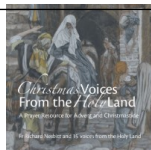


CHRISTMAS VOICES FROM THE HOLY LAND: Friends of the Holy Land have produced this publication, 'Christmas Voices from the Holy Land', a collection of Christ-centred prayer resources for Advent and Christmas which speak powerfully to our journey through Advent to the Nativity of Jesus, and beyond. The publication is available now from



<https://www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/shop/advent-book-2021> All funds raised from the sale of this book will be used in the charitable activities of Friends of the Holy Land, and so help those who have suffered in Gaza, the West Bank (including east Jerusalem), and the divided communities in Israel this Christmas.

REPOSITORY: Christmas Cards, dairies and so on are available in the Repository.

FR CHRIS'S THOUGHTS FOR SUNDAY: Each year on the 2nd and 3rd Sundays of advent we encounter John the Baptist. I find the first reading and the gospel a bit puzzling. We hear those words which we know so well: the call to prepare away for the Lord, make his path straight and so on. They are apt words for advent as we prepare to celebrate Christmas with the coming of the Lord born in Bethlehem and of course as we said last week his coming to us in mystery now through faith and our Christian life. In the gospel John is seen as fulfilling the words of the prophet Isaiah. We also hear the same words in our first reading from the prophet Baruch. However, they seem to be saying two different things. In our first reading it's not talking so much about God coming as the people returning from exile. Even though some had already come back after the Babylonian deportation there were many still scattered throughout the world as it was known in great communities in Rome, Egypt and Alexandria and so on. The prophet foresees the Israelites coming from east and West as royalty returning to Jerusalem, to the temple. It is God who has removed every obstacle to their return, as though he had flattened mountains and hills and filled in the valleys, so Israel can return in safety, saved by the Lord. There is the sense of jubilation in the return with God accompanying them and it is he who fills in the valleys makes low the mountains. They will come back through mercy and in integrity.

However, in the gospel it is clearly the Lord who is coming: *prepare away for the Lord. Make his path straight. The quote from the prophet Isaiah coming refers to preparing for a royal visit where the roads were repaired and made good in preparation. We see that clearly in John the Baptist as the voice, foretold by Isaiah calling in the desert. He calls for a straight road to be prepared for God, with valleys filled in and hills laid low. The way that this happens is in the symbolic Baptism of repentance, as the people recognise that they have sins that need to be forgiven. So we have two comings or returns. The Coming of God and the return of the People to God as seen in Jerusalem, the city of God.*

These are the two poles of our Christian life. The first is always God's action his coming to us. Mountains, valleys and windy and rough roads are big obstacles to be sorted out. God's grace is the first thing always. He will do the heavy lifting we might say. Indeed, even in the Gospel the verbs about the valleys being filled in and the mountains laid low and the roads made smooth are in the passive tense. In advent we become aware of the great deeds that God has done in the past and will do for us. As the Psalm says: *What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad.*

The other pole is of course our response that is to see our repentance that is vital to prepare for the Coming of Our Lord as John the Baptist reminds us in no uncertain words. We must come out of any valleys into which we may have let ourselves fall such as always taking the easiest route the path of least resistance. The mountains may be our pride and self satisfaction that recognises no need to repent. The windy and rough roads our hearts twisted by sin and disordered appetites - our inner crookedness. We all have things we need to change. This time of advent is a good time to make an examination of conscience over several days in our prayer. And then we should put a date in our diary for confession. I'm sure that already there are many entries in the run up to Christmas. But this is an important one. Write it in!!



Our Lady of Victories

Market Harborough

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Deanery Comprehensive: St. Paul's 0116 241 4057
Parish Accountant: finance@olv.com
Parish Gift Aid Organiser: giftaid@olvic.com
Parish Pastoral Council Members: see photos on notice board
Diocese of Nottingham: Company Number 7151646 Charity Number: 1134449
Registered Address: Wilson House, 25 Derby Road, Nottingham, NG1 5AW

5th December 2021
2nd Week of Advent
Psalter Week 2

Times of Services

Sunday: 2nd of Advent

6.00pm Mass: John Breward RIP (Wade)
9.00am Mass: Monica Malone RIP (Davis)
11.00am: Mass: People of the Parish

Monday: Advent Feria

9.00am Mass: Sr. Carmel Ruane RIP

Tuesday: St Ambrose

10.00am Mass: Jen Lee RIP

Wednesday: THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

6.00pm: Holy Hour for life
7.00pm Mass: The Unborn & The Dignity of Life

Thursday: Advent Feria

10.00am Mass: Daphne Bennett (Blamires)

Friday: Advent Feria

7.00pm Mass: Frank Lehmann RIP (Wallace)

Saturday: Advent Feria

6.00pm: First Mass of Sunday 12th December - Jim McCabe RIP birthday (Joan)

Sunday: 3rd of Advent

9.00am Mass: People of the Parish
11.00am Mass: Michael Donnelly RIP (McGlone)



*All mankind shall
see the salvation of
God.*

CONFESSIONS
Saturdays 11am
& 5.15 - 5.45pm

PLEASE NOTE: YOU MUST PRE BOOK FOR OUR WEEKEND MASSES:

Also it would be helpful to book for weekdays too, though not necessary at the moment as we are not full.

Booking is now online: www.Massbooking.uk You can sign up there and then book. If you do not have the internet you can ask someone else to book for you, a child or grandchild or ring or email Fr. Chris on 01858 462359 giving your name and phone number. Please see instructions on our website: www.olvic.com/news.htm

FR CHRIS WRITES: The PPC reflected further on the responses to the Synod questions and the themes that emerged. We have been asked to present to the diocese some proposed actions: One of them is immediate: we realised we need to update the Parish List to build the community through good communication. We are thinking the best way to do that in present times. More information to follow. The longer term proposal is to develop a Pastoral Plan based on the feedback following prayerful discernment. There will be feedback of the responses to the Parish. Some common themes were the need to rebuild and develop the parish Community and from there to reach out, Churches Together, Marginalized groups, the youth, better communication through technology, keeping in touch with older people, PPC, Adult formation & renewing the spiritual life of the Parish with better Liturgy & Music. The PPC now has a notice board in the cloister where minutes and notices etc will be put up. Please contact one of the members or Fr. Chris if there is any particular subject to be raised, we will try to keep people informed.



PS : from next Saturday Saturday evening Confessions will resume: 5:15pm –5.45pm

PRO LIFE GROUP: This week we have the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception. There will be an evening Mass with a Holy Hour before praying for Life from Conception to its natural end. Please come and pray for this and spend some time with Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. It will be a good Advent devotion as well!

THURSDAY COFFEE: Come and join us for tea or coffee in the octagonal hall on **Thursday 9th December after 10:00 am Mass**. If all goes well, we plan to start again on Thursday the 13th of January 2022.

CHRISTMAS MASSES: Our Christmas Masses will be booked through the online booking system : www.Massbooking.uk They will appear a week before. For those of you who are new to it when you register with the System, the confirmation email link often goes to the spam Junk folder of your email. Also **please book just one place for up to three of you** in a family or a family bench for 4 or more. See instructions under our parish.

In respect of COVID: All to wear Masks and I would advise any concerned about COVID **to avoid the 6.00pm vigil Mass** as it will be very full and we may not be able to have our normal social distancing.

Christmas Eve: 6.00pm & 10.00pm. (Preceded by carols 9.30pm)

Christmas Day: 8.30am: & 10.30am:

On Sunday the Masses will be the normal 9.00am & 11.00am.

THE VICTORY PRIZE DRAW: 1st Prize £100 D England ticket No 70; 2nd Prize £50 J Masding ticket No 99; 3rd Prize £30 D Wilson ticket No 238. Annual ticket holders are reminded that they need to renew. Cheques to be made out to THE VICTORY PRIZE DRAW and forwarded to Keith Shiers 23 Fairfax Road M.H. LE16 9JT or left for collection with Fr Chris. Many thanks.

PARISH CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE on Sunday 19th December 3.00pm. Supported by the Catenians. Parishioners family and friends are very welcome. Children from school will also be taking part. As COVID is still with us bring your masks and also use the online booking system for Masses where the Event will be posted a week before. As before one place can be booked for up to three people.

A PRAYER FOR ADVENT: Spirit of God, You stir our hearts in the Advent season to awaken us from the spiritual doldrums. You urge us to be alert to the coming of the Lord, whether now or at the end of time. You invite us to embrace our longing for the fullness of a life without end. Enlighten our hearts with Your holy wisdom so that we might seek and find You, especially in the needs of the poor. Give us the courage and perseverance to look for the Holy One, who offers us more than the world can ever give. Amen

ALTAR SERVERS: Following the recent notice and appeal we are pleased to welcome James to our Altar Serving Team, Welcome James. If anyone else is interested please contact myself or Fr. Chris for an informal chat. It's Advent already and we have to prepare for the services at Christmas. I hope to contact all servers/parents on the rota about their expectations over the Christmas period, if anyone knows they will be at a particular mass or can offer to be flexible can you please call/text/email me so I can start putting the rota together.

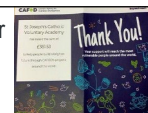
Finally, thank you to all our servers, parents, and their families for your help and flexibility during this difficult Covid time. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and holy holiday. Thanks to everyone and Stay Safe.

SALE OF KNITTED GARMENTS after all Masses this weekend. They are wonderful and make good Christmas presents

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION FOR 2022. We are now looking forward to First Holy Communion in 2022. Applications forms are now available from Fr Chris after any of the Masses. Please return the form by **Friday 17th December 2022**. It is for children in year 3 and above, The first meeting for **parents** will take place on **Wednesday 12th January 2022 at 7.30pm** in the Octagonal Hall when we will introduce the course and give out the plan. The first session **for children** will take place on **Friday 14th January 2022 from 3.30-4.30pm** in the same place and then the 21st & 28th January. Depending on the numbers & COVID there will be two first communion days: 18th June 2022 & 2nd July 2022



ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL from the twitter account Thank you to all of our wonderful families for supporting our Go Green Fundraiser @CAFODSchools you were very generous @sta_cmat. See school website and twitter feed: www.stjosephs.leics.sch.uk



DISCOVER HOW JESUS IS SPEAKING TO YOU IN THE SCRIPTURE – On Tuesday 7th December at 7:30pm Sr Hyacinthe a Dominican Sister, catechist, tutor, writer and joy filled follower of Jesus will lead a workshop on Zoom introducing the 4 senses of Scripture. These skills are great ways to help us see how we can use and understand scripture more in our own lives and in catechesis too. Register for the talk by visiting www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/onlineevents

" The Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham at Saint Mary's Catholic Church, Husbands Bosworth have organised an ADVENT DAY OF REFLECTION on Saturday December 11th from 10am to 3pm (arrivals from 9.30am), to be held at Market Harborough Methodist Church. The theme for the day is : LIVING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD and will be led by Mr Peter Green, OP . Members of OLV's are warmly invited. Please bring a packed lunch. "

Also could People bring in their **Red Mission Boxes** for emptying. If anyone would like a box please let myself or Christine Shepherd know

