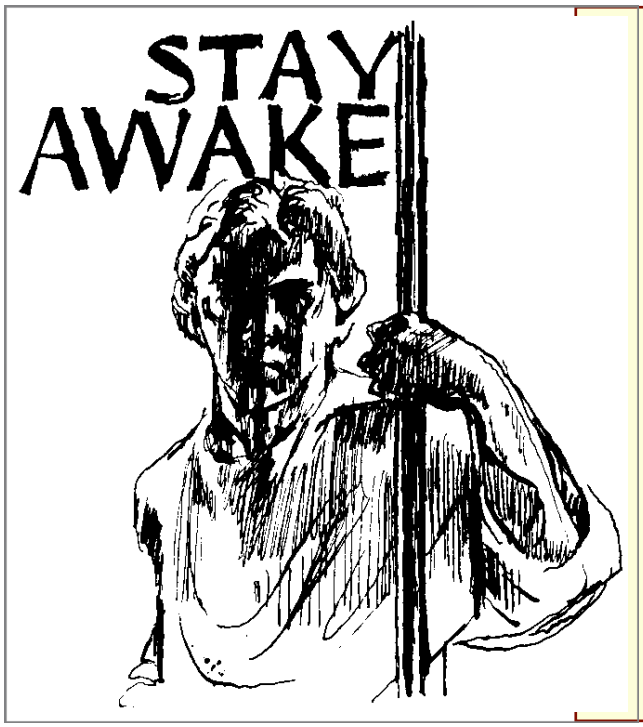
St Nicholas of Tolentino RC Church, Lawford's Gate, Bristol BS5 0RE

St Nicholas Presbytery, Lawford's Gate, Bristol BS5 0RE tel: 0117-909-8810
Parish Office, Assisi Centre, Lawford's Gate, Bristol BS5 0RE 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)

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B (Year of Mark's Gospel)



Advent - about baby Jesus … or a New World?

Our God is the God who comes - comes to us, draws near to us. The infinite transcendent God yearns with a passion to come and dwell in our poor, cold, human hearts. What a God, this God who comes!

Jesus birth in the cold poverty and homelessness of Bethlehem is a sign of this yearning love of the God who will come to those places, people and realities that we would not want to approach!

Yet this (the baby of Bethlehem) is not the coming we yearn for in Advent - we yearn rather the Coming that will gather all creation into Divine Glory, the Coming that will forever conquer death and liberate life in all creation. Yearning for the Final Coming of Christ is the song that has also arisen in the Christian heart with the cry 'Maranatha' 'Come Lord Jesus, come!'

So we open our lives to His Coming each day in Eucharist, in the Poor, in the new breath of the Spirit, in the unexpected person or event, that we can make ready our world for the great Day of His Final Com-

SUNDAY: **PARISH MASS with Blessing of the Advent Wreath** at 10am *(streamed on website)*
Signed Mass with the Catholic Handicapped Fellowship & Catholic Deaf Association at 3.00pm

MONDAY: ***No Liturgy today***

TUESDAY: ***Feast of St Osmund, Bishop of Old Sarum (died 1099)***
Adoration at 6.00pm **Mass at 6.30pm**

WEDNESDAY: ***Feast of St Nicholas of Myra/Bari ('Santa Claus'), Bishop, Patron of children***
Adoration at 6.00pm **Mass at 6.30pm**

THURSDAY: ***Feast of St Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, Theologian (339-397)***
Adoration at 12.00 noon **Mass at 12.30pm (*NB Note change of time*)**

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!'

FRIDAY: ***FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY***
Adoration at 8.30am **Mass at 9.00am**

SATURDAY: ***Feast of San Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, Visionary of Guadeloupe (1474-1548)***
Adoration at 9.00am **Mass at 12.00 noon**

Sacrament of Reconciliation: **after Mass and 4.00-4.30pm**

TODAY: [1] We begin our **Liturgical Year B (featuring Mark's Gospel) on the First Sunday of Advent**. We celebrate Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah, who challenges us to 'stay awake', and be watchful for his coming - on 'the last day, the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ'. Advent is a season of repentance, seeking the `Lord to come with mercy, healing and purifying forgiveness. Let us cry out with the first Christians 'Come Lord Jesus, come!'.
[2] It is also the **Day of Prayer for migrants and refugees**. There are some 120 million refugees and displaced people around the world, most of whom are being sheltered from danger by the poorest countries of the world - while we rich nations accept so few by comparison. The Church must stand prophetically saying 'All are welcome here among us', for we are a Universal ('Catholic') Church witnessing that all humanity is but one family and we are all sisters and brothers.
[3] There will be a **Special Retiring Collection for the stricken people of Gaza**, the money being channelled in Relief through CAFOD. The war has and is devastating the people and community in Gaza and the needs are huge! Please be as generous as you can.
[4]**Mass with the Catholic Handicapped fellowship & the Catholic Deaf Association** 3pm

NEXT SUNDAY: [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.
[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.

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 reverenced, 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 empower 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!

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!'

DIOCESAN PRAYER The Diocese prays today for the Parish in Communion for Mission of St Peter, Gloucester, served by Mgr Canon Liam Slattery VG, Fr Stephen Corrigan , Deacons Colm Robinson, Tim Meadows, David Hebbes, Parish Administrator Mrs Therese English and all their community.

PRAY FOR THIS WEEK'S PARISH MINISTRY OR MISSION We pray for the **ministry of our Parish School** that with the leadership of Mrs Rachael James provides a Catholic Christian environment for our children to thrive and develop their understanding, skills and social interactions. Education has always been a priority mission for the Church, sent by Jesus 'to teach all nations'. Please pray our staff, all our children and their families.

COLLECTION LAST WEEK

G.A.Env £20.00 + Loose £392.71 + Card Reader £9.84 + S/O £165.88 = £588.43 - thanks!

Caritas Fund £40.00 **FoodBank donation** £200.00 - many thanks

DATES FOR THE DIARY 2023

3rd Dec	**First Sunday of Advent**
7th Dec	Parents meeting in preparation for First Eucharist Programme at 6.00pm
9th Dec	Preaching Group meets 9am-12noon (Assisi Centre)
10th Dec	Special United Advent Celebration with the LGBTQ+ community at 3.00pm
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)
14th Dec	Parish Pastoral Council meets at 7.30pm (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

CALLING PARENTS OF CHILDREN TO PREPARE FOR FIRST EUCHARIST IN JUNE 2024

Parents seeking the First Eucharist for their children are asked to register their child (need to be 7 years old before May 2024) and attend a parents meeting on **Thursday 6th December at 6.00pm** in the Assisi Centre. Registration forms back by Monday 4th Dec at the latest.

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.

THE PARISH DATABASE **THE PPC APOLOGISES TO YOU ALL** - by error it seems that someone disposed of the registration forms - so **unfortunately we have to repeat the exercise. As way of a reminder -** The Parish Pastoral Council seeks to create a comprehensive database to include all our parish members. Today forms will be distributed asking for some essential information - names of all family members, address with postcode, telephone and email contact details etc. The purpose of this is to enable effective pastoral care, commu-

nity 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). THANK YOU!***

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.

ST NICK'S SCHOOL NEWS **Reception Class September 2024**
Are you looking for a place for your child in Reception class in September 2024, or know of anyone who is, then please do come along to our Reception open mornings. This is a chance for you see our caring and inclusive school in action. If you are unable to attend on the dates below, please do call the school office (01173772260) and book a convenient time - every day is an open day! Thursday 7th December 9.30am - 11.30am

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.

CAROLINE'S FUNERAL On behalf of the whole parish I would like to thank all who have worked so hard supporting Caroline during her last months and those who have prepared and arranged her Funeral. It has been a labour of love in recognition of and gratitude for someone who has belonged to St Nicks and served us our community and mission for about 20 years.

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.

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!'