

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;
Mobile 07867803479

5th August 2021
The Fourteenth Sunday
after Trinity

The Collect

Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; 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 Isaiah

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.

[35. 4-7a]

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

Psalm 146

R/ You open wide your hand, O Lord, and satisfy our needs

Alleluia! Praise the Lord, O my soul!
I will praise the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

R/ You open wide your hand, O Lord, and satisfy our needs

Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth, for there is no help in them. When they breathe their last, they return to earth, and in that day their thoughts perish.

R/ You open wide your hand, O Lord, and satisfy our needs

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help!
whose hope is in the Lord their God;
Who made heaven and earth, the seas,
and all that is in them;
who keeps his promise for ever;
Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.

R/ You open wide your hand, O Lord, and satisfy our needs

The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger; he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

R/ You open wide your hand, O Lord, and satisfy our needs

The Lord shall reign for ever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.
Alleluia!

R/ You open wide your hand, O Lord, and satisfy our needs

A reading from the letter of St James

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favouritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, 'Have a seat here, please,' while to the one who is poor you say, 'Stand there,' or, 'Sit at my feet,' have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonoured the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you? You do well if you really fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of

Commented [M1]:

you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,' and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

[2. 1-10, 14-17]

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

Gradual Hymn

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 Mark](#)

Glory to you, O Lord

Jesus set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, 'Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.'
But she answered him, 'Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.'
Then he said to her, 'For saying that, you may go – the demon has left your daughter.' So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, 'Ephphatha,' that is, 'Be opened.' And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered

them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, 'He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.'

[St Mark 7. 24-37]

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

For Your Prayers

That our faith may be demonstrated in our deeds.
The people of Afghanistan
Those who are suffering the effects of climate change throughout the world
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 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; Rose Pugh; Betty Davies; Rosaleen Dusting; our own departed relatives & friends, & those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Jeff Gravelle; Rachael Hill; Arthur Bevan; Anne Morgan

Thought for the Week

"It pleased God to make it easy for us to be saved. He didn't attach salvation to knowledge or intelligence or wealth, nor to long experience or rare gifts that are not given to all. He attached it to something within the reach of everyone, absolutely everyone. Jesus attaches salvation to humility, to the act of making yourself little. That is all it takes to win heaven."

Bl Charles de Foucauld

The Jereboam Interviews

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'

Gabriel

Jereboam: I understand that you have a very special memory of Jesus.

Gabriel: Yes: it'll be nearly thirty years ago now that I approached him because of my deafness. I had difficulty with speech too – those problems often go together. Anyway, some friends persuaded me to ask Jesus for help, and he cured me on the spot.

Jereboam: What happened?

Gabriel: We went off in private, the two of us and a couple of his friends. Then he touched the affected areas and seemed to be praying. For a moment there was a strong feeling of concentration. I could sense that I was beginning to be healed, and then he said something with an air of great authority. Immediately after that, I found that I could hear and speak properly and, what's more, I felt light as a feather inside, as if I'd been set free from all sorts of restrictions. It was as if I had become myself for the first time.

Jereboam: That must have been wonderful. You certainly seem to hear and

speaking well enough now. So was the change permanent?

Gabriel: Almost, yes.

Jereboam: Almost?

Gabriel: Yes: ever since that day my hearing and speech have been excellent, except that occasionally they deteriorate for a short while.

Jereboam: What happens then?

Gabriel: Well, it's when I get really caught up in the dramas and concerns of life; I suppose we all do that from time to time. When things become particularly frenetic, sometimes I find that my hearing isn't quite what it should be. If that happens, I take myself away somewhere, very much as we did that day thirty years ago, and I try to recall Jesus' cure and the lightness that it brought. I suppose you might say that I'm praying. Anyway, whatever you call it, when I do that, my hearing is restored. It's as if Jesus showed me the way to cure myself, but I need to persevere with it myself.

Jereboam: So perhaps the hint of deafness reminds you to rely on God's strength?

Gabriel: You could say that, yes.

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, the 14th Sunday after Trinity, the prophet Isaiah offers comforting words: "Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; with divine recompense he comes to save you." In St Mark's Gospel, Jesus heals a deaf and mute man. The people are astonished and say of Jesus, "He makes the deaf hear

and the mute speak."

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

During the first part of the week, the first readings at the Eucharist are from the letter to the Colossians. Paul is in prison, encouraging this community to put their trust in Christ, not mystical teachings and powers. He challenges them to live their baptism and to walk in the union they have with and in Jesus. On Friday we begin reading St Paul's first letter to Timothy. On Saturday Paul boldly proclaims that he is the "foremost" among sinners and a sign of God's mercy.

In the first part of this week, in St Luke's Gospel, Jesus heals a man with a withered hand, on the Sabbath, in front of his religious critics. Then Jesus goes up on a mountain to pray and comes down to name his twelve apostles - all of whom seem to be unknown or questionable at best. 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, affluent, laughing, and spoken well of, for their fates will be reversed. Jesus urges us to love our enemies and pray for those who mistreat us. 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 can we hope to survive crises.

Next Sunday: we hear in St Mark's Gospel Jesus tell his disciples about his passion, death and resurrection to come in Jerusalem. Peter tries to prevent him from going there. Jesus rebukes him and tells the disciples and us that to be a disciple is to follow him, not trying to save one's life, but by dying to ourselves and losing ourselves for his sake and that of the Gospel. That is the only path to real life.

A Reflection for Trinity 14

+ + For a while there's been a series of cartoons doing the rounds on social media called 'Off the Leash' - the main theme which comes across is of dogs wrapping their owners around their little fingers - not

that dogs have little fingers, but you know what I mean. I think it's branched out into mugs, tea towels and all kinds of merchandising.

One of the cartoons has a couple of dogs sitting by the side of a dinner table and saying to one another over and over again - "*just keep staring*" - until the people who are eating give them some of their food. And, in a sense, that is exactly what the Syrophenician woman does in today's Gospel. To begin with what we see in this passage is an occasion when Jesus seems to be very harsh indeed - uninterested, even hostile to what seems like a perfectly reasonable request from the woman - a Gentile - a non-Jew, someone regarded as outside the Covenant with God - that her daughter be healed. Immediately it seems that Jesus is dismissing her request because of who she is - a woman belonging to the people who were originally driven out of the land of Canaan by the people of Israel when they were brought by God into the Promised Land.

But if we look at what Our Lord is really saying there is much more to it than that. He says to her in effect - look I have come first and foremost to save the people of Israel, the lost sheep of the Old Covenant who are drifting away from God. It's not that he doesn't care, it's just that she and her daughter are not his main concern. So her request is met first with silence, and then with the metaphor which is a little startling to us - and to modern sensibilities - that her asking for the healing of her daughter is like taking the food from children and giving it to the household dogs. Actually the word he uses really means 'little dogs' or even 'puppies.' And the woman - who has, remember, has already bowed down at his feet recognises his words as far from an outright rejection of her urgent request, and engages in a bit of word play of her own - "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.'

And in doing this in effect she stakes a claim to be part of the household of faith - not as a child of the Covenant, but in a sense through her very humanity. In faith, this woman acknowledges the reality of the distinction between Jew and Gentile, but she also acts from a deeply felt conviction that this barrier can and will be overcome. So in a way, her request and the faith which prompts it *anticipates* the

Resurrection and Pentecost where God's salvation in Christ is made available to all the peoples of the earth.

It is a feature of the Gospel narratives that we often see Gentiles, that is, non-Jews, responding to Christ with more faith than those closer to the Law of Moses. It's true that he has come first to the people of Israel – but time and again the example of people who listen to his message and show faith come from outside.

So a bit like the other little dogs in the *cartoon*, the woman keeps staring at Jesus until he is satisfied of her faith and determination. Her heart is open to faith and that openness is tested by Jesus, - she shows her faith by her insistence even in the face of silence and what looks like a rebuke. Even when she comes up against his initial wall of silence she doesn't give up.

Far from being a rejected outsider, she ends up being held up by Jesus - perhaps even laughingly because of her witty response to his put down - as a model of discipleship and faith. OK, he is saying, I give in! This is certainly one of the few funny stories in the gospels. How much are we to make of it? Has Jesus just been teasing the woman, or is she testing him? Is this a turning point for him, his discovery, as he deals with her persistence, that his mission will transcend the boundaries of Israel? It's not so much that he changes his mind but that the response to him from outsiders is often more impressive than from those insiders from among whom he springs. So, like the gentile woman, we, who are his children by adoption and grace, have to recognise Jesus as the one who brings salvation, who heals us from the spiritual sickness of our lives. And that process of spiritual healing always begins by entering into an honest relationship with him, a relationship that is not above imploring him for his help in our every need.

The focus in today's Gospel isn't so much on the healing of the child, a fact which St Matthew adds almost as an afterthought, but on the woman's response which brings it about.

Through faith we belong. We belong to God's holy people not by anything we ourselves have done but by what Christ has done for us. We have been given a part to play in God's plan of salvation, not by birth or inheritance, but rather by our re-birth through the waters of baptism and

by our communion with the one who calls us.

As the Letter of St James tells us the true disciples of Christ are those who show their faith by means of their actions and are prepared to love their neighbour as themselves. +

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**

Saint of the Week 8th September The Birthday of Our Lady

The Church has celebrated Mary's birthday since at least the 6th century. We don't know the actual date of her birth, but September was chosen as that is when the Eastern church begins its church year. Every human birth is a call for new hope in the world. If Jesus is the perfect expression of God's love, then Mary is the foreshadowing of that love. Next to the birth of Jesus, Mary's birth offers the greatest possible happiness to the world. Each time we celebrate her birth, we can confidently hope for an increase of peace in our hearts and in the world at large.

Almighty and everlasting God, who stooped to raise fallen humanity through the child-bearing of blessed Mary: grant that we, who have seen your glory revealed in our human nature and your love made perfect in our weakness, may daily be renewed in your image and conformed to the pattern of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**