

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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7th November 2021
The Second Sunday
of the Kingdom
3rd Sunday before Advent

The Collect

Almighty Father, whose will is to restore all things in your beloved Son, the King of all: govern the hearts and minds of those in authority, and bring the families of the nations, divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin, to be subject to his just and gentle rule; 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 Jonah

The word of the LORD came to Jonah, saying, 'Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.' So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, 'Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!' And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it. [3. 1-5, 10]

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

Psalm 62 6-14

R/ God alone is my rock and my salvation.

For God alone my soul in silence waits; truly, my hope is in him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold, so that I shall not be shaken.
In God is my safety and my honour;
God is my strong rock and my refuge.

R/ God alone is my rock and my salvation.

Put your trust in him always, O people, pour out your hearts before him, for God is our refuge.

Those of high degree are but a fleeting breath, even those of low estate cannot be trusted.
On the scales they are lighter than a breath, all of them together.

R/ God alone is my rock and my salvation.

Put no trust in extortion;

in robbery take no empty pride; though wealth increase, set not your heart upon it.
God has spoken once, twice have I heard it, that power belongs to God.
Steadfast love is yours, O Lord, for you repay everyone according to his deeds.

R/ God alone is my rock and my salvation.

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

[9. 24-28]

Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself again and again, as the high priest enters the Holy Place year after year with blood that is not his own; for then he would have had to suffer again and again since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for mortals to die once, and after that the judgement, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

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

Alleluia, alleluia!
Jesus Christ is the First-born from the dead
To him be glory and power for ever and ever
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.

After John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.' As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake – for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fish for people.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James, son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately, he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

[St Mark 1.14–20]

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 repent and believe the Gospel., , Integrity in public life

The COP26 Conference in Glasgow.

Those who care for the environment and the natural world

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; Mali

For the Departed:

The recently departed; Cynthia Harris; Mady Gerrard; Shirley Capp; Josef Chatham; John Morris; Stuart Moles; Robert Pring our own departed relatives & friends, & those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Richard Leigh Clay; Donald Voss; George Sherwood; Vera Witts; Evelyn Lloyd; Joyce Furneaux

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'

Jethur and Nabaioth

Jereboam: So, Jethur, what did you make of Jesus this afternoon?

Jethur: Interesting...he was talking about how we need to change our priorities, to think differently.

Nabaioth: Excuse me, Jethur.

Jethur: Ah, Nabaioth, hello!

Jereboam: I'm sorry to interrupt your conversation, but you wouldn't have any bread I could borrow, would you?

Jethur: I think so. The others should be at home at the moment. Why not go and ask them?

Nabaioth: Thanks. I don't know whether we might need some more wine too. You couldn't lend us some of that as well, just in case we run out?

Jethur: Of course: just tell the others what you need.

Nabaioth: I'm sorry to interrupt you.

Jethur: Don't worry: it's fine. Nabaioth, you're looking rather anxious this afternoon.

Nabaioth: Well yes – I've just agreed to feed some of Jesus' friends this evening and then put them up for the night. Obviously we weren't planning for that. I have to make sure that there's enough to eat and drink. I mean, they all seem very likeable and accepting, but I want to do things properly.

Jereboam: That's only natural. In your position I'm sure we'd all want to do our best.

Nabaioth: I'm not used to this sort of thing. Normally at this time of day I'd clean up a bit, have a rest and then go off somewhere for a walk. That's all been abandoned today, of course.

Jereboam: But we all get these emergencies from time to time. You just have to drop everything else and do what's necessary. I always tell myself that it's good to be adaptable.

Nabaioth: You're right, obviously. Anyhow, I'd better be on my way. I'll drop round at your house, Jethur. Thanks a lot.

Jethur: Tell them I suggested you called in.

Nabaioth: Thanks very much. 'Bye.

Jereboam: Goodbye, Nabaioth. So where were we? Talking about Jesus and his priorities...

Jethur: Actually, I think you just said pretty much the same as Jesus did. We sometimes have to drop everything and react to special circumstances. In Jesus' eyes, the special circumstances are the urgent need to change our lives. Look, maybe I'd better go and check that we can find everything Nabaioth needs.

Jereboam: Certainly, yes. Maybe we'll speak again some other time.

Thought for the Week

“Exercise pleasantness toward all, taking great care what you have commanded may never be done by reason of force. For God has given free will to everyone, and therefore never forces anyone - but only indicates, call and persuades.

- St Angela Merici -

This Week

Today we hear in St Mark's Gospel about Jesus' call to repent, and the calling of the first apostles by the Sea of Galilee

Wednesday is the feast day of Saint Leo the Great, Doctor of the Church and Thursday is that of Saint Martin of Tours, Bishop.

As we move draw towards the end of the liturgical year, our first reading this week is taken from the book of Wisdom, written to encourage a downtrodden Jewish community. The vivid imagery offers us a view of the glory and justice of the Lord. “The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them.” In St Luke's Gospel this week, Jesus turns his focus away from the Pharisees and back to his followers. “If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.” He tells them the duties of discipleship, asking if a master should be grateful to a servant who does what is commanded. “So should it be with you.” We read of the curing the ten lepers - yet only one returns to give thanks. “Stand up and go; your faith has saved you.” He also tells us that we should not spend our lives looking for the coming of the Kingdom “for behold, the Kingdom of God is among you.” The Kingdom of God is coming, when we least expect it and, “Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses it will save it.” We must “pray always without becoming weary.”

Next Sunday we keep as Remembrance Sunday when we remember at the altar those who have died in conflict and resolve to work for a better world in which peace will prevail.

A Reflection for the Second Sunday

of the Kingdom

In today's Gospel St Mark shows us Jesus taking up the message of John the Baptist after he hears the news of John's arrest and imprisonment. The message is direct and straightforward: “Repent, and believe in the good news.”

To our present day ears, that word “repent” is a little bit problematic – because it's come to have rather puritanical & moralistic overtones of being guiltily sorry for something that we have done wrong. But the scriptural understanding of repentance is much more profound and wide-reaching. It means something more on the lines of “changing your life because it is taking you in the wrong direction.” Or Turn around and face in the right direction - that is towards God and the things of God, and the values of his kingdom.

And if we look at the first reading from the book of Jonah together with today's Gospel, we can ask ourselves these questions: Where is our lives taking us today? In what sense do we need to repent? And where do we find hope in our lives?

We could go on to ask ourselves the question of how we believe God to be present in our own lives, in our relationships with others and in the larger world in which we have a place. As followers of Jesus (as part of his Body the Church) we want to be able to say clearly: God is present in our world, in our lives and in our relationships. God is present in everything, but always as a presence of good, of love and of compassion.

And it's when we ourselves don't reflect God's goodness, love and compassion - *and there are times for all of us when we conspicuously fall short of the mark* - then we need to repent, to turn our lives around, to seek the living God, who is always there – we just need to be in the right spiritual and psychological place to be aware of his presence.

Repentance in this sense is never something which is a once-for-all action, but part of a process which will occupy the whole of our lives, as we keep changing and re-ordering our lives in the direction of God.

For the most part, we are called to radical conversion where we are now, not in some ideal future situation world which may never exist.

In the Gospel today, four fishermen *do leave everything behind*, all the ties and bonds of work and family, in order to follow Jesus. But *here* they are not doing this to “find themselves” or whatever the conventional phrase is, but *they* leave everything in response to Christ's call: He says: “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

But what Jesus *doesn't do* is offer them an escape from reality, from everything which defines them and makes them who they are. He doesn't offer them an easy way out of past failures or misunderstandings. He gives them a specific task to do as the people they are, and as they follow him, and as they live their lives in his company, they discover their identity afresh in a new way and with a deeper self-understanding. But they don't follow Jesus in order to run away, as a means of escape. As we know, for some people, following Jesus involves almost precisely what it did for the apostles and first disciples, giving things up and leaving behind the prospect of family, of successful careers and what we might call all the trappings of “normal life.” We see this most particularly in those who are called to the religious life in community. But for most people, the call of Christ doesn't come in this way, but it involves growing, like the Apostles, in the presence of Jesus - *but which for us happens through prayer, through our living encounter with him in the Sacraments, through our constant reflection on the words of the Gospels* - growing in our everyday experience of life towards an expanded vision of who we are, and our value in God's plan.

The call of Jesus to repent, because the kingdom of heaven is close at hand, is a call not to allow the failures of life to define who or what we are. Because from the time of our baptism we have been brought into the new age of grace, into the kingdom of God, where we are given the means to live differently, and in the new world of the Resurrection.

The urge to escape who we are often weighs very heavily upon us. But there are no real clean slates in this life in the sense that we can become someone other than who we really are: and who we are is intimately bound up with those amongst whom we live, with those who have cared for us or hurt us, with our ways of making a living and passing our time. But, of course, on of the insights of the spiritual

life is that there are clean slates in our relationship with God: because mercy and grace are freely offered to us, and that grace can be freely accepted. The call of God's grace which comes to all of us - *the secret is to be willing and able to stop and listen* - doesn't offer us a new identity, or a way of escaping into a kind of ideal world, without the pressures, anxieties and alienation of what it is to be human. The call to be a disciple - when the Lord says "follow me" - is a call to grow in understanding of who we are and most importantly of all, who we are called to become, in the perspective of the self-sacrificial offering of God upon the cross and the new life of the Resurrection. In a few short weeks we will be preparing - in the season of Advent - for our celebration of God's coming among us in Christ as a human being to renew us and lead us to life in all its fullness. This is a good time to consider how we are called to reflect that essential truth about God's presence with us in our own lives.

Saint of the Week

St Martin of Tours

11th November

Born in Hungary in the 4th century, Martin's father was a senior officer in the Roman army. As was the custom, on his retirement from the army he was given some land and the family moved to northern Italy.

Martin started attending church when he was 10, although this was against the wishes of his parents. Although he was a 'catechumen' that is, one who was receiving instruction in the Christian faith, he did not get baptised until later in life. Aged 15, he joined the army as this was his obligation as the son of an officer. Once, when serving as a soldier he encountered a naked beggar. He cut his cloak in half and gave it to the beggar. That night he had a vision of Jesus who said, 'Martin, a mere catechumen, has clothed me.'

Martin left the army, was baptised and spent some time as a hermit before moving to a monastery in western France where he was guided by St Hilary and was ordained a priest. He became Bishop of Tours in 371, although this was against his wishes, the will of the people prevailed. He was a good shepherd of his

people and preached the Gospel to the poor. He set up a system of parishes in his diocese and made a point to visit each parish in his care at least once a year. Martin also placed an emphasis on the education of the clergy, the care of the poor and he founded several monasteries. He died in the year 397.

God all powerful, who called St Martin from the armies of this world to be a faithful soldier of Christ: give us grace to follow him in his love and compassion for the needy, and enable your Church to claim for all people their inheritance as children of God; 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**

PLEASE NOTE:

The Requiem & Act of Remembrance for our parishes this year will be held at St Deiniol's, Itton at 10.30 next Sunday morning - 14th November .

There will also be an outdoor Remembrance service on the village green at Devauden at 10 a.m.

Sunday November 21st

(Christ the King)

As requested by Bishop Cherry & the Diocese, there will be a joint celebration of the Eucharist for the new Ministry Area at 10 a.m. in St Mary's Church, Chepstow, All are very welcome indeed to attend.

After today, the next Sunday morning service at St Arvans will be on 28th November, the First Sunday of Advent, at the usual time of 10 a.m.