

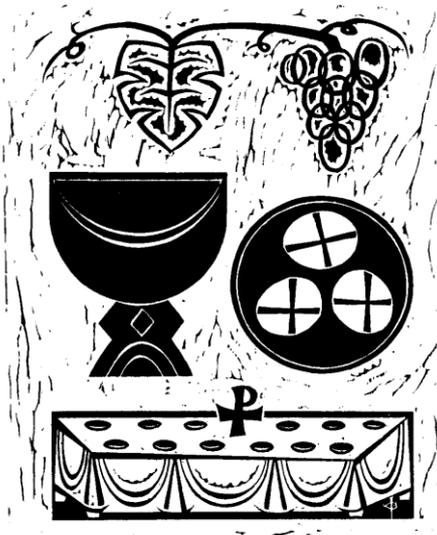
PARISH NEWSLETTER

St Arvans with Penterry, Itton, Devauden & Kilgwrrwg

Welcome to the Newsletter for our group of parishes during the period when, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some of our churches remain closed. The Sunday Eucharist is now able to be celebrated with a congregation at St Arvans, although – **please note - for the time being, because of limited space, attendance has to be by prior booking only**

Please help to keep us informed of anyone who is in need or is isolated over the next weeks and months, and anyone in need of our prayer and support
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6th September 2020
**The Thirteenth Sunday
after Trinity (A)**



The Collect

Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **AMEN**

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

The word of the Lord came to me: So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, 'O wicked ones, you shall surely die,' and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life. Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: 'Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?' Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel? [33. 7-11]

Reader / This is the Word of the Lord
Response / Thanks be to God

Psalms 119 33- 40

**R/ Give me understanding
and I shall keep your law.**

Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes, and I shall keep it to the end. Give me understanding and I shall keep your law; I shall keep it with all my heart.

**R/ Give me understanding
and I shall keep your law.**

Make me go in the path of your commandments, for that is my desire. Incline my heart to your decrees and not to unjust gain.

**R/ Give me understanding
and I shall keep your law.**

Turn my eyes from watching what is worthless; give me life in your ways. Fulfil your promise to your servant, which you make to those who fear you.

**R/ Give me understanding
and I shall keep your law.**

Turn away the reproach which I dread, because your judgements are good. Behold, I long for your commandments; in your righteousness preserve my life.

**R/ Give me understanding
and I shall keep your law.**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans [13; 8-14]

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder, You shall not steal; You shall not covet'; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Reader/ This is the Word of the Lord
Response / Thanks be to God

The Gospel

Alleluia, alleluia!
Your word is truth, O Lord,
Consecrate us in the truth.
Alleluia!

The Lord be with you:
And also with you

Listen to the Gospel of Christ
according to St Matthew
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus spoke to his disciples.
'If another member of the church sins
against you, go and point out the fault
when the two of you are alone.
If the member listens to you, you have
regained that one. But if you are not
listened to, take one or two others along
with you, so that every word may be
confirmed by the evidence of two or three
witnesses. If the member refuses to listen
to them, tell it to the church; and if the
offender refuses to listen even to the
church, let such a one be to you as a
Gentile and a tax-collector.
Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth
will be bound in heaven, and whatever
you loose on earth will be loosed in
heaven. Again, truly I tell you,
if two of you agree on earth about
anything you ask, it will be done for you by
my Father in heaven. For where two or
three are gathered in my name,
I am there among them.

[St Matthew 18.15-20]

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ

Thought for the Week

"The saints are exceedingly loving and
gentle to humankind, and even to brute
beasts... Surely we ought to show them
(animals) great kindness and gentleness
for many reasons, but, above all, because
they are of the same origin as ourselves."

— St. John Chrysostom —



For Your Prayers

That we may be open to the Lord's
mercy and forgiveness and show it in
our dealings with others

For our planet, that its resources may
not be plundered but shared in a just
and respectful way.

That our spiritual communions will
give us the grace to serve Christ more
fully.

Those throughout the world suffering
from the Coronavirus

Doctors, nurses and all medical staff,
all carers, medical scientists and
researchers.

All who are isolated and alone, those
anxious for their health and well being
and those of their loved ones.

For those in government throughout
the world, that they may make
informed, wise and compassionate
decisions for the good of all

For the Church:

For the bishops of the Church:
John, Archbishop of Wales;
Cherry, Bishop of Monmouth, Philip,
Episcopal Visitor of the Society of the
Holy Cross in Wales, Jonathan,
Bishop of Ebbsfleet; Justin,
Archbishop of Canterbury. & for all
who hold and teach the Catholic faith
that comes to us from the Apostles.

All bishops, priests and deacons and
all baptised Christians
For the reunion of all Christians: for
Pope Francis, for Orthodox Patriarch
Bartholomew, & for the leaders of the
Reformed traditions

For the Sick & those in need:

Roy Staples, Ralph Hamilton, Patricia
Hamilton; Sylvia; The Revd Helen
Rodwell; Amanda Morgan; Naomi;
Kim; Elisabeth; Helen Herbert; Cliff
Edwards; Kate Lewis; Dave

For the Departed:

The recently departed: Art Eggert; our
own departed relatives & friends, &
those whose anniversaries of death
fall at this time: Jeff Gravelle;
Rachael Hill; Arthur bevan; Anne
Morgan

A Prayer of Spiritual Communion
*for these times when we are unable
physically to receive Holy Communion*

My Jesus, I believe that you are
in the Blessed Sacrament.
I love you above all things,
and I long for you in my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you
sacramentally, come at least
spiritually into my heart.
As though you have already come,
I embrace you and unite myself
entirely to you; never permit me
to be separated from you. Amen.

*(The Confraternity of the Blessed
Sacrament)*



This Week

Today the prophet Ezekiel speaks of
repentance and a turning towards the
Lord, St Paul in the Letter to the Romans
tells us: "owe no one anything, except to
love one another." In St Matthew's
Gospel, Jesus tells us to challenge each
other on our behaviour and to pray, "For
where two or three are gathered together
in my name, there am I in the midst of
them."

Tuesday is the Feast of the Nativity of the
Blessed Virgin Mary with its own special

readings.

In the first readings at the Eucharist this week, we continue with St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, an intimate look at the struggles of the early Church community.

In St Luke's Gospel this week we see how Jesus spends a night in prayer and calls his twelve closest followers. When people come to him from all over, he heals them. Jesus announces that the poor, the hungry, those who weep, and those hated or excluded or denounced because of him are the blessed. He warns those who are rich, filled, laughing and spoken well of, for their fates will be reversed. He cautions not to be quick to see the splinter in someone else's eye when we do not notice the "wooden beam" in our own eyes. Jesus says that we will be known by our fruit. It is only by building our lives upon him, as a firm foundation, can we hope to survive crises.

Next Sunday The reading from Genesis shows us Joseph forgiving his brothers for the harm they did to him. St Paul warns about the dangers of passing premature judgement. Jesus talks about mercy and forgiveness in the gospel. He tells the parable of the unforgiving servant. It is a powerful message for us all.

A Meditation for Trinity 13

+ These days checking social media or listening to the news first thing in the morning usually turns out to be a mistake. If you're brave enough - or foolhardy enough - you can't help being struck by the sheer amount of anger, division and sheer stupidity which seems to be around - something, of course, upon which the modern mass media with its need to make the news ever more "exciting" (in heavy inverted commas), confrontational and controversial, has to bear a good deal of responsibility. It's not a spiritually edifying way to greet the day over a cup of coffee. Music or perhaps silence is far better - it doesn't spoil the day! Someone once said that one of the most difficult obstacles to living the Christian life is anger, and that in human life anger can build up like a kind of corrosion, appearing in the most unexpected corners of our hearts and surfacing at quite unexpected

or unpredicted moments. Just when we think we are dealing successfully with the problem, it rears its head again in response to some crisis or other in our lives and we grind to a despairing halt, just when we thought we were making a little bit of progress.

It's true about all the analysis we come across about world events - so many causes are put forward to explain wars, violence and instability throughout the world, that we forget sometimes the sheer pent-up dysfunctional anger which forms part of our human nature and of the human condition itself.

On the other hand, anger in itself isn't always unreasonable; it can be a perfectly natural and understandable reaction to the frustrations, difficulties and injustices of life. But if it's not channelled in a positive direction - if it's what we might call unspiritual anger - as we know, it can be one of the most destructive of all human emotions, sweeping away reason and much else before it.

The anger of man does not carry out the justice of God.' says the letter of St James in the New Testament (James 1:19) but in itself as St Thomas Aquinas pointed out it's not a sin. It can be, if it's excessive or unfair or misdirected - when we are angry we sometimes lash out in all kinds of unexpected directions and say all kinds of things which are difficult to forgive. On the other hand, there are occasions when we fall short by not being angry enough.

There's a well known prayer which asks for the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, and in response, someone once wrote that they wanted to add to it another line: Lord, give us the strength to change the things we should not accept.

The point is well made: we can avoid anger by simply not caring enough, by not being angry in a directed and rational and even peaceful way - the kind of directed reasoned anger which perhaps enables us to change things for the better.

In other words, being angry in the way that sometimes in the Gospels Our Lord was angry.

Today's Gospel speaks about conflict, about one person doing wrong to another, as does the

Old Testament reading from the prophet Ezekiel. Ezekiel speaks of the wicked and the Gospel speaks of sin. Very often in

human life there are conflicts, and disagreements, sometimes even what appear to be irresolvable disagreements. But what Jesus calls us to is an unrelenting insistence upon the truth, a commitment to the truth whatever it takes - - the truth as a way of casting light rather than as confrontational argument.

Resisting the temptation of a Twitter verbal punch-up at all costs. Truth in this sense is filled with a persistent hope - even in an age of malevolent disinformation - that human beings are able to hear the truth about themselves, and to live that truth with joy, knowing that whatever we have been, the Lord is with us. 'When two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'

Whenever we experience something particularly joyful - whether it's a holiday, a religious retreat or even a good evening out, we tend to say - well, back to the real world - forgetting that the world of stress and conflict is so often the sort of world we choose and contribute to by our own thoughts, words and actions. Perhaps the world - and you and I as part of it - rushes to present 'reality' as always involving conflict, because it cannot cope with truth. But as Christians we believe that the truth can set us free. The true reality isn't the conflict which we, - of course, always as the innocent victims - have with the guilty, but the discovery of our solidarity in guilt and in sinfulness, and therefore so our solidarity in being loved by God in spite of that and our being capable of being forgiven and restored.

There will always be conflict in human life - there'll always be conflict in our own hearts. It's inescapable - it's how we respond to it that defines us as followers of Christ. And so we shouldn't be too surprised about the fact that there will always be conflict in the Church as it passes through this turbulent and sinful world. As GK Chesterton, that great lover of paradox - some might say he was overfond of it - says the Church isn't always an oasis of peace in this world of conflict, but sometimes a place of conflict in a world of false peace. Jesus instructs the Church on how to deal with this conflict. And the authority Jesus gives Peter and his brother apostles is an authority to bind and to loose, the power to declare the forgiveness of sins in his name.

In a world of accusations and self-justification, words of mercy and forgiveness are very much needed, so is our need to be receptive to them. It's a great pity that we don't these days seek to make the most of our sacramental opportunities to hear them and be freed by them.

Because what we proclaim and live out in our lives as Christians is the real story of a God who loves us and seeks to draw us into the communion of his love and in whom we can encounter the truth - the love, the mercy and forgiveness - that sets us free. We meet him here at the altar and receive his life. +

**YOU
HAVE NOT
CHOSEN
ME ‡
I HAVE
CHOSEN
YOU ‡**

13th September – St John Chrysostom

Chrysostom means 'golden mouthed' and this week's saint is one of the greatest preachers in Christian history.

He was ascetic, unimposing but dignified, and troubled by stomach ailments from his desert days as a monk, John became a bishop under the cloud of imperial politics. If his body was weak, his tongue was powerful. The content of his sermons, his exegesis of Scripture, were never without a point. Sometimes the point stung the high and mighty. Some sermons lasted up to two hours.

His lifestyle at the imperial court at Byzantium (Constantinople) was not appreciated by many courtiers. He could not stand people who gathered around him expecting favours.

His zeal led him to decisive action. Bishops who bribed their way into office were deposed. Many of his sermons called for concrete steps to share wealth with the poor. The rich did not appreciate hearing from John that private property existed because of Adam's fall from grace any more than married men liked to hear that they were bound to marital fidelity just as much as their wives were.

When it came to justice and charity, John acknowledged no double standards. Aloof, energetic, outspoken, especially when he became excited in the pulpit, John was a sure target for criticism and personal trouble. He was accused of gorging himself secretly on rich wines and fine foods. His faithfulness as spiritual director to the rich widow, Olympia, provoked much gossip attempting to prove him a hypocrite where wealth and chastity were concerned.

His sermons were misinterpreted by some which led him to be forced into exile, where he died in 407.

God of truth and love, who gave to your servant John Chrysostom eloquence to declare your righteousness in the great congregation and courage to bear reproach for the honour of your name: mercifully grant to those who minister your word such excellence in preaching, that all people may share with them in the glory that shall be revealed; 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.**