

Advent Day of Recollection

Saturday 9th December 2017



“PREPARE A WAY FOR THE LORD”

From 10.15am until approximately 1.30pm

- 10.15am Tea and coffee in the Parish Centre
NB. Priests will be available in the church to hear Confessions during this time
- 11.00am First talk
- 11.40am Break
- 12.00pm Second talk
- 12.40pm Break
- 12.50pm Commissioning and recommissioning of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
- 1.00pm Soup and bread, tea and coffee in the parish centre
NB. Priests will be available in the church to hear Confessions until 1.15pm

Our speaker will be Fr John Hemer,
scripture lecturer at Allen Hall seminary.
ALL WELCOME!



THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF
ST GEORGE, SUDBURY



ADVENT 2017



Celebrating Advent

In the Catholic Church, Advent is a period of preparation, extending over four Sundays, before Christmas. The word Advent comes from the Latin *advenio*, "to come to," and refers to the coming of Christ. This refers, first of all, to our celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas; but second, to the coming of Christ in our lives through grace and the Sacrament of Holy Communion; and finally, to His Second Coming at the end of time. Our preparations, therefore, should have all three comings in mind. We need to prepare our souls to receive Christ worthily.

First We Fast, Then We Feast

That's why Advent has traditionally been known as a "little Lent."

As in Lent, Advent should be marked by increased prayer, fasting, and good works. While the Western Church no longer has a set requirement for fasting during Advent, the Eastern Church, both Catholic and Orthodox, continues to observe what is known as Philip's Fast, from November 15 until Christmas. Traditionally, all great feasts have been preceded by a time of fasting, which makes the feast itself more joyful. Sadly, Advent today has supplanted by "the Christmas shopping season," so that by Christmas Day many people no longer enjoy the feast and by Boxing Day its over!

The Symbols of Advent

In its symbolism, the Church continues to stress the penitential and preparatory nature of Advent. As during Lent, priests wear purple vestments, and the Gloria ("Glory to God") is omitted during Mass. The only exception is on the Third Sunday of Advent, known as Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday, when priests wear rose-coloured vestments. This special exception is designed to encourage us to continue our prayer and fasting, because we can see that Advent is more than halfway over and Christmas is coming near.

The Advent Wreath

Perhaps the best-known of all Advent symbols is the Advent wreath, a custom which originated among German Lutherans but was soon adopted by Catholics. Consisting of four candles (three purple and one pink) arranged in a circle with evergreen boughs (and often a fifth, white candle in the centre), the Advent wreath corresponds to the four Sundays of Advent. The purple candles represent the penitential nature of the season, while the pink candle calls to mind the respite of Gaudete Sunday. (The white candle represents Christmas.)

Celebrating

We can better enjoy Christmas—all 12 days of it, from Christmas Day to Epiphany—if we revive Advent as a period of preparation. Abstaining from meat on Fridays, or not eating at all between meals, is a good way to revive the Advent fast. (Not eating Christmas biscuits and endless mince pies or even listening to Christmas music before Christmas is another.) We can incorporate such customs as the Advent wreath, and we can set some time aside for special scripture readings for Advent, which remind us of the threefold coming of Christ.

Holding off on putting up the Christmas tree and other decorations is another way to remind ourselves that the feast is not here yet. Traditionally, such decorations were put up on Christmas Eve, but they would not be taken down until after Epiphany, in order to celebrate the Christmas season to its fullest.



OPPORTUNITIES AT ST GEORGE'S THIS ADVENT

ADVENT BEGINS on Sunday 3rd December.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

In addition to the usual times for the Sacrament of Penance there will be a **PARISH RECONCILIATION SERVICE** with an opportunity for **individual confession** on **THURSDAY 14th DECEMBER at 7.30pm**.

CAROLS

School Carol Concert (in Church) Thursday 14th December at 1.30pm

Parish Carol Concert by Candlelight Sunday 17th December at 7.30pm

The Parish Carol Concert will be followed by mulled wine & mince pies in the Parish Centre.

HOLY MASS

SUNDAY MASS Saturday (Vigil) 6.15pm, 8.30, 9.45am (Family), 11.15am (Solemn) & 5.30pm. **WEEKDAY MASS** Monday—Saturday at 9.30am.

CHURCH CLEANING & DECORATION

Friday 22nd December all morning from after Mass.

Saturday 23rd December all morning from after Mass.

SMALL REFLECTION/STUDY GROUP on Mondays after Mass in the Café/Bar. All welcome!

CHILDREN'S NATIVITY at the 6.00pm **CHRISTMAS EVE MASS**: If your child is in **year 3 or above** and would like to take part or help in any way please contact Monica Mortali (Tel: 07427 897787 or monicamortali@hotmail.co.uk) Rehearsals on Saturday 16th December 10.00 - 12.30, Thursday 21st December 6.30 - 7.30pm & Saturday 23rd December 10.30am - 12noon.

CHRISTMAS EVE Sunday 24th December THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

6.15pm Saturday Vigil Mass (said)
8.30am Mass (said)
9.45am Mass (said)
11.15am Mass (said)

Christmas begins

5.30pm Carols
6.00pm Family Vigil Mass for Christmas
11.30pm Carols by candlelight
12 midnight MIDNIGHT MASS

CHRISTMAS DAY Monday 25th December THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

8.30am Mass of the Dawn (said)
9.45am Mass (Family)
11.15am Mass (Solemn)
NB There will be NO evening Mass on Christmas Day

CONFESSIONS BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Saturday 16th December 5.15 - 6.00pm
Monday 18th –
Saturday 23rd December 9.00 - 9.30am
or at any other time by appointment