

BRINDLE St JOSEPH'S

Chapel Fold, Hoghton, PR5 0DE

Parish Priest: Fr Raphael Jones OSB

Telephone: 01254 852026 – Mobile (emergency) 07944 255541

Email: pp@brindlestjosephs.org.uk

Website: www.brindlestjosephs.org.uk

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Second Sunday of Advent 10th December 2023

(Sunday cycle year B, weekday cycle year 2, psalter week 2)



“Prepare a way for the Lord”

Advent prayer for refugees

Each day we read about, we see, we hear people seeking refuge from war, from poverty, from natural disaster, searching for a better life for their families and themselves. Jesus, we remember that your family also sought refuge.

Now, as we prepare for your arrival in Bethlehem, let us walk alongside our sisters and brothers created in your image, who also seek refuge.

This Advent let us see in them your face and be joyful, not fearful. Help us rejoice and not lament. Amen.

(Trevor Stockton/CAFOD)

THIS WEEK

Sat 9 th	10.30am	Abbot's intentions	Saturday of Advent 1
	6.00pm	Francis Elliott	Second Sunday of Advent
Sun 10 th	9.30am	For the Parish	
	11.00am	Baptism: Hollie Victoria Haydock	
Mon 11 th	No Mass today		Monday of Advent 2
Tue 12 th	No Mass today		Tuesday of Advent 2
Wed 13 th	9.30am	Dorothy Hoole	St Lucy (memorial)
	6.00pm	Advent Reflection (in the Parish Room)	
Thu 14 th	9.30am	Dunstan Booth	St John of the Cross (memorial)
Fri 15 th	9.30am	Christine Jamieson	Friday of Advent 2
Sat 16 th	10.30am	Hilda Martindale	Saturday of Advent 2
	6.00pm	Joseph and Margaret Jamieson	Third Sunday of Advent
Sun 17 th	9.30am	For the Parish	

First Saturday of the Month: Confessions at 10.00am, Anointing of the Sick during 10.30am Mass

This week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister		Bookshop	
Sat 9 th		M Russell		P Cook		P Hothersall	
Sun 10 th		L Rigbye		S Schofield		B Gore	
Bidding prayers	The Music Group	Children's Liturgy		B Gorrell, A Fowler	Collection counters	C & K Snape	
Next week		Reader		Eucharistic Minister		Bookshop	
Sat 16 th		M Sherry		P Fawcett		L Lomax	
Sun 17 th		K Slater		M Gardner		K Slater	
Bidding prayers	Fr Raphael	Children's Liturgy		F Fordyce, G Fowler	Collection counters	P & J Kitchen	

Last weekend: attendance: 98, collection £312.75 – thank you!

We have received letters from SPUC and CAFOD thanking us for recent donations of £174.93 and £46 respectively

Readings: Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11, 2 Peter 3:8-14, Mark 1:1-8.

In this second week of Advent, the Gospel introduces John the Baptist who will quote from our first reading (Isaiah) to prepare a way for the Lord who will offer not just a baptism of repentance, such as is in John's gift, but a baptism that actually forgives sins.

We reflected in our *Prayer and Reflection* meeting on Wednesday: that the first reading and second reading carry on something of last week's themes... as if in answering the question: 'how long must we continue waiting for the arrival of the Messiah and our final liberation' – a question we ourselves may be wondering.

So, the prophet is told by God to *Console my people console them... for her time of service is ended and her sin atoned for...*

The people to whom our second reading was addressed were also consoled and encouraged *There is one thing, my friends, you must never forget: that with the Lord, "a day" can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years... a day.*

God is not being slow to carry out his promises... he is being patient...wanting nobody to be lost so that everybody might be brought to change their ways.

At our meeting, we also reflected upon the meaning of *Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.*

In the OT setting, it celebrates the forthcoming return of the Hebrews from Babylonian exile: so, make the path straight, level out the hills and mountains, fill in the valley remove anything that might impede this long-awaited and joyful return.

They will have seen this as a second *Exodus*: God leading them out of Babylonian captivity to their homeland; the way he did many years before when he liberated them from captivity in Egypt by his mighty hand.

In the Gospel of Luke, the people ask what they must do in order to clear the way for the Lord. (Lk 3:10ff)

He answers: those with two tunics: share with him who has none; to the tax collectors: collect no more than you should; to the soldiers: do not threaten or use false accusation to extort money...and to be content with their wages.

So, to you and me, here and now – how might we prepare for the first coming of Christ which we re-live and celebrate at Christmas?

But also, how might we prepare for his second coming, when, at the end of time after having given us time to pass judgement upon him and his message of love, he will come to pass judgement on us?

No less important: how do we prepare on a daily basis?

What obstacles in our lives impede his **Coming** into our hearts **here and now**?

What hills and mountains of pride and arrogance need pulling down and what dark valleys of sin need filling in?

Advent is the time to give ourselves an internal spiritual audit – something many do at the end of each day before night prayers.

But the best way to prepare and level out the mountains of pride and the valleys of sin is to be reconciled with the Lord in the sacrament of *Confession* which carries with it, the assurance of God's forgiveness and the restoration of a loving relationship with him.

Reflections

Repentance is not self-regarding but God regarding. It is not self-loathing but God loving.

Christianity bids me to accept myself as I am with all my faults, failings and sins.

The examination of conscience never induces despair, always hope.(Ven. Fulton J. Sheen)

With Prayers,

Fr Raphael.

This Week's Commemorations

St Lucy (d 304): Historically, little is known about her but during this period of persecution, she is believed to have been born to a wealthy family in Sicily, refused marriage preferring to give herself to Christ. She was reported and ordered into a brothel to be violated but by some miracle, she remained immobile. Attempts to burn her also failed and she was eventually dispatched by sword or dagger. Some accounts tell us that she had her eyes torn out but they were miraculously restored and part of her intercessory prayer is for perfect vision for my bodily eyes and the grace to use them for God's greater glory and the salvation of our souls hence, she is the patron Saint of eyesight and of the blind among other things.

It was thought that she supplied bread or buns for the Christians hiding in the catacombs and in some countries, this is celebrated as a festival of light on the shortest day of the year, where the youngest daughter dressed in white wakes the rest of the family with rolls, coffee and a song, perhaps Santa Lucia which is still popular in Sicily.

St John of the Cross (1542-1591) Doctor of the Church: St John was one of Spain's foremost poets and mystical writers, who with St Theresa of Avila, reformed the order of Carmelite Friars of which he was a member.

The poverty he had known as a child was to assist in his understanding of the spiritual life that through a life of poverty and pure faith and love of God, the soul eventually attains the mystical union.

Initially the Order rejected his reforms even imprisoning him but eventually, his piety and learning was recognised and his reforms accepted.

There is **NO MASS ON TUESDAY** this week.

There is a meeting of the **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** on Friday at 6.00pm. If there is anything you would like raising under "Any other business", please bring it to the attention of one of the committee members – there's a list of their names and contact details on the noticeboard.

Thank you for last weekend's **FOODBANK COLLECTION** and for your generosity throughout the year. The Salvation Army in Preston are extremely grateful for our support. We'll draw up and publish a rota for 2024 sometime in January.

Joseph and Niamh are collecting items for the **FOXTON CENTRE** again this Christmas. They'd welcome donations of tinned food, warm clothes (new or used), toys and gifts, toiletries, long-life milk and juice, rice, pasta and cereal bars. Contact their mum (Claire) on 07968254860 or drop off at 29 Bank Head Lane. Thank you!

The **AUTUMN APF RED BOX** collection amounted to £451.34. As ever, many thanks to contributors (including those who donate online) and collectors. The next collection will be in March/April next year. Calendars for 2024 will be available soon.

There is a **DEANERY SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION** at St Gregory's, Weld Bank, Chorley, PR7 3NW on **NEXT SUNDAY** 17th December at 3.00pm.

ADVENT REFLECTION – every Wednesday at 6.00pm in the Parish Room? Each session starts with Vespers (the evening prayer of the Church) then we reflect on the readings for the coming Sunday and end with Compline (the night prayer of the Church). There's no heavy theology involved, just a bit of peace and quiet at the end of the day.

NEXT SATURDAY (16th) in the Parish Hall from 7.30pm. The **"In the Living Room" Christmas gig** – "Underneath the Mountain". £5.00 entry – all proceeds to charity. Mince pies, ginger biscuits, raffle and festive music. Bring your own tipple and mistletoe.

PLEASE PRAY for May Elliott who has died, for those who are sick or housebound including Rita Gorrell, Rose Higginson, Fr Jonathan Cotton OSB and Bill Warbrick, and for those whose anniversaries occur about this time.

100 CLUB: The winner for week 2 is number 76, Brian Doran. The new year for the club has started so subs are due. You can pay for the full year (£50) or in blocks of 10 weeks (£10, 5 times over the year). Payment can be by cash, cheque (payable to Brindle Books) or, if you prefer, by bank transfer – see Lesley or Mick for the account details. Last year, despite losing a few members, we paid out £1,500 in prize money and raised £1,360 for church funds – thank you! New members are always welcome – again, please see Lesley or Mick or leave your name and contact details in the bookshop with your subs.

DURING ADVENT AND CHRISTMASTIDE we are asked to pray for Migrants and Refugees, Expectant Mothers.

Bidding prayers for 2nd Sunday of Advent Year B – 9th/10th December 2023

Fr Raphael

As we wait with hope and anticipation for the coming of our Lord, we ask for mercy and salvation for ourselves and the world.

Reader

We pray for the church, that during this time of Advent it will help everyone to prepare spiritually for the coming of our Saviour. Lord hear us...

We pray for the world: for nations in crisis, for those at war and for those suffering political turmoil or economic recession, that all may be able to find a space of peace and happiness. Lord hear us...

For all who are suffering from illness and worry: that God will heal the sick, give strength to those who care for them, and comfort those who yearn for peace. Lord hear us...

For each of us here, we pray that we may continue through this Advent season with renewed resolve to prepare a way for Christ's return. Lord hear us...

We pray for our parish, especially those who have died recently and for those whose anniversaries fall at this time; may they be raised to new and eternal life. Lord hear us...

Mary looked forward with joy to the coming of the Christ child, we ask for her help with our prayers as we say - Hail Mary...

In silence, we place our own concerns before the Lord.

Fr Raphael

Merciful Father, continue to inspire us through the Good News of Jesus Christ. Hear these prayers for ourselves and our world which we make through Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK

Priest: As we thank God for the gift of his Son in Holy Communion, let us remember those of our Parish who are sick or housebound.

All: May the body and blood of your Son, which we now send to them through our Eucharistic Ministers, bring them consolation and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord. Amen.