

Second Sunday of Advent – 4TH December 2022

The Season of Advent marks the beginning of a New year in the calendar of the Church after another momentous year in the life of the nation – the year of two Monarchs, three Prime Ministers, four Chancellors, as well as (ahead of us) the most challenging energy/cost of living crisis since the Second World War, and the very survival of many species of life on our planet, in the greatest environmental challenge to our climate since our first parents were commissioned in the Garden of Eden to “till the earth and to keep it” (Genesis 2 v 15). The Season of Advent reminds us that history has a direction and a purpose. The purpose of life, in all things, is to seek God’s glory, and the direction of history is the “Return of the King”. As the return of Christ draws closer, there will be “great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be” (St. Matthew 24 v21) before “they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory” v 27). Through the many trials and tribulations of life, Advent reminds us that we are to have our eyes fixed on Jesus so that “when these things begin to take place” says Jesus “raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (v 28) May this Season of Advent be for us a time of deep reflection, of prayer and devotion as we learn to read “the signs of the times” and seek that deeper consecration to Christ and a new “advent” of the Holy Spirit. “Come, Holy Spirit!”, “Come, Lord Jesus!”.

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”.*

Mass Intentions this Sunday (4th December) **Saturday** 4-00 p.m. (St. John Kemble)Parish & People; (St. Joseph’s) 6-00p.m. Michelle O’Brien (RIP) (Philip & Patrick O’Brien). **Sunday** 10-30a.m. Mary Pughsley (RIP) (Elias Family).

Weekday Mass Intentions: Tuesday (6th) 6-30 p.m. Brendan Harvey (RIP) (Janice);Wednesday – **No Mass** (Diocesan Clergy Conference); Thursday (8th – **The Immaculate Conception**) 9-30 a.m. Gwladys Gallagher (RIP) (Maureen & Sandra); 11-00 a.m. (St. John Kemble) Frank Nedza (RIP) (Nancy); Friday 9-30 a.m. Norman Evans (RIP) (J.Evans).

Mass Intentions next Sunday (11th December – Gaudete Sunday) – **Saturday** 4-00 p.m. (St.John Kemble) Parish & People; 6-00p.m. (St. Joseph’s) Kevin Halloran (RIP) (Lorna); **Sunday** 10-30 a.m. (St. Joseph’s) Peter Thomas (RIP) (The family)..

Christmas Raffle Tickets Please return counterfoils and money this weekend. Thank you. **Christmas Cards & Gifts** – now available from the Piety Shop. **Christmas CAFOD Gifts** Please take a Cafod leaflet with details of Christmas gifts you might like to purchase.

Christmas Flowers – donations to the cost of the Christmas flowers gratefully received. Please see Chris or Babs.

Readers: This Sunday (4th December) 6-00 p.m. Gerald Smith; 10-30 a.m. Peter Buckingham. **Next Sunday** (11th December) 6-00 p.m. Caroline Thomas; 10-30 a.m. Babs Hunt.

Candles: Sacred Heart – Vi Taylor & family; Our Lady – Ukraine; St. Joseph – Brendan Harvey (RIP).

S.J.P.G. Mince Pie, Raffle & Prize Bingo Evening – (Tomorrow Evening) Monday 5th December at 7-00 p.m.. Tickets £3-00 (first increase in many years! Not like the supermarket!). Fund raising for Neath Foodbank.

Anniversaries: Of your charity, remember in prayer those whose anniversaries occur at this time; Brendan Harvey (RIP) (2021); Denis Protheroe (2004); Patrick O’Connell (2006); Kathleen Maloney (2009); Regina Pearl (2012). *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, And let light perpetual shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*

Dennis Taylor (RIP) Dennis died suddenly on Thursday. Please remember Dennis in your prayers and Vi and the family in their loss. Funeral details to be announced. *Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.*

S.P.U.C. National Prayer Campaign. 27th October to 27th April. " 10 Million prayers " to mark the 55th Anniversary of the Abortion Act, remember the 10 million lives lost in Britain since 1967 and to unite in prayer and build together a Culture of Life. **Please take with you the FOURTH in the series of the prayer cards, " Prayer to St. Gianna Molla " and join with this national prayer campaign.**

Fatima Pilgrimage Sr. Margaret Fitzgerald is organising a pilgrimage to Fatima from 10 to 15 May next year 2023. If you are interested, please contact Sr. Margaret on 01792 987059

Congratulations to Betty Hopkins celebrating her 95th birthday (in the Hollins) and to Rose Williams celebrating her 90th birthday. We wish them both every blessing and all good wishes.

The Synod Process We have been asked to move to Part II of the world-wide consultation process. Unfortunately, and once again, since the Bishops require a response by 20 December, there is only a short time in which to set up the parish meetings. You are invited to contribute to the consultation at our two Parish Synod Our second meeting is this **Wednesday 7th December** starting with prayer with the Legion of Mary at 6-00 p.m. leading into a time of discussion at about 6-45 p.m. If you are not able to be present for the time of prayer you are very welcome to join the meeting at 6-45 p.m. If you are interested in attending please take the "**Enlarge the Space of your Tent**" sheet from the back of the church.

Mrs Claire Dineen As you know Claire will be retiring at Christmas as Head Teacher of St. Joseph's after many years of service during which we have developed a lovely relationship between the school and the church, priest and parishioners. Many of you will have had children and grandchildren at the school during this time and if you would like to contribute to a leaving gift for Claire please pass your donation to Fr.Neil. Many thanks.

Deanery Confirmation Mass (?) It is hoped, possibly, to hold a Deanery Confirmation Mass next year at Our Lady of Margam. If you may be interested please have a word with Fr.Neil.

Parish Coffee Morning – Every Thursday from 10-00 – 11-00 a.m. All welcome!

Parish Hall Committee We are very grateful to the following for accepting nomination to the Parish Hall Committee. The first Committee Meeting is scheduled for this **Tuesday 6th December at 7-15 p.m.** (after the 6-30 p.m. Mass) when the Chair (and Secretary?) will be elected. (Luke Parel, Des Nicholas, Sheila Morgan, Geraint Jones, Mary Isaac, Angela Healey, Jan Harvey, Brenda Grant, Peter Buckingham).

Health & Safety Committee Just before the pandemic, all parishes were asked to address the large number of Health & Safety regulations which we need to comply with to validate our Diocesan Insurance Policy and to ensure the safety of everyone coming on to the church/hall premises. We have now been advised that, post-pandemic, it is now time to get on with addressing these issues. We are very grateful to Richard Hopkins and Geraint Jones, whose work as our Health & Safety officers was immediately interrupted by the pandemic, for taking on some of these responsibilities but it is a big responsibility and if you have practical expertise in particular skills (electrical, plumbing, Building, "health & safety" ! etc) and/or are able to help, this would be much appreciated. It is hoped that such a committee would form the foundation of setting up a Pastoral Council for the parish.

Last Sunday's Collection: St.Joseph's – £318-50 (plus Direct Debits) – S.V.P. £350-60; St. John Kemble - £54-00 - S.V.P. £36-65. Many thanks. (The Second Collection next weekend 10/11th December for "Sick & Retired Clergy").

S.V.P Many thanks for last week's generous support of our own S.V.P. group. **Also, if you are able to buy a gift for a child this Christmas, please leave with an SVP member.**

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, Peggy Swan and Katheryn Woolley (Glynneath), Jane Boland, George Johnson, Nancy Morris, Cheryl Ford, Jason Saunders, Stephen Saunders, Julie Saunders, Yolanda Jones, Elizabeth Fluck, Lorna and Joe O'Brien, Betty Hopkins, Rose Williams, Margaret Jeffrey, Marion Brocksopp., Marlene John, Fr. Neil, Geraint Jones. If you would like others to be remembered in this prayer list (with their permission) please supply their names.