Our Faith on Sunday

LITURGY

1st Sunday of Advent (A)

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Cf. Ps 24:1-3

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God.
In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame.
Nor let my enemies exult over me;
and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 2:1-5

The Lord gathers all nations together into the eternal peace of God's kingdom.

PSALM: Ps 121:1-2.4-5.6-9. R.cf.v1

R) I rejoiced when I heard them say: 'Let us go to God's house.'

I rejoiced when I heard them say:
'Let us go to God's house.'
And now our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem. **(R)**

It is there that the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord.
For Israel's law it is,
there to praise the Lord's name.
There were set the thrones of judgement
of the house of David. **(R)**

For the peace of Jerusalem pray:
'Peace be to your homes!
May peace reign in your walls,
in your palaces, peace!' **(R)**

For love of my brethren and friends
I say: 'Peace upon you!'
For love of the house of the Lord
I will ask for your good. **(R)**

SECOND READING: Romans 13:11-14

Our salvation is near

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! Ps 84:8
Let us see, O Lord, your mercy
and give us your saving help.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL: Matthew 24:37-44

Stay awake so that you may be ready.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Ps 84:13

The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.



GOSPEL REFLECTION



In Advent, as we prepare to celebrate the Lord's first 'coming', our thoughts are appropriately turned (by the Church) to Our Lord's second 'coming', which will be the definitive one. Jesus tells us, in no uncertain terms, to be prepared for it. Life will be moving in its accustomed ways, he says, but be ready. In what way be ready? There is a clue, I think, in the fact that "one (man) is taken, another left; of two women, one is taken one left." At the Lord's second coming time comes to an end and the Last Judgement will take place. So the one man, the one woman "taken", are taken to Heaven; the others not. Therefore, to "be prepared" is to be alert to Our Lord's presence at all times; to know him as the way and the truth, and to follow his leadership. "To follow" means to keep his commandments and "My commandments are not difficult," he says. They lead to life, eternal life, and even to the flourishing of life here on earth. It is like God's generosity: that even his demands are for our enrichment.

EVANGELII GAUDIUM (JOY OF THE GOSPEL)



THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF EVANGELIZATION

CONCERN FOR THE VULNERABLE

213. Among the vulnerable for whom the Church wishes to care with particular love and concern are unborn children, the most defenceless and innocent among us. Nowadays efforts are made to deny them their human dignity and to do with them whatever one pleases, taking their lives and passing laws preventing anyone from standing in the way of this. Frequently, as a way of ridiculing the Church's effort to defend their lives, attempts are made to present her position as ideological, obscurantist and conservative. Yet this defence of unborn life is closely linked to the defence of each and every other human right. It involves the conviction that a human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development.

GOSPEL CHILDHOOD
The 'Little Way' of St Therese of Lisieux for everyone*

I HAVE FOUND MY VOCATION

In my quandary [about my vocation] I turned to the Word of God for light on this matter and opened my New Testament at St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapters twelve and thirteen.

There I read that we can't all be apostles, or prophets or teachers and so on. The Church is a body in which the members have different parts. The eye has a different function from the ear, the hand from the knee. We have different gifts because we need to work together for the good of the whole body. We cannot all do the same thing or the body ceases to function properly.

But as I read on, I discovered that St Paul tells us that there is a more excellent way than any of those played by the differentiated bodily organs. It is the universal way of love. I recognised that my real gift, that of love, was actually the most important, and indeed the only, gift that matters. Without it, all the other gifts are worthless and mere show.

If the Church is a body then it must have a heart which is at its centre and which sustains all the other parts by pumping blood around the whole organism.

Love burning in the Church's heart is what enables its members to act. It enables the preachers to preach, the apostles to spread the gospel, the martyrs to shed their blood.

Without love the Church can do nothing worthwhile. In fact love encompasses every vocation there is.

Beside myself with joy, I cried out: 'Jesus, my Love! I have found my vocation. It's to be love deep down in the heart of the Church. With love I can be everything I desire.'

* Simplified and illustrated by Elizabeth Ruth Obbard. First published in 2005 in Great Britain by: New City Unit 1 Polaris Centre 41 Brownfields Welwyn Garden City AL7 1AN https://www.newcity.co.uk/book-tag/focolare/ ISBN: 13:978-0904287-94-3

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S. JOHN FISHER, REDBOURN with FLAMSTEAD AND MARKYATE.

PARISH PRIEST: Father Michael Mannion. Telephone 01582 792270

1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT – 1ST DECEMBER 2019

MASSES THIS WEEK

Sunday (Saturday)	5.30pm	Mary and Family Intentions
Sunday	9.00am	Gil Taylor (RIP)
Monday 2nd December	11.45am	feria – Martin (Intentions)
Friday 6th December	11.45 am	St Nicholas, Bishop
Sunday 8th December	**2nd Sunday of Advent**	
(Saturday)	5.30pm	
Sunday	9.00am	Louis Kayum (RIP Anniv.)

Confessions are available after Saturday evening Mass and on request.

Feast Days This Week: 3rd December – St. Francis Xavier, Priest
7th December – St. Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor.

Please remember in your prayers: Sick; Nigel Clark, Judy Atkins, Sofia Mayorga, Una Hewitt, Mary Jones, David Ruth, Maria Maynard, Liz Mevin and Diane Boba.

Please remember in you prayers this week in The Churches Together List the residents of:
Downedge, Basset Close, Blackhorse Lane, Wheatlock Mead, Harding Close, Lynsey Close, Cell, Dunstable Road, High View, Park Close, Sursham Court, Cheverells Green, Little Wood End and Roe End Lane.

Christmas Hampers: The hampers will be raffled on Sunday 1st December after Mass.
This year the proceeds will go to **CAFOD.**

Christmas Flower Collection will take place the weekends of 7th /8th December and 14th /15th December.

Church Cleaning will take place on **Saturday 14th December from 9.00am.** As many helpers as possible please.

Advent Giving Calendar
Advent is a special season in the Church's year when we prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ. However, for many people facing food poverty, Christmas can be a difficult time. Currently, 8.4 million people in the U.K. regularly do not get enough to eat. The Caritas Food Collective are a new project working to tackle food poverty in the Diocese of Westminster. This year, we have created an 'Advent Giving Calendar' to help use this season as a time when we think of those who might be struggling, and do our bit to help them in the run up to Christmas.
You are welcome to bring anything you wish to donate to the Church and we will pass them on to the local food bank.
The **Big Blue Advent Calendar** is available at the back of the Church.

Reconciliation Services

Redbourn
17 Dec.
at 7.30 pm

Wheathampstead
16TH DEC.
at 7.30 pm