

# ***Little Saint Mary's, Cambridge***

*December 2016: No. 497*



## ***NEWSLETTER***

*This Newsletter contains details of the upcoming events of the Advent season, including Bible study groups and rosary prayers, Mothers' Union and the monthly Forum Lunch, together with the usual intentions for prayer and more.*

# Highlights of December

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December

**Advent Group I** – 7:30pm in the Parish Centre.

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December

**Bible Study Group**

4:30pm in the Parish Centre. *We will be looking at chapter four of S. John's Gospel.*

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December

**Advent Group II** – 7:30pm in the Parish Centre

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December

**Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Low Mass 7:45am; Pontifical High Mass 7pm *followed by Society of Mary AGM. Preacher at 7pm Mass: Bishop Robert Ladds, Superior-General of the Society of Mary.*

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December

**Third Sunday of Advent** (*Gaudete*)

Preacher at 10:30am High Mass: Fr Nigel Hancock, *former Assistant Curate, on the anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. Sparkling rosé follows Mass!*

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December

**Forum Lunch** *for dementia sufferers and their carers*

11:30am-3pm. *New cooks and helpers wanted (training given). See Bob DeWolf for information.*

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December

**Mothers' Union**

10:30am – Prayers *in the Lady Chapel*; 11am – Coffee *in the Parish Centre*

**Advent Talk**

7:30pm – 'The Image of the Lord', by the Vicar and Peter Granville Davis.

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December

**Advent Group III** – 7:30pm in the Parish Centre

# From the Vicar

26<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I suspect it is having a dog that has made me more aware this year than ever before of the shortening of the days. The need to get the second walk done before it gets dark means we have been leaving the vicarage for Lammas Land opposite earlier and earlier – presently about 3:30pm or so!

Sensitivity to the gathering darkness, together with the general geopolitical gloom (or at least uncertainty), can't help but dampen one's spirits. I used to read S. Paul telling us that 'we are contending against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness' as a bit of overwrought hyperbole. As I get older I begin to see the Apostle's wisdom.

It is the supreme wisdom of the church, therefore, to place Christmas at the darkest moment of the year. The light, the joy and the glory of the Christ Child is never needed more than in the depths of winter. Even more, it reminds us that it is often only when we finally recognise that it is dark that God is able to help us – or, more accurately, that we're willing to let God in. When we give up fighting and pretending that it's really light and everything is just fine, then the Lord can begin to do His work.

Light in darkness is an enduringly powerful theme and image. Candles may no longer be needed for light at a practical level but we will never cease to need them at a spiritual and symbolic level. A good practice this Advent might be to light a candle at home when we stop to pray. We can on

occasion think of Christmas as mere frivolity, or as 'something for the children' and focus only on the loveliness of it all. Christmas, however, is not just for the children. The single mother, the poverty, the homeless family – not to mention the martyrdom of S. Stephen and the massacre of the Holy Innocents commemorated in the days immediately after Christmas Day – mean that Christmas is for ever true and powerful for adults as well. Not just happy and content adults but those enduring agonies and sadnesses too.

One of the challenges of the season before Christmas – Advent – is of how we open ourselves to that light and avoid being instead part of the 'present darkness'. Prayer surely is at the heart of this and I hope that a midweek Mass or one of the daily offices of Morning or Evening Prayer might be something to take up for Advent for some of you. If getting physically to LSM is simply not possible then a period of silent prayer or sharing in our prayers in church by using the Simple Office Card at home are excellent ideas over these four weeks of preparation. Copies of the Card are at the back of church.

Two other things are offered to us. The first is the possibility of Sacramental Confession – a wonderful and powerful way of cleansing the pores of our soul and making ourselves open and ready to receive Jesus. It is never too late to do this and I am always honoured and delighted to make time not only to hear Confessions but to explain and assist in preparing to make one. As I never tire of saying: I have never heard a Confession without liking the person more at the end than I did at the beginning – and that's not because I haven't heard yours yet! The second is to do something that detoxifies all the loony consumerism of these weeks: the Reverse Advent Calendar suggested by the Foodbank (see Pat Boulhosa for more information), assisting at our Forum Lunch (see 'Highlights of December' above) or supporting the Prison Fellowship's Angel Tree Project

(they provide presents for prisoners to give to their children). You can think of others, I'm sure.

A final way of being the light in the darkness is by directing people to the Lord. Advent is a great time to 'fess up at work or with a friend to being a churchgoer, as this season is one which is still not incomprehensible to newbies. Our two Carol Services are one way in which we open the mystery of Advent and Christmas to those who are not perhaps regular churchgoers. The combination of music and reading followed by hospitality is hopefully something that attracts and gently opens the wonders of our Faith to new people. If you have neighbours or work colleagues or a family member who you think might enjoy or value these events do please invite them. It is good to be able to share the Light as well as be part of it. 6pm on 4th and 18th December.

With my love & prayers, I am,  
yours in the Lord,  
Fr Robert.

## **Papua New Guinea Church Link**

LSM continues to support and pray for the work of the Papua New Guinea Church Partnership (PNGCP). As well as receiving the PNGCP's Summer newsletter (available at the back of the church), LSM was represented at PNGCP's day conference, held on 1<sup>st</sup> October at St Mary's, Lambeth, and chaired by Bishop Peter Ramsden, former Bishop of Port Moresby and new PNGCP chair.

Since the appointment of Bishop Denny Guka to Port Moresby in 2014, all Anglican bishops in the province are Papua New Guinean (PNG) nationals. As PNGCP met in London, Bishop Denny was in England with his Roman Catholic counterpart, Bishop Bill Fey. They were attending a special gathering in Canterbury and Rome to mark

50 years of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission. Ecumenicism has always been important in Papua New Guinea and the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches have established a particularly close working relationship. Together they have also been involved in the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission, an initiative seeking not just dialogue but common action.

Bishop Denny and Bishop Bill have identified five main challenges facing the church in PNG. These include: the financial support of the church in a country where the faithful do not, by and large, have a share in the country's rich resources; the availability of quality seminary and education provision; evangelizing family life and combating domestic violence; responding to the belief in witchcraft and sorcery; and overcoming corruption at all levels of government. It is a formidable list, but one which the church is tackling with dedication and patient labour, working with the strong local communities that are the heart of Papua New Guinean life. Our prayers and support help this to happen.

Ed Backhouse, a theological student at Durham University, has recently returned from a two month placement in PNGCP but was unfortunately unable to attend the conference. We did, however, hear from Fr Barrie Slater on his church building work in the Jimi valley. Fr Barrie shared pictures and videos of St John the Baptist, Koinambe (2010) and St Alban's, Kwima (2012) and spoke of the challenges and successes of these transformative community projects.

This year, LSM has been able to send £1,375 to further the work of the PNGCP. Many thanks to all who have contributed to make this possible. We look forward to welcoming Bishop Peter Ramsden in the New Year. He will be visiting to preach at Mass, and afterwards talk about and share pictures of PNG, on **Sunday 22 January**.

**The Friends of Whitworth House present:**

**a Burns Night Cèilidh**

**27/01/2017**

**St Giles' Church,  
Cambridge**

**8-11:30pm**

**Tickets: £10/£5 concessions**

**under-12s free**

**To book, visit the ADC theatre box office:**

**[www.adcticketing.com](http://www.adcticketing.com)**

**Calendar  
and  
Intentions  
  
for**



**December 2016**

*The list of Thanksgivings and Intercessions offers a focus  
for our daily prayer, both at the Offices and Mass,  
and in our personal times of prayer.*

*The Vicar would be glad of suggestions or  
additions to the list of daily intention.*

# Calendar for December

LM-Low Mass, SM-Sung Mass, HM-High Mass

Thu 1<sup>st</sup> S. Eligius, Bishop  
Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> of the Sacred Heart  
Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> *S. Francis Xavier, Priest & Missionary*

## **SUN 4<sup>th</sup> SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Mon 5<sup>th</sup>  
Tue 6<sup>th</sup> S. Nicholas, Bishop  
Wed 7<sup>th</sup> S. Ambrose, Bishop  
Thu 8<sup>th</sup> **Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**  
Fri 9<sup>th</sup>  
Sat 10<sup>th</sup> of the Blessed Virgin Mary

## **SUN 11<sup>th</sup> THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Gaudete)**

Mon 12<sup>th</sup>  
Tue 13<sup>th</sup> S. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr  
Wed 14<sup>th</sup> S. John of the Cross, Religious & Doctor  
Thu 15<sup>th</sup>  
Fri 16<sup>th</sup>  
Sat 17<sup>th</sup> *O SAPIENTIA*

## **SUN 18<sup>th</sup> FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (O ADONAI)**

Mon 19<sup>th</sup> *O RADIX JESSE*  
Tue 20<sup>th</sup> *O CLAVIS DAVID*  
Wed 21<sup>st</sup> *O ORIENS*  
Thu 22<sup>nd</sup> *O REX GENTIUM*  
Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> *O EMMANUEL*  
Sat 24<sup>th</sup> **CHRISTMAS EVE**

## **SUN 25<sup>th</sup> CHRISTMAS DAY**

Mon 26<sup>th</sup> **S. Stephen, Deacon & Martyr**  
Tue 27<sup>th</sup> **S. John, Apostle & Evangelist**  
Wed 28<sup>th</sup> **Holy Innocents**  
Thu 29<sup>th</sup> S. Thomas Becket, Bishop & Martyr  
Fri 30<sup>th</sup> in the Octave of Christmas  
Sat 31<sup>st</sup> in the Octave of Christmas

# Daily Intentions and *Anniversaries of death for December*

Metal workers & engineers	<i>Douglas Bird, Brian Jordan</i> 1 <sup>st</sup>
Increase in our compassion	<i>Anthony Morcom (pr.)</i> 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Christians in Asia	3 <sup>rd</sup>

<b>Our Parish &amp; People</b>	<i>Romo Gorrada</i> 4 <sup>th</sup>
Thanksgiving for the Prophets of the Old Testament	<i>Michael Fisher (bp)</i> 5 <sup>th</sup>
The Cambridge Churches Homelessness Project	6 <sup>th</sup>
Academic Theologians	<i>Michael Barnard</i> 7 <sup>th</sup>
Increase in devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary	8 <sup>th</sup>
The clergy of LSM	<i>Cyril Hankey (pr.), Charles Goodhart</i> 9 <sup>th</sup>
Increase in Anglican Vocations	10 <sup>th</sup>

<b>Our Parish &amp; People</b>	11 <sup>th</sup>
Increase in devotion to S. John the Baptist	12 <sup>th</sup>
Increase in almsgiving	<i>Glyn Daniel, Dennis Peck</i> 13 <sup>th</sup>
Christian Poets	14 <sup>th</sup>
Mothers' Union	<i>Gladys Stockbridge</i> 15 <sup>th</sup>
The Cambridge Foodbank	16 <sup>th</sup>
Increase in Wisdom	<i>Diana Galletly, Jack Grist</i> 17 <sup>th</sup>

<b>Our Parish &amp; People</b>	18 <sup>th</sup>
Increase in the meditative study of Scripture	<i>David Eric Lawson</i> 19 <sup>th</sup>
Prisoners	<i>Yvonne Mashedor</i> 20 <sup>th</sup>
Astronomers	<i>Joan Garrett</i> 21 <sup>st</sup>
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II	22 <sup>nd</sup>
Those who give their time to the upkeep of LSM	<i>Ruth Wheatley</i> 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Expectant parents	24 <sup>th</sup>

<b>Our Parish &amp; People</b>	<i>Nelson Bleackley</i> 25 <sup>th</sup>
All persecuted for the Faith	26 <sup>th</sup>
Thanksgiving for the Gospels	<i>Muriel Ellis, Leonard Beard</i> 27 <sup>th</sup>
Young people living in war zones	28 <sup>th</sup>
Anglican Bishops	<i>Leonard Charles Askham (pr.), Peter Walker (Bp.)</i> 29 <sup>th</sup>
Those living with feelings of loneliness	30 <sup>th</sup>
Thanksgiving for the past year	<i>Muriel Brittain</i> 31 <sup>st</sup>

# Saint of December

7<sup>th</sup> December – Saint Ambrose of Milan

*Lord God of Hosts, who didst call Ambrose from the governor's throne to be a bishop in Thy Church and a courageous champion of thy faithful people:*

*mercifully grant that, as he fearlessly rebuked rulers, so we may with like courage contend for the faith which we have received; through Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.*



Ambrose was born into a Roman Christian family about 340 AD and was raised in Trier, Belgic Gaul (present-day Germany) where his father was a Roman official. There is a legend that, while he was an infant, a swarm of bees settled on his face as he lay in his cradle, leaving behind a drop of honey. His father considered this a sign of his future eloquence and honeyed tongue.

Ambrose followed his father's career. He was educated in Rome, studying literature, law, and rhetoric. and in about 372 he was made Governor of Liguria and Emilia, with headquarters at Milan – a role in which he served until 374 when he became the Bishop of Milan. Upon being appointed Bishop of Milan, he energetically refused the office, for which he was in no way prepared: Ambrose was neither baptized nor formally trained in theology. Within a week, he was baptized, ordained and duly consecrated bishop of Milan.

As Bishop, he immediately and forcefully stopped the Arian heresy in Milan. He studied theology, using his excellent knowledge of Greek to his advantage, studying the Old Testament and Greek authors like Philo, Origen, Athanasius, and Basil of Caesarea. He applied this knowledge as preacher, concentrating especially on exegesis of the Old Testament, and his rhetorical abilities impressed Augustine of Hippo, who was greatly influenced by Ambrose.

Ambrose wrote many theological treatises and hymns, and was a promoter of antiphonal chant in worship. Ambrose died in Milan on 4 April 397. His body may still be viewed in the church of Sant'Ambrogio in Milan, where it has been continuously venerated.

## **Wave of Prayer**

Prayer is central to the work of the Mothers' Union and is a continuous expression of their commitment in prayer to one another. This is a continual "Wave of Prayer" which travels around the Mothers' Union worldwide throughout the year in an unbroken circle and encompasses all the places in which they are represented, with each group of linked dioceses prayed for in turn.

From 10 –12 December it is the turn of Ely Diocese with their linked dioceses of Lusaka in Zambia, Shyogwe in Rwanda, Sokoto and Ikka in Nigeria and Karimnagar in India. Please pray for their leaders, members and the work of the Mothers' Union in these places during these three days.

"God of grace, enable Your servants to carry out Your mission on earth through the work of Mothers' Union worldwide. Today we pray for the dioceses of Ely, Lusaka, Shyogwe, Sokoto, Ikka and Karimnagar, their leaders and members. May You be with them in every part of their lives, encouraging them and leading them, sheltering and strengthening them so they may work to Your praise and glory. Amen."

## **Advent Groups**

The Vicar writes: As my letter this month makes clear, one of the things we need to avoid is frantic activity and rather to spend time open and waiting for Jesus Christ. I hope we can thus use our Advent Groups this year as precious spaces in which to do this. To that end our Groups will take the form of four bible studies on key scriptural texts related to Advent, each of which will be preceded by a time of Lectio Divina – prayerful reading together of the words waiting for the Lord to speak to each of us. No previous experience, etc. necessary! 7.30pm on Thursday 1st, Monday 5th and Monday 19th December.

## **The Image of the Lord**

On Thursday 15 December the Vicar and Peter Granville Davis will give an illustrated Advent talk on the place and use of picture and imagery in Christian life, reflecting on how we can deepen our faith through the visual; a lovely balance to our reading of Scripture in the Advent Group. 7:30pm in the parish centre. All welcome. There will be lots of ravishing pictures!

## **Advent Rosary**

On 27 November the new Christian year begins, and we enter the liturgical season of Advent. Traditionally this is a time of penitence and expectation; we are called to reflect on the First Coming of Our Lord at Christmas (and the sins that necessitated this), and to look forward to the Second Coming. In short, Advent is a time where we attempt to refine our discipleship, and to ready ourselves to receive the joy of Christ's coming into the world.

Traditionally, the rosary has been a devotion most suited to such a focus. In essence, praying the rosary is participation in the life of Mary, whose sole focus was Christ and in whose very body Jesus came to be. Praying the rosary is then part of Jesus Christ being formed in us. To this end, Yaroslav

will be praying the rosary at 5:30pm, Tuesday-Friday, in the Lady Chapel, throughout Advent – and would like to invite anyone interested to join him

## **Advent Carol Service**

Excitement abounds as we remember that the annual Advent Carol Service takes place next Sunday at 6pm. This will involve a seasonal selection of readings, carols and choral music ending with Benediction. Refreshments follow.

## **Cambridge City Foodbank – Transport Needed**

The Little Saint Mary's congregation has been generous in bringing in goods for the Cambridge City Foodbank. Help is needed, however, in getting the foodbank box to the depot. It would be most welcome if someone could volunteer to drive the box from LSM to the depot each week. Donations can be taken there 9:30am-1pm, Mondays and Fridays only. The depot's address is  
CCFb Warehouse, Unit 4 Orwell Furlong, CB4 0WY

If you can help, please contact Patricia Boulhosa or Bob DeWolf at [robert.s.dewolf@gmail.com](mailto:robert.s.dewolf@gmail.com) or by telephone on 07500 071700. More information about Cambridge City Foodbank, including how you could help out in other ways, can be found at <https://cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk>

**HE WILL COME** like last leaf's fall.

One night when the November wind  
has flayed the trees to the bone, and earth  
wakes choking on the mould,  
the soft shroud's folding.

He will come like frost.

One morning when the shrinking earth  
opens on mist, to find itself  
arrested in the net  
of alien, sword-set beauty.

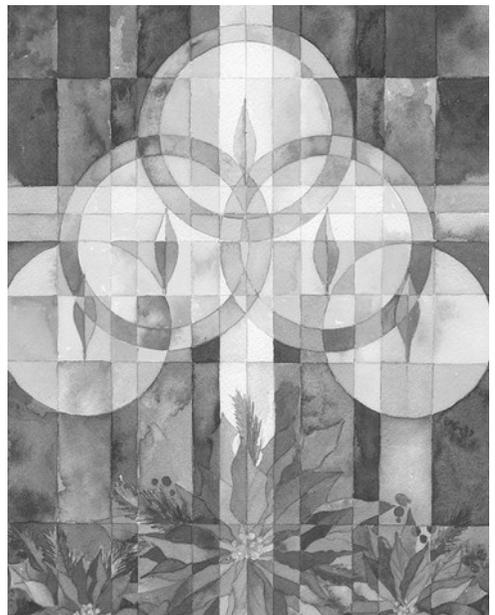
He will come like dark.

One evening when the bursting red  
December sun draws up the sheet  
and penny-masks its eye to yield  
the star-snowed fields of sky.

He will come, will come,  
will come like crying in the night,  
like blood, like breaking,  
as the earth writhes to toss Him  
free.

He will come like child.

*('Advent Calendar'  
by Rowan Williams)*



**THE ADVENT WIND** begins to stir  
With sea-like sounds in our Scotch fir,  
It's dark at breakfast, dark at tea,  
And in between we only see  
Clouds hurrying across the sky  
And rain-wet roads the wind blows dry  
And branches bending to the gale  
Against great skies all silver pale  
The world seems travelling into space,  
And travelling at a faster pace  
Than in the leisured summer weather  
When we and it sit out together,  
For now we feel the world spin round  
On some momentous journey bound -  
Journey to what? to whom? to where?  
The Advent bells call out 'Prepare,  
Your world is journeying to the birth  
Of God made Man for us on earth.'

And how, in fact, do we prepare  
The great day that waits us there -  
For the twenty-fifth day of December,  
The birth of Christ? For some it means  
An interchange of hunting scenes  
On coloured cards, and I remember  
Last year I sent out twenty yards,  
Laid end to end, of Christmas cards  
To people that I scarcely know -  
They'd sent a card to me, and so  
I had to send one back. Oh dear!  
Is this a form of Christmas cheer?

Or is it, which is less surprising,  
My pride gone in for advertising?  
The only cards that really count  
Are that extremely small amount  
From real friends who keep in touch  
And are not rich but love us much  
Some ways indeed are very odd  
By which we hail the birth of God.  
We raise the price of things in shops,  
We give plain boxes fancy tops  
And lines which traders cannot sell  
Thus parcell'd go extremely well  
We dole out bribes we call a present  
To those to whom we must be pleasant  
For business reasons. Our defence is  
These bribes are charged against expenses  
And bring relief in Income Tax  
Enough of these unworthy cracks!  
'The time draws near the birth of Christ'.  
A present that cannot be priced  
Given two thousand years ago  
Yet if God had not given so  
He still would be a distant stranger  
And not the Baby in the manger.

*('Advent 1955' by John Betjeman)*