



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH OF
SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL
NORDEN

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28th November 2021 FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (C)

THE WORD THIS WEEK



As usual, the great Season of Advent begins, not by talking about Christmas, but about the Second Coming. We've had this theme already for the past two weeks, but there is a slight change of emphasis in the Scripture readings offered for this Sunday: here the tone is positive: it is the 'promise' of what

is to come that we contemplate. Even in the Gospel, though it talks of the dreadful signs that mark the end times, we hear of a promise - 'liberation'. For this we should stand erect and hold our heads high. The central theme is that we welcome the coming of a person - Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, and this is what links this Sunday to the coming feast of his birth: we are now preparing to celebrate how he once came: may these preparations also help us to prepare for him when he comes again.

NEWS & NOTES

CHRISTMAS MASSES

I have been thinking long and hard about our celebration of Christmas this year: recently two items struck me. The first was a statement from our own Catholic Bishops after their conference the other week, when they said: **"At this time, we recognise that for some people there may be certain factors which hinder attendance at Sunday Mass. The pandemic is clearly not over. The risk of infection is still present. For some, there is legitimate fear in gathering together.**

er. As your bishops, we recognise that these prevailing circumstances suggest that not everyone is yet in the position to fulfil the absolute duty to attend freely Sunday Mass." The second item was a statement from a government scientist about mitigation measures at this time of year: **"These include all those we considered last year - thinking about the vulnerability of those you are visiting; maximising the chance that you are not infectious [for example] by testing, restricting contact beforehand; and making indoor spaces as safe as possible in terms of ventilation, limiting numbers and crowding, and using sanitiser and face masks. The Delta variant is highly contagious, with many people now catching it despite double vaccination and cautious behaviour."** I am therefore announcing the following plan for our Christmas weekend:

- ◆ Mask wearing will still be highly recommended, and hand sanitising on entry required.
- ◆ "Social Distancing seating" will still be available in Church at all Masses.
- ◆ Doors will be left open to maximise ventilation (so wrap up warm!)
- ◆ Mass times will be as follows: Christmas Eve Masses at **5.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.**; Christmas Day Masses at **9.00 a.m., 10.15 a.m. and 11.30 a.m.** Boxing Day Masses (Sunday) at **9.00 a.m. and 11.00 a.m.** (no Saturday night Mass)
- ◆ Like last year, **booking places will be required** for the Masses on Christmas Eve: this is to avoid overcrowding. More details on the phone booking lines and how to do this next weekend!

THE SYNOD

Pope Francis has called on the whole Church throughout the world to enter into a very special journey—a global Synod. "Synod" is a Greek word, meaning "on the road together", and the Holy Fa-

STAY WITH US, LORD, ON OUR JOURNEY!



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ther wants all Catholics to consider what the Holy Spirit might be saying to the Church in our age about how we should be fulfilling the Divine Mission entrusted to us all. The Synodal journey will culminate in the 2023 Synod of Bishops in Rome, but in order to involve the whole Church (and, indeed, the lapsed, the distant, those from other churches or communities or religions) the process begins now. In October Pope Francis launched the "Diocesan Synodal Journey" in Rome, and this weekend, as Bishop John announces in his Pastoral Letter, we are formally launching the process in our Diocese. The first period of Synod is consultation—everyone can take part in this, whether Catholic or not, church-goer or not. It is not, however, an "opinion survey": we are being asked to pray, so that the Spirit of God may guide our thinking and our responses. We will contribute not simply by offering our opinion, but what we think the Holy Spirit is asking of us all. This part of the process will last until at least March 2022, so there is no hurry! There will be a variety of ways for people to contribute to the Diocesan Synodal Journey, which will be made available to you over the next few weeks. For now, please begin with prayer: Pope Francis has asked that we all frequently use the "Adsumus" Prayer, which began all the sessions of the Second Vatican Council:

"We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name. With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts; Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it. We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions. Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right. All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen."

"GETTING TOGETHER"

The next gathering is this coming **Tuesday 30th November** from 1.00 .m.–3.00 p.m. in the Parish Centre, this time with a talk from Mike Davis on Photography. Everyone welcome!

HELP FOR THE HOMELESS

The teams at Rochdale Infirmary are hosting an informal drop-in event for the homeless on Wednesday 8th December 2021, 5.00–7.30 p.m. and would be most grateful for any donations of: outdoor coats, warm socks, hats, scarves, gloves, toiletries and personal items. Drop off point: Rochdale Infirmary main entrance reception desk.

Please contact Jackie Heatley or Jennie Curran on **01706 517202** for enquiries

SVP YOUTH COFFEE MORNING

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed so generously with their contributions to our Youth Coffee morning last week: to everyone who baked, attended and gave to make our SVP Youth Coffee morning such a huge success. Your wonderful donations raised £405.00 for the Youth Summer Camps - a great achievement, thanks again!

OUT OF AFRICA JEWELLERY

Looking for Christmas gifts that make a difference to the most needy in our world? Check out "Out of Africa Jewellery." There is a wide selection of fairly-traded, ethically sourced jewellery, hand-made by twelve small scale producers in Nairobi, Kenya and from Congo at www.facebook.com/outofafricajewellery. Ideal for gifts, Christmas presents and stocking-fillers, or as a treat for yourself. Your purchases help to support these producers, and this year 20% of all sales will be donated to CAFOD. If you have any difficulties purchasing items through Facebook, or have any queries, please contact Bernie Slater at bernie-slater@live.co.uk Hope you enjoy looking and shopping—and making a difference!

CARITAS SALFORD'S ADVENT APPEAL 2021: #LOVED

Caritas Salford's work with children and families is at the heart of our Love in Action as much as it ever was, and is just one aspect of their diverse work supporting those facing crisis and challenge. As the principal domestic social action agency of the Catholic Diocese of Salford, and in this Year of St Joseph and the Family, Caritas is asking for your support to continue this transformative work. Please visit <http://www.caritassalford.org.uk/advent-2021> to see the difference your donations have made in the past 12 months to over 5,000 families. Online donations, via the website, save the charity the cost of administration and eases the claim for 25% extra in Gift Aid. Setting up a direct debit can also be done in this way. Alternatively, call Rachel Taylor during office hours on **0161 817 2285**. Cheques made payable to Caritas Diocese of Salford, marked FAO Rachel Taylor: ADVENT APPEAL to: Caritas House, Nobby Stiles Drive, Collyhurst, Manchester M4 4FA. Please include your full name, address and postcode, and whether you wish to gift aid the donation. Thank you for your support. Please continue to keep our teams of staff and volunteers in your prayers,

as well as those who need our support, so that they know they are loved.

POPE FRANCIS ON ADVENT

Angelus Message 1st Sunday of Advent 2020

"Advent is a continuous call to hope: it reminds us that God is present in history to lead it to its ultimate goal, to lead it to its fullness, which is the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ. God is present in the history of humanity, He is the "God-with-us", God is not distant, he is always with us, to the extent that very often he knocks on the door to our heart. God walks beside us to support us. The Lord does not abandon us; He accompanies us through the events of our lives to help us discover the meaning of the journey the meaning of everyday life, to give us courage when we are under duress or suffering. In the midst of life's storms, God always extends his hand to us and frees us from threats. This is beautiful! In the book of Deuteronomy there is a very beautiful passage, in which the Prophet says to the people: "For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is to us?". No-one, only we have this grace of having God close to us. We await God, we hope that he manifests himself, but he too hopes that we manifest ourselves to him!"

IN OUR PRAYERS ...

REQUESTS FOR MASSES & PRAYERS

Recently Deceased: Cath Bilsborrow, Maureen Carey, Carole Barrow, Susan Entwistle.

Anniversaries: Mary Kershaw, Alma Wilson, Andrew Wilson, William Furber, Eileen Arkins, Wendy Lonergan.

Other: Maureen Coyle & Family, Gerard Lundergan, Jessie Welsh.

NATIONAL CYCLE OF PRAYER

During Advent and Christmastide we are asked to pray for these intentions: Openness to the Word of God, Migrants and Refugees, Expectant Mothers.

HOLY FATHER'S INTENTION (DECEMBER)

Catechists: Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER

Let us pray for the people of the parishes of Saint Mary, Langho, and Saint Mary, Osbaldeston, and for Father Leo Heakin, their parish priest. We pray

for their parish primary schools, for Saint Augustine's High School and for Kemple View Hospital. May they all grow in faith with Christ as their King.

THE SACRAMENTS

Baptisms are by appointment: please collect one of the Information forms from the porch for details of what is required and the next steps in the process.

Anointing of the Sick Please call the Presbytery to ask for this Sacrament. It should not be left until the last minute, but the sick should celebrate this sacrament to receive God's help, healing and comfort.

Marriage is also by appointment. Please take an information leaflet and return the tear off portion to arrange a pre-Nuptial interview. Please do not make bookings before this interview and note that six months' notice is required.

Initiation of Children First Holy Communion is normally celebrated in Year 3 (this will be resuming in 2022); Confirmation is offered in Year 8. Children attending Catholic Schools will be contacted directly: if your child is at a non-Catholic School, please speak to Father James.

Initiation of Adults It is my hope to begin a course for Adult Baptism/Reception into the Church in the New Year. Please watch this space!

NEXT WEEK'S GOSPEL

Luke 3:1-6



In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene,

during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah: A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley will be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, winding ways will be straightened and rough roads made smooth. And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

THIS WEEK

FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

Church opens half an hour before Mass

Monday 29th November

Advent Weekday

Tuesday 30th November

Saint Andrew, Apostle, Patron of Scotland

9.30 a.m. MASS

1.00–3.00 p.m. "Getting Together"

Wednesday 1st December

Advent Weekday

9.0 a.m. MASS

Thursday 2nd December

Advent Weekday

9.30 a.m. MASS

1.00 p.m. Funeral Service of Mary Catherine Bilsborrow

Friday 3rd December

Saint Francis Xavier, Priest

9.30 p.m. MASS

Saturday 4th December

Saint John Damascene, Priest and Doctor of the Church

6.00–6.15 p.m. Confessions

6.30 p.m. First MASS of Sunday

Sunday 5th December

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (C)

9.00 a.m. MASS

11.00 a.m. MASS

PRACTICALITIES

Refreshments after Mass

Everyone is very welcome to stay behind after Sunday morning Masses and share a cuppa! Tea and Coffee are served in the Parish Centre after 9.00 a.m. and 11.00 a.m. Masses.

Toilets

The toilet is located near the side entrance: children should not go out of Church unaccompanied. Please use the disinfectant wipes to clean all surfaces **after every use**—dispose of them in the bin but do not flush them down the toilet. Thank you.

Saint Vincent's Parish Centre

The Parish Centre is now open again for parish use and outside bookings. Please contact **Robert Allen** on **0758 320 7810** for all enquiries.

Our Parish S.V.P.

The SVP conference at Saint Vincent's are still actively involved with our beneficiaries. If you or anyone you know would like any kind of help please contact Elizabeth Ramsden on **01706 658100** or **0756 418 7903** or email hibson3@talktalk.net

Rochdale Food Bank

Please place your donations in the boxes at the back of the Church. The Food Bank currently has a surplus of pasta and breakfast cereal, but is in URGENT NEED of all the other regular items. A full "shopping list" is available by the donations box.

SUNDAY GOSPEL WORDSEARCH

Y	N	O	G	A	R	T	S	O	L
E	R	H	W	A	S	E	L	I	E
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N	D	V	W	C	R	D	A	T	E
O	O	E	S	A	U	R	R	R	S
I	L	N	T	O	T	A	W	A	K
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SUN
OCEAN
DEBAUCHERY
SURVIVE
LIBERATION
HEAVEN
HEARTS
AWAKE
NATIONS
AGONY
EARTH
STARS

