Our Faith on Sunday

LITURGY

3rd Sunday of Advent (A)

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Phil 4:4-5

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.
Indeed, the Lord is near.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 35:1-6.10

God himself is coming to save you.

PSALM: Ps 145:6-10. R.cf.Is 35:4

R) Come, Lord, and save us.

It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **(R)**

It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan. **(R)**

It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. **(R)**

SECOND READING: James 5:7-10

Do not lose heart for the Lord's coming will be soon.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! Is 61:1 (Lk 4:18)
The spirit of the Lord has been given to me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2-11

Are you the one who is to come, or have we got to wait for someone else?

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: Cf. Is 35:4

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.
Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.



GOSPEL REFLECTION



John the Baptist is a fascinating character. He has been sent to 'prepare the way' for Jesus, but he didn't know who to expect. In today's Gospel he sends his disciples to ask Christ 'if he is the one who is to come'. Jesus sends them back to tell John what they hear and see. But then Jesus has to explain exactly who John is. He says that there has been no greater human being and yet 'the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.'

There is always the danger for us that we are attracted by a very gifted, even a very holy, speaker, so much so, that we start to follow that person. If he or she is real disciple of Christ, however, they will always direct us towards him and not to themselves. The greatest of saints, such as Francis of Assisi or Mother Teresa of Calcutta, were at pains to deflect attention away from themselves and towards God. If we want to be sure that any of our spiritual leaders today are genuine, we must ask the question: "Who is the real focus of their attention? Is it them or are they simply doing what John the Baptist did – pointing us to Christ?

EVANGELII GAUDIUM (JOY OF THE GOSPEL)



THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF EVANGELIZATION

CONCERN FOR THE VULNERABLE

214. Precisely because this involves the internal consistency of our message about the value of the human person, the Church cannot be expected to change her position on this question. I want to be completely honest in this regard. This is not something subject to alleged reforms or "modernizations". It is not "progressive" to try to resolve problems by eliminating a human life. On the other hand, it is also true that we have done little to adequately accompany women in very difficult situations, where abortion appears as a quick solution to their profound anguish, especially when the life developing within them is the result of rape or a situation of extreme poverty. Who can remain unmoved before such painful situations?

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

A WAY OF PUTTING LOVE INTO ACTION

The prophet Elisha asked Elijah for a double portion of his spirit (II Kings 2:9). Those who are gifted are only too pleased to give and share in return. So I asked all the angels and saints, God's gifted ones, to share with me some of their love, in fact make me a 'double gift' of it, to compensate for my own weaknesses and failings.

A loving parent is always ready to help a child. And I am a child of Mother Church and the King of Kings. I'm not seeking glory for myself. I'm not able to do great things. Others in the Church can do the great things that need to be done to bring about God's reign. I just remain close to the royal throne like a little child and go on loving on behalf of those who have to go out to do the necessary work.

But how can I show my love? Love needs to be proved by action. It can't just remain in the head or even in the heart. It has to be made real by what we do. Love is effort-full, not effortless.

Well, even a little child can scatter flowers. Even a little child can sing, adding its voice to the great Song of God's love and God's life.

So this is what I do – I scatter flowers. How? By doing what is within my power here and now: for instance, a kind look, a smile, a word of encouragement, a small suffering gladly endured. Everything can be offered to God whether it is something joyful of sorrowful. Everything, no matter how small, can be grist for the mill of love.

* 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

Excerpts from the English translation of The Roman Missal © 2010 International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved. The Psalms: A new Translation © 1963 The Grail (England) published by Harper Collins.Excerpt from THE JERUSALEM BIBLE, copyright (c) 1966 by Darton, Longman & Todd, Ltd. and Doubleday, a division of Random House, Inc. Reprinted by Permission.

THE CATHOLIC PRINTING COMPANY OF FARNWORTH* www.catholicprint.co.uk 0161 873 7457 ©2019

S. JOHN FISHER, REDBOURN with FLAMSTEAD AND MARKYATE.

PARISH PRIEST: Father Michael Mannion. Telephone 01582 792270

3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT – 15th DECEMBER 2019

MASSES THIS WEEK

Sunday (Saturday)	5.30pm	Parishioners Intentions
Sunday	9.00am	Gil Taylor (RIP)
Monday 16th December	11.45am	Advent feria
Tuesday 17th December	7.30pm	Reconciliation Service with Absolution
Friday 20th December	11.45 am	Advent feria
Sunday 22nd December	**4th Sunday of Advent**	
(Saturday)	5.30pm	Geoff Bliss (RIP)
Sunday	9.00am	

Confessions are available after Saturday evening Mass and on request.

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:
Brooke End, Ver Road, Dunstable Road, Rickyard Meadow, Cumberland Drive, Linden Road,Cheverelles Green, Flax Mews, London Road, Parkfield Road, The Coppins, College Close, Mill Lane & Pietley Cottages (Trowley Bottom)

Christmas Hampers: This year the raffle raised the magnificent sum of £353.00 which will go towards our project for purchasing another well in Uganda through **CAFOD.** A huge Thank You to everybody who contributed and helped in any way and to Janet who organised this event.
The winning tickets are; White 840 Daniella, White 833 Mavis, Green 421 Patsy Luck, White 809 Susan Aldridge, Blue 706 Tessa Corbett, Green 341 Sarah Street, Green 323 Kin, Green 348 Jo, White 803 Sue Chambers, Green 359 Lauren & Mario.

Christmas Flower Collection will take place after Mass this weekend

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, there is a basket in the porch, and we will pass them on to our local food bank through St Marys.

Readers and Extraordinary Ministers are needed for the Christmas Services.
If you are able to help please put your name on the list at the back of the Church.
New Rotas are also available.

An Invitation from the Mothers Union of St. Mary's Church, Redbourn, to the women of St. John Fisher to attend the Ecumenical Carol Service to be held at St. Mary's Church on **Tuesday 7th January at 10.00am**

Reconciliation Services	**Redbourn**	**Wheathampstead**
	Tuesday 17th December at 7.30pm	Monday 16th December at 7.30pm