

ST MARY'S & ST PAUL'S NEWSLETTER

The R.C. Diocese of Shrewsbury is a registered charity

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3rd Sunday of Advent

13th December 2020

GAUDETE Sunday

THEME: Being happy and thankful.

Christian people have a deep seated Joyfulness, since their hope and security is based on unflinching love. We know we are ultimately safe in the arms of our God; that the beautiful world he has made is part of a great plan in which Goodness has the victory. So we should try to make sure that minor irritations do not cloud the profound joy that is our heritage.

MASS TIMES:

St Paul's: Saturday 6-00pm Vigil mass.

St Mary's: Sunday 9-30am and 11-00am. Monday to Thursday 9-00am. Saturday 10-00am.

FUNERAL SERVICE: St Paul's Tuesday 11-00am. Mary (May) Gorman

REQUIEM MASS: St Mary's Friday 12-30pm. Ernestine Margareta Kruszyna

BAPTISM: James Joseph O' Shaughnessy was welcomed into the family of God last Sunday

RECENT DEATH: Angela Eccles. We offer our sincere sympathy to all her family and friends

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE: John 1:6-8, 19-28 In this account of John the Baptist's witness, we see the heralding of the long awaited Messiah in images the people, with their sound knowledge of the prophets, would be likely to understand. John was fulfilling a role that was essential in preparing the way for Israel's Saviour. It would alert many of them to look for the signs of God visiting his people and guide them to see his presence where they may not have been expecting to find it.

If we join the crowds around John and whole-heartedly repent of all that is evil, ugly and damaging in our characters, we too shall be alerted to recognise Christ and see him more clearly.

THE SEASON OF ADVENT: The season of Advent is a great time to grow in our faith and especially in our understanding of this awesome and wonderful intervention of God in human history. The incarnation, the Son of God becoming man, is the central pillar of Christian revelation, because it reveals that in the fulness of time God himself was born of a woman and became man, Jesus of Nazareth. Through his grace everything has changed, nothing can ever be the same again. God has come and rescued his people. St Athanasius expresses this truth: 'It was our sorry case that caused the Word to come down, our transgression that called out his love for us, so that he made haste to help us. It is we who were the cause of his taking human form, and for our salvation that is his great love; he was both born and manifested in a human body.'. This Advent, if we allow him to, the Spirit will take us by the hand and lead us into deeper wonder and awe of the truth that God became man in Jesus of Nazareth.

ARRANGEMENTS for MASS

- If you are intending to come to mass please provide advance notification, preferably by email john.storey6@btopenworld.com or tel: 0161 330 2424.
- A face mask must be worn whilst you are in Church. The only exception is for children 3 and under. Please do not come to mass if you are feeling ill or if you are unable to wear a face covering.

- On arrival you will be asked to sanitise your hands and check your name against the booked list. If you have not pre-booked, please give the steward your details.
- You will be guided to a pew. To avoid passing those already seated, pews are filled from the front.
- Mass will take approximately 30 minutes, there are no mass sheets and there will be no singing
- **Holy Communion will be distributed after the final blessing.** Please remain seated whilst Father prepares for communion. Stewards will then guide the congregation for communion starting with the front pews of the centre aisle. After receiving communion **do not return to your seat** and leave church by the exit doors on the left (front of church at St Mary's, back of church at St Paul's).
- **Parishioners with disability must not leave St Mary's church through the front door of the house due to the steps but through the main door of the church.** John Storey and his helpers will assist you with advice if needed.
- **The toilets will not be open.**

Stewards are needed for the 11-00am Mass. If you can help, please contact John Storey or Fr Oliver.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES: Christmas Eve services will be at St Paul's, 5-00pm (**already fully booked**) and St Mary's, 6-30pm. **There will be no live Nativity scene as in previous years.** Christmas Day services will be 9-30am and 11-00am at St Mary's. As numbers attending mass continue to be significantly restricted please request a place by emailing John Storey as soon as possible at john.storey6@btopenworld.com. Please note that while every effort will be made to accommodate your preference, numbers remain limited and you may be asked to accept an alternative mass.

RIGHT TO LIFE: Yesterday we celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patron saint of the unborn. We ask for guidance and inspiration as we the church seek to support all pregnant mothers through their pregnancies, and that we would become models of support to all in society.

ST PAUL'S CHURCH BOILER AND CHURCH ROOF: Work will continue next week. Progress has been delayed due to a number of issues encountered, the main one being it is an old building. They have dismantled the old boiler and cleared out the area. The work on the church and toilet roofs has been completed. Father Oliver has asked them (Ashton Roofing) on behalf of the diocesan property officer to carry out a number of repairs on the presbytery roof.

THE COVENANT WITH CREATION: It is only with the relatively recent development of ecological theology that the full significance of this covenant with Noah has been recognised. A key point is that this covenant is made, not just between God and humans, but between God and humans and 'every living creature of every kind' .. the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth (vv16-17 emphasis added). This primordial covenant provides a strong biblical basis for our relatively recent waking up to the fact that humans are an integral part of nature. There is no question of God making a commitment to protect humans while allowing most of the rest of creation to be wiped out or despoiled. We can say with assurance that God cares for other creatures alongside humanity. But it is more accurate to say that God's care for humanity is within the context of God's care for all creation.
Donal Dorr, A Creed for today

SECOND COLLECTION: The annual Collection for the Clergy Education and Training Fund will be held **this weekend**. The future of our Diocese depends so much on the training and formation of Priests, please give what you can. If you wish to Gift Aid your donation, please make your donation on line. To donate on line please go to www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/clergy-education-and-training-fund.

SECOND COLLECTION NEXT WEEKEND: For the flowers and decorations for the Christmas Services at both churches.

OFFERTORY: Thank you to everyone for your offerings to St Mary's or St Paul's. There will be no collection at Mass on Sunday, but there will be a basket for your offertory as you leave Church.

BIDDING PRAYERS for the Third Sunday of Advent

Priest: God our Father, we offer our prayers with faith in the presence of Christ among us.

We pray for the Pope: that he may lead us in our exploration of the infinite love of God.

Lord, hear us.

We pray for the Church: that in unity, she may go forward into the future, as a sign of Christ's presence.

Lord, hear us.

We pray for those who have suffered in the last year, who have lost much: that they may gain yet more from their loss.

Lord, hear us.

We pray for those who have discovered God again: that they may grow from the roots of their faith.

Lord, hear us.

We pray for those who have died and for those whose anniversaries we keep at this time: that they may enter into the kingdom God has prepared for them.

Lord, hear us.

We pray for our own special needs.

We ask Mary the Mother of God to join us in our prayers as we pray:

Hail Mary, full of grace the Lord is with you. Blessed are you amongst all women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death, Amen.

Priest: Loving Father, we have learnt how much we depend on each other; may we now offer to you all humanity, as the gift of your kingdom, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

The readings for Sunday 13th December

Entrance Antiphon Gaudete. Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed the Lord is near.

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
for the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken;
to proclaim liberty to captives,
freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.
'I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my
God,
for he has clothed me in the garments of
salvation,
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,
like a bride adorned in her jewels.
'For as the earth makes fresh things grow,
as a garden makes seeds spring up,
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise
spring up in the sight of the nations.'

Psalm 79

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

My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed. **Response**

The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him. **Response**

He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy. **Response**

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians 5:16-24

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus. Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit,

soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

Alleluia, alleluia! The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor. **Alleluia!**

A Reading from the holy Gospel according to John 1:6-8, 19-28

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

Communion Antiphon Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

The Gloria is not said during Advent

Credo:

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
Of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the
Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate
of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried
and rose again on the third day
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.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of
life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and
glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic
Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.