

ST MARGARET'S PAGE

3rd Sunday of Advent - 13th December 2020 Year B



In Peter writes:

One of the most interesting events in the world of biblical archaeology has been the rediscovery of the site of Jesus' baptism on the other side of the Jordan. Recent archaeological digs have uncovered the foundations of numerous byzantine baptismal chapels, indicating that this was a major site of pilgrimage from the 6th century till the fall of Jerusalem and the conquest of the Holy Land by the military forces of Saladin. Today the Baptism of Jesus, and the mission of John the Baptist seem to lie on the fringes of Christian preaching and teaching. Yet there is something fundamental here to understand the context of Jesus mission both then and now. John the Baptist's is located by St Mark and St John in the Prologue of their respective Gospels. John's mission sets the scene for the coming of Jesus. His preaching stirred the minds and hearts of his hearers, in much the same manner that our conscience is aroused today by that internal voice, questioning motives and conduct. John the Baptist makes us aware that everyone stands under judgement.

'To stand under judgement' might be the modern caricature of the Catholic faith, but judgement has never been a stand-alone concept. It is always the prelude to Jesus' offer of mercy. Mercy, to be truly effective, requires conversion, the simple recognition that mercy is needed in the first place. All the arguments between ourselves requires one or both to ask forgiveness, thus 'to stand under judgement', is necessary for mercy to be shown by the other and reconciliation effected.

This dynamic becomes effective when a voice from beyond to initiate the conversation. This voice may be that of conscience, of a close friend, of the preaching of the Church, or in this Sunday's Gospel that of John the Baptist. What this voice rejects is the endemic pessimism of journalists and their slavish repeaters, who delight in predicting disaster, that London will be in Tier 3 soon, shops will be denuded of food because of Brexit, travel chaos will ensue because of snow, and the NHS swamped with Covid cases. John the Baptist preached an immanent judgement as an aid to hear the Good News not as a means to induce depression. The current explanation of this pandemic has shown how atheism is a profoundly depressing creed possessing no hope of redemption. Satisfaction is found only in ever more gloomy prog-

Mass Times & Liturgy Services		
Sunday	8:30 am, 10:30 am and 6:30 pm	
Mon. Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat		10.00 am
Thursday	Eucharistic Service	10.00 am
Saturday	Adoration	10:30 - 11:00
Rosary	Mon, Tue, Wed and Sat (via Zoom) (please email the parish office for the link)	9.30 am
Confessions	By request	

noses.

The Gospels offer a very different vision, because recognising our need for mercy is always matched with the donation of mercy. This is the way of Jesus. The need for mercy and the donation of mercy are two sides of one divine-human relationship found in Jesus Christ. The power of this dynamic maybe seen in our relationship with physical health. The temptation, as with faith, is always to put off going to see the doctor, to muddle along the best one can, and take the discomfort, thinking that it will go away. A family member says the obvious, and healing begins once contact has been made with the doctor who assesses the situation. In the same way, spiritual healing is only possible through contact with Jesus. The voice that begins the spiritual process is John the Baptist, his words echo in the chambers of the soul at this time of year.

St John's opening verses in his Prologue, a literary work of great beauty, places the Baptist's historic mission within the eternity of God's creative thinking that brings forth the Word. From the beginning God engages in conversation, within the life of the Trinity, incomprehensible to us, but this conversation bursts forth creating the cosmos, and focuses onto one-person Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Now divine conversation will take place in human language, the conversation of mercy coming from Jesus Christ. Faith is learning to make the language of mercy our own. The first steps to take in learning this divine-human language are found in the preaching of John the Baptist. He makes simple demands, offering questions for reflection that will lead to confession. To know the need for mercy is the prelude to celebrate once again the gift of renewed life offered by Jesus Christ. Mercy is the language of Good News and the first steps are learnt from John the Baptist.

St Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church

• E-mail: stmargaretonthames@rcdow.org.uk • Website: www.stmargaretsrchurch.co.uk

Parish Priest: Canon Peter Newby. Deacon Joseph Estorninho; Parish Administrator: Cynthia Souza; Bookkeeper: Ann Edes

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9.30 am—12.30 pm

Mass Intentions

Saturday 12th December – Sunday 20th December

12-Dec	Sat	10.00 am	For unemployed seeking work	
13-Dec	Sun 3 rd Sunday of Advent	8.30 am	Thanksgiving for prayers answered	Winter
		10.30 am	Dennis Coates RIP	Olga McLoughlin
		6.30 pm	Tulia de Vergara (Anniv) Edna McCaw (Anniv)	Lily McCaw
14-Dec	Mon	10.00 am	Cipollone family's Intentions	Melanie Blackwood
15-Dec	Tue	10.00 am	Intentions of Walker Family	Anne Jones
16-Dec	Wed	10.00 am	For the Intentions Mary Heffernan	Rita Johnston
17-Dec	Thu	10.00 am	Eucharistic Service	
18-Dec	Fri	10.00 am	For all young people	
19-Dec	Sat	10.00 am	For unemployed seeking work	
20-Dec	Sun 4 th Sunday of Advent	8.30 pm	For all young people	
		10.30 am	For you the people	
		6.30 pm	Laurie Inman RIP and May Nelson (Anniv)	Lily McCaw

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Adriana Posse de González (Valeria's Mum), Rachel Rose, Fr Paul Bigirwa, Patricia Mary Picton (Mary), Arthur Mathewson, Maureen Costello, Helen Sweeny, Pat Friel, Mary Reagan, Pauline Slawson, Ben, Carol Samba, Colin Bartram, Gerry McEntee, Rose Williams, Peter Coughlan, Hilary Sudell, Rose Lorden, William Hamilton, Mary Arnold, Cesar Juan Urrutigoity, Mary Ethel Arnolda, Sydney and Patricia Parkes, Judith Thomas, Wanda Ostrowska, Christopher Browne, Antonella Sesta, Margaret Masterson, Bernard Sharratt, Carmen Ruibal, Ann Macpherson, Chris McLoughlin (son of Olga), Paul Costello and Kevin Sweeney

Recently deceased - Janet McAllister RIP

Anniversaries - Syd Pascoe, William Cowell, Patrick Farrell, Frederick Morgan, Janina Jascia, Stanislaus Leszczynski, Patricia Margaret O'Callahan

Entrance Antiphon:

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

Response to the Psalm

My soul rejoices in my God.



Sadly St Margaret's long tradition of providing gifts to needy families is unable to go ahead this year due to difficulties presented by the Covid pandemic.

Early next year, we hope to organise alternative ways of harnessing your generosity to the benefit of the most needy in our community so please look out for further details in the Spring.

Christmas Masses



Places to attend Christmas Masses will need to be booked in advance to ensure we can respect safe distancing.

Masses will be held on:

Christmas Eve at 5:00 pm, 7:00 pm & 10:00 pm

Christmas Day at 8:30 am & 10:30 am

Bookings are now open. Once you are taken into the Bookings page, please select the 'Events' tab (on the left corner of the page) to view all Masses in order.

If you know anyone who does not have access to the internet and would like to reserve a place, please ask them to call the parish office who will do it for them.

13th December - 3rd Sunday of Advent Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11
20th December - 4th Sunday of Advent 2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14,16

Luke 1:46-50,53-54 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 John 1:6-8,19-28
Psalm 88(89):2-5,27,29 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38

Mother's Prayers group

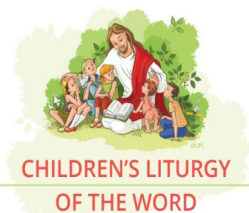
One of the most important things that we can do as a Parish is to support each other in prayer. St Pio of Pietrelcina ('Padre Pio') says, "*prayer is the best weapon we have; it is the key to God's heart.*"

Did you know that we have a small group of mothers who meet regularly to pray together? If you have a specific prayer intention that you would like to be included in their prayers, please email the parish office and they will pass it on. New members to the group are also welcome.



Children's Liturgy

Before lockdown the Parish managed to offer children's liturgy at the Sunday 10:30am Mass on a regular basis. Since the lockdown began this activity had sadly ceased and the Parish Pastoral Council feels it is time now to resume this activity but by zoom, rather than face to face.



If you had been involved beforehand or would like to become involved in providing a children's liturgy, at a different time to 10:30am Mass please make contact with the Parish Office. I do not wish to be a pessimist but the parish should think of providing such a service till Easter. If we can return to normal before then all well and good. Fr Peter

Pictures from blessing of the nativity at WAY-SIDE NATIVITY CAMBRIDGE PARK by Father Peter on Sunday 6th December



St James's
Catholic Primary School

Children starting school in Reception 2021

St James's is an outstanding Catholic school with close links to St Margaret's parish.

Due to the generosity of previous parishioners who funded part of the new build some years ago, the Admissions Policy gives priority places to 15 Catholic children who live within the geographical boundaries of St Margaret's parish. The Head Teacher Mr Beatty warmly invites you to join a virtual tour of the school and meet him over Zoom on a Friday morning at 9:30 am. Please reserve a place by emailing the school office info@st-james.richmond.sch.uk

Please see the link below for our School Virtual Tour Video <https://vimeo.com/480819740>

Admission arrangement for Catholic Schools

If you wish to apply for a place at a Catholic Primary school for 2021, you will need a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP). Fr Peter is happy to sign these forms for regular parishioners on

Saturday, 9th January 2021 11.00 am—12.30 pm

Please bring along your forms to the Church Hall (head upstairs in the library) to have the documents signed and stamped.

Confirmation



The next Confirmation course, for those in Year 9 and above will begin on Saturday 16th January at 5:15pm to be followed by Mass at 6:30pm.

This year the Course is being led by Deacon Joseph Estorninho, Joseph Kilsby, a recent graduate from St Marys and Kirsten Roy, long standing parishioner.

If you would like to participate please contact Fr Peter at the Parish Office to obtain an application form.

Thank you

Fr Peter



ADVENT IN ST MARGARETS

The Joy of Hope – Parish Advent course

This zoom Advent course continues for it's last week out of the four weeks, one session at Monday 2:00pm led by Angie Keane, and Wednesday 8:00pm led by Fr Peter. The daytime course has attracted 10 participants and the evening course 16 participants.

The sessions include time for worship, listening to the presentation, shared dialogue afterwards and concluding music and prayer. Each session lasts an hour and quarter.

This is simple way to help prepare spiritually for the coming Festival of Christmas. Zoom details on the website.

SOUP LUNCH DONATIONS

Despite the fact that we haven't been able to hold soup lunches for the past few months, due to your generosity, we have been able to continue making a monthly contribution to Fr David Cullen's work among the poor there.

We are hoping to send a generous Christmas donation to him on Friday 16th December.

If you would like to contribute to this valuable work helping some of the most needy people in the Chipata area of Zambia, please contact: Maz or Bernard Winter.

02089430824 07769721975

Many thanks for your generosity.



Christmas Cards for our senior citizen parishioners & Dalemead Care Home

Many thanks to all those who have kindly signed up via the link for making a Christmas card for a parishioner.

Please drop your cards through the letterbox to the parish office before **Monday 14th December**.

This week, we will add names of 46 residents of Dalemead Care Home in St Margaret's to the list, so please do visit the link below to sign up, if you haven't done so yet.

volunteersignup.org/QXCD4

The cards to the Care Home residents will be delivered by hand and so can be left at the parish office by **Sunday 20th December**.

They will be delivered in the week before Christmas.
Fr Peter



CAFOD's Christmas Fun Run' – A virtual event on December 27th.

'Take to the streets in your local area on December 27th to run, walk or toddle 5km for CAFOD this Christmas.'

There are loads of places where you can join this event. Please go to the [Eventbrite page](#) to sign up, or the [Facebook Event](#) to share. To fundraise, please go to [JustGiving](#).

All are welcome, and if you fundraise over £100 we will send you a running vest!

If anyone is interested we can arrange a group fundraising page, please contact Ellie Jones on 07961383719 if you would like to join the team.