



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



13.12.2020 – Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday) – Home Mission Sunday

Welcome to guests visitors and parishioners.

Our Joy in Christ

We celebrate our joy in Christ's redeeming work among us, realising that he who is to come is indeed already with us, "unseen to us". May we be blessed with hearts to seek him and wills to serve him.

Masses & Intentions

Saturday 12	<i>Feria in Ordinary Time</i>
5.30pm	Bernard & Kathleen Mayman RIP (Anniversary)
Sunday 13	<i>THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT</i>
10.00am	Enid & Albert Brown
Monday 14	<i>St. John of the Cross, Priest, Doctor of the Church</i>
	Pat (Birthday) & Ian Woolstan Intentions
Tuesday 15	<i>Advent feria</i>
	Barbara Cox (Intentions)
Wednesday 16	<i>Advent feria</i>
6.30pm	Eucharistic Adoration
7.00pm	Maureen Goulden (Intentions)
Thursday 17	<i>Advent feria</i>
	Graham Drakeford RIP
Friday 18	<i>Advent feria</i>
	Maureen Kemsley (Intentions)
Saturday 19	<i>Advent feria</i>
5.30pm	Maureen & Jim Stewart (Intentions)
Sunday 20	<i>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</i>
10.00am	Tony Varney RIP (15 th Anniversary)



Each year the Church in England and Wales celebrates *Home Mission Sunday*. Normally this would take place in September, but this year September held so many challenges for everyone that it was moved to Gaudete Sunday. It is hoped that this is a better time of year to focus on Evangelisation.

Our Mission is to help the local Church share the joy of the Gospel so the connection Gaudete Sunday. Preparing for Christmas gives us several opportunities to share our faith with the people we love. Let us do our best to share the Good News during these turbulent times. There will be a retiring collection next week for this purpose.

Sea Sunday: This year, due to Covid-19, Sea Sunday has been re-arranged for the **20th December**

Every year churches around the world celebrate Sea Sunday as a day for people to come together to pray for seafarers and fishers and thank them for the vital role they play in our lives.

This year, more than ever, seafarers and fishers are making huge sacrifices to ensure food, medicine, and vital equipment continues to be delivered globally. Many have been away from home for a long time. But they are tired, anxious about the future, and they miss their families.

Our church can show our support for seafarers and fishers next Sea Sunday and raise vital funds to ensure support to everyone who needs our help. There will be a retiring collection next Sunday. Your support will be much appreciated.

Churches open for Mass

We are back in our churches to pray and celebrate the Eucharist together as a community. A big 'THANK YOU' our stewards and volunteers for their generous help.

We continue to pray for all who are and have been affected by the pandemic and their families. We remember in our prayers especially all those whose employment and job securities have been threatened or affected. All our scientists, research personnel, NHS staff, care home staff and all who have been part of getting the vaccine ready deserve a big 'THANK YOU'. It was a great relief indeed to see vaccinations taking place in many centres across the country. May all these efforts and our cooperation bring healing and renewal to our life and well-being.

There will be Masses in our church as usual on Wednesday (7.00pm), Saturday (5.30pm) and Sunday (10.00am). *I very much hope that there could be Masses with parishioners on the rest of the weekdays as well, but this depends on the availability of stewards to assist. Volunteers are always welcome to help.*

A Voice Crying in the Desert (John 1:6-8, 19-28): So, John the Baptist came as a witness to the light. In today's gospel reading he seems rather to refuse witness. He is quite negative, answering with a stalwart and repeated 'No!'. He witnesses only that 'There is one standing among you whom you do not know'. It is not always easy to find Jesus. All the way through the Gospel of John there are misunderstandings about Jesus; people fail to recognise him for what he is: there's the Samaritan at the well, Nicodemus in the night, Mary Magdalene beside the empty tomb, even Peter and the disciples as they fish on the Lake. We can easily become so wrapped up in our own troubles and worries that we fail to recognise the one figure who can provide the solution to them, although he is standing among us, the one who 'has the words of eternal life'. He may come to us in a way we do not like, as a corrective - blocking or diverting the way we have chosen. He may come as suffering, disappointment, failure or bereavement. All of these may be acts of God's love, to show us the way, though we cannot see it at the time. It is just like John the Baptist, saying steadily 'No!', until eventually we turn around and see Christ as our true light.

How can I find Jesus in the crowded events of my busy life? He often comes in unexpected ways. Is he in the quiet voice of a friend? Is he in the anger of someone I have annoyed? Is he in the rebuke of someone who knows me better than I know myself? Is he in my failures and frustrations?
Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

Home Mission Sunday

This weekend, we celebrate Home Mission Sunday enabling people to experience the joy of coming closer to Christ this Christmas.

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.

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.

Kay Griffin RIP: We are very sad to learn that Kay died on Monday 7th December at Warwick Hospital, surrounded by her family. May she rest in peace. We offer our sympathies and prayers to the bereaved family. Kay's funeral arrangements have yet to be confirmed.

Masses for Christmas in our Parish

Thursday 24th - December - Christmas Vigil

5.30pm Christmas (Vigil) Mass

8.00pm Christmas (Midnight) Mass

Friday 25th - December - Christmas Day

8.30am Christmas (Dawn) Mass

10.00am Christmas (Day) Mass

Covid 19 restrictions and government guidelines demand that hand sanitizing, face-covering and social distancing are strictly followed.

There is also restriction on the number of people attending each Mass. Hence, it is very important that parishioners and visitors alike book their places to any of the above Masses.

Forms are made available in our church to fill in the details required. Please speak to one of the stewards and make sure you book your place/s.

For the benefit of those parishioners who have not been able to attend Masses in recent times, but wish to be present for any of the Masses over Christmas, and for anyone from among your family, friends and well-wishers who wish to be present for any of the above Masses, please contact Peter Guy on tel. no. 01926-814436 / 07495006232 and book you place/s. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

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 **Kay Griffin, 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.*

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.

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.

Third Sunday of Advent / Gaudete Sunday: For much of the Church's history, the Third Sunday had a special name: "Gaudete" Sunday. The traditions surrounding this Sunday go back as far as the fourth or fifth century, as does the season of Advent itself. Advent, our preparation for Christmas, was originally a forty-day penitential season like Lent. In fact, since it used to begin on November 12 (just after the Memorial of St. Martin of Tours), it was called "St. Martin's Lent." "Gaudete Sunday" was the Advent counterpart to "Laetare Sunday," which marks the midpoint in Lent.

On Gaudete Sunday, the season of Advent shifts its focus. For the first two weeks of Advent, the focus can be summed up in the phrase, "The Lord is coming." But beginning with Gaudete Sunday, the summary might be, "The Lord is near." This shift is marked by a lighter mood and a heightened sense of joyous anticipation.

Liturgically, the colours lighten as well. The priest usually wears rose-coloured vestments, a hue seen only on Gaudete Sunday and Laetare Sunday. On this day, we light the third candle of the Advent wreath, which is also rose-coloured, or if you prefer, pink.

The word "Gaudete" is Latin for "Rejoice." In times when the focus of our anticipation is often on the negative and fearful, this celebration is a reminder that God who loves us is still in charge and that we await his coming not with fear, but with tremendous joy.

Today's second reading, from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, reflects this joy:

"Brothers and sisters: Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus."

<https://dphx.org/gaudete-sunday/>

The Twelve Days of Christmas

The song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" started life as a way of teaching young English Catholics the central elements of faith during the years of persecution in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Partridge in a Pear Tree	One God
Two Turtle Doves	Old and New Testament
Three French Hens	Father, Son, Holy Spirit / Faith, Hope, Charity
Four Colley Birds	Matthew, Mark, Luke & John
Five Gold Rings	The Pentateuch / Books of Moses
Six Geese a Laying	The days of Creation
Seven Swans a Swimming	Gifts of the Holy Spirit
Eight Maids a milking	Beatitudes
Nine Drummers drumming	Fruits of the Holy Spirit
Ten Pipers piping	Ten Commandments
Eleven Ladies Dancing	Faithful Apostles
Twelve Lords a Leaping	Articles of the Creed.

Saint John of the Cross (June 24, 1542 – December 14, 1591)

John is a saint because his life was a heroic effort to live up to his name: "of the Cross." The folly of the cross came to full realization in time. "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8:34b) is the story of John's life. The Paschal Mystery—through death to life—strongly marks John as reformer, mystic-poet, and theologian-priest.



Ordained a Carmelite priest in 1567 at age 25, John met Teresa of Avila and like her, vowed himself to the primitive Rule of the Carmelites. As partner with Teresa and in his own right, John engaged in the work of reform, and came to experience the price of reform: increasing opposition, misunderstanding, persecution, imprisonment. He came to know the cross acutely—to experience the dying of Jesus—as he sat month after month in his dark, damp, narrow cell with only his God.

Yet, the paradox! In this dying of imprisonment John came to life, uttering poetry. In the darkness of the dungeon, John's spirit came into the Light. There are many mystics, many poets; John is unique as mystic-poet, expressing in his prison-cross the ecstasy of mystical union with God in the *Spiritual Canticle*.

But as agony leads to ecstasy, so John had his *Ascent to Mt. Carmel*, as he named it in his prose masterpiece. As man-Christian-Carmelite, he experienced in himself this purifying ascent; as spiritual director, he sensed it in others; as psychologist-theologian, he described and analysed it in his prose writings. His prose works are outstanding in underscoring the cost of discipleship, the path of union with God: rigorous discipline, abandonment, purification. Uniquely and strongly John underlines the gospel paradox: The cross leads to resurrection, agony to ecstasy, darkness to light, abandonment to possession, denial to self to union with God. If you want to save your life, you must lose it. John is truly "of the Cross." He died at 49—a life short, but full.

<http://www.franciscanmedia.org/learn-of-the-deceased/saint-of-the-cross>