

**LITTLE S. MARY'S, CAMBRIDGE**

*December 2023: No. 618*

# NEWSLETTER



## Notable dates in December

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December

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

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December **6pm Advent Carol Service**

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> December

**5.30–6.30pm Eucharistic Adoration & Evening Prayer**

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December **Feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Low Mass 12.30pm; Sung Mass 7pm

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> 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 14<sup>th</sup> December

**5.30–6.30pm Eucharistic Adoration & Evening Prayer**

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December **6pm Nine Lessons and Carols**

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> 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 21<sup>st</sup> December

**5.30–6.30pm Eucharistic Adoration & Evening Prayer**

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December: **5pm Children's Candlelight Crib Service**

**11pm Midnight Mass of Christmas**

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

# Intentions for December

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

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

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

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

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

## 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!"

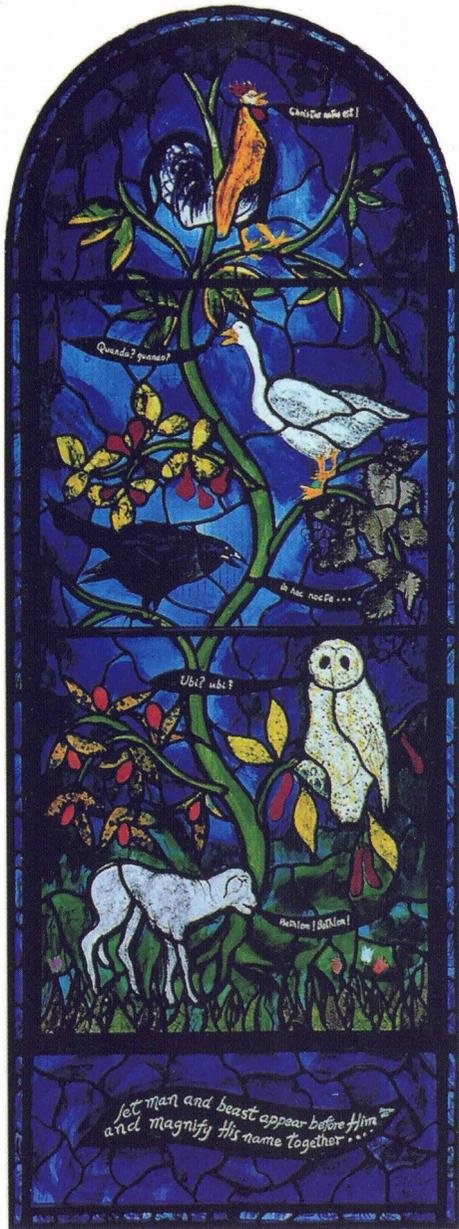
The creatures sit on and stand under the curving green branches of a plant bearing red fruit, which resembles the "tree of life" of another Piper window, the drawing for which is at Ely Stained Glass museum.

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:<sup>1</sup>

Let man and beast appear before Him  
and magnify His name together.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Victoria 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].

<sup>2</sup>Christopher 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](mailto:claire@camtrust.co.uk) who would be happy to tell you more, or call us on (01223) 236786.