

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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24th October 2021
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 prophet Jeremiah

Thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, 'Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel.' See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labour, together; a great company, they shall return here. With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

[31. 7-9]

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

Psalms 126

R/ The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad.

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy.

R/ The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad.

Then they said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.' The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

R/ The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses of the Negev. Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

R/ The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad.

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews [7. 23-28]

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues for ever. Consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people; this he did once for all when he offered himself. For the law appoints as high priests those who are subject to weakness, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect for ever.

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

Gradual Hymn

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 Mark

Glory to you, O Lord.

As Jesus and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' Many sternly ordered him to be quiet,

but he cried out even more loudly, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' Jesus stood still and said, 'Call him here.' And they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart; get up, he is calling you.' So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. Then Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' The blind man said to him, 'My teacher, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has made you well.' Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

[St Mark 10.46b–52]

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

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)

For Your Prayers

That we may come to Christ for the healing of our souls
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, 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; Marion Webster

For the Departed:

The recently departed; Kevin Brennan; Cynthia Harris; Mady Gerrard; Shirley Capp; Josef Chatham; Dini Hardy; Sue Grisswell; our own departed relatives & friends, & those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Horace Collard; Donald Sunderland

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'

Bartimaeus

Jereboam: Welcome, Bartimaeus. You have a well-known connection with Jesus, don't you?

Bartimaeus: Yes: he healed my blindness, and people still talk about it to this day. I suppose it was a pretty spectacular moment.

Jereboam: Can you explain what it felt like?

Bartimaeus: Well, I often tell people that it was like something being released inside me. It wasn't so much that he restored my sight, but more that he removed some sort of blockage that had prevented me seeing.

Jereboam: So was it painful?

Bartimaeus: Not at all. I felt pretty strange for a few days, until I got used to seeing again, but there was no pain involved. It was a bit like water

evaporating: this blockage just seemed to disappear.

Jereboam: I understand that you're quite particular about the exact words that Jesus used.

Bartimaeus: Yes, I suppose so. Let me give you some background: in our community we've had strong debates between two groups of people. One group maintains that we should just let God's will direct the course of our lives. Others argue that God gave us the power of reason, and that we should honour that by taking charge of our destinies.

Jereboam: So what did your healing have to do with all that?

Bartimaeus: Let me take you through what happened. First of all I called out to Jesus; then he asked that I be brought over to him. I asked him to restore my sight, and he healed me, saying, "Go; your faith has saved you." The point is that he didn't say: "I have saved you." He said: "your faith has saved you." So it seemed that my active participation was essential. There's another thing: although the healing clearly couldn't have happened without Jesus – nobody there could possibly have argued that – I think it was crucial that I called out to him in the first place. So the healing involved three elements: Jesus' power, my faith and my initial calling out to him.

Jereboam: So what's the verdict? Should you trust God to guide your life, or do you take charge of it yourself?

Bartimaeus: You do both, and try to keep the two principles in balance. Reason and faith have to work together.

Jereboam: I'm somehow reminded of that comment someone else made to Jesus: "I believe; help my unbelief."

Bartimaeus: Yes, there's a definite connection there. Incidentally, just about anyone could say that, not only followers of Jesus.

Jereboam: Except for people who deny the existence of God altogether...

Bartimaeus: I reckon that even they could use it really. You watch them carefully: it seems to me that they're trying to extinguish a light inside themselves.

Jereboam: I think we'll keep that topic for another day, if you don't mind. Thank you, Bartimaeus.

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"

This Week

Today we are offered a vision of comfort and healing. In the reading from the prophet Jeremiah, we see the Lord gathering "his people" - the blind, the lame and the helpless innocents, bringing them together to console and guide them. In St Mark's Gospel, Bartimaeus, the blind beggar has the courage to beg for healing from Jesus. He is hushed by the crowd but continues to call loudly for Jesus, who hears him and heals him. *"Go your way; your faith has saved you."*

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

The first readings this week are all taken from St Paul's letter to the Romans, with his teaching on the Holy Spirit acting in our lives of faith.

The Gospels from St Luke offer a glimpse of Jesus healing and teaching the people, even as he continues to clash with the religious leaders. He cures the "bent woman" on a Sabbath and tells of the tiny mustard seed which develops to become a full grown bush. He repeats that it will not be easy to enter the Kingdom: "For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last." He defies those who bring word of threats on his life and defies the silent Pharisees who watch as he cures a man on the Sabbath. Jesus encourages us to be humble: "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Next Sunday: we celebrate the great Solemnity of All Saints. In the Book of Revelation we read of "a great multitude" that stood before God. "These are the ones who have come through the great

tribulation - the time of great distress and persecution - and stand in white before the throne of God.

St Matthew's Gospel sets before us the Beatitudes: simple words but challenging teachings, which lead us to share the holiness of the saints.

A Reflection for the Last Sunday after Trinity

+ Names are important. We tend not to be very happy if someone gets our name wrong, because it means they don't really know who we are, or has forgotten something absolutely vital about us. And St Mark's story of the healing of the blind man, Bartimaeus, in this morning's Gospel reading is interesting because it emphasises the significance of names. In fact, this is about the only place in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke where we are told the name of a person who was healed by Jesus. In the story St Mark mentions the name not only once but twice: "Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus,". This very unusual emphasis on the name is a clue that his name is vitally important in order to understand the point that Mark is trying to make here. In the ancient world, a name wasn't thought of as just a label used to identify a person - something accidental given to us by our parents, but they considered it to be in some way an expression the innermost personality or the even the destiny of a person. And that's an important thing to remember about the scriptures, both the Old and the New Testaments - they can't always be taken at face value - they are the product of a different culture - sometimes we have to dig deeper to get at what they are saying to us. And that name Bartimaeus - the name of the blind man in the Gospel today - means, literally in Aramaic - which is the language Jesus would have spoken in the normal course of life - it means "son of defilement" So, his name therefore could be a nickname given to him simply because he was a blind beggar. Again in the ancient world, popular belief at the time held blindness to be in some way a punishment from God for sin - either your own or inherited from your

forebears - in other words, they believed it was in some way your own fault and we meet this idea quite a few times in the Gospels and each time, Jesus strongly distances himself from it, saying that it is just untrue and goes quite against the reality of the God he declared to be the source of love and compassion. But, again, interestingly, the Greek version of the name, Bartimaeus - and Greek was one of the other widely used languages in the middle east at the time - the language in which the New Testament was eventually written - the name Bartimaeus could also be understood as "son of honour," something which indicates not sinfulness at all but something positive about his eternal destiny and the nature of his faith and his response to Christ. And so by giving us this name 'Bartimaeus' with its double meaning, Mark is telling us that here is a man who is supposed to be a man of honour and dignity but who is forced by both his disability and people's mistaken view of it, to live in a state of dishonour and shame until Jesus comes to him and frees him from it. What Jesus did for him, then, wasn't simply restoring his physical sight but, over and above that, restoring his God-given human dignity. The wider point St Mark is making by including this episode is that we ourselves, like Bartimaeus by the side of the road, are sometimes frustrated, suppressed, confined, feeling that there has to be more to life than our present experience. And the good news is that Jesus is always passing by. He can heal and take away whatever weakness that holds us back - he wants to help us live in an authentically human way as God intends.. And that's where Bartimaeus' faith - and his hope for something better comes in. To his credit he doesn't heed the realists who tried to dissuade him, those who told him to be quiet - to shut up - and accept his infirmity. He speaks up and makes his need - and his faith - clear to the only one who could heal and transform him. Jesus is here to heal the wounds of humanity, the things which alienate us from God and one another, which prevent us from seeing things clearly, which immobilise us and hold us back from being the people we are intended to be - to transform us from being passive bystanders at the

roadside to being active and enthusiastic followers of the Way of life that leads to the kingdom of God. +

Ss Simon & Jude, Apostles

Saints of the Week

28th October

Ss Simon & Jude, Apostles

Today 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 the shame of the confusion with Judas Iscariot. He is the patron saint of lost or impossible causes.

It is Jude who, at the last supper (St 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.**

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**