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Newsletter for the week commencing 4th December 2022

Second Sunday of Advent (A)

Entrance antiphon: O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

First Reading: Isaiah 11: 1-10

Psalm 71 Response: In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.

Second Reading: The letter of St Paul to the Romans 15: 4-9

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

Gospel: Matthew 3: 1-2

Communion antiphon: Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

Father Behr writes:

Who is the greatest? Muhammad Ali, the great boxer? The Rolling Stones, the rock and roll group? The national football team of France? The question about greatness is one human communities have asked for aeons. Something in human psychology wants an answer to this. It may be because humans, despite their best efforts, realize that their reality is hierarchical. There are winners and losers and not everyone has the same talents, skills, wealth.

St John the Baptist was the greatest spiritual leader of his generation or of many generations. Herod, the Gospels tell us, loved to listen to him. However, as St John himself knew, there was someone greater. Much much greater. Jesus is the greatest spiritual leader of all time and unlike some spiritual leaders he put his life on the line. St John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus. In his humility and zealous love for almighty God, he begs us to make way, to prepare a road in our souls, in our hearts, for Jesus, himself the model of humility. He comes to us as a defenceless baby born in poverty. Yet do we make way for the love and mercy he is offering us?

To prepare for God, to prepare for the ecstatic gifts he offers us, we need to place ourselves before him, before Jesus, humbly asking for forgiveness for the ways in which we ruin and spoil things for ourselves, for those around us, and for God, who wants us to be incandescent with love, with the joy that God the Son brought: the healing, the peace, the gift of eternal life. Nothing is free, but with God the gifts offered are gained with tremendous help from him. That's why he gave us his Son. His Son, our Lord Jesus, presents the map; he with his life, works, death and resurrection, shows us the way to the infinite everlasting joy of God's house, a place of such splendour and happiness we can only scarcely imagine. But that gift is there for the asking. Asking is the operative word: asking for our needs and asking for forgiveness, because sin actually takes us away from ourselves, from goodness and happiness. Baptism is intimately linked with the sacrament of reconciliation. In Baptism our souls are cleansed of original sin and energised by Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of reconciliation our souls become clean, we feel lighter, and we are able to love more fully and more wholeheartedly because of the grace we receive from our Saviour.

No one is richer than God. No one is greater than God. Nothing and no being is more beautiful than God and yet why do we not want to make the path straight for him to heal us and enrich us with his loving gifts? Why do we shy away from the joy he offers? Let us listen to John the Baptist and understand that the kingdom of heaven is being offered to us. Let us listen and understand the greatness of the one who offers this kingdom to us. Let us turn to our loving Lord Jesus as the feast of his birth, the feast of his being with us, approaches. Let us ask him with humility to forgive us and to give us wonderful graces so that despite all the troubles that might beset us in these times, we may feel the gorgeous lightness, the wondrous joy and the spiritual beauty of Christmas.

Your Prayers are asked for:

Those recently deceased: Elizabeth Vickers RIP

Those ill or infirm: Ailish Cantwell (Jones), Sylwia Dorosz, Joe Adams, Ellie Lawrence, Patricia Hook, Josie Payne, Pat Holland, Pat Sargent, Rachel Heinrichsmeier and all those who are unwell and in need of our prayers.

Those whose anniversaries of death occur at this time: Edith Margaret Corbett, Alex Mickle, Elizabeth de Blaby, Agnes Finnan, Nora Cregan, Frances Kelly, Ann Collins, Nathaniel 'Nat' Kennell, Barbara Beresford, Gwladys Webbe-Wood, Kieran McNamara and Roy Sturdy.

This week's services (3 rd – 10 th December), Feasts and Mass intentions during the week.	
Saturday 3rd December St Francis Xavier, Priest	10.30 -11am Confession 6pm Vigil Alex Hatch RIP Reader: Family readers Christine & Lucie
Sunday 4th December Second Sunday of Advent	10am Mass Mary Iglinski RIP Reader: Collette 12 Midday Traditional Latin Mass
Monday 5th December Weekday of Advent	10am Mass <i>People of the Parish</i>
Tuesday 6th December St Nicholas, Bishop	10am Mass Donor's Intention
Wednesday 7th December St Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor of the Church	10am Service of the Word and Holy Communion
Thursday 8th December The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	9am-10am Adoration 10am Mass Patrick and Mary Hastings RIP
Friday 9th December St Juan Diego Cuahatlatoatzin	11am Funeral Mass for Elizabeth Vickers RIP
Saturday 10th December St John Roberts, Priest & Martyr	10.30 -11am Confession 6pm Vigil Deceased Members of Dumbleton Family Reader: Charles
Sunday 11th December Third Sunday of Advent	10am Mass <i>People of the Parish</i> Reader: Frances 12 Midday Traditional Latin Mass
Flowers: for 11th December – Breeda to check Advent wreath	
Readers: for Saturday 10th Dec - Charles/Sunday 11th Dec - Frances	

Confession

Fr Behr is available for Confession every Saturday from 10.30am - 11am. He is also happy to visit those who are not able to come to church.

A New Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Southwark

On Monday 28 November 2022 it was announced that His Holiness Pope Francis has appointed Mgr Philip Moger as an Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Southwark. A priest of the Diocese of Leeds for 40 years, Bishop- Elect Moger has, until now, been the Rector of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk.

Christmas foliage decorations.

We would like to ask parishioners to make an evergreen arrangement for a window ledge (less difficult than a flower one). We would provide a container and Oasis to be collected after Mass on the weekend of 10th and 11th December and to be brought back the following weekend. A sample one would be on the desk in the porch with the containers. Evergreens are long lasting so should be O.K. for Christmas. We need 11! There will also be a **collection for flowers** at Masses on **December 3rd and 4th**.

Preparing For Christ's coming at Christmas Saturday 10th December – 14:00 to 16:00 Deacon Jolyon would welcome your company and assistance to set up the Crib in the Church and the Christmas Tree in the Porch. We would like help to set up the frame for the crib and the covering, to clean the figures and to put them in place. Tree decorators are also welcome. Your rewards will include hot drinks/ mulled wine/mince pies and cake. Please let us know if you can help.

Saturday 17th December – pre-Christmas spit and polish – times to be agreed. Rachel and Martin and members of the Church Cleaning team are aiming to give the Church a pre-Christmas mega-clean. If you can assist, please let them know.

Save the date! **Racial Justice Sunday** Mass at 10 am St George's Cathedral, Sunday 5 February 2023 On Sunday 5 February 2023, our Archdiocese will celebrate Racial Justice Sunday. To mark this important day, Archbishop John Wilson will celebrate Mass at 10 am in St George's Cathedral, in collaboration with the Commission for Promoting Racial and Cultural Inclusion which is led by Canon Victor Darlington.

Tuesday Film Show

Why not come to the parish centre to watch an uplifting film in a warm and friendly atmosphere. Refreshments from 10.30am with film from 10.50am. This Tuesday our film is The Diary of Immaculee a moving story of Immaculee Ilibagiza, survivor of the Rwandan Massacres. A story of hope, faith, and forgiveness.

**Churches Together in Tenterden
Joint Advent Course**

The first session of our Churches Together Advent Course was held last Wednesday night - the topic John the Baptist. It will continue for the next 2 Wednesday evenings in Saint Mildred's from 7pm to 8:30pm. The sessions are self-contained, so you are welcome to as many sessions as you can. 7th December Shepherds, 14th December Wise Men. Everybody welcome!

Quality Used Book Sale

(Including a wide selection of fiction and non-fiction) in aid of the Old School House Larder Charity.

Saint Andrew's Parish Centre

Saturday 3rd December 15:00 to 17:45 Sunday 4th December 09:00 to 10:00/11:00 to 12:00