

# 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):  
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The Vicarage, St Arvans  
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**18<sup>th</sup> July 2021**  
**The Seventh Sunday**  
**after Trinity B**

### The Collect

Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things:  
graft in our hearts the love of your name,  
increase in us true religion,  
nourish us with all goodness, and of your great mercy keep us in the same;  
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**

### A reading from the prophet Jeremiah

Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD. The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

[23. 1-6]

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

### Psalm 23.

**R/ The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.**

The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.

**R/ The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.**

He revives my soul and guides me along right pathways for his name's sake.  
Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

**R/ The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.**

You spread a table before me  
in the presence of those who trouble me;  
you have anointed my head with oil, and  
my cup is running over.  
Surely your goodness and mercy  
shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord  
for ever.

**R/ The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.**

### A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians [2. 11-22]

Remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called 'the uncircumcision' by those who are called 'the circumcision' – a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands – remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you

also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.

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

### Gradual Hymn

Alleluia, alleluia!  
The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice, says the Lord,  
I know them and they follow me.  
**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.**

**T**he apostles returned from their mission. They gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the market-places, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

[St Mark 6.30–34, 53–56]

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

## For Your Prayers

The Church's ministry of healing and reconciliation: that we may witness to God's love in a broken world.

The victims of flooding in Germany, Belgium & the Netherlands.

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. Alan; Marion Webster.

### **For the Departed:**

The recently departed; our own departed relatives & friends, & those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Joan Dryland; David Carmichael; Joan Neal; Stanley Phillips; Nancy Shepherd; David & Mary Marshall; Rene Blakey.

## Thought for the Week

"Contempt of material things as such is, in fact, no more orthodox than pantheism -- it is the great dualist heresy which always lies in wait for an over-spiritualized Christianity."

*Dorothy L. Sayers (1893 – 1957)*

## 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'*

## Eli

**Jereboam:** Eli, my old friend, how are you?

**Eli:** Very well, thanks. Never felt better in my life.

**Jereboam:** Good. Still looking after your sheep up there on the hills?

**Eli:** Oh yes, except that my son's helping me nowadays, so I'm a bit freer to do other things... like follow the crowds as they trail after this man Jesus.

**Jereboam:** Ah, I see you've kept up to date with all that.

**Eli:** Yes, I spotted him and his friends in their boat one day, and I made my way down to investigate. I tell you what: he's an amazing man.

**Jereboam:** Of course, he's described as a shepherd, like you.

**Eli:** Yes, and jolly good at it he is too. You know, when you look after sheep, you can't bully them. You give them a little nudge here and there, but you rely on their trust and respect to keep control. He's just the same – he guides people with kindness and...and subtlety.

**Jereboam:** It's a bit different with people, though, surely.

**Eli:** Well, I guess you're right. We're all so different – not that there aren't characters amongst the sheep too. But the great thing about this chap Jesus is that, although he addresses the whole crowd, everyone feels as if he's speaking to them personally...penetrating into their heart.

**Jereboam:** Everyone's saying the same actually.

**Eli:** You don't need me then.

**Jereboam:** I didn't mean that.

**Eli:** Don't worry, Jerry. I'm only pulling your leg.

## 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

Today we hear from the prophet Jeremiah that God himself will shepherd his people and that a descendant of David will rule with wisdom and justice. St Mark's Gospel paints a picture of Jesus trying to gather his disciples for a rest together, but the people kept coming to them: "his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things." Thursday is the Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene.

The daily readings continue from the Book of Exodus continuing the story of God's faithful deliverance of the people from slavery in Egypt. Pharaoh has a change of heart and chases the fleeing Israelites. Moses tells them to "Fear not! Stand your ground, and you will see the victory the Lord will win for you today." With Moses' outstretched arm, they pass through the sea on dry land, while their pursuers drown. Still the people grumble against God in the desert and God gives them manna to eat, with Moses saying, "This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat." Then God comes to the people in smoke and fire. He summons Moses and gives him the Ten Commandments and Moses shares them with the people in a covenant ceremony, sprinkling the blood of sacrificed bulls on the altar, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you."

In St Matthew's Gospel this week some people come up and ask Jesus for a sign. He answers mysteriously by saying that the only sign they will receive is the sign of

Jonah the prophet, whose preaching brought about conversion. Most likely the reference is the prophet's being in the whale for three days – a sign of resurrection. His family comes looking for Jesus and he again asks the mystifying question about who is really a relative, an intimate, with him. His answer is that all of us who do the will of his Father. Then we hear the parable of the sower. It is important for us not to be discouraged because all of the seed doesn't find its way to good soil. Jesus encourages us to be sowers of the Word. He will guarantee a rich harvest. To understand his parables is Jesus' gift to us. Finally, we hear the parable about the weeds in the field once again.

**Next Sunday** we celebrate the feast of St James the Greater, brother of John and son of Zebedee, the fisherman. James, together with Peter and his brother, form the inner circle of the Apostles as witnesses of what Jesus said and did.

## A Reflection for the Seventh Sunday after Trinity

+ In the Gospel this morning, the apostles, sent out by Jesus to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God, have returned from their mission in Galilee. It was time for a rest, for a break away from the frantic activity and demands of following Jesus in his ministry. Jesus says to them: 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest awhile.' But the crowds continue to come and ask questions and they don't have a moment to themselves, no time even to snatch a hurried meal, so Our Lord and the Apostles try to sail across the Sea of Galilee to take refuge in the desert. But again, it's something of a wasted effort to try to escape, the news has spread and the crowds are there before them, ready to make demands upon their time and energy again. And Jesus gives in and begins to speak to them and teach them at some length. But this isn't just a recognition that there is no escaping the crowds - it's much more than that - St Mark tells us he was filled with compassion for them and for their human striving for healing, for life-changing truth. They were, he says, like sheep without a shepherd.

So much for the Apostles' time of rest and recuperation. After their missionary endeavours, they were also in need of the quiet and contemplation which they would find with their master. Jesus alone could give a meaning and context to what had gone before, only he could give substance to the words they had spoken, the actions they had performed in his name. But it was not to be. But by not rejecting the crowds who streamed after him, even at the cost of their much needed time of rest and recovery, Jesus is in fact revealing to his own closest followers and disciples the very thing they are looking for from him. He is saying to them that following him can never be truly serious and authentic if it is anything less than given in full measure. This is the over-flowing tenderness of God the Holy Trinity for his creation, for those made in his own image, the unconditional, sacrificial outpouring of love which leads to both Cross and Resurrection. And Christ's love urges on his apostles - they are to serve without let-up at the mercy of those in need. We might think after hearing this, half-way through the summer that this is a bit discouraging, especially those who are looking forward to their annual holidays. No break, then, for those who seek to follow Christ? Not quite; it's clear that throughout his ministry, Jesus and the apostles did manage from time to time to get away for quiet periods of prayer, reflection and rest and recreation. Without that they would have been a rather grim collection of people. But what the Gospel is saying to us is there are no holidays from the love of God. Wherever we may find ourselves Christ is with us, wherever we may be, we are called to be faithful to our baptism, to the essential meaning of our relationship - our friendship - with Christ. We can't ever take time off from trying, even in our own rather feeble, struggling sometimes faltering human way, to reflect the loving-kindness of God. There are holidays, there is time for rest and recreation - otherwise we are probably little use to those closest to us and so stale we are less use to God than otherwise we would be - there are dangers in too much constant activity as there are in doing too little – but, of course, there are no holidays from love.

There's a passage in the Rule of St Benedict, which is a useful guide for all Christian people, not just those committed to the religious life, which describes what the response should be when someone a monk is interrupted in some necessary task by someone who comes to him in need. Benedict says constantly, 'prefer nothing to the love of Christ,' and following Jesus, he says that the first call on our time is always that of love and service, what used to be called Christian charity - that word 'compassion' St Mark uses in this morning's Gospel, which really means 'suffering with' or 'suffering alongside.' It's to show this compassion in the true sense that God in Christ become one of us and shared our humanity. It is this compassion we are shown when we come to the altar to plead Christ's death and resurrection and to receive his life in Holy Communion.

The object of the Gospel this morning isn't to make Christ's followers feel guilty if they take time off - if they are not in some way constantly, actively and self-consciously witnessing to Christ. We are meant to do more than by what we are and what we are always being converted to each day. We do that by growing to be more Christ-like, more faithful to the divine image in which we are made, and to which we are restored by Christ.

We don't need a break, even if it is just a 'staycation,' to avoid the demands made upon us by our faith, by our daily occupations, our families and friends, but in order to perform them better and to see Christ in all things. +

## SAINT OF THE WEEK

### 22nd July – St Mary Magdalene

*St Mary Magdalene at the tomb meeting the Risen Christ*

Mary Magdalene was a follower of Jesus, who is mentioned 12 times in the Gospels. Very little is known about her life. It is likely that she came from Magdala, a town on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, and was called 'Magdalene' to distinguish her from the other Marys the group.

Mary Magdalene has long been regarded as having been a prostitute or sexually immoral in western Christianity, but this is not supported either in the scriptures or in the tradition of the eastern Church.

The Gospels do agree that Mary was originally a great sinner. Jesus cast seven demons out of her when he met her. After this, she told several women she associated with and these women also became followers.

Despite error and confusion over her background, what she did in her subsequent life, after meeting Jesus, is much more significant. She was certainly a sinner whom Jesus saved, giving us an example of how no person is beyond the saving grace of God. During Jesus' ministry, it is believed that Mary Magdalene followed him, part of a semi-permanent entourage who served Jesus and his Apostles..

Mary likely watched the crucifixion from a distance along with the other women who followed Christ during His ministry. Mary was present when Christ rose from the dead, visiting his tomb to anoint his body only to find the stone rolled away and Christ, very much alive, sitting at the place they laid Him. She was the first witness to His resurrection and sometimes referred to as the apostle to the Apostles.

Almighty God,  
whose Son restored Mary Magdalene to health of mind and body and called her to be a witness to his resurrection: forgive our sins and heal us by your grace, that we may serve you in the power of his risen life; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

## 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