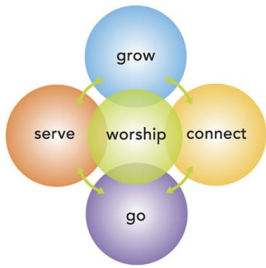


The Parish of
STONY STRATFORD
 with
CALVERTON



THE PARISH NEWSLETTER
THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
SUNDAY 24th January AD 2016



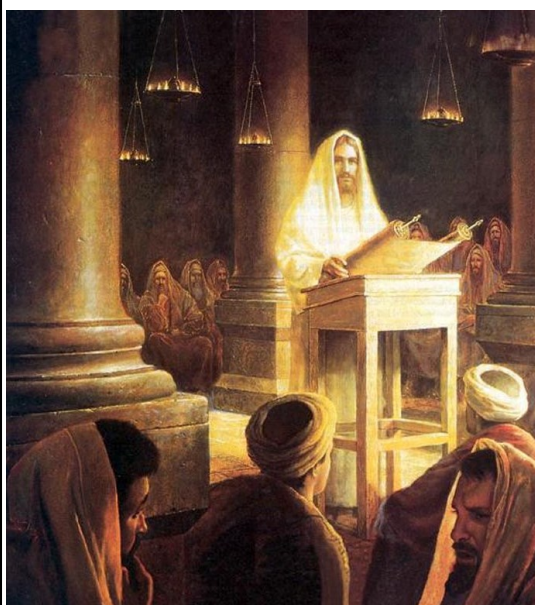
Welcome to the Parish Church where, after the example of the early church, we celebrate the Eucharist: the "apostles teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42)

The Gospel is from St. Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21. In the first four verses of St. Luke's Gospel which have been read to you today, you will find reason to be grateful to him. He went to a lot of trouble in order to put in a permanent form, in a written record, the essential facts concerning Christ, his words and his works, so that we "would understand (like Theophilus) the certainty of the faith in which we have been instructed."

But while we must be grateful to St. Luke, we owe a bigger debt of gratitude still to the all-good, all-wise God who moved Luke and the other Evangelists to preserve for us in writing the essential truths of the Christian faith that has been handed down to us. The Apostles were companions of Christ. They witnessed his works and his words; they remembered most of his doings and his sayings, and what they might have forgotten the Holy Spirit recalled to their memory on that first Pentecost day in Jerusalem. The first two generations of Christians received the facts of the faith from these eyewitnesses and the miracles so frequent in the infant Church were confirmation of the truth of their teaching.

But God in his wisdom provided for the many generations to come who would not have this evident confirmation of their faith. He established a teaching body in his Church which would safeguard the purity of the Christian truths, for "he himself would be with it all days," and he gave us a written record of the facts of the faith in the Gospels and the other writings of the New Testament.

How can we ever thank God sufficiently for his thoughtfulness in our regard? We Christians of today can be as certain, as assured, of the truth of the faith that we are trying to practice as was St. Luke who was converted by St. Paul. We have a living, teaching Magisterium in the Church, which authentically preserves and interprets for us the true facts of Christ's teaching and works as written down for us by a first-generation Christian under the impulse and guidance of God's Holy Spirit. If we needed further proof of the priceless value of our New Testament Books, the virulent attacks on their authenticity, on their objectivity, and on their veracity, by enemies of the faith down to and including our own day, should be sufficient.



But they have stood the test of time and the onslaughts of biased, prejudiced criticism, for they are the word of truth, which is eternal, and comes from God.

THIS WEEK IN OUR PARISH

- TODAY:** **3rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**
9:30am PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles
11:00am. Family Mass at All Saints
 Pray for: Our Parish (Education Sunday)
- Monday: The Conversion of St Paul**
(Octave of Prayer for the Unity of the Church ends today)
 9:30am 'Squeals on Wheels' in Parish Hall
 8:00pm Bell Ringing Practice
 Pray for: The Sick, Housebound & Handicapped
- Tuesday: St Timothy & St Titus, Bishops**
 10:00am Calverton Almshouses Charity Meets
10:30am Mass at All Saints + 'Elevenses'
 Pray for: For Christians facing Persecution
- Wednesday: Feria**
 6:00pm Parish Office Open to arrange: Banns, Marriages & Baptisms
 6:15pm Handbell Ringing Practice at SMSG School
 7:30pm The Band - Practice at SMSG School
7:30pm Mass at St Mary & St Giles
 7:30pm Milton Keynes Deanery Synod at Christ the Cornerstone
 Pray for: For victims of terrorism
- Thursday: St Thomas Aquinas, Priest & Doctor**
9:15am Mass at St Mary & St Giles
 7:00pm Parish Diary Planning at the Rectory
 Pray for: For all theologians
- Friday: Feria**
8:00am Mass at St Mary & St Giles School
 7:30pm Parish Singers Rehearsal
 Pray for: For our Church School
- Saturday: Feria**
 4:00pm Confessions in St Mary & St Giles
 4:30pm Evening Prayer in St Mary & St Giles
 Pray for: All Visitors to our Parish Churches

Next Sunday: THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD (CANDLEMASS)

- 9:30am PARISH MASS at St Mary & St Giles**
11:00am. Family Mass at All Saints
 Pray for: Our Parish

READINGS NEXT SUNDAY
The Presentation of the Lord

- 1st Reading: Malachi 3:1-4
 Psalm: 24 (part)
 2nd Reading: Hebrews 2:14-18
 Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

- Sidesmen Team 4
 Altar Servers Team 3
 Offertory Shirley Archer & Alan Butler
 Cleaning Team 4
 Gardening Team 2

Worshipping Numbers last Sunday: 93 (snow!!)

INFORMATION



The Order of Mass is on the laminated card. The references to the Scripture Readings, which may be either listened to or followed in the Bibles provided, along with the Psalm and the Prayer of the Faithful are also included in this Sheet. Hymns are unannounced but are indicated on the boards towards the front of the Nave.

AA Large Print Orders of Service are available at St Mary & St Giles. Please ask a Sidesman or Sideswoman for a copy.



A Loop System is in operation at St Mary & St Giles - please set hearing aids to the "T" position.



Access for the Disabled at St Mary & St Giles is via the path on the north side of the church. **At All Saints** it is via the South Porch.



Gluten-Free Hosts: if you are on a Gluten-Free diet and would like a Gluten-Free Host when you receive Holy Communion please mention this before Mass to one of the Sidesmen or women who will arrange this for you. Please make yourself known to the Parish Priest so that he is aware of your need.



Collections: for the continuing mission of Christ are taken while the altar and gifts of bread and wine are being prepared. If you are a visitor and a taxpayer and would like to make a donation please use the Gift Aid envelopes provided at the end of each row - please fill in your details. This enables us to reclaim, from the Inland Revenue, 25p for each £1 donated.



We observe a period of quiet prayer and reflection before the celebration of Mass, between the end of the Organ Voluntary and the Sacristy Bell being rung, in order that we may be better prepared to worship almighty God.



Please join us at the back of church for tea or coffee after Mass. A priest will be near the main door shortly after the end of Mass should you need to talk with one.

Please take this Service Sheet home with you and use as part of your devotions during the week.

FUTURE DIARY DATES

Wednesday 27th January

Almshouses Charity Meeting
MK Deanery Synod

Monday 1st February

Greenleys First School visit St Mary & St Giles Church Pipe Organ
Rector at 'Shared Conversations'

Tuesday 2nd February CANDLEMASS

10:30am Mass & 'Elevesens' at All Saints
7:30pm Parish Mass at SMSG

Thursday 4th February

Meeting of Rector & Flower Arrangers regarding Flower Festival for HM The Queen's 90th Birthday

Sunday 7th February

6:00pm Evensong at All saints with 'Quorum'

Tuesday 9th February Shrove Tuesday

5:30pm Confessions

Wednesday 10th February ASH WEDNESDAY

7:30pm Parish Mass with Imposition of Ashes

Saturday 13th February

10:00am 'Musical Bite' Coffee Morning at SMSG

Wednesday 17th February

7:00pm the 1st of this Lent's weekly celebrations of the Stations of the Cross at SMSG
7:30pm Mass at SMSG
8:00pm the start of the Course 'A Faith for Skeptics' in the Parish Hall

Sunday 21st February

Masses as usual
4:00pm Lenten Motets & Meditations

Sunday 5th March

The Rector, at the Invitation of the Bishop of Dorchester, will be participating in the Diocesan 'Shared Conversations' on Human Sexuality
Fr Joseph will celebrate both Masses today.

Saturday 12th March

10:00am 'Musical Bite' Coffee Morning at SMSG

Tuesday 15th March

7:30pm Parochial Church Council in Parish Hall

Advent Boxes: The Treasurer reports that so far we have only had 25 Advent Boxes returned. If you haven't done so please return yours by next Sunday. If you forgot to take one during Advent and would like to make a donation to SANDS please place it in an envelope marked "2015 Advent Appeal" and bring it to Mass with you next Sunday. Thank you

Palm Crosses: Please return your Palm Crosses in order that they may be burnt to ashes for Ash Wednesday. Thank you.

Faculty Granted: I am delighted to be able to report that on Wednesday morning of last week we received in the post the Faculty for the disabled access, gallery extension, additional toilet, storeroom, replacement seating, décor and insulation at St Mary & St Giles. The only condition attached to the faculty is that copies of photographic record of all parts of the church affected by the approved works and measured drawings to be deposited with the DAC and the County Records Office. The work of fundraising / grant seeking can now begin in earnest and I have called a meeting to get that started. I would like to thank all those who helped with the preparation of all the documents required for the faculty application. Fr Ross

VERY IMPORTANT - Sound System: It is really important that the sound system at St Mary & St Giles is operated each week, but for this to happen we need volunteers to be trained in its use. Please have a word with the Rector or Churchwardens if you would be willing to be part of a rota of volunteers who manage this during the Parish Mass on Sundays and Feast Days. Thank you.

Scripture Readers at Mass and the Offertory bearers: as a parish family we are hugely grateful to all those who take part each week in various ways in the Liturgy. With the need for the Rector to spend some time at the back of church after Mass before needing to leave for the 11:00am Mass at All Saints it would be really helpful if we could ensure that the Mass runs more to time. If Scripture readers could be at the Lectern at the start of the preceding item of the reading they have been asked to read that would be really helpful - so the First Reader should be at the Lectern as the Collect commences and the Second Reader should be at the Lectern as the Psalm commences

In order that the altar can be prepared at the Offertory without undue delay could those responsible for bringing up the Gifts of Bread and Wine each week please ensure that this is done during the first verse of the Offertory hymn. The alms may be brought up towards the end of the hymn as they take time to collect. Thank you.

Thursday 28th January - Parish Diary Planning Meeting: Would all those who need to book dates in the Parish Diary for the remainder of the year (and make advance bookings for 2017), please come to the Rectory at **7:00pm** in order that we can ensure that everything is planned as much as possible. Thank you.

SMSG Flower Arrangers Meeting: will take place on Thursday 4th February at 12 Market Square. At this meeting a proposed Flower Festival to mark HM The Queen's 90th Birthday will be discussed and planned.

Urgent Request: Do you know of any organists or pianists who would be willing to play at the 11:00am Family Mass at All Saints to cover two Sunday's per month. Please let

PARISH NEWS AND NOTICES



Fr Ross know if you do, or indeed if you are hiding your light under a bushel and might be willing to have a go.

Email Spoofing: about four people have recently contacted me about strange emails which appear to come from me. They start "r.northing" but then if you look closely the email address after "@" is not mine. Essentially these emails are simply spam. The only emails that are bona fide from me will be from either: "btinternet.com" or from "parishstonystratfordcalverton.com"

You might want to read the advice on what is called "Email Spoofing" on this page: https://askleo.com/why_am_i_getting_email_from_someone_with_the_wrong_email_address/

I hope this reassures you and helps. *Fr Ross*

Lent, Holy Week & Easter 2016

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (8th February) and Easter is very early this year on March 27th.

What can I do?

Begin to prepare to keep a good and Holy Lent. Think about what spiritual discipline you are going to take on rather than simply giving up vegetable (in reality that is what much Milk Chocolate is as the cocoa solids are so often substituted with vegetable fats).

There is nothing wrong with making sacrifices...indeed it is commendable ...providing one doesn't binge once Easter Day arrives!

However, the taking up either the:

Corporal Works of Mercy

- To feed the hungry;
- To give drink to the thirsty;
- To clothe the naked;
- To harbour the harbourless;
- To visit the sick;
- To ransom the captive;
- To bury the dead.

or, the Spiritual Works of Mercy:

- To instruct the ignorant;
- To counsel the doubtful;
- To admonish sinners;
- To bear wrongs patiently;
- To forgive offences willingly;
- To comfort the afflicted;
- To pray for the living and the dead.

are an ancient and proven Lenten discipline to aid progress in the spiritual life and draw us closer to Christ.

If you wish some guidance in preparing for Lent, please ask Fr Ross to arrange to see you.

Parochial Church Council News: The PCC met on Thursday evening of last week and discussed a number of items.

The PCC noted with delight that the Organ refurbishment is now complete and that the Diocesan Organ Advisor had inspected the organ and was of the opinion that we had got good value for money and identified no matters of serious concern. He has asked for a few things to be done, which amount to no more than an additional day's work. Two of the items he identified were not part of our contract with FH Browne and Sons. One is a repair to the organ blower which has a slight leak and the other is to

install an adjustable organist's bench (as not all organists are the same height of have the same leg measurements!). The PCC agreed to have these matters dealt with.

Mrs Salter reported that a good number of concerts were already booked for this year and even some for 2017. The PCC's new charging arrangement for concert ensures that both the Organ and Restoration Funds benefit from each concert.

There were no items of immediate concern on the fabric of either church. The PCC was delighted to learn that the faculty had been granted and received for the Disabled Access, Western Gallery Extension, Additional Toilet and Storeroom, Decoration of the Church, Replacement Seating, and insulation above the ceiling at St Mary & St Giles. The PCC were informed that a first planning meeting to start the process of appealing for grants had been arranged for yesterday afternoon.

Mr Salter reported that the floodlighting at St Mary & St Giles had now been repaired.

The Treasurer guided the PCC through the accounts for the end of the year and distributed draft accounts for 2015 in readiness for the March PCC Meeting at which it will need to "receive" the Accounts. Last year we managed to pay an additional amount of £5000 towards the Parish Share (the total paid was £34,000, which is unfortunately still far short of the £54,000 apportioned to us by the Milton Keynes Deanery Finance Committee. It was also reported that after the new sheds and path works had been completed at St Mary & St Giles the Restoration Fund would stand at about £45,000

It was agreed that in Lent this year we would support the Barnabas Fund, which helps persecuted Christians throughout the world.

Sister Janet had submitted a written report to the PCC on the initial responses to our Visiting Teams going out with the "Local Information Packs." The new residents visited so far have all been very appreciative that the Church is doing something so practical and helpful.

It was agreed that a copy of the display about the expanded parish should be erected at All Saints Church as well as St Mary & St Giles.

The Rector outlined some more of his thinking about the future impact of the four-fold increase in parish population on how the parish is run - following his article in the Parish Newsletter of 13th December 2015. The PCC will be considering this further over its next few meetings.

Mrs Salter reported on children's activities off premises, DBS matters and informed the PCC that a copy of its 'Children's Policy' was being personalised for All Saints Church as the new time of Mass there is starting to attract families and as the parish expands numbers may well grow.

Mr Salter had submitted a written report to the PCC on our Church School and highlighted a number of matters including that day's training session for the Full Governing Body on recruitment and retention of teachers and the pressures that lead to 25% of all newly qualified teachers leaving the profession after 5 years. Happily that is not the case at St Mary & St Giles.

The Rector reported that HM The Queen's 90th Birthday would be marked by a Flower Festival at SMSG. Mrs Salter has organised a Cream Teas event with music. The PCC agreed that the Beacon should be lit. The Rector will be organising special Services in both churches.

MASS TEXTS PROPER TO TODAY'S OBSERVANCE

Reflection before Mass:

The Lord Jesus came to preach the gospel to the poor, the oppressed, the underprivileged. We who profess to follow him are called to show our real concern for the poor of the world. As we offer this Mass let us pray God to move our hearts to respond to the needs of our neighbour.

The Collect

Almighty God, whose Son revealed in signs and miracles the wonder of your saving presence: renew your people with your heavenly grace, and in all our weakness sustain us by your mighty power; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (SIT)

The First Reading Nehemiah 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10
SMSG Reader: Sharon Sherwood Old Testament Page 359
All Saints Reader: Sister Janet

The Responsorial Psalm (from Psalm 19)

**R/. Your words are spirit, Lord,
and they are life.**

The law of the Lord is perfect,
it revives the soul.

The rule of the Lord is to be trusted,
it gives wisdom to the simple. ®

The precepts of the Lord are right,
they gladden the heart.

The command of the Lord is clear,
it gives light to the eyes. ®

The fear of the Lord is holy,
abiding for ever.

The decrees of the Lord are truth
and all of them just. ®

May the spoken words of my mouth,
the thoughts of my heart,
win favour in your sight, O Lord,
my rescuer, my rock! ®

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 12:12-30
Reader: Matthew Lucas New Testament Page 145

Gospel Acclamation (STAND)

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Lord has set me to preach good news to the poor,
to proclaim release to the captives.

Alleluia!

The Gospel Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21
New Testament Pages 48 & 52

The Prayer of the Faithful (Biddings: Jenny Rowilson)

Priest: Let us pray for the Church and for the world, and let us thank God for his goodness.

Intercessor: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, you promised through your Son Jesus Christ to hear us when

we pray in faith.

Strengthen *Jonathan* our bishop and all your Church in the service of Christ;that those who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

V/. Lord, hear us.

R/. Lord, graciously hear us.

Bless and guide Elizabeth our Queen; give wisdom to all in authority; and direct this and every nation in the ways of justice and of peace;that all may honour one another, and seek the common good.

Give grace to us, our families and friends, and to all our neighbours;that we may serve Christ in one another, and love as he loves us.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit ...Wendy, Fiddy Abraham, Anna Archer, Maggie Baker, Mary Barry, Henry Blake, Richard Coley, Gill Edwards, Sue Gower, Russell Herbert, Paul, Margaret Hooton, Rebecca, Magnus John, Isaac Lyon, Sue Maton, Cyril Millward, Capt John Richards CA, Shirley Scrutton, Jenny Smallbones, Alma Steinmetz, Fr Edmund, June Wilde, Janis Williams, Jeff Wright, Marian Wright... give them courage and hope in their troubles; and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Hear us as we remember those who have died in the faith of Christ..Caroline Adebisi, Lyn Butterworth, Gloria Dixey, Martha John, Iris McLennan, Susan de Mont, Joan Orchard, Mick Phillips, Jack Smith... and for those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time...**24th** Ted Goodman, Edith Edwards; **25th** Eileen Froggatt; **26th** Cheyenne Lucy, William Tapp; **27th** Lillian Quick, George Taylor; **28th** Katrina Zehetopher, Mary Beevor, Frances Syratt; **29th** Olive Savage, Frances Reeve, William Richardson, Martin Mal-lows, Harry Coombs, Joan Smith; **30th** Alfred Styles, Violet Wilkes... according to your promises, grant us with them a share in your eternal kingdom.

✠ Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord

And let light perpetual shine upon them.

In silence we pray for our needs and concerns

Priest: Rejoicing in the fellowship of (N and of) all your saints, we commend ourselves and the whole of creation to your unfailing love. Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Communion Reflection:

Lord Jesus, you are the eternal Son who draws your life and being eternally from the Father. You came on earth that we might come to share that life in abundance. Becoming man you humbled yourself even to death on the cross, but, raised up to life, you have bestowed your Holy Spirit upon us with all his gifts to communicate to us your own divine life and to enable us, even here, to be one with you and with our neighbour. We thank you for your great gifts and we desire to be faithful to you.

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