

# PARISH NEWSLETTER

St Arvans with Penterry, Itton, Devauden, & Kilgwrrwg

## IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE

St Arvan's Church is open for worship at 10 a.m. on Sundays. Places must be booked and social distancing maintained in the building and following services.

Again, we stress there is absolutely no obligation to attend in person, and that your own safety and health & those of others must remain paramount

Our broadcast services will continue as follows: Sunday Eucharist at 10. a.m. and a reflection & celebration of Night Prayer on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. are live-streamed on the St Arvans Parish Group page on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/vicaragecello1/>

and are available to watch at any time

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):  
Fr Michael Gollop,  
The Vicarage, St Arvans  
01291 622064;  
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**27<sup>th</sup> June 2021**  
**The Fourth Sunday**  
**after Trinity B**

## The Collect

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; grant this, heavenly Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, 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 Wisdom of Solomon

God did not make death, and he does not delight in the death of the living. For he created all things so that they might exist; the generative forces of the world are wholesome, and there is no destructive poison in them, and the dominion of Hades is not on earth. For righteousness is immortal. For God created us for incorruption, and made us in the image of his own eternity, but through the devil's envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his company experience it. [1. 13-15; 2. 23-24]

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

## Psalm 30 1 - 6; 12 - 13

**R/ To you, O Lord, my heart shall sing without ceasing.**

I will exalt you, O Lord, because you have lifted me up and have not let my enemies triumph over me.

O Lord my God, I cried out to you, and you restored me to health.  
You brought me up, O Lord, from the dead; you restored my life as I was going down to the grave.

**R/ To you, O Lord, my heart shall sing without ceasing.**

Sing to the Lord, you servants of his; give thanks for the remembrance of his holiness.

For his wrath endures but the twinkling of an eye, his favour for a lifetime. Weeping may spend the night, but joy comes in the morning.

**R/ To you, O Lord, my heart shall sing without ceasing.**

You have turned my wailing into dancing; you have put off my sack-cloth and clothed me with joy; Therefore my heart sings to you without ceasing; O Lord my God, I will give you thanks for ever.

**R/ To you, O Lord, my heart shall sing without ceasing.**

## A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

You excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you – so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking. I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others.

For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something – now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means.

For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has – not according to what one does not have. I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. As it is written, 'The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.'

[8. 7-15]

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

## The Gospel

Alleluia, alleluia!

Our Saviour Christ Jesus abolished death and he has proclaimed life through the Good News  
**Alleluia!**

The Lord be with you:  
**And also with you**

[Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St Mark](#)

**Glory to you, O Lord**

**W**hen Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the lake. Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet and begged him repeatedly, 'My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.' So he went with him. And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. Now there was a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, 'If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.' Immediately her haemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, 'Who touched my clothes?' And his disciples said to him, 'You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, "Who touched me?"' He looked all around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.' While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, 'Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?' But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, 'Do not fear, only believe.' He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, 'Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.' And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, 'Talitha cum,' which means, 'Little girl, get up!' And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age).

At this they were overcome with amazement. He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

[St Mark 5.21–43]

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

### For Your Prayers

That we may have faith in Christ our healer and redeemer

Those throughout the world who continue to suffer from the Coronavirus pandemic - for doctors, nurses and all medical staff, all carers, medical scientists and researchers.

All who are 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: 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; Kim; Elisabeth; Helen Herbert; Dave; John; Sue; Elizabeth.

### For the Departed:

The recently departed; our own departed relatives & friends, & those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time:  
Alice Maud Gollop; Douglas Evans; Daphne Richards

## Thought for the Week

"The miracles of the church seem to me to rest not so much upon faces or voices or healing power coming suddenly near to us from afar off, but upon our perceptions being made finer, so that for a moment our eyes can see and our ears can hear what is there about us always."

- from Willa Cather's novel, "Death Comes for the Archbishop"

## The Jereboam Interview

We continue our series of extracts from the Jerusalem and Galilee Gazette, an imaginary first-century newspaper. Week by week the correspondent Jereboam interviews various people whose lives have been affected in some way by Jesus Christ and his teaching.

Thanks to the Parish of St Catharine's Chipping Campden & to the author for permission to reproduce 'Jereboam'

Jereboam this week speaks about John the Baptist in the week that sees the feast of his Nativity

## Lael

**Jereboam:** I think I began to understand something the other day.

**Lael:** What was that?

**Jereboam:** Well, I've always been rather baffled by the accounts of Jesus healing people...you know, like that lady who was cured of her haemorrhage when she touched his cloak. Now, if Jesus really was the Son of God, I suppose that he could do absolutely anything, but stories like that always seemed a bit improbable to me.

**Lael:** Until the other day...

**Jereboam:** That's right: I went to see my niece, just before she gave birth to her son, her first child. She was absolutely terrified.

**Lael:** Poor girl... Was there a problem?

**Jereboam:** Actually, no. Everything went well in the end – or as well as could be expected: these things are never easy. The point was, though, that I realised that

she was terrified, at the very moment that I set foot in her home. I hadn't seen her; I hadn't even heard her speak. I just sensed the fear immediately. I don't understand how these things happen, but I reckon that Jesus' healing of the lady with the haemorrhage must have involved a similar process. I'm sorry if that sounds ridiculous...or disrespectful.

**Lael:** Not in the slightest: I think I know what you mean. Once a week I deliver something to a lady in the next village. We usually chat for a few minutes, which is pleasant enough, but as soon as I walk away from her house, I feel dreadful. It's as if I've absorbed some fear that lurks inside her. I suspect that many of us pick these things up. Even children may do...maybe particularly children: they're so open to influences. The biggest problem is that these fears are so hard to deal with, since they don't relate to our own experience.

**Jereboam:** So what help can the Church provide? You can't exactly say to this woman: "You make me feel bad. I think you need help."

**Lael:** No – that would be very awkward. Of course we can pray for her well-being. We can also try to foster an atmosphere of friendship. As John says: "Fear is driven out by perfect love." I'd say that love communicates itself just as easily as fear. If you spend time with a loving family or with a group of friends that get on well together, you feel uplifted. So I always try to spend time with good friends after visiting that woman. It makes me feel a lot better.

**Jereboam:** That's a good idea.

**Lael:** Jesus was wonderful in that way. You had only to be in his presence for a few minutes, and you'd feel completely restored. Still today we experience that, as we receive his Body and Blood from a priest. Some priests even allow a period of silence after the prayer of consecration. I don't know how long it lasts: it might be hours, for all I know – and we all just bask in the presence of our Lord. It's like a gentle summer breeze – so refreshing.

**Jereboam:** I'd love to witness that.

**Lael:** Do come along; you'd always be welcome.

## 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 Gospel today we hear the story of the healing of Jairus' daughter. In the middle of the narrative comes another story of the healing of the woman with a haemorrhage. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction." Jesus tells Jairus, "Do not be afraid; just have faith." When the girl was healed the people "were utterly astounded."

Monday is the feast day of Saint Irenaeus, Bishop and Martyr. Tuesday is the great feast of **Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles**. Saturday is the **Feast of Saint Thomas, Apostle**.

The first readings at the Eucharist this week are from the **Book of Genesis**. We follow the story of Abraham and his son Isaac.

**St Matthew's Gospel** takes us through several stories about Jesus' ministry. We begin as Jesus demonstrates that following him requires a radical change in life: "Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead." Jesus calms the storm at sea. Then he drives demons out of two men living among the tombs. When a paralyzed man is brought to him, Jesus has compassion on the man and forgives his sins, which causes a controversy. Jesus then heals the man's paralysis. He calls Matthew to leave his customs post and follow him, and the many tax collectors and sinners who come to have dinner with Jesus cause a controversy with the religious leaders. "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. Go and learn the meaning of the words, I desire mercy, not sacrifice. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

**Next Sunday** in the Gospel we are told that Jesus was not able to work miracles in his home town. In their eyes of his neighbours, he was just the person they'd seen grow up. This distressed him and he couldn't work many miracles there.

## A Reflection for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity

+ All of us from time to time must have wondered what it would have been like to meet Jesus in the flesh? We've all probably in the course of our meditations and prayers thought about what it would have been like to be sitting in front of Our Lord as he taught in stories and parables and explained them to his listeners. In fact it's a very good way of allowing the Gospels to speak to us directly. It would have been an immense privilege to have heard him and to have seen things as they really were.

Yet time and time again in the Gospels, we find that when Jesus does speak to people, or when he teaches and preaches the good news about salvation and the restoration of our relationship with God, and when, as in this morning's Gospel he demonstrates it by his actions, they simply didn't get it. It is easy – fatally easy – but very mistaken to think that they were simply obtuse, and that we would have known better.

Today's Gospel is an example. Jesus is clearly from the great crowd which is following him and surrounding him on every side, being acclaimed as someone who has a well-known reputation as a healer. It's very clear from both the incidents in this morning's Gospel – which St Mark in a very literary and almost televisual way interweaves in his account – that Jairus, the leader of the synagogue, and the woman with the constant haemorrhage, thought that, too. But whereas the woman's faith in Jesus clearly goes further than a vision of Jesus as just someone with the power of physical healing – she recognises him as the Messiah, the one whose very touch brings new life – those caring for the little girl fail to appreciate his potential power over death itself. And it is this demonstration of a God-given power and his identity as the expected Messiah which Jesus is particularly anxious at the end of the passage we heard to conceal until the proper time, in case the crowds

take hold of him and try force him to assume a political or a military role which was not part of God's plan for the redemption of the world.

To go back to what we said, it's all too easy to think that we would have known better – that we would have had the insight of the woman in the crowd. Not so - the Faith is very clear that the Son of God became a human being, and that his divinity was largely veiled in his humanity, even if to the eyes of faith that veil was sometimes swept aside. As St Paul says in the second reading today: "*For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.*" Christ came among us – as one of us - not to be recognised by everyone for who he was, but to show the way to the Father in a very human way. He assumes our nature to heal it from within. In the world he was a sign of contradiction - the light which shows up the darkness only too well. Put starkly, he is born in order to die at the hands of a creation gone astray and the darkness in human hearts. We could even say that he dies, too, for the pride in us which makes us think we would have known better. Even now, believing what we believe, how often do our lives fall short of the demands that following Christ makes of us? We may think that we do get the message, but all the lives of each one of us so often suggest otherwise. So what do we do? Saying that an authentic following of Christ is difficult isn't the same thing as saying that it is impossible. But the liberating truth which St Paul emphasises in the second reading today gives us a great deal of encouragement. It's not all about effort and proving ourselves worthy – it's about grace. The work of redemption is done by Christ – already done, we might say.

Paul understands that to be authentic followers of Christ we need to have our feet firmly on the ground, even if our hearts and minds are in heaven, and this means knowing who and what we really are and being willing to recognise the weakness and infirmities of our own human nature, the gulf between our calling and the present reality of how we are actually are - a gulf which is only bridged by God in Christ. The work is done; we have to open to its grace. Faith and discipleship are a process not an

event, as through grace we become people who hang on the word of God and who can be open to the change, the constant conversion, that the Gospel message calls us to. We are always called to look deeper into the mystery who is God and to strive to live the Gospel at an ever more profound level, asking always that we might receive that life which Christ has promised us.

We are not left on our own in the midst of a confusing world. We are given the life of the Church. By that I don't mean by that the bureaucratic institution, with all its inexplicable hierarchies and confusing committee structures, but the living community of faith and practice gathered around the altar of the Lord. What are sometimes referred to as "the "ordinary means of grace" - the sacraments, the scriptures, the prayer life of the Church – these are the places where we meet Christ - and this holds as true today as it has always done. They're not the only places – if we think that, we are fatally underestimating and diminishing the great mystery of Father, Son and Holy Spirit whose life fills everything. But we could say they are the guaranteed places – Sunday and weekday Eucharist, daily prayer and worship, meditation, and prayerful reading and reflection on the Scriptures may not sound particularly exciting, but they are reliable - dependable, constant as vehicles of grace - that is, real encounters with the life of God. And they're they are not subjective, individualistic impressions which come and go with the mood of the moment or the ebb and flow of our physical biorhythms.

Here, by presenting ourselves at the altar to receive Christ's life and his grace, we travel in company with the apostles, patriarchs, prophets, apostles and martyrs, that great cloud of witnesses, all the holy people who have gone before us and who pray for us now in the presence of Christ. Because the Church is the Body of Christ, and - God help us - despite its institutional imperfections, its slowness, its pomposity, even sometimes its cruel and appalling betrayals of God and humanity - is the place where, far more often than not down the ages, people have encountered the living God, the God who changes lives and leads us towards the life of his kingdom. And this is where we look upon the face of his Son who from this altar,

and from his altar in heaven, feeds us with his life. This is where we meet Jesus in the flesh.

In the words of St Thomas Aquinas:

"Godhead here in hiding,  
whom I do adore,  
Masked by these bare shadows,  
shape and nothing more,  
See, Lord, at Thy service  
low lies here a heart  
Lost, all lost in wonder  
at the God thou art." +

### Ministry Area Prayer

Dear Lord, we thank you for the opportunity to work together as a Ministry Area.

May we engage with each other with faith and encouragement.

May we manage each situation with wisdom and mutual respect.

May we serve with integrity, creativity and purpose.

May we speak with openness and gentleness.

May we offer our gifts, time and finances with generosity.

May we face each challenge with courage and the desire to grow through it.

May we all be drawn deeper into our relationship with You and be known as your disciples.

Help us to show your love, proclaim your Good News and grow your Kingdom in this place.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. **AMEN**