

Second Sunday of Advent - 10th December 2023

“ Renew Your wonders in this our day, as by a New Pentecost. Grant to Your Church that, being of one mind and steadfast in prayer with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and following the lead of blessed Peter, it may advance the reign of our Divine Saviour, the reign of truth and justice, the reign of love and peace. Come Holy Spirit, in Your power and might to renew the face of the earth”. (Pope St.John XXIII)

Prayer for Ukraine (from the Bishops 'Conference) “*Mary, Our Lady of Kiev, Mother of God, We ask you to intercede for the people of Ukraine, For their government and all who suffer as a result of war. Be with them as you stood beside your Son, Suffering on the Cross at Calvary. Give them strength and courage, Through faith, hope and justice. May we, in our turn, Support them through prayer and generosity, That lives may be saved, the injured healed, that the dead may rest in peace, And that war will end in peace*”.

ADVENT - marks the beginning of the New Year in the Liturgical Calendar of the Church as we enter the cycle of Christmas celebrations and festivities which began on Advent Sunday and take us all the way through to Candlemas on 2nd February (40 days after Christmas Day). Advent gives us the opportunity to reflect on the Coming (the “Advent”) of Christ - (i) His First Coming at His Birth in Bethlehem, and also (ii) His Second Coming upon the clouds of Heaven when He will return “in power and great glory”. Let us pray that this Advent season may be for us a time of preparation as John the Baptist (the Forerunner and Herald of Christ) and Our Blessed Lady (the Bright Morning Star of Christ's Appearing) point us to Jesus and say, “ Behold the Lamb of God!” – “Do whatever He tells you!”

Mass Intentions this Sunday (10th) Saturday 4-00 p.m. (St.John Kemble) Parish & People; 6-00p.m. Peter Thomas (RIP) (Loynes & Thomas Families); Sunday 10-30 a.m. Nathan Roberts (RIP) (Michael Family).

Weekday Mass Intentions Tuesday (12th) 6-00 p.m. Eugenia Rossi (RIP) (Remo); Wednesday (13th – St. Lucy) 9-30 a.m. Philip Giles (RIP) (Rosemary Insole); 11-00 a.m. (St. John Kemble) Frank Nedza (RIP) (Nancy); 6-00 p.m. SCHOOL CAROL CONCERT. Thursday (14th – St. John of the Cross) 9-30 a.m. Michael McAteer (RIP) (The family); Friday (15th) 9-30 a.m. Laurence Macpherson-Jones (RIP) (Adrian & Paula).

This Wednesday (13th). The School Christmas Carol Concert here in church at 6-00 p.m. All welcome!

Mass Intentions next Sunday (17th December) Saturday 4-00 p.m. (St. John Kemble) Parish & People; 6-00 p.m. (St. Joseph's) Mike O'Hea (RIP) (Eirwen & family); Sunday 10-30 a.m. Anne Williams (RIP) (The family).

Next Sunday (17th) Cancer Challenge Singers to begin our celebration of Christmas, a Service of Christmas Carols & Readings at 5-00 p.m. here in St. Joseph's followed by refreshments in the Hall. Tickets now available £5 – (please see Angela or Geraint) to support Cancer Challenge.

CHRISTMAS PARTY (TODAY - IMMEDIATELY AFTER MASS) – including the usual tea & coffee - in the Parish Hall . If you are able to contribute savoury or dessert items – the Hall will be open before Mass to receive donations of food. (Please see Nora, Brigid or Joanne). All welcome - the draw will be made for the Christmas Raffle. Lots of prizes – over 25! Many thanks to Peter for organising the raffle and to all who have generously donated extra gifts.

A gentle reminder (!) – please observe and respect a prayerful silence before Mass to prepare yourself for the celebration of Mass. Loud conversations are disturbing (and upsetting) for those who may come early to church precisely to have a time of quiet reflection (including the parish priest!) who do not want to overhear personal conversations about family, friends, future plans etc! Plenty of time to exchange news and information after the end of Mass. Thank you.

Candles: Sacred Heart – Peter Healey (RIP); Our Lady – David Jones Family (RIP); St. Joseph – Annie & William Cochrane (RIP).

.....

Readers: This Sunday (10th) 6-00 p.m. Maureen McAteer; 10-30a.m. Tommy Parel. Next Sunday (17th) 6-00 p.m. Ceri McAteer; 10-30 a.m. Barbara Hunt. **Please take the opportunity to arrive early and look at (and prepare) the readings beforehand. Thank you.**

Christmas Mass Times Sunday 24th (Fourth Sunday of Advent) Morning Mass 10-30 a.m. **Christmas Eve** St. John Kemble 4-00 p.m. St. Joseph's 6-00 p.m." Family Mass"; 10-00 p.m. "Midnight Mass"; Christmas Day: St Joseph's 10-30 a.m.

Christmas Flowers Donations toward the cost of the Christmas flowers would be much appreciated. Thank you.

Anniversaries: Of your charity, remember in prayer those whose anniversaries occur at this time; Denis Protheroe (2004); Patrick O'Connell (2006); Kathleen Maloney (2009); Regina Pearl (2012); Peggy Swan (2022). Clare Pike (2006); Deta May (2001); Vincenzo DiDeo (2009); Audrey Gammon (2017); Michael Sheridan (2019); Kevin Halloran (2021). Laurence Macpherson- Jones (2020); Michael McAteer (2000). *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, And let light perpetual shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*

Mass Intentions Please note that weekend and weekday Mass intentions are now reserved into **February 2024**. Please be thinking ahead by several months if you would like a Mass intention for a loved one on a particular day/date – even so, some dates are reserved a year ahead and if so Mass will be said on the nearest date available to the request. Thank you.

Catholic Youth Event – all welcome! 13-18 yr. olds (**plus a separate stream for those over 18**) **Saturday 16th December** from 10-00 a.m. to 5-00 p.m. at Stella Maris Convent (Uplands, Swansea). Holy Mass celebrated by Archbishop Mark. Live music from "Jesus Youth". Great food! Time for silence. To book your place, contact Deacon Christian Mahoney on 07764515864 or christian.mahoney@rcadc.org The cost of £10 (plus pocket money) will be covered by the parish. **Please notify Fr.Neil for funding.** A great opportunity for fellowship with fellow young catholics (and to meet the Archbishop!)

School Caretaker The School is looking to appoint a new caretaker from the beginning of January for 15 hours per week. If you are interested or know of someone please contact the school on 635099.

The Parish S.V.P. Group would like to thank fellow parishioners for their very generous response to their Christmas Appeal.

Last Sunday's Collection: St. Joseph's £502-61 (plus Direct Debits). St John Kemble – £47-50 Many thanks.

Legion of Mary Every Tuesday evening at 4-45 p.m. in the Hall. New members very welcome. Please come along.

Parish Coffee Morning Every Thursday from 10-00a.m. to 11-00 a.m.

ST.JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL If you have a child over 2 years of age or are new to the area and are looking for a school – look no further! St Joseph's has a loving, caring ethos to bring out the full potential of your child. Please contact the school on 01639 635099 for further details

The Sick and Housebound Please continue to remember in your prayers all those who are sick and housebound, those in hospital and in our local care homes. Especially at this time, George Johnson, Cheryl Ford, Julie, Stephen & Jason Saunders, Yolanda Jones, Elizabeth Fluck, Lorna and Joe O'Brien, Betty Hopkins, Rose Williams, Margaret Jeffrey, Marion Brocksopp., Marlene John, Pat Day, Daniel John, George McIntyre, David Reynolds, Adrian Macpherson-Jones, Roger Horton, Kath Davies. If you would like others to be remembered in this prayer list (with their permission) please supply their names.

TO CONTACT THE PARISH/FATHER NEIL - The Presbytery, Hillside Lane, Neath, SA11 1TG. 01639 643323
Parish Website – www.catholicchurchneath.org.uk

.....