

PARISH NEWSLETTER

IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE

St Arvan's Church is open during the day both for worship and private prayer, Again, we stress there is no obligation while Covid-19 infection rates remain high to attend in person, and that your own safety and health & those of others must remain paramount. There is now no legal obligation to wear masks in church, but please do so if you wish. If you feel unwell with Covid-like symptoms, or have tested positive, please take part in our church services online rather than attend in person.

Our live-streamed 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

26th June 2022 The Second Sunday after Trinity

The Collect

Lord, you have taught us that all our doings without love are nothing worth: send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the true bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whoever lives is counted dead before you. Grant this for your only Son 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 second book of the Kings. [2. 1 – 2, 6-14]

Now when the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the Lord lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. Fifty men of the company of prophets also went and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and the two of them crossed on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." He responded, "You have asked a hard thing, yet if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had

fallen from him and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. He took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him and struck the water. He said, "Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah? Where is he?" He struck the water again, and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha crossed over.

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

Psalm 116 10–17

R/ O Lord, you are my portion and my cup

Preserve me, O God,
for in you have I taken refuge;
I have said to the Lord, 'You are my Lord,
all my good depends on you.'
All my delight is upon the godly
that are in the land,
upon those who are noble in heart.

R/ O Lord, you are my portion and my cup

Though the idols are legion
that many run after,
their drink offerings of blood I will not offer,
neither make mention of their names
upon my lips.

R/ O Lord, you are my portion and my cup

The Lord himself is my portion
and my cup; in your hands alone is my
fortune.

My share has fallen in a fair land;
indeed, I have a goodly heritage.
I will bless the Lord who has given me
counsel, and in the night watches
he instructs my heart.

R/ O Lord, you are my portion and my cup

I have set the Lord always before me;
he is at my right hand; I shall not fall.
Wherefore my heart is glad and my spirit
rejoices; my flesh also shall rest secure.

R/ O Lord, you are my portion and my cup

For you will not abandon
my soul to Death,
nor suffer your faithful one to see the Pit.
You will show me the path of life;
in your presence is the fullness of joy
and in your right hand
are pleasures for evermore.

R/ O Lord, you are my portion and my cup

A reading from the letter of St Paul

to the Galatians [5. 1, 13 - 26]

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters, only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become enslaved to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

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

Alleluia, Alleluia!
Speak, Lord, your servant is listening:
you have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia!

The Lord be with you:
And also with you

**Listen to the Gospel of Christ
according to St Luke.**

R/ *Glory to you, O Lord.*

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a

village of the Samaritans to prepare for his arrival, but they did not receive him because his face was set toward Jerusalem. When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" But he turned and rebuked them. Then they went on to another village.

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." And Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

[9. 51 - 62]

This is the Gospel of the Lord
R/ *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 follow without hesitation when he calls us.
The well-being of the earth and everything which lives on it.
The people of Ukraine.
The peace of the world
Those killed and injured in Ukraine
Those without adequate food and shelter
For all migrants, refugees, and all forced to flee from their homelands

Those here and throughout the world who continue to suffer from the Coronavirus pandemic - for doctors, nurses, all medical staff, carers, medical researchers. 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; Marion Webster; Lorna; Michael; Lisa; Anne-Louise; Abigail; John Metivier, priest; David Nicholson, priest.

For the Departed:

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

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.

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

Elisha

Jereboam: I'm not sure that I'd have the patience to make nets, Elisha.

Elisha: It is repetitive, I agree, but I find that repetition can help you focus your attention on other things. Look at the lovely view here for a start. In this beautiful setting I can think, I can talk to

people as I work, I can pray – I can do whatever I like really. Making the nets just continues in the background, as it were.

Jereboam: So you pray whilst you work on your nets?

Elisha: Yes. I'm assuming that Jesus doesn't stop listening just because I work and pray at the same time.

Jereboam: You're a follower of Jesus then...

Elisha: From the earliest days: I used to go and listen to the man himself.

Jereboam: In that case maybe you could explain something that's often confused me. From what I've heard, Jesus said that people should get up and follow him immediately, without even waiting to say goodbye to people at their homes. He didn't want one particular man to bury his father. Surely Jesus can't have objected that much to families?

Elisha: No, of course not. As I see it, Jesus had such a short time to preach his message that he was saying to people: "You need to respond now. If you put it off, you'll lose the opportunity." In those early days many of us did alter our lives pretty drastically. I certainly gave up my work to follow Jesus. In the end though, we realised that at least some members of the Church would need to earn money, just so that we could support each other. We also realised that families and friends should be an integral part of the Church.

Jereboam: So you don't feel any conflict between your religion, your family life and your work.

Elisha: No. What Jesus said about acting immediately has made me change my approach to life, though.

Jereboam: In what sense?

Elisha: Let's put it like this: if you see a crowd of people, every individual there deserves to be honoured and respected as a human being.

Jereboam: I agree so far, yes...

Elisha: Well, for me it's the same with time. Every moment is potentially valuable as a part of my life of faith. I shouldn't say, for example: "Things are busy today, so I'll be part of the Body of Christ tomorrow instead." You can't hide from the present moment.

Jereboam: So, if I understand you correctly, you might adapt those words of Jesus a little. You might say that it's all right to stay with your family or bury your father, so long as you keep Jesus with you

at all times.

Elisha: Well, I'm always reluctant to put words into his mouth, but I suppose that is more or less what I feel, yes.

Jereboam: Thank you, Elisha.

Thought for the Week

"Often, actually very often, God allows his greatest servants to make the most humiliating mistakes. This humbles them in their own eyes and in the eyes of their fellow men. It prevents them from seeing and taking pride in the graces God bestows on them."

- St. Louis Marie de Montfort

This Week

Today (Sunday) is the Second Sunday after Trinity. In St Luke's Gospel we hear of Jesus "resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem" but not being welcomed by everyone. When Jesus invites people to "Follow me" he is put off with excuses. "No one who sets a hand to the plough and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God."

Tuesday sees the feast day of **Saint Irenaeus, bishop and martyr.** & Wednesday the **solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles**, with its own special readings.

The first readings at the Eucharist this week are from the **Prophet Amos**. Amos was a shepherd who was called to deliver God's word to the northern kingdom, Israel.

This week 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 paralysed 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." When Jesus' disciples are criticised for not fasting, Jesus talks about the difficulty of combining the old and the new. He is calling for something radically new. Not a patch, but new wine in new wineskins.

Next Sunday, we celebrate the Feast of Saint Thomas, the apostle. The Gospel repeats a familiar story from the Easter Season, of the sceptical Thomas who becomes a believer in the Resurrection after a transforming encounter with the Risen Lord

A Homily for Trinity 2

+ In today's Gospel we come across these significant words: "*Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.*"

Very often these words of Jesus are seen as simply referring to the demands of Our Lord's wandering lifestyle and to the poverty he voluntarily assumes as he travels from place to place, dependent upon the hospitality and generosity of others. He is seen as warning the man who says he will follow him that his values and his way of life isn't one to be undertaken lightly.

But there is much more to it than that. There is an implication in Jesus' reply that ultimately, he, the Son of Man, does not belong to this world. His only true home is elsewhere, he belongs fully to no place and no time. Jesus identifies himself wholly with his Father; he is fully committed to the mission with which his Father has entrusted him; he is sent to proclaim the kingdom to a world which fails to recognise him, and which will reject him. His only place is where the salvation of the world requires him to be. In the first part of today's Gospel we hear, and it's repeated to emphasise its importance, of how Jesus had set his face to go to Jerusalem. The time had come to reveal the Father's mercy and justice, to reveal his unlimited love for the human race. Jerusalem was more than, in today's terms, the capital of Israel. It was the place of the Temple, the place where God dwelt among his people, the place where the law was taught in its fullness, it was the place of the true and authentic worship of God, it was the place where the throne

of David had been established and where the scriptures said it would be restored for all time.

Christ goes to Jerusalem to reveal God's glory, yet as always it appears to us in the most unexpected ways. The restoration of the throne of David takes place at Calvary where God is seen reigning on the cross. For us Jerusalem is the place of the Easter Mystery, which took place then at a specific time and place in the world's history, but which is always and eternally present. The Son of Man who has no place to lay his head is seen to have one place in particular, and through that one place we are led home to the life of God. So, in today's Gospel, what Jesus is saying to those who say they will follow him is that we can't come to God with our own agenda - expecting him to fit in with our clearly mapped out ideas for our own future. It's clinging on to our own agendas that so often make us unfit for the kingdom of God. We want to be part of it, we pray for it to come, but only when we're ready and only when we have time and only if it fits in with our desires and carefully laid plans. Jesus, the Incarnate Word, who has no agenda but God's, doesn't try to bargain or control what is going on. His face is already set towards Jerusalem, he knows he hasn't time for any other agenda and timetable but God's.

But when we talk of past, present and future, we as part of the Church do so in subtly different ways from the culture around us. The past isn't dead and buried; those who have gone before us live, as we do, in Christ. The Communion of Saints isn't an abstract concept, but an ever-present reality. That inevitably has to make our perspective somehow different. The past speaks to us not as something irrelevant and which has completely passed away but as something we carry with us. The Risen Christ transcends the limitations of time and space and, so do we, as part of his Body. We should be on our guard against the modern temptation to sweep the past aside as if it has nothing to say to our present and our future. As those who are journeying towards the heavenly Jerusalem, we are part of a living stream of faith, belief and practice - *a tradition* - however counter-cultural that may sound, but it literally means something handed down across the centuries of human experience - the

things which have stood the test of time, in *our sense* things which have stood the test of prayer and lived experience - those things which show us the living face of Christ. And the *living face of Christ* is the crucial point. It was the composer Gustav Mahler who said that "Tradition is not the worship of ashes, but the preservation of fire." We don't try to preserve the past in a culture of fossilisation or negativity. We don't as Christians seek to turn the clock back, but to live according to another concept of time altogether - to take the living past with us into a present and a future in which the Gospel of Christ can be proclaimed positively and without hesitation.

But it's important to realise that the Kingdom is never behind us, it's never in the past. Jesus himself isn't a figure from the past, but always someone in the present, someone who lives here and now, and is the one who is our future. The Kingdom of God - which of course the Gospels identify with the person of Jesus himself - is both with us now and ahead of us still, and his voice calls us on. And we won't not be fit for the Kingdom if we spend our time looking for God as being present only somewhere in the past, or confined within the covers of a book, however sacred, while ignoring the living reality of his presence with us now. When we say that ours is an historic faith, what we mean is that something has happened in the past which determines our present and our future. In other words, God has revealed himself to us in Christ and the consequences of that are for all times and all places and are still working themselves out in the yet unwritten pages of the world's history. The Son of Man who has nowhere to lay his head is at home both nowhere and everywhere, and his values of mercy, peace and compassion can seem equally homeless and misunderstood, hence his stern rebuke to the apostles James and John in the Gospel today, who want to use faith as a partisan weapon against those who have rejected them. Christ himself sets his face towards Jerusalem and the cross. There's a myth that it was easier somehow in the past to leave everything behind and follow the call of Christ. But I wouldn't be so sure of that; human beings, as we see from the Gospels themselves, have always yearned after familiarity and security. We don't like change, we don't

like having to work things out for ourselves, we tend to avoid having our assumptions confronted or challenged; for the most part we prefer to paddle in the shallows of the cultural and theological pool. Yet the call of Jesus is constant and keeps leading us towards the interior freedom which true, authentic faith provides.

Most of the time we are called to follow him in tried and tested ways within the boundaries of the familiar, within the world, the time and place and conditions in which we find ourselves. It's not that we *are* all being asked literally to leave everything and follow him. The point, of course, is *being spiritually prepared* to do it, and that our first response to the call of Christ shouldn't ever be to try to add reservations and conditions of our own. We are called to trust, and where *Christ* leads, to follow. +

Services in the Group:

Trinity 2

10 a.m. Sung Eucharist at St Arvans
(Live streamed)

Hymns (*New English Hymnal*)

238; 465; 296; 381

11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist with hymns
at St Deiniol's, Itton

SEVERN WYE MINISTRY AREA

PRAYING TOGETHER

"The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results." JAMES 5:16

Praying together for our ministry
area and our local communities

**THE 2nd AND 4th MONDAY
OF EVERY MONTH
7.30 TO 8.30 PM
St Christopher's Church,
Bulwark, Chepstow**

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**

A Prayer for Ukraine

written by Ukrainain Christians

O Lord our God, look down with mercy on the Ukrainian people. Protect and save them from the unjust aggressors who seek to subdue them. Grant them steadfast trust in your mercy and protection.
O Mother of God, who gave us your miraculous icon at Zarvanytsia, intercede for the Ukrainian people, who run to the shelter of your mercy in their times of need.
O Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Grant peace and protection to the people of Ukraine. Give them strength and courage to defend what is good, right, and holy. Keep them safe from harm and provide for all their needs, both temporal and spiritual.
Hear our prayers, O Lord, and deliver us from distress, for You are merciful and compassionate and love mankind.
To you we give glory: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**