

The Project at All Saints is nearing completion, but with the flooring having been restored concerns have been raised about the need for ongoing protection of the flooring from dirt and grit. These matters are being looked into.

The Treasurer reported on the current state of the Parish's finances and although income has not increased as might have been hoped we are on course to at least equal, if not pay a little more, of the Parish Share this year. The Treasurer would like us to get to the point of being able to pay at least £43,000 annually towards the Parish Share - it being a figure at which he believes we would be covering the actual cost of the ministry. After that we can aim towards the extra costs that the Diocese ask of us. Progress towards placing a cashless donation card reading machine in St Mary & St Giles is being made, and the donate button on the Parish Website is now working. Those who buy goods online can now sign up to 'easyfundraising' which makes a small donation to St Mary & St Giles every time you make a purchase from participating companies.

Mr Mullins gave a report of progress at St Mary & St Giles school, which has been considerable. Mrs Wiseman, Mr Ellens and Fr Victor Bullock had been appointed as Governors to the School for the period up to Academisation.

Mrs Wiseman had submitted a Safeguarding Report which outlined concerns following the IICSA reports. The Rector and she share the view of a growing number of people that Safeguarding Procedures should be removed from the control of all organisations, including churches, and placed with an entirely independent body as to as to be fully transparent to victims and the accused. Mrs Wiseman also raised the matter of the care of vulnerable people at this time of shielding and self-isolating, and asks that our Safeguarding Officers be contacted by anyone with any concerns.

The Rector is still awaiting news from Ormbys of Scarisbrick who are designing new Sanctuary Seating at St Mary in St Giles in memory of the late Larry Francis and his mother. The lockdown has, of course, disrupted this company's ability to work.

Dates for the meetings of the Parochial Church Council as well as Annual Meetings were agreed for 2021.

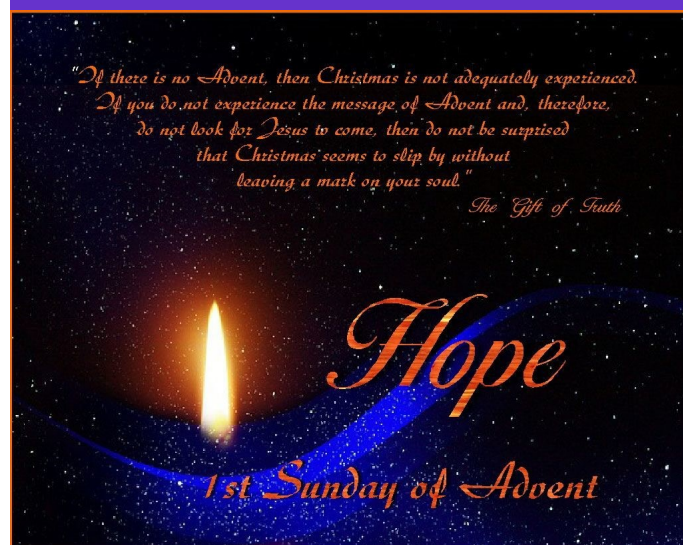
The Rector reported on the reopening of our churches for public worship, with the proviso that there were unknown factors with regard to the new Tier System and as to whether congregational singing would be permitted or not.



The Parish of
STONY STRATFORD
 with
CALVERTON

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
 29th November AD 2020

"If there is no Advent, then Christmas is not adequately experienced. If you do not experience the message of Advent and, therefore, do not look for Jesus to come, then do not be surprised that Christmas seems to slip by without leaving a mark on your soul."
The Gift of Faith



As Blessed John Henry Newman reminded us in a homily for the Advent Season: "Advent is a time of waiting, it is a time of joy because the coming of Christ is not only a gift of grace and salvation but it is also a time of commitment because it motivates us to live the present as a time of responsibility and vigilance. This 'vigilance' means the necessity, the urgency of an industrious, living 'wait'. To make all this happen, then we need to wake up, as we are warned by the apostle to the Gentiles, in his letter to the Romans: 'Besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed'" (Rm 13:11).

We are called to start our journey to ascend to the mountain of the Lord, to be illuminated by His Words of peace and to allow Him to indicate the path to tread (cf. Is 2:1-5). Moreover, we are called to change our conduct, abandoning the works of darkness and to put on the 'armour of light,' and so seek only to do God's work and to abandon the deeds of the flesh (cf. Rm 13:12-14). Jesus, through the Gospel this morning, outlines the Christian duty to watch, that we ought not to be distracted or indifferent, but must be vigilant and recognise even the smallest sign of the Lord's coming because we don't know the hour in which He will arrive (cf. Mark 13: 33-37).

Prayer Thought before Mass

The word 'Advent' means arrival or coming: the arrival or coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The risen Lord of the universe has already arrived. All through the past year he has been nearer to us than we are to ourselves. Each year, in Advent, we long for him to come to us with even greater power. We long for him to open our minds and hearts wider so that he can give us more of his riches. We long too for hope in his

final coming in glory when he will be seen as Lord giving us to the Father. Come, Lord Jesus'.

Introit Hymn

**Creator of the stars of night,
Thy people's everlasting light,
Jesu, Redeemer, save us all,
And hear Thy servants when they call.**

**Thou, grieving that the ancient curse
Should doom to death a universe,
Hast found the medicine, full of grace,
To save and heal a ruined race.**

**Thou cam'st, the Bridegroom of the bride,
As drew the world to evening-tide;
Proceeding from a virgin shrine,
The spotless Victim all divine.**

**At Whose dread Name, majestic now,
All knees must bend, all hearts must bow;
And things celestial Thee shall own,
And things terrestrial, Lord alone.**

**O Thou Whose coming is with dread
To judge and doom the quick and dead,
Preserve us, while we dwell below,
From every insult of the foe.**

**To God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Spirit, Three in One,
Laud, honour, might, and glory be
From age to age eternally. Amen.**

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

In the name of the Father, ✠
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The priest greets the people

Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.
and also with you.

The Lighting of the First Advent Candle

The priest invites a child to light the first Candle on the Advent Wreath, and then leads the people in prayer

Blessed are you, Sovereign Lord, God of our Fathers: to you be praise and glory for ever! You called the patriarchs to live by the light of faith and to journey in the hope of your promised fulfilment. May we be obedient to your call and be ready and watchful to receive your Christ, a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; for you are our light and salvation. **Blessed be God for ever.**

Penitential Rite

The priest invites the people to call to mind their sins and repent of them.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us, forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you
in newness of life
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

The priest pronounces the general absolution

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

The Parochial Church Council met on the evening of Tuesday 24th November via ZOOM - but not without some significant teething problems with access ! However, eventually all but one member was able to join in. If we have to meet 'virtually' again, then we are seriously considering using Microsoft Teams as it is more secure, and isn't time limited (for more than 40 minute meetings on ZOOM, payment is required).

The Rector reported that the Terrier and Inventories (Property Registers) were now complete for both churches in the new format. These had been major documents to revise and bring up to date, and he is grateful to all those who supplied information.

The Log Books, which record repairs, regular maintenance and works authorised by faculty, for both churches have now to be updated and put into a new format. Unfortunately, the Log Book for All Saints will not be complete as the previous edition was inadvertently disposed of with a change of Churchwarden some years ago. However, that for St Mary & St Giles simply needs bringing up to date, albeit that the 'cutting and pasting' into the new format will take time. From this point on all four documents will be held in double form in hard copy and also held digitally on the Parish 'Drop Box' account, as well as on the Rector's computer. This will also aid updating digitally, with updated hard copies only being required annually for the Archdeacon's Visitation.

The PCC has now reviewed all of its policies and has agreed necessary changes to Safeguarding, Fire Risk, Risk Assessment and Health & Safety Policies.

The Rector reported on the ongoing situation with regard to the important need for repairs to the Sacristy and Vestry Roofs at St Mary & St Giles. 'Historic England' (HE) had not sent the grant application as they had promised, and then suddenly sent it with only seven days before submission was due. The Architect and he had discussed this with HE, and it had given the Rector a further seven days in which to get an application for a grant in. It is still doubtful as to whether this will be possible to achieve as at least three quotations for the work are required. We are hoping that if we do not make this application date, then another round of applications may be made early next year. The PCC agreed to explore other avenues of funding as the longer these important works are left incomplete there is a greater likelihood of damage from water ingress to the fabric of the building and with that eventuality a greater cost.

The PCC received a report of recent repairs to the heating system at St Mary & St Giles. The engineer had reported that the System has two pumps and that it always runs on Pump No1. the second pump has seized up, but he wasn't worried about that as it is only a back-up for when No1 pump fails. The PCC could not understand why a second pump had been installed in the first place given that the system is not that for a large commercial or industrial complex nor indeed for a block of residential dwellings. It was agreed that the heating engineer be asked for further clarification.

Amen. (Pope Benedict XVI)

24 December *Christmas Eve* – Thursday, Week 4 – Read Titus 3.4-7 [or Morning Gospel: Luke 1.67-79]

Jesus, our Peace

O JESUS, help me to accept, with total openness of spirit, you who for love made yourself my brother. You came to bring to the world the gift of peace, which is the precious gift of Christmas. You are my true peace. You knock at my heart to grant me peace—peace of the soul. May I dedicate myself each day to building in every situation an authentic culture of encounter and peace. Amen. (Pope Francis)

25 December *Christmas Day* – Friday, Week 4 – Read St Luke 2.8-14 [or Dawn Gospel: Luke 2.15-20]

Sharing the Mystery of Christmas

Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in this profound mystery of Christmas. Put into our hearts this peace for which we sometimes seek so desperately and which you alone can give us. Help us know one another better, and live as brothers and sisters, children of the same Father. Amen. (Pope St John XXIII)

Dear brothers and sisters:

I offer you my warmest good wishes for Christmas, praying that the celebration may renew your hope for the future. May our Lord Jesus Christ be with you throughout 2021.

*With every blessing:
+JONATHAN*

Week 1 *The prayers have been drawn from the following published works:* Henri J.M. Nouwen, *¡Gracias!* (Harper & Row, 1983) Macrina Wiederkehr, OSB, *Seasons of Your Heart* (HarperCollins, 1991) Edward Hays, *Make Straight the Crooked Ways: Daily Reflections for Advent* (Forest of Peace/Ave Maria Press, 2005) Thomas H. Green, SJ, *Opening to God* (Ave Maria, 2006) Joyce Rupp, OSM, *A Simple Path* (Ballantine Books, 1995)

Week 2 *The prayers have been drawn from the following published works:* William Johnston, *Christian Mysticism Today* (Harper & Row, 1984) Ruth Burrows, OCD, *The Watchful Heart* (Dimension Books, 1998) James Martin, SJ, *The Jesuit Guide to (Practically) Everything* (HarperCollins, 2010) Megan McKenna, *And Morning Came: Scriptures of the Resurrection* (Sheed & Ward, 2004) Charles E. Miller, CM, *Opening the Treasures* (Alba House, 1982) Macrina Scott, OSF, *Bible Stories Revisited* (Tau Books, 2013) Brother Roger of Taizé, *Awakened from Within* (Doubleday, 1987)

Week 3 *The prayers have been drawn from the following published works:* St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, *Total Surrender* (Walker & Co, 1993) Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New Directions, 1961) Maria Boulding, OSB, *The Coming of God* (Canterbury Press, 2001) Richard Rohr, OFM & Joseph Martos, *Why Be Catholic?* (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1990) Joan Chittister, OSB, *Becoming Fully Human* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2005)

Week 4 *The prayers have been drawn from the following published works:* Bernard Haring, CSSR, in *Journey to the Light: Spirituality as We Mature*, ed. Ann Finch (New City Press, 1993) Joyce Rupp, OSM, *Inviting God In* (Ave Maria Press, 2001) Maria Boulding, OSB, *The Coming of God* (Canterbury Press, 2001)

Kyrie, eleison, Kyrie, eleison. Kyrie eleison, eleison

Christe, eleison. Christe, eleison.

Christe eleison, eleison

Kyrie, eleison. Kyrie, eleison. Kyrie eleison, eleison.

The Gloria in excelsis is omitted during Advent

The Collect

Let us pray.

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The First Reading

Isaiah 63: 16-17; 64: 1,3-8

(Old Testament Page 629 in the Bibles) A prayer of great feeling and beauty. Isaiah begs God to come and save his people from their sinfulness and hard-heartedness. Equally applicable today.

The Responsorial Psalm

(from Psalm 80)

**R/. God of hosts, bring us back;
let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.**

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.
O Lord, rouse up your might,
O Lord, come to our help. ®

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted. ®

May your hand be on the man you have chosen,
the man you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again:
give us life that we may call upon your name. ®

The Second Reading

1 Corinthians 1: 3-9

(New Testament Page 138 in the Bibles) Paul tells the Corinthian Christians that he constantly thanks God for the graces given to them and that he takes God's gifts as an assurance of their fidelity.

Gospel Acclamation

(STAND)

Alleluia, alleluia!

Show us your merciful love,
and grant us your salvation.
Alleluia!

The Gospel

Mark 13: 33-37

(New Testament Page 43 in the Bibles) Jesus tells us that since we do not know when the time will come we ought always to be ready.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

As the Gospel is announced the people respond:

☩☩☩ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

At the conclusion of the Gospel Reading:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The Homily

The Nicene Creed

(STAND)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines)

**by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayer of the Faithful

Priest: My brothers and sisters, as Advent begins, we hear our Lord challenging us to be alert and ready for him. Let us pray to our heavenly Father with an attentive and active faith...

Intercessor: That the holy Church may be united in love and in faith and proclaim boldly the Advent of our Lord and Saviour who comes to right all wrongs.....

V/. Lord, hear us.

R/. **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the nations of the world and their governments that they may act with integrity and be mindful of God's ways....

For the most neglected and rejected of all peoples, that the apostolic works of charity may draw them into the kingdom of mercy and love....

That those who are distracted by worldly pleasures and sin may return to the saving Grace of the Spirit....

For our parish and the strengthening of our common life, that God may bless us with the grace and resources needed to sustain and further the work of mission and ministry within our parish...

For all those who are in pain or suffering at this time, either in hospital or at home, especially....Shirley, Jane, Cecilia, Christel, Joan Carrigan, Margaret DeSousa, Richard Desousa, Ronnie DeSousa, Rene Hazlewood, Fr Joseph, Lilith, Lorna, Theresa, Sr Janet, James, Peter, Rosie, Fr Francis Rodriguez-Veglio, Susie, Dee, Stacey, Isa, Wendy, Janet, David, Adam Viard, Eric, Davida Wiseman...

That mercy and love may perfect those who have died, in particular we are asked to pray for the souls of...George Davis, Carl Done, Dale Marshall, Sylvia Mundy, Charles Smith, Danny Stott, Joan Thompson, Bob Wain, Gren Wiseman...and for those whose anniversaries of death occur during this week, amongst them...**29th** Poppy McCormack...

✠ Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord.

And let light perpetual shine upon them.

Priest: Lord and heavenly Father, we beseech you to hear our prayers as we prepare for the return of your Son by fidelity to his Gospel and the sacraments he left us as his medicine. We ask this through Christ our Lord.. **Amen.**

O GRACIOUS GOD, thank you for the good things of life. Help me always to appreciate the goodness of the world and the joyfulness of life, to rejoice and be glad for all the great and small pleasures that come to me from you through creation. Amen. (Richard Rohr, OFM & Joseph Martos)

18 December – Friday, Week 3 – Read *St Matthew 13.31-32*
[or Gospel: *Matt 1.18-24*]

Relishing my insignificance

O GOD, help me to recognize the real miracle of Christmas: that Jesus came to us as a child so that we might come to understand not only that nothing we do is insignificant but that every small thing we do for love of Christ has within it the power to change the world. Amen. (Joan Chittister, OSB)

19 December – Saturday, Week 3 – Read *Philippians 2.5-11*
[or Gospel: *Luke 1.5-25*]

Witnesses to your Love

Lord Jesus, whom we contemplate in the poverty of Bethlehem, make us witnesses to your love, that love which led you to strip yourself of divine glory, in order to be born among us and die for us. You, O Prince of peace, you, O Savior born for us, be with your Church on the road which stretches before us into the future! Amen. (Pope St John Paul II)

FOURTH WEEK: from Sunday 20 December

20 December – **Fourth Sunday of Advent** – Read *St Luke 10.21* [or Gospel: *Luke 1.26-38*]

Send us your Spirit

LORD JESUS, I thank you that you have revealed to us the depths of your boundless love. Send us your Holy Spirit so that we may experience the healing and liberating power of life in union with you and that we may play our part in lightening the suffering of others. Amen. (Bernard Haring, CSSR)

21 December – Monday, Week 4 – Read *Isaiah 55.6* [or Gospel: *Luke.1.39-45*]

You are near

O GOD, as Christmas draws near, it is easy to forget your nearness as I rush around pre-occupied. Help me to slow down and recognize the opportunity to sense your nearness. Let me look for signs of your nearness so that I may enter into the joy of the season. Amen. (Joyce Rupp, OSM)

22 December – Tuesday, Week 4 – Read *Psalms 96.12-13* [or Gospel: *Luke 1.46-56*]

Silence before the Mystery

O JESUS, help me to live in day-to-day fidelity to mysteries I do not fully understand, to wait in hope, waiting for the mystery to unfold, going on doing ordinary things but all the time listening, learning, pondering, growing and energetically serving—to be silent before the mystery. Amen. (Maria Boulding, OSB)

23 December – Wednesday, Week 4 – Read *Psalms 77.11* [or Gospel: *Luke 1.57-66*]

Witnessing to Your Presence

O GOD, help me not to grow lazy in the faith but to perceive, ever anew, the marvels that you work for us. Help me to become a living sign of the presence of Christ in the world, to witness and help open the hearts and minds of many to the desire for God and for true life, life without end.

flesh in the womb of Mary. May your Holy Spirit enlighten me to see that you love me and give me the great gift of your own Son. Amen. (Charles E. Miller, CM)

11 December – Friday, Week 2 – Read 2 Corinthians 5.17 [or Gospel: Matt 11.16-19]

Seeking a new beginning

O GOD, I hope for a new creation, a new beginning. The future is open-ended. When everything I value seems to be falling apart, you may be moving me toward a future I cannot imagine. The destruction of one shape my life has taken, so as to give it a new shape. Amen. (Macrina Scott, OSF)

12 December – Saturday, Week 2 – Read Ephesians 3.16-17 [or Gospel: Matt 17.10-13]

Change my heart

O JESUS, so often I forget that you never want human suffering, but peace. By your Spirit you dwell in me. Let it penetrate the harsh and rocky ground of my heart, and prepare me to be a bearer of reconciliation wherever you may place me, to let a ray of hope shine through in our world. Amen. (Brother Roger of Taizé)

THIRD WEEK: from Sunday 13 December

13 December – **Third Sunday of Advent** – Read *Philippians* 4.4 [or Gospel: *John* 1.6-8, 19-28]

Enter our lives anew

O JESUS, help us to be glad with the joy that you give us when we allow you to enter our lives. Enter our lives anew and invite us to go out to the margins of life and proclaim the gospel with joy and courage! Help us discover true joy—the joy of making of our self a gift, of reciprocating the great gift that we have first received, without merit of our own. Amen. (Pope Francis)

14 December – Monday, Week 3 – Read *Jeremiah* 24.7 [or Gospel: *Matt* 21.23-27]

Be with me

O GOD, help me to find ways to be alone with you, to speak to you, to listen to you, to ponder your words deep in my heart and so be renewed and transformed. Fill me with your grace, which makes me do all things with joy. Amen. (St Mother Teresa of Calcutta)

15 December – Tuesday, Week 3 – Read *Jeremiah* 19.13 [or Gospel: *Matt* 21.28-32]

Finding myself in You

O GOD, I cannot hope to find myself anywhere except in you. All my existence, my peace and my happiness depend on discovering myself in discovering you. If I find you I will find myself, and if I find my true self I will find you. Amen. (Thomas Merton)

16 December – Wednesday, Week 3 – Read *St John* 14.27 [or Gospel: *Luke* 7.19-23]

The peace of Christ

O GOD, when I am painfully conscious of turmoil, help me remember that Christ's love has made itself vulnerable to all that hatred can do and has conquered hatred; and as the life he gives is a life that has been through death and proved the stronger, so the peace he gives is much more than an absence of stress. Amen. (Maria Boulding, OSB)

17 December – Thursday, Week 3 – Read *Psalms* 118.24 [or Gospel: *Matt* 1.1-17]

Thanks for your good gifts

Offertory Hymn

Hark! a herald voice is calling:
'Christ is nigh,' it seems to say;
'Cast away the dreams of darkness,
O ye children of the day!'

Startled at the solemn warning,
Let the earth-bound soul arise;
Christ, her Sun, all sloth dispelling,
Shines upon the morning skies.

Lo! the Lamb, so long expected,
Comes with pardon down from heaven;
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
One and all to be forgiven;

So when next he comes with glory,
Wrapping all the earth in fear,
May he then as our defender
Of the clouds of heaven appear.

Honour, glory, virtue, merit,
To the Father and the Son,
With the co-eternal Spirit,
While unending ages run. Amen..

(STAND)

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Pray brethren that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the almighty Father.

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his Church.

The priest says the Prayer over the Gifts to which all respond:
Amen.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

The Priest sings the Preface, at the end of which the People KNEEL... all join in the acclamation:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts,
Heaven and earth are full, are full of your glory.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes,
who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

The Priest says the Eucharistic Prayer of Thanksgiving, recalling the command of the Lord Jesus, 'Do this in memory of me.'

Priest: The mystery of faith:

**All: We proclaim your Death, O Lord,
and profess your Resurrection
until you come again.**

The Priest continues the Eucharistic Prayer thanking God for all he has done for us in Jesus Christ. At the end of the Doxology, all join in the Great Amen:

Amen.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

The priest introduces the Lord's Prayer:

(STAND)

**Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you, look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

The Agnus Dei

(KNEEL)

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

The priest shows the consecrated Host to the people, saying:

Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those who are called
to the supper of the Lamb.

**✠ Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

An antiphon and/or hymns may be sung quietly as the people reverently receive Holy Communion.

Communion Hymn

**Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly-minded,
for with blessing in his Hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
our full homage to demand.**

**King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture –
in the body and the blood –
He will give to all the faithful
his own self for heavenly food.**

**Rank on rank the host of heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of Light descendeth
from the realms of endless day,
That the powers of hell may vanish
as the darkness clears away.**

**At his feet the six-winged seraph -
cherubim, with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the Presence,
as with ceaseless voice they cry,
"Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia,
Lord Most High."**

Prayer after Communion

(STAND)

Let us pray.

And all pray in silence with the Priest for a while, unless the silence has just been observed. Then the priest, with hands extended, says the Prayer after Communion; at the end of which the people acclaim: Amen.

ever you take, with a big smile. Amen. (St Mother Teresa of Calcutta)

4 December – Friday, Week 1 – Read *St Mark 4.9* [or Gospel: *Matt 9.21.31*]

Open my ears

O GOD, you speak to me in all the events of my life and not merely in times of formal prayer. Everything that happens, everything that I do, is a revelation of you. Help me learn to listen with attention and sensitivity, so my life becomes an encounter with you and all events become prayer. Amen. (Thomas H. Green, SJ)

5 December – Saturday, Week 1 – Read *Psalm 139.13-14* [or Gospel: *Matt 9.35-10.1, 6-8*]

You know me Lord

O GOD, you know me through and through. You love me as I am. You also know what challenges me, how I need to continue to grow, to constantly be more transformed. Join my heart to the wideness of your love. Take me to all who await my compassion and attention. Amen. (Joyce Rupp, OSM)

SECOND WEEK: from Sunday 6 December

6 December – **Second Sunday of Advent** – Read *Psalm 119.41* [or Gospel: *Mark 1.1-8*]

Longing for Your Love

O GOD, open my heart to the one who knocks, to accept Christ into the very depths of my being. The deepest longing of my heart is for love—for human love and divine love. Help me not to shut it out or slam the door so that even you cannot enter. Amen. (William Johnston)

7 December – Monday, Week 2 – Read *Psalm 146.8* [or Gospel: *Luke 5.17-26*]

Heal my blindness

O JESUS, you come to heal my blindness, and blindness in regard to sin is my chief blindness. Help me to choose to see myself, my life, my past and present as they are, and keep me from choosing not to see—or not to see very much. Amen. (Ruth Burrows, OCD)

8 December – Tuesday, Week 2, **Immaculate Conception** – Read *Psalm 79.8* [or Gospel: *Luke 1.26-38*]

Meet me now

O GOD, you speak to me in ways I can understand and can meet me at any time, no matter how things may seem. If you meet me where I am, then where I am is a place to meet you. I don't have to wait because you are ready to meet me – now. Amen. (James Martin, SJ)

9 December – Wednesday, Week 2 – Read *Romans 12.9-10* [or Gospel: *Matt 11.28-30*]

Seeking a new way

O GOD, help me to treasure your Word and look to it for alternatives to what the world and nations say should be my response to any situation. Help me to tell stories of hope, of resurrection and new life, of justice and peace, and refuse to be caught in the trap of criticism or violence. Amen. (Megan McKenna)

10 December – Thursday, Week 2 – Read *Psalm 9.1* [or Gospel: *Matt 11.11-15*]

Come to me anew

O GOD, I praise and thank you for all your blessings and gifts, especially Christmas. You come to us in Jesus made

Return to the Eucharist

From early Advent we will be able celebrate the Mass again together. Please go to church. Do not neglect to *gather together*: St Paul is always urging Christians *not to stay away* from the Eucharist. We need it! so that, although the Lord will come suddenly to those who cannot see, like a thief in the night (see *1 Thess 5.4*), 'we shall see him as he is' (*1 John 3.2*).

Yours devotedly:



FIRST WEEK: from Sunday 29 November

29 November – **First Sunday of Advent** – Read *Revelation 3.20* [or Gospel: *Mark 13.33-37*]

Open my heart

O JESUS, make my heart open to the word of God, make my heart open to goodness, make my heart open to the beauty of God every day, make my heart open to you. You knock at my heart to enter and grant me peace, peace of the soul. Let me open my heart to you! Amen. (Pope Francis)

30 November – Monday, Week 1, St Andrew the Apostle – Read *St John 3.16* [or Gospel: *Matt 4.18-22*]

Be my companion

O GOD, you gave us life and sent us your only Son to be with us at all times and in all places, so that we never have to feel lost in our struggles but always can trust that he walks with us. Let me not be afraid to let you—whose love is greater than our own hearts and minds can comprehend—be my companion. Amen. (Henri J M Nouwen)

1 December – Tuesday, Week 1 – Read *St Matthew 24.43-44* [or Gospel: *Luke 10.21-24*]

Prepare for His coming

O JESUS, I am forever preparing for your arrival. I hunger for your presence, yet I do not take the time to wait for your coming, and to my great sorrow, you never arrive. Because I refuse to be silent, I cannot hear you. Because I refuse to wait for you, you cannot come. Amen. (Macrina Wiederkehr, OSB)

2 December – Wednesday, Week 1 – Read *St Luke 3.4-5* [or Gospel: *Matt 15.29-37*]

Make straight His way

GRACIOUS GOD, inspire me this Advent to make straight my ways so that you can come to me and our world. Help me to be aware of the rough ways in my relationships with family, friends and strangers, and smooth out the bumps so that you can be more present in me. By all these Advent works may I prepare a way for a truly holy Christmas. Amen. (Edward Hays)

3 December – Thursday, Week 1 – Read *St John 13.34* [or Gospel: *Matt 7.21, 24-27*]

Loving one another

LOVING FATHER, teach me to see Jesus in the members of my family, especially in any distressing disguise or need. May we love one another as you love each one of us, more and more each day, and forgive each other's faults as you forgive our sins. Help me to take whatever you give, and give what-

Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Through him we offer you our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

(STAND)

THE CONCLUDING RITE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

For the dismissal, the Priest faces the people and uses a form of blessing appropriate to the season.

.....; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Before we conclude with the Recessional Hymn we recite 'The Angelus' (The Memorial of the Incarnation).

The Angelus

V/. The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary;

R/. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women,

and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V/. Behold the handmaid of the Lord;

R/. Be it done to me according to thy word.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women,

and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V/. And the Word was made flesh;

R/. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women,

and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V/. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R/. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

We beseech thee, O Lord, to pour thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ

by the message of an angel, so by his ✠ Cross and Passion, we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection.

Through the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We remain STANDING to sing the following hymn as the priest leaves the sanctuary:

**Lo! he comes, with clouds descending,
once for favoured sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluya! Alleluya! Alleluya!
God appears, on earth to reign.**

**Every eye shall now behold him,
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at nought and sold him,
pierced, and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.**

Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshipers;
with what rapture, with what rapture
gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, amen! let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory;
claim the kingdom for thine own:
O come quickly! O come quickly! O come quickly!
Alleluia! Come, Lord, come!

Communion Reflection:

Christ our Judge commands us to be vigilant.
We wait expectantly for His visitation,
For He comes to be born of a Virgin.
At Your awesome second coming, O Christ,
Number me with the sheep at Your right hand,
For You took up Your abode in the flesh to save us.
At Your first coming to us, O Christ,
You desired to save the race of Adam;
When You come again to judge us,
Show mercy on those who honour Your Holy Nativity.

*Ode 9 of the Canon of Compline
of the second day of the pre-feast of the Nativity,
December 21 of the Holy Orthodox Church*

Hymn texts authorised by:

'One-License' number: A-631717 (with Podcasting)

'CCLI' number: 2287208 + 2287215

29th NOVEMBER - THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

09:30 THE PARISH MASS

10:30 SMSG open for Private Prayer

Tuesday 1st December - *St Edmund Campion,* *Priest, Martyr*

12:00n The Angelus & Mass

Wednesday 2nd December - *Feria*

18:00 The Angelus & Mass

Thursday 3rd December - *St Francis Xavier, Priest*

18:00 The Luminous Mysteries
of the Holy Rosary

Friday 4th December - *St John of Damascus, Priest, Martyr*

12:00n The Angelus & Mass

6th DECEMBER - THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

09:30 THE PARISH MASS

10:30 SMSG open for Private Prayer

PASTORAL LETTER

from Bishop Jonathan Goodall
to the parishes and clergy
of the See of Ebbsfleet

Daily Prayers for the weeks of Advent

Dear friends, dear brothers and sisters:

Each month now I have sent a letter to you to help encourage you and assure you of my prayers for you in our unprecedented situation. This month, the month of Advent, I want to invite you to do something different. I want to invite you, clergy and people of the parishes in the see of Ebbsfleet, to join in prayer with me as your bishop, prayer that is both personal and shared, so that we can be more united in heart and mind during the remaining weeks before Christmas. Each day—whatever the news, whatever is happening in daily life—please make space, either as part of your present prayer, or at another time, to read the daily Scripture verse from your Bible, and say the prayer ... slowly. (I've added in brackets the daily Gospel passage for those who prefer that). I shall say it each day at 12.00, perhaps after the Angelus, and I hope you will join me. May the Lord help us, despite all the fuss of our pre-Christmas lives, and the worries and bruises of the pandemic, *to focus our eyes on what is truly essential*. And I hope that this opening meditation will remain with you throughout.

Meditation

Every parent—especially every mother—yearns to see the face of any child that is being carried in the womb. It is a long process of expectation and waiting; it involves a longing and a desire that can no more be stifled than it can be stopped. Mary and Joseph and their small family circle must have longed and desired to see the face of Jesus in just this way – perhaps even more so given what had been prophesied about him. Mary was, we sing in one Christmas hymn, “Most blest to bring to human birth / *the Long-Desired of all the earth*’. During Advent, in some of our most loved hymns, the Church too remembers and sings about her longing and desire to see the Lord’s face when he comes again, and in our Christmas festivities we celebrate that we will not be disappointed: *we will* come to the goal of all human life — that is, to see God and be united with him for ever.

But for now it is like we are blind, like the ‘two blind men sitting by the roadside’ (in *Matthew 20.30-34*) who, ‘when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!”’ Commenting on this passage in a sermon St Augustine says, the goal of ‘all of our work in this life’—all our Christian discipleship—‘is to restore to health the *eye of the heart* so that God may be seen’. Restoring to health the eye of our hearts. This is the purpose, he says, of the Sacraments, the preaching of the word, all our training and effort to live a good moral life, and all the changes that have to happen in our lives so that we may be rid of whatever prevents us from seeing God. That is also the purpose of these prayers.