

LITTLE S. MARY'S, CAMBRIDGE

December 2023: No. 618

NEWSLETTER



Notable dates in December

Saturday 2nd December

10.30am Bible Study *looking at S. Mark's Gospel, led by Fr Ed ward after 10am Mass.*

Sunday 3rd December **6pm Advent Carol Service**

Wednesday 6th December

10.30am **Advent Group I in person** – looking at Bishop Rowan Williams' book *Ponder these things: praying with icons of the Virgin Mary*

7pm **Rorate Mass** – a candlelit Mass of Our Lady in the Lady Chapel

8pm **Advent Group I on Zoom**

Thursday 7th December

5.30–6.30pm Eucharistic Adoration & Evening Prayer

Friday 8th December **Feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Low Mass 12.30pm; Sung Mass 7pm

Wednesday 13th December

10am Monthly Mass of Healing *with laying on of hands and anointing.*

10.30am **Advent Group II in person**

7pm **Rorate Mass** – a candlelit Mass of Our Lady in the Lady Chapel

8pm **Advent Group II on Zoom**

Thursday 14th December

5.30–6.30pm Eucharistic Adoration & Evening Prayer

Sunday 17th December **6pm Nine Lessons and Carols**

Wednesday 20th December

10.30am **Advent Group III in person**

7pm **Rorate Mass** – a candlelit Mass of Our Lady in the Lady Chapel

8pm **Advent Group III on Zoom**

Thursday 21st December

5.30–6.30pm Eucharistic Adoration & Evening Prayer

Sunday 24th December: **5pm Children's Candlelight Crib Service**

11pm Midnight Mass of Christmas

Monday 25th December: **8am Low Mass of Christmas Dawn**

10.30am High Mass of Christmas Day

6pm Evening Prayer & Benediction

From the Vicar

S. Andrew, apostle 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Advent, the season on which we embark this Sunday, is the great season of hope. In the gathering gloom of both the declining daylight and the state of the world, the cry of Advent goes out: awake! It's tempting to look in and down and get gloomy but these weeks leading up to Christmas tell us to look beyond the immediate trials of this life to the life to come and the assurance that Christ will return in glorious judgement and there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

The season does it by stretching us forward and back: back, by reflecting on the patriarchs, the prophets, S. John Baptist and Our Lady as those in whom God was working and preparing for the coming of His Son; forward, by reflecting on the Four Last Things of Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell which remind us that we and the world are a work in progress but that it is a work that assuredly will be brought to completion.

You'll see above this letter the various ways in which we are keeping the holy season. If you are a parent or connected with a school then it may well be impossible to keep Christmas out of Advent but for the rest of us I pray that these three weeks are not just weeks of "getting ready for Christmas" but weeks when we are able to lift our heads up and know that the Lord truly is at hand.

For our sister **Renata Sayers** all of this is unnecessary because she is with the Lord. A long-standing member of our choir and congregation, Renata had survived multiple cancers, but this time it was not to be and she died peacefully, in the company of her family, on 24th November. She needs no more Advents, Christmases, Epiphanies or Lents because she is entering upon her eternal Easter, and we pray for her as she does so. I will let you know the time and date of the funeral when it is settled. In the meantime, may she rest in peace and may God grant comfort and faith to her husband John, daughter Cristina, son-in-law Philip and grandsons William and Ben.

Another reason for hope is the generous response of a number of you to our parish giving appeal. I'm well aware that few of us are exactly rolling in money at the moment, but giving to the work of the Body of Christ is not an optional extra for a Christian and I'm moved by those of you who have recognised this and either begun to give in a planned way or increased your giving. I will be writing to say thank you to each of you personally. Even if the parish can't avoid a deficit this year, I pray that it will be less scary than it had been looking and that we will be able to eliminate it in 2024.

Several people have asked how we got into this situation of being so short of money. It is a combination of circumstances: inflation (especially of energy bills), various generous givers moving away or dying, unexpected building expenses and many new members of the congregation who had not yet started giving. Looking closely at the level of giving generally was alarming, however: the number of people who didn't give anything at all, and those who gave tiny amounts – in a (broadly) middle-class parish like ours, it really should not be the case that I am one of the most generous givers (at £150/month, on a stipend of £28,000, albeit with no housing costs). Being the Established Church brings no additional income, and the considerable monies that the Church Commissioners have nationally rarely make their way to parishes but exist to fund clergy pensions, subsidise poorer dioceses, fund bishops and cathedrals and new missionary endeavours. Anything we want to do we have to pay for ourselves. What we do we do well and professionally, but I fear that has meant that people thought we had plenty of money; whereas we were operating frequently on a shoestring with a lot of hard work and goodwill from various people, and a certain quantity of smoke and mirrors! If nothing else, I hope these weeks of appeal have given people a more realistic sense of our parish's life.

Advent exists to lift up our heads and renew our hope and vision by setting the eyes of our hearts on the things to come. Being with you Sunday by Sunday, seeing the work our children's leaders, our musicians and servers do, the commitment to peace and justice work, the number of you who volunteer in all sorts of ways both within and beyond the life of the church, certainly renews my hope and vision. I pray that our time attending to the Lord over these next three weeks will do that in spades so

that we come to Christmas not exhausted but full of hope and expectation of what God will do in and with and for us in 2024.

With my love and prayers, I am,
yours in the God who comes,

Fr Robert.



Calendar and Intentions

for

December 2023

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 intentions.

Calendar for December

FRI	1 st	S. Eligius, bishop
SAT	2 nd	of the Sacred Heart
SUN	3rd	FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT
MON	4 th	S. John of Damascus, monk, teacher
TUE	5 th	
WED	6 th	S. Nicholas, bishop
THU	7 th	S. Ambrose, bishop; Ember day
FRI	8th	Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
SAT	9 th	
SUN	10th	SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT
MON	11 th	
TUE	12 th	
WED	13 th	S. Lucy, virgin & martyr, Ember day
THU	14 th	S. John of the Cross, religious & doctor
FRI	15 th	Ember day
SAT	16 th	Ember day
SUN	17th	THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT, <i>O Sapientia</i>
MON	18 th	<i>O Adonai</i>
TUE	19 th	<i>O Radix Jesse</i>
WED	20 th	<i>O Clavis David</i>
THU	21 st	<i>O Oriens</i>
FRI	22 nd	<i>O Rex Gentium</i>
SAT	23 rd	<i>O Emmanuel</i>
SUN	24th	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, Christmas Eve
MON	25th	CHRISTMAS DAY
TUE	26th	S. Stephen, deacon & protomartyr
WED	27th	S. John, apostle & evangelist
THU	28th	Holy Innocents
FRI	29 th	S. Thomas Beckett, Bishop & Martyr
SAT	30 th	in the Octave of Christmas
SUN	31st	SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

Intentions for December

Those who care for animals *Douglas Bird, Brian Jordan, Judith Swan* 1st
A good keeping of Advent *Anthony Morcom, pr.* 2nd

Our Parish & People 3rd
Missionaries *Roma Gorrada* 4th
Our Advent groups *Michael Fisher, SSF bp* 5th
Children at LSM *David Strutt, Jeanette Miller, Cherry Tapner* 6th
Bishops of the Church of England *Michael Barnard* 7th
The Society of Mary *Martha Pearson* 8th
Ordinands *Cyril Hankey, pr., Charles Goodhart* 9th

Our Parish & People 10th
Cambridge City Food Bank *John Robson* 11th
Those who serve at the Altar *Alan Ashton presbyter* 12th
Light of Christ in our lives *Glyn Daniel, Dennis Peck, Edwin Ogle* 13th
Spiritual directors 14th
The homeless *Gladys Stockbridge* 15th
Preparation for death 16th

Our Parish & People *Jack Grist, Diana Galletly* 17th
Wisdom 18th
Our Jewish brothers & sisters *Eric Lawson* 19th
Prisoners *Yvonne Masheder* 20th
The Eastern Orthodox Church *Joan Garrett, Irene Gore* 21st
HM The King *James Kinnier Wilson* 22nd
The lonely *Ruth Wheatley* 23rd

Our Parish & People *Daniel Mitchell* 24th
For every person to receive the Word of God *Nelson Bleackley* 25th
Persecuted Christians 26th
Openness to Christ *Muriel Ellis, Leonard Beard* 27th
Vulnerable children 28th
The recently bereaved *Leonard Askham, pr., Peter Walker, bp* 29th
New parents *Joy James* 30th
Thanksgiving for God's graces in 2023 *Marianne Leeder-Voss, Muriel Brittain, Rita Ollett* 31st

John Piper's stained glass window at St Mary's, Iffley, Oxford

Elizabeth Kemp writes:

John Piper's stained glass window at St Mary's, Iffley, made by David Walsey, takes inspiration from the legend that animals could talk on Christmas Eve. These four birds and a lamb talk to one another in Latin, and the sounds of the Latin words echo each creature's noise:

Christus natus est! The cock crows "Christ is born!"

'Quando? Quando?' The goose honks "When? When?"

In hac nocte. The raven caws "In this night."

Ubi? Ubi? The owl hoots "Where? Where?"

Bethlem! Bethlem! The lamb bleats "Bethlehem! Bethlehem!"

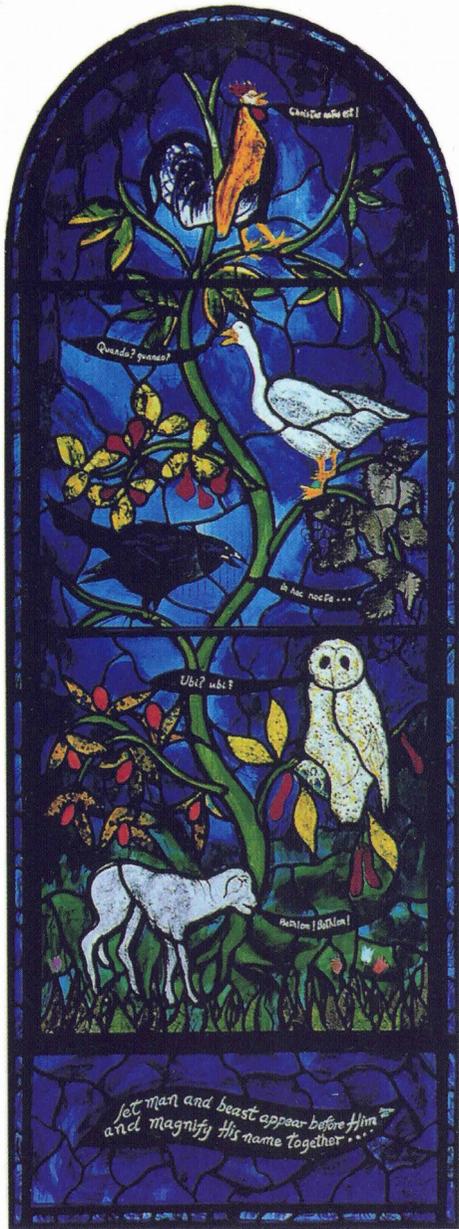
The creatures sit on and stand under the curving green branches of a plant bearing red fruit, which resembles the "tree of life" of another Piper window, the drawing for which is at Ely Stained Glass museum.

At the bottom of the window, in a section added by David Walsey when the artwork, originally made for an exhibition, was fitted to the church, is a couplet from *Jubilate Agno*, a poem by 18th-century writer Christopher Smart:¹

Let man and beast appear before Him
and magnify His name together.²

¹Victoria Emily Jones, 'Church of St Mary the Virgin, Iffley', The Jesus Question (website): <https://thejesusquestion.org/2013/09/09/church-of-st-mary-the-virgin-iffley/> [Accessed 21 November 2023].

²Christopher Smart, *Jubilate Agno*, Fragment A: <http://www.pseudopodium.org/repress/jubilate/> [Accessed 22 November 2023].



Nativity window by John Piper, with stained glass made by David Walsey, St Mary the Virgin, Iffley, Oxford. Photograph: Sonia Halliday, from a postcard published by Iffley PCC,

Camtrust News and Opportunity for Volunteering

Lily Mungovan, Charity Manager of Camtrust, writes:

We recently received an amazing donation from Little St Mary's for £1,017.07. We are **so** grateful; thank you.

I am delighted to say that in September we launched a new, exciting work experience programme. Initially the programme is for one year, for our current clients, but we're hopeful to secure additional funding to extend this.

We have partnered with Holiday Inn, Cambridge (Impington) working alongside the Food & Beverage and Spirit Health Club teams to gain valuable work experience. Camtrust has also partnered with the Castle School and from the New Year will be keeping the Castle Community Shop in Arbury Court, Cambridge, every Friday

Camtrust is a local charity, based in Impington, which provides training in life and work skills for adults with disabilities. Camtrust is seeking a volunteer (or volunteers) to support our Work Experience Lead Tutor with a new and exciting opportunity – providing work experience to clients at **Castle Community Shop** in Arbury Court, Cambridge.

- Starting New Year 2024.
- Assisting the Work Experience Lead Tutor, supporting clients during their work experience placements.
- Camtrust will keep the shop from 10am until 2.30pm, on **Fridays** only.
- The volunteer(s) will be required to start at 9.30am and finish at 3pm.
- Alternatively, this could be shared between two shifts: 9.30am – 12.30pm & 12 noon – 3pm

If you're interested in volunteering, please email Claire Hancock claire@camtrust.co.uk who would be happy to tell you more, or call us on (01223) 236786.