

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;

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10th July 2022

**The Fourth Sunday
after Trinity**

The Collect

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; grant this, heavenly Father, for our Lord 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 book of Deuteronomy [30. 9-14]

Moses spoke to the people saying, the Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all your undertakings, in the fruit of your body, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your soil. For the Lord will again take delight in prospering you, just as he delighted in prospering your ancestors, when you obey the Lord your God by observing his commandments and decrees that are written in this book of the law, because you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Surely, this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?' No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe.

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

Psalm 25 1 - 6

**R/ Show me your ways, O Lord
and teach me your paths**

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;
O my God, in you I trust;
let me not be put to shame;
let not my enemies triumph over me.

Let none who look to you
be put to shame,
but let the treacherous
be shamed and frustrated.

**R/ Show me your ways, O Lord
and teach me your paths**

Make me to know your ways, O Lord,
and teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you have I hoped all the day long.

**R/ Show me your ways, O Lord
and teach me your paths**

Remember, Lord, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting. Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions, but think on me in your goodness, O Lord, according to your steadfast love.

**R/ Show me your ways, O Lord
and teach me your paths**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians [1. 1-14]

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow-servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit. For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the

kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

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

Gradual Hymn

Alleluia, alleluia! Your words are spirit,
Lord, And they are life;
You have the message of eternal life
Alleluia!

The Lord be with you:
And also with you

Listen to the Gospel of Christ
according to St Luke [St Luke 10. 25-37]

Glory to you, O Lord

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'
But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

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 grow in love of God and our neighbour
For integrity and truth in public life
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; Colin Jenkins; John Henry Lewis Rowlands, priest; our own departed relatives & friends, & those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Freddy Cooper; Jane Zorab;

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'

Tirzah

Jereboam: Tell me, Tirzah, do you still operate your "neighbour project" or whatever it was called?

Tirzah: The Neighbour Group...well, it's still a busy group, although I don't play such an active rôle any longer.

Jereboam: It always struck me as a marvellous idea, derived, I think, from that story Jesus told, the one about the Good Samaritan.

Tirzah: Yes -- we named the group after the questions that gave rise to that story in the first place: "Who is my neighbour?" and therefore "Whom should I love as myself?"

Jereboam: You used to look after all sorts of people and help them. Did you find the work too exhausting to continue?

Tirzah: Not exactly. It's ironic: I started the project because of my religious beliefs, and I had to reduce my commitment to it because of my religious beliefs too.

Jereboam: You'll need to explain that.

Tirzah: The trouble with such practical work was that I started paying too much attention to my own abilities and opinions. There was also the danger of being too pleased with my achievements. In the end I crowded my mind with words, principles, ideas and opinions. I lost sight of other aspects of my faith.

Jereboam: Such as...?

Tirzah: *I found I needed to regain a sense of what I received from God and a sense of my own nothingness without him. So it felt natural that I should become less active within the Neighbour Group. For a while I stopped altogether. After all, I told myself, the Samaritan in the story responded to a single situation which God had allowed him to encounter. He didn't try to take control and set up an organisation to solve the world's problems.*

Jereboam: *You make the Neighbour Group sound almost evil.*

Tirzah: *No, no – and, as I said, that was only my initial reaction anyway. I soon had second thoughts. Now I still do a limited amount of active work for the group, but my colleagues do most of the practical jobs. I know that we do good things, but personally I need to lose myself in prayer too. It's a question of keeping the right balance. Look, do you mind if I make a suggestion?*

Jereboam: *Of course not.*

Tirzah: *Why don't I introduce you to Gad? He leads the group nowadays.*

Jereboam: *Thank you: I'd be interested to speak to him.*

Thought for the Week

“We must stand up for the rights of our neighbour who is suffering from injustice; we must defend them all the more vigorously because we see Jesus present in them. Surely this is our duty because of our love for others for his sake. We have no right to be ‘sleeping watchmen’ or dumb watch-dogs. Whenever we see evil we must sound the alarm.”

St. Charles de Foucauld

This Week

Sunday is the Fourth Sunday after Trinity. In St Luke's gospel we see Jesus challenged by a scholar who asks how to obtain eternal life. Jesus says “love your neighbour as yourself.” When he is asked, “who is my neighbor?” Jesus tells the well-loved story of the Good Samaritan, who stopped to help a Levite who had been left for dead. Even though others had passed by the Levite, the Samaritan cares for him

with tenderness. “Go and do likewise,” Jesus tells us.

Monday is the Feast of Saint Benedict, Abbot, and Friday the feast day of Saint Bonaventure, Bishop and Doctor of the Church.

In our readings from St Matthew's Gospel this week we read more about the challenge of being a disciple of Jesus. He calls us to a bond with him that is even greater than the bonds of family.

“Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” Jesus reproaches towns where he worked miracles and the people had not repented. Jesus thanks God that, though the wise and the learned remain in unbelief, the childlike are open to God's grace and believe. Jesus says, “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.” Taking on discipleship, we will find that it is easy and we will find rest in him. When controversy comes up about his disciples' picking grain to eat on the Sabbath, Jesus give a startling response to the judgment of the Pharisees: “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.” Jesus leaves town when the Pharisees want to kill him to fulfill the Prophet Isaiah: “He will not contend or cry out, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory.”

Next Sunday the readings speak to us about service. In the Genesis story, Abraham generously cares for three strangers who then tell him that his wife, Sarah, will finally have a son. St Luke's gospel recounts the story of Martha and Mary: Martha ran around serving Jesus while Mary sat at his feet listening. “Mary has chosen the better part,” Jesus says.

A Homily for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity

+ Today's Gospel focuses on that most well known, and probably the most often quoted of all Our Lord's parables, the story of the Good Samaritan. At the heart of the message Jesus is putting over here is something both liberating and challenging in equal degrees to each one of us.

The scholar of the law asks Jesus a question, and it appears on the surface to

be an invitation to begin an informed and intelligent discussion. But the lawyer, the acknowledged expert on the religious law, isn't really, it seems, innocently searching for information, he is asking in a very sceptical and pointed way what exactly was this latest fashionable rabbi's take on a very widely discussed topic. Is it possible - even desirable - to add anything new to what has already been deliberated and pondered over down the centuries of religious tradition?

And Jesus, being very well aware of this hidden agenda, in his usual manner, answers a question with a question. His questioner knows very well what the scriptures and the rabbinical interpretations of the scriptures say and replies correctly. According to the Book of Leviticus (19: 18,) loving one's neighbour is a sacred responsibility for the faithful follower of the Law of Moses. So, to carry on the discussion, again knowing very well all the pages of learned discussions and disputes on the matter, the teacher of the law asks the obvious question: “*And who is my neighbour?*” (we can imagine the tone of that question - probably put rather condescendingly).

Jesus answers this follow up with the parable, beginning with that well known phrase, “*a man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho ...*”

So, then, let's look very briefly at some of the religious and cultural background. In the Judaism of the time there was a wide-ranging discussion about who should be considered an Israelite's neighbour. In general, it came to be understood that the category of “*neighbour*” included all one's fellow countrymen and Gentile converts to Judaism. With his choice of characters in the story (a Samaritan who comes to the aid of a Jew!) Jesus extends the term neighbour and makes it universal, without restriction or qualification. Its application is the whole of humanity not made as a sweeping generalisation, but taken person by person, and has nothing to do with family, ethnic, or religious boundaries. In fact, as Jesus' choice of a Samaritan as the main character in his story shows us our traditional enemy can also be our neighbour! The Samaritans and the Jews had been at odds for generations; the Samaritan was the hated outsider, the heretic, the nearest enemy.

We find the shock value of Jesus choice of a Samaritan protagonist somewhat hard

to understand, since this parable is so well known to us – it's so built into the spiritual consciousness of the Christian tradition - that when we think of the word 'Samaritan,' we now immediately tend to think of the 'Good Samaritan,' but to Jesus' hearers this would have been a shocking contradiction in terms. The general feeling among Jesus' contemporaries would have been the equivalent of *'the only good Samaritan is a dead Samaritan.'* We hear that sort of language being used even now along with less blood-curdling but equally dead-eyed phrases such as *"charity begins at home"* – that it goes some considerable way towards explaining why Our Lord's parable is so revolutionary and so challenging in its outlook.

Jesus is telling this story to move from the Law to the Gospel, from an application of religious regulation to the saving good news which can't be confined in an intellectual, cultural or theological box. And the power of this parable is made evident in several ways. The two people who pass by (some think that the inclusion of the Levite, the religious scholar, the lawyer, is probably made as a dig at the man who asks the question!) are not meant to be seen as bad people - merely as being restricted by the demands of a tradition they have inherited without really understanding the need not to be confined by their understanding of it. They can't allow themselves to respond to a fellow human being in need for fear of compromising their understanding of religious truth.

Jesus comes, as he tells us, not to abolish the law but to fulfil it, and the duty owed to those in the hitherto highly restricted category of who is one's neighbour under the law is extended to everyone in need. What is revolutionary here is the lack of qualification and exception. In the eyes of God, no one is left outside the circle of his love and compassion. The good news of the kingdom of God is meant for the whole world, applied indiscriminately to those we actually come across on the road of life. There is another interpretation of the parable, too - not so obvious to us today but one which was put forward by the Fathers of the Church who saw in the story of the Good Samaritan the pattern of our lives. If we look carefully, it is not difficult to see why they thought that.

The man robbed and left for dead is an image of our own human nature; wounded and unable to help ourselves. The priest and the Levite are our own alienated hearts, again unable to reach out in compassion to help and serve others. It is Christ himself who enters this world in mercy and love to bring us healing and to carry us to his Father; healing our wounds and by his resurrection, lifting us to the Father.

So, like the Saints - those who have taken the Gospel both so deadly seriously and so practically humanely, we are to go beyond the formal requirements of justice - not according to people what we think they deserve - but trying to live according to Christ's own example of love without measure. We can only hope to do this through the grace of Jesus Christ, who raises us to heaven by making us part of his body. As St Paul tells the Colossians: 'God wanted all things to be reconciled through Him and for Him, everything in heaven and on earth, when he made peace by his death on the cross.'

The Gospel, the saving good news of Jesus Christ, is meant to carry us beyond the requirements of formal justice, (*the Law, if you like*) and to bring peace and healing where hope has been lost; to lift us up in anticipation to the immeasurable joy of the life of heaven and the love of God which knows no qualification, and where the angels and Saints rejoice without ceasing. +

Services in the Group: 4th Sunday after Trinity

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

Hymns (*New English Hymnal*)
492; 407; 285; 355

11.30 a.m. Liturgy of the Word with hymns
at St Deiniol's, Llton

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.**

NEXT SUNDAY

**An ORGAN RECITAL
BY JOHN CHEER**

**St Arvans Church
Sunday 17th July 9, 2022
at 5 p.m.
Tickets £10 adults
Students £5
Accompanied children free**



...Joy of the organ

**AN ORGAN RECITAL BY
John Cheer**

Programme to include...
BACH: D minor Toccata, An Wasserflüssen
Babylon
VIVALDI arr. BACH: Concerto in A minor
BUXTEHUDE: Prelude and Fugue in D
STANLEY: Voluntary in C
Arr. PINKEVICIUS: Ukrainian Folk Songs
*Presentation on Joy of Learning
Ugandan crafts (cash only)*

Sunday 17th July at 5 pm
St Arvans Church, nr. Chepstow
Adults: £10, including glass of wine
Students £5, accompanied children free

Joy of Learning is a new charity which has been set up to support children who have left Sanyu Babies' Home in Kampala, in particular with their ongoing education

***Wine, Wander
and a little light music
at Wyndcliffe Court***

**In aid of St Mary's Church,
Penterry**

**Friday 22nd July
6 – 8 p.m.**

**You are invited to enjoy a drink,
a wander and a chance to listen
to Kate Price performing some
old favourites in the beautiful
garden at Wyndcliffe Court.**

**Free entry to include a glass
of wine or soft drink.
All donations received
will be used to support
the maintenance of St Mary's**

**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**