



St Nicholas of Tolentino RC Church, Lawford's Gate, Bristol BS5 ORE

St Nicholas Presbytery, Lawford's Gate, Bristol BS5 ORE tel: 0117-909-8810

Parish Office, Assisi Centre, Lawford's Gate, Bristol BS5 ORE tel: 0117-909-0419

(Office open: Monday-Friday 10am - 1.00pm)

'Borderlands' Charity Office: Assisi Centre, St Nicholas Church tel: 0117-904-0479

Parish email: bristol.stnicholasoftolentino@cliftondiocese.com

Fr Richard's email: richard.mckay@cliftondiocese.com

Clifton Diocesan Website: www.cliftondiocese.com

Download this Bulletin from the Parish Website: www.tolentino.org.uk

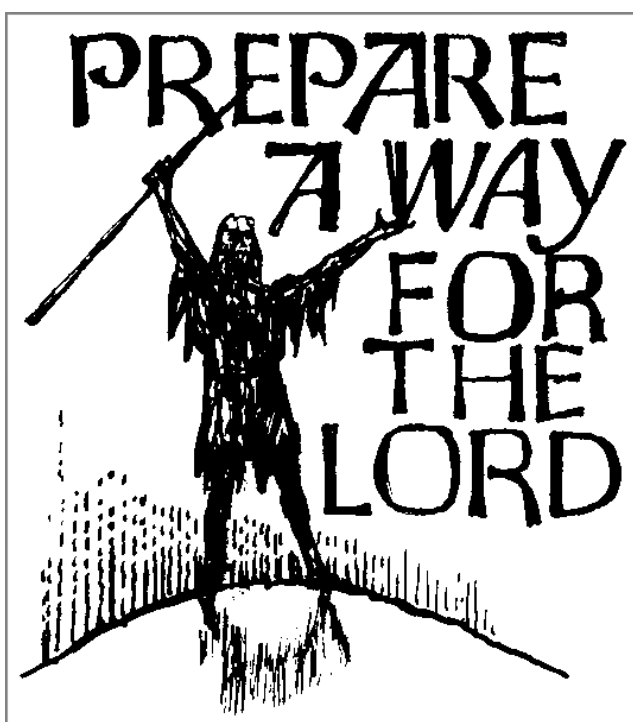
Parish Priest - Rev Richard McKay (tel: 0117-909-8810 / mob: 07779677370)

Catechesis: Mary Hopper (01275-830788) Caretaking of our buildings: Eddie Mgbeoduru

Safeguarding Reps: Mary Hopper (01275-830788) & Jennine Oldis (0117-915-0486)

Parish Administration & Hall/Room Bookings: Astrid Fagon and Team (0117-909-0419)

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B (Bible Sunday)



WILD ABOUT THE WORD!

Not a very respectable preacher, this John the Baptizer - all that desert stuff, dressed in smelly camel skin and what a diet! Locusts and wild honey!! Certainly would not be admitted to a seminary or to the priesthood!

Why did God shape and choose this wild man to be the prophet of the Word? Maybe we need to be a bit more wild about God and His Word? Because God does not want a respectable people - he wants a people on fire with the Word, on fire with a passionate love that will cry JUSTICE, will cry FREEDOM, will cry CHANGE!

God will not be contained in our tidy, circumscribed churches, rules and creeds. God is a wild and uncontrollable Love who turns the tables, upsets the ordered, in order to make dramatic space for the New Order that raises up the poor. You have to be a bit wild to love this God! And to proclaim this Word!

SUNDAY: PARISH MASS at 10am (*streamed on website*)

Ecumenical Carols & Mass with LGBTQ+ community & friends 3.00pm - all welcome

MONDAY: *No Liturgy today*

TUESDAY: *Feast of Our Lady of Guadeloupe, Patron of the Americas*

Adoration at 6.00pm

Service of Word and Communion at 6.30pm

WEDNESDAY: *Feast of St Lucy, Martyr (died 304 in Sicily)*

Adoration at 6.00pm

Mass at 6.30pm

School's First Year Nativity Play at 1.30pm (Church)

Jesus says: 'Stay awake, because you do not know when the Master is coming'
His disciples say: 'Come Lord Jesus, come! Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus, Come!'

THURSDAY: *Feast of St John of the Cross, Reforming Carmelite priest & mystic (1542-91)*
Funeral Mass for Marjorie Kelly RIP at 11.00am
School Carol Concert at 2.30pm (Church)

FRIDAY: *Adoration* at 8.30am **Mass at 9.00am**

SATURDAY: *Adoration* at 11.30am **Mass at 12.00 noon**

Sacrament of Reconciliation: after Mass and 4.00-4.30pm

TODAY: [1] On the **Second Sunday of Advent** we celebrate our 'John the Baptist Mission', to 'prepare the way of the Lord' by, like John, working courageously for justice and proclaiming the Gospel of Peace. We are to level hills power and fill in dark valleys of poverty and injustice, as we prepare our world to receive the Glory of Christ's Return.

[2] It is **Bible Sunday** - a day to rejoice in the gift of God's Word in the Scriptures and recommit ourselves to building our lives, families, world on the solid Rock of God's Word.

[3] We welcome our Ecumenical partners in the LGBTQ+ Ministry (Bristol Christian Pride and the Open Table Ministry) to our **United Carols and Mass** at 3.00pm today, followed by Christmas refreshments. All are welcome!

[4] There is another opportunity to support the **Retiring Collection for the People of Gaza, which will be channeled through CAFOD.**

NEXT SUNDAY: [1] The **Third Sunday of Advent ('Gaudete' or 'Rejoicing' Sunday)** celebrates with Joy the Coming of He who brings the Spirit of God that liberates the poor and heals the broken hearted. John is the 'Voice' that prepares the way for the 'Word' and the era of the Holy Spirit. Will we also be witnesses, speaking for the Light that is Jesus?

[2] We rejoice to celebrate the **Rite of Adult Catechumen** with Gabe and Gray who are journeying towards Full Communion with the Universal Church.

[2] A **Retiring Collection** for our **Parish Caritas (Destitution) Fund**, supporting those most afflicted by fuel and food poverty. Please be as generous as possible.

THE YEAR OF ST MARK This year (Year B) the whole Church ponders Mark's Gospel: it is the earliest of the Gospel narratives, completed before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies in 65AD. The author is thought to have been St Peter's disciple, John Mark, and the text to have originated in the Christian community in Rome over which Peter presided. It conveys to us a most human Jesus, expressing his emotions of joy and anger. It is also a Jesus who challenges the sacred institutions of His time - Temple, priesthood, sacrifices and their leadership. Jesus provokes conflict throughout Mark's Gospel, because these sacred places and people were hiding the face of God, rather than revealing the Divine. So it is a study of conflict and the prophetic call of our baptism to be in conflict with institutions that dehumanise and diminish the wonder and beauty of the human person: for when the human person is not revered, God is not found or worshipped despite all our rituals!

ADVENT - THE VISION OF MISSION Advent is a time for 'people with far-seeing eyes' - awakened to the reality of today's world, ready to listen and to gaze: in order to recognise where, when and how Jesus comes in the 21st century (in the poverty, among the oppressed, disguised as an addict or as homeless, crying out for acceptance and freedom in the asylum-seeker, yearning for peace among the women and children who are the greatest victims of our wars). But you need courage to see and to hear - and more courage to speak and to act! The Spirit of God unfolds a vision of Mission - to transform the deserts and wastelands of our world into places of hope, rich and fertile in humanity and justice, healing and freedom. Our Mission is world-challenging and world-changing. Let our worship em-

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power our mission, as we gaze upon bread from the fields and wine from the hills being transformed utterly in Christ by the Spirit and the Word through the ministry of the Church!

DIOCESAN PRAYER The Diocese prays today for the Parishes in Communion for Mission of St Augustine of Canterbury, Matson and English Martyrs, Tuffley, Gloucester, served by Fr Gerry Walsh, Parish Administrator Mrs Marisa Wood and both their communities.

PRAY FOR THIS WEEK'S PARISH MINISTRY OR MISSION We pray for the **ministry of Wild Goose Café**, serving so many homeless and otherwise marginalised sisters and brothers with a hot meal and opportunities grow in life-skills and independent living. If you would like to volunteer in this ecumenical mission to the disadvantaged of the inner city, please see John Flannery.

COLLECTION LAST WEEK

G.A.Env £40.00 + Loose £212.69 + Card Reader £76.97 + S/O £165.88 = £495.54 - thanks!
CAFOD for Gaza £316.00 (Appeal remains open) - many thanks

DATES FOR THE DIARY 2023

10th Dec Special United Advent Celebration with the LGBTQ+ community at 3.00pm
 12th Dec Parish Pastoral Council meets at 7.30pm (Assisi Centre)
 13th Dec St Nick's First Year Nativity Play at 1.30pm (in church)
 14th Dec Funeral Mass for Marjorie Kelly at 11.00am
 14th Dec St Nick's School Carol Concert at 2.30pm (in church)
 14th Dec First Reconciliation Parents meeting at 6.00pm (Assisi Centre)
 19th Dec Advent Reconciliation Service at Holy Family Church Patchway at 7.00pm
 20th Dec Advent Reconciliation Service at St Augustine's Church, Downend at 7.00pm
 24th Dec **Christmas Eve - Midnight Mass at 10.30pm**
 25th Dec **Christmas Day - Solemn Day Mass of Christmas at 10.00am**
 31st Dec 'Watchnight' Mass to pray the New Year in at 10.30pm

2024

1st Jan **Feast of Mary, Mother of God - Mass for Peace at 10.00am**
 7th Jan **Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord**
 14th Jan **Feast of the Baptism of the Lord - Baptismal Sunday**
 18th Jan First Eucharist Programme begins at 4.00pm (Assisi Centre) also Parents session
 18th Jan Parish Pastoral Council meets at 7.30pm (Assisi Centre)
 21st Jan United Service for Christian unity Week at Parkway Methodist Church 4.00pm

POPE CALLS A YEAR OF PRAYER PREPARING FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE 2025

Pope Francis invites us to hold a 'Year of Prayer' 2024, to deepen our prayer life as individuals and as the Church as we prepare for the **Jubilee Year 2025 - a Jubilee of Hope**, building towards a more Synodal Church. Pope Francis emphasises especially the Prayer of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the 'Lectio Divina', prayer reflection upon the Word of God. Let us reflect how as a parish community we might embrace this call to deeper prayer, seeking personal and communal renewal.

CALLING PARENTS OF CHILDREN TO PREPARE FOR FIRST RECONCILIATION 2024

Parents seeking the First Reconciliation for their children who have celebrated their First Eucharist in 2023 (or earlier) are asked to attend a parents meeting on **Thursday 14th December at 6.00pm** in the Assisi Centre.

BAPTISMAL PREPARATION FOR PARENTS

Our next **Baptismal Sunday will be the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, 14th January**. Parents seeking the baptism of their child on that day please contact Eustace Tameh or Richard soon as possible.

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THE PARISH DATABASE If you have not filled our Parish Data forms (perhaps for the second time!), please do so after Mass today. The purpose of this is to enable effective pastoral care, community building and effective communication. *The information given will be used solely for internal parish and pastoral reasons and will not be divulged to any other party. Please sign the forms giving your permission for us to hold your details on our database - this is essential for compliance with GDPR (Data Protection legislation). THANKS!*

SERVICES OF RECONCILIATION FOR OUR PASTORAL AREA Advent is a 'Penitential Season' during which the Church strongly encourages us to open our hearts to the healing and renewing mercy and forgiveness of God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There will be **two Services of Reconciliation in our St Edmund of Abingdon Pastoral Area:**

- a] Tuesday 19th December at 7.00pm (Holy Family, Patchway Bristol BS34 5DP)
- b] Wednesday 20th December at 7.30pm (St Augustine's, Downend Bristol, BS16 6QR)

A number of priests will be available for individual confession at these services.

STARTING SCHOOL? If you have a child born between **1 Sept 2019 & 31 August 2020**, now is the time to apply for a place at a primary school for admission from **September 2024** onwards. You must complete an application form available from the school admissions team of the Local Council (Bristol/North Glos, Banes etc). If your child has been baptised and you are applying for a Catholic school, you **must** also provide a copy of the baptism certificate to the school. Please ensure you apply by the closing date of **15 January 2024**.

CAFOD WORLD GIFTS THIS CHRISTMAS Why not give a friend or family a gift that benefits the poorest of our world. Jesus is not honoured by lavish gifts to each other - when you give someone a CAFOD World Gift, you are giving to Jesus who identified himself with the poor who benefit from your Gift. 'Whatever you do to the least of my sisters and brothers you do to me!' The catalogues for these CAFOD World Gifts are in the porch.

MARRIAGE SUPPORT **Retrouvaille – Do you need in your marriage?** Retrouvaille has helped many couples find new hope, nourishment and growth in their marriages. If you want to uncover or reawaken the love, trust and commitment that brought you together and work through difficult times in your marriage contact Retrouvaille confidential for more information about our 2024 programmes. There is not group therapy or group work. Our next programme commences with a Virtual weekend on 8 - 11 February 2024 or there is a Face to Face weekend in Welwyn Garden City on 14-16 June 2024. Call or text 07887 296983 or 07973 380443, email retrouvailleukinfo@gmail.com - or visit www.retrouvaille.org.uk

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star - Shafts of Light, Shafts of Hope in Advent

Advent is a time of light, of waiting and hope, of light and joy. Join us as we reflect on these great themes with music, art, and scripture. A mini retreat to give some focus in this busy time of present buying, food shopping, baking and wrapping of gifts.

The same mini retreat will be run twice online, just click on your chosen session link below:

Thursday 14th December 7-8pm: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/bef05e7a-38d9-4349-8c6c-39c0d79dda93@f10b8f13-604e-4fa2-9e12-04a7fad22e94>

Tuesday 19th December 3-4pm: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/e1cc27ee-0fba-403e-a6a4-86c34a930b1a@f10b8f13-604e-4fa2-9e12-04a7fad22e94>

ANY OFFERS FOR A VENUE AND CONVENER FOR AREA HOUR MASSES?

We want to encourage these in the coming months as a way of bringing the Eucharist into the centre of our Christian lives and build our diverse, widespread community as one Eucharistic Community in Mission. We hope to celebrate a number of House Masses in December, January and February. Contact Richard or Margaret as soon as possible. Thank you.

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