dementia and their carers particularly welcome. Next date: 8 January. Any questions, contact Veronica Swann 07884134599.

Art Group: On 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month 10.00 – 12.00. All welcome, including beginners, to join small and very friendly group. Bring your own materials. Any questions, contact Chris Swann 01179427018 or Cath Lucas 078069437664.

Breviary Morning Prayer: Every Thursday 9am in the church.

Friday Soup Lunches: We will be having a short break over the holidays, recommencing Friday, 10th Jan in the Presbytery from 12 noon, all welcome! Donations are sent to charity. More information from Chris Swann on 01179427018.

Men of St Joseph: Bible and Catechism study with real life application to become a better Catholic man, Husband, Father and forge a lasting brotherhood of men of the faith. Meetings every 1st Friday of the month at 7.30pm. If you're interested, please see Deacon Bart or Juan Carlos (altar servers) after 10am Mass or come to the meeting.

Tea & Coffee: Join us in the Presbytery after Sunday morning Mass for tea, coffee biscuits and a chance to chat.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

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| Sunday 22 | 4th Sunday of Advent | 10.00 | Bill & Hanna Tully RIP |
| | | 18.00 | Patrick & Rose Galvin RIP |
| Monday 23 | Weekday of Advent II | | No Mass |
| Tuesday 24 | Children's Christmas Mass | 17.00 | People of the Parish |
| | Mass of Christmas Night | 22.00 | People of the Parish |
| Wednesday 25 | Solemnity of the Nativity of The Lord | 10.00 | People of the Parish |
| Thursday 26 | Saint Steven, The First Martyr (Christmas Day) | 10.00 | Mary Legg & Jeannie Meier |
| Friday 27 | Feast of Saint John, Apostle, Evangelist | 9.30 | Juan Mondragon RIP |
| Saturday 28 | Feast of the Holy Innocents | 9.30 | Private intention |
| Sunday 29 | The Holy Family of Jesus | 10.00 | Thanksgiving |
| | | 18.00 | People of the Parish |
| Monday 30 | Sixth day within the octave of Christmas | | No Mass |
| Tuesday 31 | Seventh day within the octave of Christmas | 9.30 | Refugees |
| Wednesday 1 | Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God | 10.00 | Thomas Barnes RIP |
| Thursday 2 | Ss Basil the great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops | 9.30 | Pope Francis |
| Friday 3 | Weekday of Christmas Time | 9.30 | Mason Family |
| Saturday 4 | Weekday of Christmas Time | 9.30 | Bishop Bosco |
| Sunday 5 | Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord | 10.00 | Roger Mason RIP |
| | | 18.00 | People of the Parish |

Happy Christmas!