

Saint Charles Swinton

Parish Newsletter
29 November 2015
First Sunday of Advent (Year C)
Page 82 in Mass Book.



Why do we have Advent?

You say, "I don't know, it always just comes along." Or, "to prepare for Christmas." But Christmas came long ago, and if Christ has already been born, what is this Advent waiting about? "Have we forgotten about his birthing?" I have heard these questions, answers, and others, a number of times.

So let us look at his birth and at our forgetfulness - our hearts get drowsy and lazy, tired out by the anxieties of daily life. Maybe we distract ourselves from troubles by working very hard, or becoming depressed, or becoming fascinated with drink, or sex, or out-of-control emotions, or gambling, or email, or golf, or surfing the web, or pride, or, or, or (name yours). Whatever it is for you, the very clear message of Advent is, "Settle down for a while." Open the door just a crack to let God in.

There is a design to help us do this. Each week's First Reading is the carrot: usually positive, a promise of good. Then the Gospel hits you with a big stick to wake us up. Take the encouraging First Reading this Sunday. It reminds us of the promise God made to his people: rightness and justice will come to the earth. Security. The day of the Lord will arrive, though long delayed. Peace in our day.

How rewarding it is to desire such a time. Too good to be true? Just pious thought? Read the First Reading now and ask yourself those questions. Spend time with them. Pray to God for help.

...continued over...



The Coming Week.....

Sunday 29 November First Sunday of Advent.

Mass 6.00pm (Saturday)
8.45am. 11.00am

2.00pm Eucharistic Adoration ("Exposition") and Evening Prayer. A prayerful way to begin Advent and make it a time of prayerful waiting.

Monday 30 November

Saint Andrew, Apostle, patron of Scotland. Born at Bethsaida (Galilee) Andrew was a fisherman and perhaps a disciple of John the Baptist. He introduced his brother Simon Peter to Jesus and is mentioned a number of times in the gospels. He became recognised as patron of Scotland because, according to legend, some of his bones were brought there and buried in the place that now bears his name.

8.30am Mass.

7.00pm Saint Vincent de Paul Society meet.

Tuesday 1 December 8.30am Mass

Wednesday 2 December

9.15am Whole School Mass for Advent in school,
All welcome.

Thursday 3 December

Saint Francis Xavier, priest. A friend of Ignatius of Loyola and one of the first members of the "Company of Jesus". He became a great missionary, reaching India and Japan. He died in China in 1552. He is patron saint of the Missions.
8.30am Mass

Friday 4 December 8.30am Mass

Saturday 5 December 9.00am Mass in Cemetery.

10.00am Sacramental Programme celebration of Sacrament of Reconciliation.

11.30am - 12noon
Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Flower arranging classes - Rita will be grateful for anyone who wants to help with flower arranging for Christmas. Please meet at 12.00noon in church.

Sunday 6 December Second Sunday of Advent.

Tuesday 8 December.

Bishop John will be celebrating his first anniversary of installation as our bishop. There will be a Mass in the cathedral at 7.30pm and he invites all who wish to join him for that.

Sunday 13 December Year of Mercy - opening celebration Mass in the cathedral at

Prayer Sponsors.

Still time to "sign up" a child. Please leave the signed card by the child's portrait. The other is a prayer for you to take home.

Travelling Nativity. Is beginning its journey around the parish this weekend. Everyone who is signed up will have had all the information they need with suggestions for prayer and how the handover works.

The Responsorial Psalm will aid you. It asks God to make known his ways to us, to guide us and teach us. The Second Reading urges us to put God's promise of peace into action, even if we are not yet sure what it means. Love others and be loved.

Ah, and then the Gospel. It tries to wake us up, especially if the above has not helped. "But I am perfectly awake," you say. Alright then, go ahead and read the Gospel. Signs in the sun, moon and stars, nations in dismay, the roaring of the sea and the waves, people dying of fright, and the Son of Man appearing in the clouds with power and great glory! Terrifying.

So are you all ready for it? Let yourself imagine what such a time might be like. Picture it scene by scene and don't worry about being exact. Just experience it.

Will such a shakeup really happen literally? We do not know. Maybe much worse is to come, judging from the state of the world today. Do you live without fear of terrorists or ISIS, of proliferating nuclear weapons, of horrific climate change, of a crash of the world economy, or of the greed that fills so many hearts to overflowing—in your city, in your state, your world?

If you can say "You are right, I am afraid of these," then you have a start on the reason for Advent. Christ has to be born afresh. Yes, it worked the last time, but you and I forget so easily. His birth must happen again, in our liturgy, in our lives, in this Advent, so that his sacrifice will not be in vain. **This is why we have Advent.** (From Saint Louis Jesuits Sunday Liturgy website by John Foley SJ)

"Stay With Us, Lord, On Our Journey"

As I noted last week, the Bishop's report on the recent consultation process could not be distributed last week due to a technical fault.

Copies are now available. Please take one from the back of church on your way home. This is a summary version with the main points. The full version is worth reading and you can access it via the diocesan web site -

www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Do read at least the summary to see the content and background of any news headlines you may have seen during the past week.

Year of Mercy "Stuff".

As mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter, Pope Francis is inviting the whole Church to reflect on the mercy of God in a special "Jubilee Year of Mercy" beginning 8 December.

I will be saying much more about this over the coming weeks/months and all the ways of entering into the spirit of that year. There are quite a number of resources on the table at the back of church. **Do help yourself - all free, give an offering if you are able.**

Advent "Stuff"

AS in past years there are special publications provided by the diocese for the season of Advent to help us prepare for Christmas. There is the "Walk with Me" booklet with reflections for each days' Scripture readings.

There is also an **Advent Calendar** with suggestions for each day to help you use Advent well. **These are for you to take free of charge.** If you would like to make a contribution that would be welcome.

Advent in Precinct.

This year we are only going to be able to have one Saturday - **12 December, 10.00am - 2.00pm.**

The good news is that Asda have allowed us to use their foyer and we are incorporating an exhibition of cribs, including our own "Travelling Nativity"

As always, volunteers welcome for a slot.

Diocesan Posts in Communications

The Diocese are looking to appoint both a

Communications Officer and a Communications Technician.

Applications are invited by 4 December. *Job descriptions and other details posted on notice board and are also on diocesan website* www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Saint Charles Rambling Club.

We are a family friendly group who have been part of the parish community since the 1970s and we would like the group to continue for many years to come!

This of course will depend on new members and everyone is welcome to join us. No experience required, just enthusiasm!

We go out walking on the third Sunday of each month. A list of all the 2106 walks can be found in the church porch.

Any questions of queries, please contact Julia Lightfoot on 794

Funeral expenses and related information and reflection.

Caritas have produced a leaflet with some practical thoughts that might be useful if you need to arrange a funeral. There is also a similar one that was in the Tablet two weeks ago. **Copies at back of church.**

A member of Churches Together in Swinton and Pendlebury

Parish Priest: Rev Mgr Paul F Smith STL • ☎ 0161 794 1089 • ✉ paulsmith@saintcharles.freeserve.co.uk website: www.stcharlesswinton.co.uk

Registered Charity No. 250037

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays: 11.30 am to 12.00 noon and after evening Mass

BAPTISMS

By appointment. Parents are expected to attend a course of preparation.

WEDDINGS

Six months notice is normally required.

Saint Vincent de Paul Society
Monthly as announced

Union of Catholic Mothers
First and third Tuesdays at 7.15pm

Beaver Scouts

Mondays in school at 6.00pm

Cub Scouts

Tuesdays in school at 6.00 pm

Brownies

Wednesdays in school at 6.00 pm

Rainbows

Thursdays in school at 6.00 pm

MASS TIMES

Saturday: 6.00 pm (First Mass of Sunday)

Sunday

- **8.45 am** (Church Parade every second Sunday of the month)
- **11.00 am** (with children's Liturgy of the Word)

Monday to Friday: usually 8.30 am

Holy Days

7.30 pm (eve), 8.30 am

If you would like to receive this weekly newsletter by e-mail please give me your e-mail address.

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