



ST TERESA'S

Newsletter

29th November 2020

My dear friends

And so we have arrived at the First Sunday of Advent - the beginning of the Church's year. Throughout this liturgical year (Year B) we will listen to the Gospel of Mark, interspersed with the Gospel of John. I always think Advent is a very special time- a time of hope, promise, preparation, opportunity. The word Advent means 'coming'. During Advent we focus on the coming of the Lord. We remember that he has already come in the flesh, the Son of God born of a Virgin. He has broken into human history and nothing has ever been the same since. During these four weeks we are preparing to celebrate the real meaning of Christmas- Emmanuel, God is with us always.



This holy season of Advent invites us also to prepare for his final visit when he will come again in all his glory, when God's reign will be all in all. But we can also prepare ourselves for a third coming- his coming to us every day in the most unassuming and unexpected ways, through a friend, a phone call, a walk – too many ways to mention here. As usual Pope Francis expresses it beautifully, "During Advent we are called to enlarge the horizons of our hearts, to be surprised by the life that is presented each day with its newness. In order to do this, we need to learn to not depend on our own securities, our own established plans, because the Lord comes in the hour which we don't imagine."



How can we make our hearts ready to receive him? What might God's invitation be to us this Advent? I would like to suggest to you one way. Caryll Houselander, a spiritual writer and poet describes Advent as, 'The season of the secret, the secret of the growth of Christ, of divine love growing in silence. It is the season of humility, silence and growth.' (The Reed of God).

I wonder if each one of us might during the next four weeks enter into this secret silence and take stock honestly of our lives? Can we take time to allow that divine love to grow silently in our innermost being? Can we allow Jesus to gently and tenderly embrace our doubts, our fears, our hurts, our disappointments, our bitterness, our anxieties, so that we can make room for him and meet him 'in the hour which we don't imagine?' Can we hear him whisper words of comfort, reassurance and encouragement? Can we hear him whisper words of hope to us?

The first Sunday of Advent is sometimes called the Sunday of Hope. And in the midst of this global pandemic Advent enters offering us hope. It can be quite hard to have hope in these testing times when the road ahead seems difficult, when so much fear, uncertainty, insecurity and anxiety surround us. And often we put our hope in so many things which ultimately disappoint us. As we enter more and more into that secret silence, can we put our hope in God. Can we put our hope in his unlimited goodness, kindness, tenderness, mercy? Can we put our hope in someone who loves us so much, who is completely reliable, our rock, our refuge, able to heal us and fill our poor hearts with unimaginable love, joy and peace?

I have always been struck by the words of Pope Benedict XVI, 'We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is a result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each one of us is necessary.' I encourage you all to enter into that secret silence during the four weeks of Advent – and as you allow this divine love to grow in you, you will come to understand more and more just how much you are loved and wanted.

The Gospel of this Sunday is from Mark (13:33-37). Jesus warns his disciples to be watchful so that they will be ready when he will come. *'So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'* This fits in beautifully with what we are focusing on in Advent. Preparing. Preparing for Christmas, preparing to meet him every day, preparing for his final coming in glory.

Pope Francis says: 'Advent is an invitation to vigilance, because, not knowing when He will come, we must always be ready to depart.' The Gospel is not meant to frighten us, just to "give meaning to everyday occurrences' (Pope Francis.) And as we know, if we live close to Jesus always and just do our best, day by day, to live as he did, we **will be** ready to depart, whenever the Lord comes to lead us to our eternal home, where we will enjoy unimaginable joy and peace.

The first Christians frequently prayed the words 'Maranatha' Come, Lord Jesus. Let us too cry out to him: 'Come, Lord Jesus, come and free me from all that prevents Your love and care from invading my heart with new life, light and hope.' As I say my daily mass this week, the first Advent candle of Hope will be burning. Be sure that I will be praying for all of you.

May God bless you all. Stay safe.

Fr Lijo

Important News

Change of Sunday Mass Time: Some of you may already know that Fr John Fleming from the Guardian Angels Parish is retiring very soon. As there is a real shortage of priests in the diocese, there is no one to replace him. Bishop David asked me if I would accept to look after this small community and say mass for them every Sunday at 11.00am. In order to allow me enough time to arrive there and prepare for the mass, it means moving our 10.00am mass to 9.30am.

I am very sorry about this and I do know that it will mean a big change for many of you. I am sure you can understand how important it is for the little community of the Guardian Angels to keep at least one of their Sunday masses and to be able to continue as a parish community for as long as possible.

So from Sunday 6th December onwards, our Sunday masses will be at 8.00am and 9.30 am.

Public Worship Resumes: The Good News this week from the government is that from 2nd December we are able to resume our public masses. Our masses will begin again on Saturday 5th December at 6.30 pm and Sunday 6th December at 8.00 am and 9.30 am.

It is very important that our Church maintains its COVID secure status. This means that the safety measures that we have become used to relating to the number of people attending, the groupings of those attendees, the wearing of masks and the importance of hand sanitising must remain in place. As per usual you will have to reserve your place for mass, booking details are given at the end of the newsletter.

Opening of the Church for Private prayer: The Church will be open this Wednesday morning from 10.00am-11.00am for private prayer. If you feel able to, please do come and spend some time with the Lord. Very strict safety measures continue to be in place.

Update from Veronica- 10,000 steps a day fundraising challenge: I just want to update you on my progress so far. I have walked 316,708 step-140 miles approximately. Heartfelt and grateful thanks to all those who have so generously donated to this cause already and for the messages of support that help to keep me going. All the money will be donated to the SVP to help local families in need and St Teresa's. It is not too late to contribute-please use the link. https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/veronica-adsetts?utm_term=e7nJqyabE or put some money in an envelope marked Veronica's Challenge and pop it through the Presbytery letter box. Saturday 28th November is the last day for the challenge but you can still donate after that date. Thank you again. Veronica Adsetts

St Teresa's Travelling Crib – An Online Journey, Christmas 2020: This year the travelling Crib we move from house to house via the internet. We have weekly dial in sessions on Zoom where the crib can be 'brought' to you and others. These will be held on the following days: **Sunday 6 December at 12am, Saturday 12 December at 12am, Wednesday 16 December at 7.30pm, Thursday 24 December at 1pm**

Each session offers a chance to reflect on the Holy Family's journey and chat and will last 30 minutes. If you would like to be part of the journey, host a session or just get more information, please contact Paul and Maru O'Neill on wethepoms@gmail.com or telephone 01844 291321. You don't need to have Zoom on your computer to take part, but will need a computer and internet connection.

Coffee and Company: If you would like to have a coffee whilst chatting to other parishioners just follow the link below on Tuesday December 1st at 10.30am .

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/76053514706?pwd=MytKZWlaejEyZTljbjZlek9zWEhCUT09>

Meeting ID: 760 5351 4706. Passcode: 79gAW6

Princes Risborough Food Cupboard: Thank you all so much for your generous donations. Donations may be made to St Mary's Church Bell Tower, 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. Wednesdays and Fridays, or in the trolley at the entrance to Tesco's at any time they're open.

Things we could do with more of: Tins of baked beans, Tins of peas (garden, not mushy or marrowfat), Tins of sweetcorn, Tins of other vegetables, Tins of kidney beans etc. (or similar pulses), Tins of lentils (or similar pulses), Tins of tomato soup, Tins of soup (other than tomato), Tins of meat, Tins of fish, Meat pies (tins), Tins of tomatoes, Packets of rice, Tins of rice pudding, Tins or cartons of custard, Long-life dairy milk (UHT), Packets of cereal, Jars of jam, Packets of biscuits.

Things we have plenty of, so don't need any more at the moment: Tins of potatoes, Tins of mushy and marrowfat peas, Household cleaning products, Toothpaste, Shower gel, Shampoo/conditioner, Egg boxes (empty)

Looking for Employment: For Parishioners who may be job hunting or going self-employed due to the pandemic, Sacred Heart Parish Luton has setup a free online career coaching programme <https://www.vitaeopus.co.uk> providing a wealth of information, tools, practical advice and activities to help anyone wanting to find new employment opportunities, especially if they are not receiving any outplacement or other back to work support. Please pass on the web link to anyone who might find it useful.

Waiting in Joyful Hope: Would you appreciate the opportunity to prepare to celebrate Christmas through shared reflection on the readings for each Sunday in Advent? There will be a parish Zoom group meeting for a maximum of an hour from 7.30pm on Wednesdays 25 November, 2, 9 and 16 December. Email Liz Clark on liz.clark4@btopenworld.com to join the group

Welcome Back to Mass!

MASS BOOKINGS

For Masses on Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th December 2020

Please: **Do wear Masks – Do not** come if symptomatic or self-isolating

Reminder – for each booking we need:

Names, which Mass, number of Seats, Phone number

*Please note ****new timing**** on Sundays from now on*

Mass Times:

Saturday 5th December – 6.30pm

Sunday 6th December – 8am

Sunday 6th December – ***** **9.30am** ***** (not 10am)

Booking – for all 3 Masses:

Opens 9am Monday 30th November

Closes 6pm Thursday 3rd December

Confirmation: on Friday 4th December by 6pm

Email: stteresa.WEEKEND.masses@gmail.com

Text: 07761 301374 (or answerphone)