

FIRST READING

Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11

"Console my people, console them" says your God. "Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes." A voice cries, "Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout with fear, say to the towns of Judah, "Here is you God." Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

RESPONSE: Let us see, O Lord, your mercy, and give us your saving help.

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| 1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land. | 2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. |
| 3. The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. | |

SECOND READING

2 Peter 3:8-14

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, "a day" can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up. Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

**Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.
And all mankind shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!**

GOSPEL

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: Look, I am going to send my messengers before you; he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the River Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, "Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.

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St Anthony of Padua

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Rev. Tom Butler (retired - 07853777957)

Sunday Masses: 6.00 (Vigil - Saturday Evening) 9.30am, 5.00pm (Sunday Morning)

Weekday Mass: Mon-Wed, Fri: 9.15am. (Thurs 9.15am at Holy Family)

Confessions: on request

Annexe: 725544

Social Centre: 735963

Primary school: 726621

Playgroup/Preschool 07963 700591

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Preparations... paths... awareness.

'Whenever eastern monarchs entered upon an expedition or took a journey, especially through desert and new territories, they would send messengers and pioneers before them to prepare all things for their coming, to open the passes, to level the ways, and to remove all impediments. The first century congregation or church was dry and in a desert, spiritually. It was John the Baptist's task to prepare for the Messiah's coming and to invite people to re-consider the paths they were following.[1] He sowed the seeds of their growth in awareness by saying, "Among you stands one whom you do not know." (John 1:26)

For John the Baptist, the most important preparation was repentance. 'The word usually translated as "repent" is the Greek word metanoia; this might be best translated as "turn around your mind" or change. It is much more than just being sorry for the past. It involves a deep and radical change in one's thinking and behaviour. But most of us won't move toward any new way of thinking or actual change until we're forced to, which usually means some form of suffering or some disturbance that upsets our habitual path. In the wilderness we face the truth of who we are and what our life is like.' [2]

And our path? 'Travel the most ancient way of all: the path that leads you to the centre of your life. This journey is not about miles. It is not about how far you can walk or how fast. It is about what you will do with this moment. The treasure in our map is buried not at journey's end but at its beginning.' [3]

'The real spiritual path is wherever you are. God is everywhere. The spiritual journey is a growth in awareness that what you are seeking is where you are.[4] It is a gradual growth in awareness that the One we seek has always been within us. We use the invocation 'Come' many times in our prayers throughout the year, especially in Advent. What would happen if instead, we were to pray, "Help us grow in awareness that we are always in You and You are always in us." That's a bit longer! This year we may have more time available to sit with this prayer and in doing so, perhaps we might experience metanoia, a true change of heart and mind.

Traveller, the path is your tracks and nothing more. The path is made by walking.

(Antonio Machado) Adapted: [1]ourancientpaths.org [2]Michael Marsh [3]Jan Richardson [4]Imre Vallyon

Second Sunday of Advent

Year B

6th December 2020

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DIARY AND MASS INTENTIONS

for the week beginning Saturday 5th December 2020

Sat	<i>St. Ant</i>	For our parish	
Sun	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H.Family</i> <i>St. Ant</i>	Kenneth Grieg For our parish Eileen Draper	<i>Second Sunday of Advent (Year B)</i>
Mon	<i>St. Ant</i>	Special Intention (A)	<i>Feast: St. Ambrose</i>
Tue	<i>St. Ant</i>	Theresa & Vincent Crook	<i>Feast: The Immaculate Conception</i>
Wed 9.15	<i>St. Ant</i>	Private Intention	
Thur 9.15	<i>H.Family</i>	Arthur Golder	
Fri 9.15am	<i>St. Ant</i>	For a reconciliation	
Sat 6.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i>	Edmund Machholz	
Sun 9.30am 11.00am 5.00pm	<i>St. Ant</i> <i>H.Family</i> <i>St. Ant</i>	Paul O'Kane For our parish Mary Dunn	<i>Third Sunday of Advent</i>

Masses received this week: Paul O'Kane.

BIDDING PRAYERS

As we begin the second week of advent, for a spirit of repentance among all believers,
 For those who may find it hard to prepare a way for the Lord in their lives, that they may be given the gifts of knowledge and discernment,
 The first reading says, console my people, console them, says your God. May we respond to the need to console others without waiting to be consoled ourselves,
 For our children, as they prepare to welcome Christ, we pray. Lord, hear us.

We pray for the sick and the housebound of our parish and for those who care for them, particularly: Bill Embery, Lawrence Dunnagan, Betty Murphy, John Myerscough, Alice Myerscough, Chris Goldsmith, Frank Stanton, Marie Gardner, Joan Green, Carole Adnitt, Jo Counsell, Les Farrer.

Pray for those who have died recently: Beryl Jacob;

... and for those whose anniversaries are around now: Vincent Crook, Helen May, Bernard Swarbrick, Michael Keane, Francis Myerscough, Winnie Rawcliffe, Brenda Gray, Edmund Machholz, Edward Giddens, Mary Kay, Agnes McMillan, Francis Bilsborough, Ava Loughlin, Margaret Mary McFetridge, Mary Dunn. May they rest in peace.

We remember in our prayers those who have been injured or lost their lives in conflict, especially those from our parish.

We're back at Mass! Usual times.

We still have to be careful and take precautions but it will be great to be back together again. We are grateful to those who volunteer as Stewards for making this possible.
 - There are Newsletters every weekend as usual. Copies will be in church and on the notice board but if you would like one by e-mail send your e-mail address to parish.priest2@btinternet.com

Advent A group of parishioners have been busy producing two linked resources for our parish:

1. Advent Jesse Tree

- telling the Biblical story from Creation to the first Christmas in 25 colourful 'decorations' to be hung on our tree in church. Members of the parish are invited to colour these decorations or add a message. Return it to us and it will be displayed on the Jesse Tree. Please phone Peter on 724576 or email pjnewsham@aol.com.

2. Advent video reflections

Tied in with this, members of the parish have recorded a series of 24 short YouTube Advent readings, again featuring the 'Jesse Tree bauble', followed by a brief time of reflection. The lighting of the Advent wreath candles each Sunday will be shown as a separate film -facebook

3. St Anthony's Children's Liturgy Advent. Sunday Nov 29th at 10:30. Ask at school or church for the password.

Christmas Raffle - Tickets for the Parish Raffle are now on sale, in church and by phone. (724576). The raffle prizes are on display in church.

Donations of food & toys are welcomed by the Salvation Army

These can be taken direct to the Salvation Army, Harrington St (01772 555425) or left by the SVP bucket at the back of church.

CAFOD World Gifts

World Gifts, CAFOD's range of virtual gifts, make a real difference to families living in poverty across the world. While we have the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown here, we can still be good neighbours to our sisters and brothers overseas by giving World Gifts as Christmas presents to family and friends. Let's spread joy and hope around the world this Christmas. Visit cafod.org.uk/worldgifts

Celebrate Advent with CAFOD

After a year of uncertainty, we all need the hope, peace and true comfort and joy that the Advent season can offer. CAFOD has a range of resources and virtual events to help us come together online to pray, reflect and celebrate as we prepare for the coming of our Lord. Visit cafod.org.uk/parishes to learn more.

Today's Virtual 'Coffee Morning' Same log in details: on Zoom at 11.00am. Log in: Meeting ID: 819 8015 2432 Passcode: 879577

Mass At Christmas There seems to be more people in favour of Vigil Masses at 4.00pm and 6.00pm and then Christmas morning at 9.30am as usual. There will also be Mass at 8pm at Holy Family and usual Mass at 11.00am on Christmas morning.

Acknowledgements Thanks to those who are leaving Offertory envelopes in church. And for the regular envelopes containing donations to the Food Bank and to Cafod.

- thanks also to our parish volunteers continue to do a great job keeping in touch with housebound and lockdown parishioners. Let's continue to look out for one another, especially for those who are isolated or have particular needs. If you need help, or know someone who does, please contact us -there are many parishioners who are willing to help out. Don't be stuck and don't suffer in silence. Please ring: 724576 and leave your number.