

PARISH NEWSLETTER

St Arvans with Penterry, Itton, Devauden & Kilgwrrwg

PLEASE NOTE:

During the 'Firebreak' lockdown in Wales (23rd October – 9th November) *all places of worship are closed both for public worship and private prayer.*

Our Sunday Eucharist at 10 a.m. and celebration of Night Prayer on Wednesdays at 20.00 will continue to be live-streamed as usual

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
Parish Priest (Vicar / Rector):
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25th October 2020
The Last Sunday
after Trinity



The Collect

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **AMEN**

A reading from the book of Leviticus

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 'Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. You shall not render an unjust judgement; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbour. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood of your neighbour: I am the LORD. You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbour, or you will incur guilt yourself. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the LORD.'

[19. 1-2, 15-18]

Reader / This is the Word of the Lord

Response / Thanks be to God

Psalm 1

R/ Happy are they who trust in the Lord!

Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful! Their delight is in the law of the Lord, and they meditate on his law day and night.

R/ Happy are they who trust in the Lord!

They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; everything they do shall prosper.

R/ Happy are they who trust in the Lord!

It is not so with the wicked: they are like chaff which the wind blows away; Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgement comes, nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked is doomed.

R/ Happy are they who trust in the Lord!

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians [2; 1-8]

You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

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

The Gospel

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord,
he who follows me
will have the light of life.

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*

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?' He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: 'What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?' They said to him, 'The son of David.' He said to them, 'How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet'"? If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?' No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

[St Matthew 22. 34 - 46]

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ

Thought for the Week

"The truth is, of course, that the curtness of the Ten Commandments is an evidence, not of the gloom and narrowness of a religion, but, on the contrary, of its liberality and humanity. It is shorter to state the things forbidden than the things permitted: precisely because most things are permitted, and only a few things are forbidden."

- G. K. Chesterton (1874 – 1936) -

For Your Prayers

That we may proclaim the Gospel of Christ by the way we live our lives in love of God and of our neighbour. 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

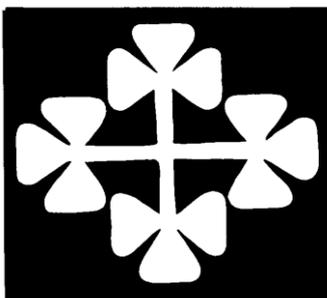
For the reunion of all Christians: for Pope Francis, for Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew, & for the leaders of the Reformed traditions

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; Dave; Eirion

For the Departed:

The recently departed: our own departed relatives & friends, & those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Donald Sunderland



A Prayer of Spiritual 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

in the Scripture readings today for the Last Sunday after Trinity, justice and compassion are seen as the keys to love. The book of Leviticus speaks of the way to holiness of life, St Paul writes of the qualities of authentic discipleship. In the Gospel Jesus says it most simply: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. ...You shall love your neighbour as yourself."

Wednesday is the Feast of Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles.

St Luke's Gospel this week offers us lessons about humility. We see a vivid example of his compassion. Jesus heals a woman on the Sabbath over the protests of the synagogue leaders. "This daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound for eighteen years now, ought she not to have been set free on the sabbath day from this bondage?" He berates the Pharisees and scholars of the law: "You impose on people burdens hard to carry, but you yourselves do not lift one finger to touch them." He cautions his followers to be humble: "For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last." When Pharisees warn Jesus that Herod wants to kill him, he warns the people of Jerusalem: "how many times I yearned to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were unwilling!" Jesus cures a man with dropsy under the critical

eyes of the Pharisees. He turns to those at the table and tells them a story about guests at a banquet scrambling for places of honor. He tells them to take the lowest place, "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Next Sunday, November 1, we celebrate the great festival of All Saints (All Saints Day). The Gospel is the great passage from the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus recounting the eight Beatitudes. It is good for us to look at who he says are "blessed." We celebrate all those, known and unknown who have reflected the light of God's love and now rejoice in his presence..

A Reflection for the Last Sunday after Trinity

+ We've all noticed the modern preoccupation with lists. The greatest culprits seem to be the weekend papers: we open them and are confronted with articles entitled; 'what are the 'top 10' whatever - it could be 1990s pop songs, or European holiday destinations, or UK seaside resorts: even - one I saw the other day - world pilgrimage sites! These days it's more like the places we hope to be able to visit when the pandemic is over, but the list (there we go again) could be endless. We seem to be in a perpetual crisis of identity - we need to know that our own choices are shared by everyone else. So much for the age of individualism! But I have always had a little bit of a phobia about lists - even as a child I could never see the point of the Guinness Book of Records.

In today's Gospel, a lawyer comes forward and asks Jesus a question about what is probably, for those of us in the Judeo-Christian tradition anyway, the greatest list of all - the Ten Commandments, and he wants to know which one is the greatest - which is the most important? We should be aware at this point that this isn't just an innocent request for information, the question isn't asked in the interests of intellectual enquiry, it is meant to discredit Our Lord's authority as a teacher - "Come on tell us what you think and we'll make you look really stupid!" They should know better and Jesus turns the tables on them once again with a masterly encapsulation of the Law of Moses. There are two

principles, he tells them, which sum up all the other laws and commandments - love of God and love of neighbour: or to quote what he said in full:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' Everything else depends upon these two commandments.

This episode occurs quite late on in St Matthew's Gospel, the tension is building. The Gospels are not just collections of sayings and actions of Jesus put together at random; they are written in the order they are for a reason - they tell a coherent story. Jesus, life and teaching are tending in the direction intended by the Father and this is the last question the religious teachers get to ask Jesus before the final questions he has to answer before Caiaphas and Pilate after his betrayal and arrest.

But he doesn't leave it there: he goes on to ask them a question in return about the origins of the Messiah, who they were all awaiting for deliverance.

Whose son is he? Jesus asks the crowd of teachers of the law.

Their answer is the conventional one - "the son of David." and the verses from the psalms Jesus quotes to them in return make it very clear that the messiah, the anointed one of God, the Christ, is very much more than just the son of David, he has a far higher dignity even than that, his royalty isn't only human but it is also divine.

When we put this passage from the Gospel into context we see its true meaning - and its challenge to each one of us. "What do you think of the Messiah, whose son is he?"

As we said this comes towards the end of Matthew's Gospel, just before the start of the Passion story itself. The questions come thick and fast to us as we read it or hear it. "What is the greatest commandment? Who is the messiah? And we are meant to take the sequence a step further - "Who in reality is Jesus? How do we know who he is?"

The teachers, the experts in the religious law know very well about what the Old Testament tradition has to say about the love of God and the love of their

neighbour and they follow it with all their heart yet they fail to perceive who it is who they are accusing and trying to destroy. St Matthew is actually saying that we cannot understand the meaning of the two greatest commandments and their summing up of the whole Jewish tradition apart from the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. And it is in his life and death that we see the painful, tragic gap between what we know about love and what we do about it. We, like the experts in the law, are those who are capable of betraying the Son of God and Son of David to his death. And it is only the cross and resurrection of the Christ which is able to bridge that gap in us between our good intentions and what we actually do. The cross is the true interpretation of the two commandments which are the greatest of all. As someone has said, the way of the cross is what love of God and neighbour looks like in our fallen world, the imperfect, alienated world of which we are a part.

And St Matthew's message is that we too must take up our crosses if we are to unite ourselves to Christ and truly love the Lord our God with all our hearts and souls and minds, if we are to join him in his divine mission to love, forgive and heal. Human effort isn't enough, unredeemed human nature isn't enough: it will betray us every time. We need the grace of God, given to us by the cross and resurrection of Christ his Son. And we come into his presence - to the altar when we can - to receive it. +

Saints of the Week



Sts Simon and Jude

28th October –St Simon and St Jude

On Wednesday we celebrate two saints on the same day. The reason why these saints are celebrated on the same day is because a church which had recently acquired their relics was dedicated to their memory in Rome on this day in the seventh century.

We know very little about them beyond what we learn about their calling as apostles in the New Testament.

Simon was the 11th apostle to be called by Jesus and is sometimes referred to as Simon the Zealot

In art, he is often represented with a saw, which is believed to be the instrument of his martyrdom.

Jude, is also called Judas or Thaddeus in the Gospels. He is not Judas Iscariot, but his name was shortened in English to Jude to remove any confusion with Judas Iscariot. He is the patron saint of lost or impossible causes.

It is Jude who, at the last supper (John 14:22), has this dialogue with Jesus: Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?" Jesus answered him, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

Almighty God, who built your Church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the chief cornerstone: so join us together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made a holy temple acceptable to you; 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.**



Next Sunday is All Saints Day

The Eucharist will be live-streamed from St Arvans at 10 a.m.

Monday 2nd is All Souls Day.

The requiem mass, offered for all the faithful departed, will be live-streamed from St Arvans at 12 noon.

Because our churches are closed, and we are under lockdown, please email the names of any loved ones you wish to be prayed for by name to Fr Michael by next Sunday evening

You are able to catch up at any time with any live-streamed service on the St Arvans Parish Group page on Facebook