



THE PARISH OF OUR LADY & ST. WULSTAN

WOOD STREET, SOUTHAM CV47 1PP

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The parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity No 234216



29.11.2020 – First Sunday of Advent

Welcome to guests visitors and parishioners.

Waiting for the Lord

Our life is a long vigil, waiting for the Lord to be revealed in all his glory. We wait with longing and with 'Joyful hope', for his Spirit is with us, and we know that God is faithful to his promises.

Masses & Intentions

Saturday 28	<i>Feria in Ordinary Time</i> November List
Sunday 29	<i>FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT</i> People of the Parish
Monday 30	<i>Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle</i> Mass
Tuesday 01	<i>St. Edmund Campion, Priest, Martyr</i> Mass
Wednesday 02	<i>Advent feria</i> Mass
Thursday 03	<i>St. Francis Xavier, Priest</i> Mass
Friday 04	<i>Advent feria</i> 1.00pm Requiem: Kathleen Healy RIP
Saturday 05	<i>St. Birinus, Bishop</i> November List
Sunday 06	<i>SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT</i> People of the Parish

Season of Advent

Advent is the beginning of the Church Year for most churches in the Western tradition. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day, which is the Sunday nearest November 30, and ends on Christmas Eve (Dec 24).

The word **Advent** means "coming" or "arrival" and it *has a twofold character*:

1. *It is a time of preparation for the Solemnities of Christmas, in which the First Coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered;*
2. *By remembering this, our minds and hearts are led to look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time.*

For these two reasons, Advent is a period for devout and expectant delight and symbolizes the spiritual journey of individuals and a communities, as they affirm that Christ has come, that He is present in the world today, and that He will come again in power. This acknowledgment provides a basis for Kingdom ethics, for holy living arising from a profound sense that we live "between the times" and are called to be faithful stewards of what is entrusted to us as God's people. So, as the church celebrates God's 'inbreaking' into history in the Incarnation, and anticipates a future consummation to that history for which "all creation is groaning awaiting its redemption," it also confesses its own responsibility as a people commissioned to "love the Lord your God with all your heart" and to "love your neighbour as yourself."

The weekdays from 17 December up to and including 24 December are ordered in a more direct way of preparing for the Nativity of the Lord.

Cf. Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the General Roman Calendar 39, 42

Readings at Mass for the Year

The new Liturgical Year begins with the Vigil Mass for the First Sunday of Advent.

**The Sunday Mass Readings are from 'Year B'
The Weekday Mass Readings during the 'Ordinary Time of the Year' are from 'Year 1'**

Sick: Please pray for all those who are unwell at this time, especially all those who are affected by Covid-19, those who are in isolation and all who help / take care of them as well as all those who serve our communities in frontline jobs.

RIP: Please pray for **Kathleen Healy** and all those who died recently and for all the faithful departed. *May they all, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

Kathleen Healy RIP: Kathleen Healy, long time parishioner of ours, aged 79 years, sadly died on Friday 13th November in Newcastle. May she rest in peace. Let us remember the bereaved family in our prayers. Requiem Mass for Kathleen has been organised for Friday 4th December at 1.00pm in our church (with current restrictions on number in place).

The Watcher at the Door (Mark 13:33-37): This brief parable of the master returning unexpectedly is typical of Jesus' vivid way of speaking. The message is typical, too, because Jesus was constantly stressing that there is no time to lose. When he came in his earthly ministry he again and again challenged his hearers to make up their minds NOW, to change their ways NOW. He challenges us to do the same. We can hear the rattle of the returning Master's key in the lock. There is no time to hide the contraband, to pull our uniforms straight before greeting the Master at his entry. Even if we do not think that the world's end is imminent, even if death is not threatening, every moment counts, every decision is for or against Jesus. Saints are rumoured to have said that, if they received the news that they were to die that night, they would carry on doing what they were doing anyway. Saints can do this, because they are ready for the coming of the Lord. But what about us? If we need to put things a bit more in order to prepare for the Lord's coming, is there any valid reason to delay? The four weeks of Advent are a good time to clean things up for the Lord's coming.

What would you like to change about your life in preparation for the coming of the Lord?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

Christmas Cards Sales: Sale of Christmas cards remind suspended until further notice.

Pope's Prayer Intention for December – For a life of prayer: We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

New Parish Email Address: Parishioners are kindly reminded that from this weekend we will be using our Diocesan wide Email System and our parish email will be: stwulstan.southam@rcaob.org.uk Please adjust your contact list accordingly. We will continue to monitor our current email account but gradually this will cease.

Telephone support: Some of our parishioners are supporting each other by telephone. Please phone 811703 (Shirley) or email (shirley@shirleyrush8.plus.com) if you want a chat or to receive calls or if you would like to join those who are calling others.

Walk With Me (Advent 2020): The Season of Advent begins in two week's time. To help us prepare and spend prayerfully for this holy season leading to Christmas, our diocese has produced prayer books and Advent Calendars. Please take your copies. .

Missio Calendar 2021: Thank you to all who help the Missions through your prayers and generous contributions. The calendar for the new year is available in our church. Please remember to take your copies.

Poor Mission Fund: This Fund exists to help our poorer parishes, many of which will have been particularly badly hit this year and the second collection is due to be taken in their support on 6 December. Donations can also be made directly and electronically to the fund via the diocesan website with the added advantage of Gift Aid for those who are eligible at <https://www.mygiving.online/appdonation/DonateNow/197597ae-b53e-430f-be0a-a78281e94aa8> (After completing their details on the form donors will be taken to the next page which has the PMF preselected as the fund to donate to.)

CAFOD World Gifts: CAFOD's range of virtual gifts make a real difference to families living in poverty across the world. While we have the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown here, we can still be good neighbours to our sisters and brothers overseas by giving World Gifts as Christmas presents to family and friends. The Keep Clean Kit gift for £6.00 and the Vegetable Garden gift for 10 are just two gifts that help vulnerable families affected by the pandemic to protect and feed themselves. Let's spread joy and hope around the world this Christmas. Thank you very much for your support and prayers. Visit: cafod.org.uk/worldgifts for more information.

Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is the traditional centerpiece of the Christmas season. It symbolizes the passage of the four weeks of Advent in the liturgical calendar of the Western Church. Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day.

On the First Sunday of Advent, a purple (or blue) candle is lit to celebrate Hope, the inspiring and uplifting hope that Christ among us represents. On the Second Sunday of Advent, another purple (or blue) candle is lit to celebrate Peace, both the Prince of Peace himself and the promise of peace on Earth. On the Third Sunday of Advent, a pink candle is lit to celebrate Joy, the joy the shepherds received at hearing the news of Christ's birth, or the joy that God brings into our lives. As the coming of Christ draws near, the final purple (or blue) candle is lit on the Fourth Sunday of Advent to celebrate Love, both God's boundless love for us and our love for one another.

The bright light from the candles is an expression of the growing anticipation of the birth of Jesus Christ, who in Christian faith is seen as the Light of the World.



Image: *The miracles of St. Francis Xavier* Peter Paul Rubens | photo by mAG-VIH-g-_RNA at Google Cultural Institute

Jesus asked, "What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" (Matthew 16:26a). The words were repeated to a young teacher of philosophy who had a highly promising career in academics, with success and a life of prestige and honor before him.

Francis Xavier, 24 at the time, and living and teaching in Paris, did not heed these words at once. They came from a good friend, Ignatius of Loyola, whose tireless persuasion finally won the young man to Christ. Francis then made the spiritual exercises under the direction of Ignatius, and in 1534, joined his little community, the infant Society of Jesus. Together at Montmartre they vowed poverty, chastity, obedience, and apostolic service according to the directions of the pope.

From Venice, where he was ordained a priest in 1537, Xavier went on to Lisbon and from there sailed to the East Indies, landing at Goa, on the west coast of India. For the next 10 years he labored to bring the faith to such widely scattered peoples as the Hindus, the Malayans, and the Japanese. He spent much of that time in India, and served as provincial of the newly established Jesuit province of India.

Wherever he went, Xavier lived with the poorest people, sharing their food and rough accommodations. He spent countless hours ministering to the sick and the poor, particularly to lepers. Very often he had no time to sleep or even to say his breviary but, as we know from his letters, he was filled always with joy.

Xavier went through the islands of Malaysia, then up to Japan. He learned enough Japanese to preach to simple folk, to instruct, and to baptize, and to establish missions for those who were to follow him. From Japan he had dreams of going to China, but this plan was never realized. Before reaching the mainland, he died. His remains are enshrined in the Church of Good Jesus in Goa. He and Saint Thérèse of Lisieux were declared co-patrons of the missions in 1925.

Reflection: All of us are called to "go and preach to all nations—see Matthew 28:19. Our preaching is not necessarily on distant shores but to our families, our children, our husband or wife, our coworkers. And we are called to preach not with words, but by our everyday lives. Only by sacrifice, the giving up of all selfish gain, could Francis Xavier be free to bear the Good News to the world. Sacrifice is leaving yourself behind at times for a greater good, the good of prayer, the good of helping someone in need, the good of just listening to another. The greatest gift we have is our time. Francis Xavier gave his to others.