

TO CONTACT THE PARISH/FATHER NEIL

The Presbytery, Hillside Lane, Neath, SA11 1TG. Phone – 01639 643323

Parish Website – www.catholicchurchneath.org.uk

Third Sunday of Advent – 12th December 2021

THE PARISH SYNODS

The date of the next meeting is now re-scheduled for **Wednesday 5th January** at 2-00 p.m. in the Hall.

A suggestion box is placed at the back of the church for those who wish to contribute but are unable to attend the meetings. Those in either parish with transport difficulties or who may be housebound or reluctant (during this pandemic) to meet socially with others but would like to contribute ideas/reflections, please ask someone to post your ideas into the box. May the Holy Spirit guide us in our understanding of what He is saying to the Church at this time.

- (i) What is my dream for the Church so that it can become more outward looking, more missionary, especially towards those on the margins?
- (ii) What hinders the baptised from being active in mission? How does the community support its members who serve in various ways (social and political involvement, scientific research, education, promoting social justice, protecting human rights, caring for the environment etc)

Mass Intentions this Sunday (12th December) **Saturday** (St John Kemble) 4-00 p.m. Parish & People; (St.Joseph's) 6-00p.m. Paul Cameron (RIP) (Betty & Roger Horton); **Sunday** 8-00 a.m. Benitia Whittington (RIP) (The Family); 10-30a.m. Deta May (RIP) (The Family).

Weekday Mass Intentions: **Tuesday** 14th December (St Joseph's) 6-30p.m. Andrew Mills (RIP) (The Family) – followed by **Exposition/Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the Sacrament of Confession.** **Wednesday** 15th December (St.Joseph's) 9-30 a.m. Lawrence Macpherson-Jones (RIP.) (Adrian & Paula); (St.John Kemble) 11-00 a.m. Fr.Pascal Dormer (RIP) (SPCD); **Thursday** 16th December (St.Joseph's) 9-30a.m. Michael O'Hea (RIP) (Eirwen & Family).

School Christmas Masses There will be two School Masses and two Class Services in Church during the week but, sadly, due to LEA Covid regulations parents and parishioners are unable to attend

Mass Intentions next Sunday (19th December) **Saturday** (St.John Kemble) 4-00p.m. Parish & People; (St. Joseph's) 6-00p.m. Michael McAteer (RIP) (The Family); **Sunday** 8-00a.m. Annie & William Cochrane (RIP) (Jean Evans); 10-30a.m. James O'Donnell (RIP) (Anne-Marie O'Donnell).

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES:

Christmas Eve – Friday 24th December (St.John Kemble) 4-00 p.m. (Reserved Seats); (St.Joseph's) 6-00 p.m. (**ALL SEATS ALREADY RESERVED**) and 10-00 p.m.

Christmas Day – Saturday 25th December (St.Joseph's) 8-00 a.m. (St.Joseph's) 10-30a.m. (No Mass at 4-00 p.m or 6-00 p.m. on Saturday evening/Christmas Day).

OCTOBER MASS ATTENDANCE – All the churches in the Diocese have experienced a significant decline in the numbers attending Mass because of the Covid Pandemic. For your interest, of the 44 parishes in the Diocese, 10 had an average attendance of over 100 (over each weekend) in October - St.Joseph's, Neath, having the fifth highest average attendance in the Diocese (115 Mass attendees – before the pandemic average attendance was just over 200). St.John Kemble, Glynneath, was 43 out of 44 (!) with an average attendance in October of 8 (before the pandemic average attendance was 16) - only Pontyberem had less – with 7. Let us continue to pray that this “pruning” of the Church will lead to vigorous new growth and Resurrection in the life of the Church.

Brendan Harvey (RIP) Please remember Brendan in your prayers who died suddenly Sunday morning. Please also remember Jan and the family in your prayers. Brendan's Funeral Mass will take place here in St. Joseph's on Thursday 23 December at 10-30a.m.. The Coffin will be received into the Church at 5-00 p.m. the night before. *Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.*

Anniversaries: Of your charity, remember in prayer those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Deta May (2001); Vincenzo Didio (2006); Audrey Gammon (2017); Michael Sheridan (2019); Lawrence Macpherson-Jones (2020); Michael McAteer (2000); Madeline Lewis (2016); Kevin O'Brien (2017); John Turner (2000) *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, And let light perpetual shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*

Candles The Sacred Heart – Peter Healey (RIP); St. Joseph – Gordon Davies (RIP); Our Lady – Nora Reynolds (Good Health).

Readers: **This Sunday** (12th December) 6-00 p.m. Patrick McAteer; 8-00 a.m. Adrian & Paula Macpherson-Jones; 10-30 a.m. Tommy Parel. **Next Sunday** (19th December) 6-00 p.m. Sian Loynes; 8-00 a.m. Gregory Page; 10-30 a.m. Sheila Williams.

Cleaning Teams. **This Sunday** (12th December) 6-00 p.m. Maralyn & Nora; 8-00 a.m. Martin & Nuala; 10-30 a.m. Joan & Ann. **Next Sunday** (19th December) 6-00 p.m. Sian & Mary; 8-00 a.m. Martin & Nuala; 10-30 a.m. Volunteers please.

N.B BIG CLEAN FOR CHRISTMAS?? Cleaners urgently needed to help clean and tidy the Church on a once-a-fortnight rota. We are currently down to just 6/7 volunteers. A commitment of just one hour in the fortnight. **Thank you for volunteering!** Please have a word with either Nora or Sheila. Many thanks!

SVP Childrens' Christmas Gift Appeal This year we are supporting our local Town Mayoress Appeal for gifts for children in need. If you are able to buy a gift please either pass it on to a member of the SVP or phone 01792 424168 where a collection can be made. We would be most grateful. Unwrapped gifts can be donated up to the 18th December. Thank you.

Betty Hopkins – would like to thank everybody for their cards, flowers and best wishes that she received recently when she celebrated her 94th birthday.

First Holy Communion Classes Please keep in your prayers as they prepare for their First Holy Communion Ronan Abell, Lucy Owen, Jack Challenger, Ava Mallows, Julia Karczynska, John Grabczewski, Amelia Tristram, Julia Kuligowska, Efan and Bodi Lewis, Shuyalini Sivarupan, Joseph Owen, Brendan Fitchett, Lowrie Smitham, Ivy Walters, Dorothea Boland. **Attendance at Mass is an essential part of preparation** for receiving Holy Communion. Classes will take place at 9-30 a.m. in the Parish Hall before the Sunday 10-30 a.m. Mass. Classes resume on Sunday 9th January. Because of the large number making their first Holy Communion and so as to accommodate family/friends the **First Holy Communion Mass – Saturday 29th January 10-30 a.m.** (First Confession – Saturday 22nd January at 10-30 a.m. in the Church)

The Sacrament of Confirmation Please remember in your prayers those preparing for Confirmation – Zaira and Joshua Zambrano, Carys Smitham, Tommy Parel, Isabella and Maria Grabczewski, Oisín and Cian Fitchett, Eve Abell, Daniel Rowlands, Mia Faure, Joseph Payne, Wiliam Heslop, Callum Lavin, Martin and Marya Joseph and Bethany Clifford. We shall meet together each Sunday after the 10-30a.m. Mass. Note for the diary! - Archbishop George Stack will visit us on **Friday 29th April** (7-00 p.m.) to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Confirmation Group will meet together today and next Sunday (12th/19th) and then resume in February during which time attendance at Mass continues to be an essential part of the preparation process.

Parish Collection Last weekend **St. Joseph's** £381-77 (plus Direct Debits) and SVP £226-82.. **St. John Kemble** tba

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 (Glynneath), Jane Boland, George Johnson, Nancy Morris, Cheryl Ford, Andrew Jenkins, Jason Saunders, Stephen Saunders, Yolanda Jones, Elizabeth Fluck, Lorna O'Brien, Betty Hopkins, Kevin Halloran, Rose Williams, Donie O'Connell, Maureen Pitt. If you would like others to be remembered in this prayer list (with their permission) please supply their names.

CHRISTMASS MASS TIMES AND THE PANDEMIC (OMICRON)

All the seats for the 6-00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass are now reserved. (see below)

Please note, every other pew continues to be roped off. This allows us to sing hymns (whilst wearing masks).The alternative would be to allow seating in every pew but without congregational singing – not a happy prospect for the celebration of Christmas! In some cases, people from different households/bubbles will be sat together in the same pew. If, in view of the new omicron variant (which is more transmissible and predicted to rapidly become the dominant strain of the virus before Christmas) you are uncomfortable about this please consider attending a different Mass (where there are just the usual restrictions on numbers).

Masks must continue to be worn (unless medically exempted), hands sanitized and social distancing when entering and leaving the church, and when coming forward to receive Holy Communion.

Please keep up to date with how regulations may be changed (and tightened) in Wales which may affect arrangements for our Christmas Masses and also our regular Sunday and weekday Masses.

Please note (!) – if Fr.Neil should catch the new virus (even though triple jabbed!) it may mean, unfortunately, that the Christmas Masses will have to be cancelled at the last moment (with little or no warning) as there is no realistic possibility of arranging cover when other priests are already fully committed to their own celebrations of Mass over the Christmas period. Should this happen, notification will be posted on the Parish Website and Facebook.

Reserved seats for the 6-00 p.m. Christmas Vigil Mass

Martin & Nualà Rees (2), Susan Farid (2), Eleanora Evans (4), Betty Thomas (1), Pat (1), Anna Stephens (6), John Morris (1), Mary Blackmore (1),Annette Blackmore (1), Stephen Evans (1), Eileen Reynolds (1), Maralyn Jones (2), Angela Healey (1), Chris Burbidge (1), Mary Isaac (2), Ceri & Patrick McAteer (2), Geraint Jones (1), JR & C. Parker (2), Clare Morley (3), Christopher Robinson (3), Creisna Comerford-Davies (5), Des Nicholas (1), Sheila Williams (1), Julia Wheatley (6), Joan Michael (7), Sian Smitham (5), Sheila Abell (6), Betty & Roger Horton (2), Remo Moruzzi (3),Liny Crago (1), Mary Prendergast (1), Michelle Bray (6), Siobhan Fitchett (6).

ENTRANCE

- 1 Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it,
for by his power each tree and flower
was planned and made.
Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it—
sun, moon and stars in heaven cry:
Jesus is Lord!
Jesus is Lord, Jesus is Lord!
Praise him with alleluias,
for Jesus is Lord.
- 2 Jesus is Lord! Yet from his throne eternal
in flesh he came to die in pain on
Calvary's tree.
Jesus is Lord! From him all life
proceeding —
yet gave his life a ransom thus setting
us free.
- 3 Jesus is Lord! O'er sin the mighty
conqueror;
from death he rose and all his foes shall
own his name.
Jesus is Lord! God sends his Holy Spirit
to show by works of power that Jesus
is Lord.

OFFERTORY

- 1 Gifts of bread and wine, gifts we've
offered,
fruits of labour, fruits of love:
taken, offered, sanctified,
blessed and broken; words of one who
died:
'Take my body; take my saving blood.'
Gifts of bread and wine: Christ our Lord.
- 2 Christ our Saviour, living presence here,
as he promised while on earth:
'I am with you for all time,
I am with you in this bread and wine.
Take my body, take my saving blood.'
Gifts of bread and wine: Christ our Lord.
- 3 Through the Father, with the Spirit,
one in union with the Son,
for God's people, joined in prayer
faith is strengthened by the food we
share.
'Take my body, take my saving blood.'
Gifts of bread and wine: Christ our
Lord.

Prayer after Low Mass

(Promulgated by Pope Leo XIII)

ST. MICHAEL the Archangel, defend us in battle; be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into Hell Satan and all the other evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



All of creation rejoices in thee, O Full of Grace, the assembly of angels and the race of men. O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins, from whom God was incarnate and became a child; our God before the ages. He made thy body into a throne, and thy womb He made more spacious than the heavens. All of creation rejoices in thee, O Full of Grace. Glory to thee!

Hymn to the Theotokos from St Basil's Liturgy

PRAYER FOR ADVENT

LOVING GOD, we seek you in both the light and the darkness, the silence and the sounds, the fullness and the emptiness of this Advent season. Fill our hearts with hope for your coming, love for those who are most in need, and faith in your promises. May this time of preparation help us celebrate the birth of your Son with deep gratitude and abundant joy. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Light of the world. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

- 1 Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee; take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.
- 2 Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love. Take my feet, and let them be swift and purposeful for thee.
- 3 Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King. Take my intellect, and use every power as thou shalt choose.
- 4 Take my will, and make it thine: it shall be no longer mine. Take my heart; it is thine own: it shall be thy royal throne.
- 5 Take my love; my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure-store. Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.

RECESSIONAL

- 1 Rejoice! The Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore;
mortals, give thanks and sing,
and triumph evermore:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.
- 2 Jesus the Saviour reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above:
- 3 His kingdom cannot fail;
he rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus given:
- 4 He sits at God's right hand
till all his foes submit,
and bow to his command,
and fall beneath his feet:

Each Church is Bethlehem

I open the stable door,
I kneel before the infant.
I worship with the shepherds.
I adore the Christ child.
I ponder the Word made flesh.
I absorb the love of God.
I sing Glory with the angels.
I offer my gifts with the Magi.
I have come from lands afar.
I receive the living Lord.
I hold him in my hands.
I go on my way rejoicing.
Glorifying and praising God.