

NEWSLETTER FOR ST BRENDAN, HARWOOD, ST COLUMBA, TONGE MOOR & ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, BROMLEY CROSS

15TH DECEMBER 2013 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



In many ways the readings this Sunday are simply a continuation of last week – Isaiah gives us more details about the work of the Messiah, and Paul invites us to continue to be patient until the Lord's Coming. What is slightly different is the voice of John the Baptist this week: last week in Matthew 3 he was proclaiming with utter confidence that "someone is coming". Now, in Matthew 11, he asks Jesus from prison: "Is it you?" For us, as we listen to these scriptures, we are being

offered something very particular – the prophecies of Isaiah (and indeed the prophet John the Baptist) are pinned down firmly and securely in the person of Jesus, Son of Mary – in fact, Jesus himself, in his reply to John says as much: "I am the Messiah that Isaiah prophesied." Again we are invited to hold the images of the prophecies in our minds until Christmas, when we can look on the child in the manger and say "We know who this is: it is the promised Messiah – God who comes to save us!"

Liturgy & Activities This Week <i>Sunday Cycle A; Weekdays of Advent; Divine Office Week 3</i> Sunday Missal: page 110; Preface page 35		Prayers Please
Sunday	9.15am (SJ) – with Children's Liturgy 10.15am Mass (SC) – with Children's Liturgy 11.15am Mass (SB) – with Children's Liturgy 3pm Signed Mass for Deaf People (SB) – <i>All welcome.</i>	Sick: Gladys Hall, Kevan Dunleavy, Mary Leigh, Joan Coles, Isabelle Owen, Laura Shuttleworth, Ethel Caton, Tony Winstanley, Jonathan Rimmer, Eunice Brierley, Elizabeth Patterson, Bernard Callaghan, Kathleen Humphreys, Eileen Jones, Cecilia Guest, Joseph Walton, Jean York, Caroline Vickers, Robin Tootill, Elzie Ball, Tricia Jennings, Mick Collins, Bernard & Rita Holder, Michael, Baby Rose, Calum Russell, Eileen Murphy, Brendan O'Grady, Pauline Bowling, Emma Turner, Joan Rankin, Guy Ryan, Maria Stott, Fiona Preston, Kathleen Hopwood, John Barrett, Bea Gilmore, Roy Smith, Isabelle Karzynski, Fiona Oldham (nee Clappison), Stephen Tootill, Maureen Kennedy, Vera Evans, Julie Smith, Ernie Little, Anthony Axford, Mary Marshall, Joan Pearce, Joshua Almond, Jacqueline Kay, Wynn Elliot, Tom Wardle, Joan Peake (nee Hooton), Bob Taylor, Rita Margiotta, Noel Gannon, Sheila Derbyshire, David Walton, Dr Bernard Higgins, Winston Shanley, Vera Casey Shaw, Heather Goil, Anne Rule and all who are sick or recovering from serious illness. Lately Dead: Andrew Moore, Dr Michael Flynn, Gladys Harris, Brian Branche, Edward Monaghan, Mary Coyne, Kathleen Goodman, Elizabeth Patterson, Anna Boyle Anniversaries: Anne Davenport, Anne Greene, Madeline Jerstice, Joseph Farrell, James & Annie McGrath, Ann & James Davies, Elizabeth Wright Mass Intentions: Fr Patrick Quinlan (Golden Jubilee), Gladys Harris, Anne Davenport, Mary Coyne, Brian Branche, Ann Greene, Joyce Knight, Prayers for young people taking important exams, Madeline Jerstice, Joseph Farrell, James & Annie McGrath, Ann & James Davies, Andrew Hayes (Birthday Remembrance), Edward Monaghan, Andrew Moore, Elizabeth & Frank Wright
<i>Gaudete Sunday</i>		
Monday	9.30am Mass (SJ) 2pm KS1 Nativity (SC) 6.30pm KS2 Nativity (SC) 8pm SVP (SJ)	
Tuesday	2pm KS2 Nativity (SC) 6.30pm KS1 Nativity (SC) 7pm Mass (SB) 7pm Thornleigh Carol Service 7.30pm SVP (SB)	
Wednesday	11.30am Requiem Mass for Anna Boyle (SC) 1pm Harbour Room Book Club (SB) 7pm Carol Service for St John's (Yrs 5&6) & Eagley Junior School Choir (SJ)	
Thursday	9.15am School Mass in Church (SB) 2pm Nativity Service (SB) 7.30 - 8.30pm Scripture Study Course (SB)	
Friday	9.15am School Mass in Church (SC) & farewell to Mrs Shaw 9.30am School Mass in Church (SJ) 11am Funeral service for Thomas Lowther (Radcliffe Crem) 2.40pm Carols in School (SC) 7.30pm Christmas Dance (Dunscar Conservative Club) 8pm & 9.30pm Churches in Harwood Carol Singing	
Saturday	5pm Mass (SC) 5.30-6pm Reconciliation (SJ) 6.30pm Mass (SJ)	
Next Sunday	9.15am (SJ) – with Children's Liturgy 10.15am (SC) – with Children's Liturgy 11.15am Mass (SB) – with Children's Liturgy <i>A Day of Special Prayer for Expectant Mothers</i> 3pm Reconciliation Service (SC)	

Parish Priest and Rural Dean: Rev Michael Cooke

Assistant Priests: Rev Joseph Gee & Rev Francis Parkinson

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Congratulations: To Thea Alice Ginns who was baptised at St John's last Sunday. We pray that she and her family will continue to grow in faith.

Gaelic Coffee Morning: Today (15 December) following 9.15am Mass at St John's. Proceeds will go to the SVP.

St John's Christmas Draw: The draw will take place next Sunday (22 December) after the 9.15am Mass at St John's. **Please hand in any sold tickets and vouchers as soon as possible before Friday 20 December.** Thankyou all.

St Columba's Christmas Fayre: Thankyou to all who helped organise this event and to all who attended. A fantastic total of £1,055 was raised for the parish.

Three Parishes' Christmas Lunch: Many thanks to those who came from our three parishes to the Christmas Lunch and made it such an enjoyable occasion. *Edwin and Joan Rankin*

Harbour Room Book Club: Would all members please note the earlier start at 1pm on Wednesday 18 December for Book Club. *Touching the Void* by Joe Simpson. All welcome.

Parish Christmas Dance: Friday 20 December, 7.30pm-11.30pm (for all three churches) at Dunscair Conservative Club. Tickets are now available and cost £8 each which includes a potato pie supper. Please ring Julie Burton 01204 304732 for more details.

Church Cleaning: The general cleaning of St John's Church will take place on Friday 20 December. Please come along and help if you can

Think Vocation

What must we do? Advent is a time for us to reflect about our lives. A regular examination of a well-informed conscience is essential for the committed Christian. By exposing ourselves regularly to such questioning in prayerful reflection, the Lord can guide us to take the steps in our lives that keep us on the way of peace.

This Newsletter is sponsored by

HOWARTH'S FUNERAL SERVICE

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BRASS Collection: The joint food collection continues during December at each of our three churches. The items particularly needed are: cartons of orange juice, vegetable oil, tinned fruit, jam, biscuits, tinned tomatoes, kidney beans, chickpeas, coffee and sugar.. Thankyou for your continued support!

Advent & Christmas

Carol Singing: Churches in Harwood will again be singing carols in various community locations. Please come along and join us. The dates are:

Friday 20 December, 8pm at the Rocket and 9.30pm at the White Horse.

Monday 23 December, 6.30pm at Longsight Lodge and onto the Bramdean estate.

St Brendan's School: The Nativity Service will be at 2pm on Thursday 19 December in church.

St Columba's School: The children will hold their Nativity plays in Church on Monday 16 December (KS1 2pm, KS2 6.30pm) & Tuesday 17 December (KS2 2pm, KS1 6.30pm). There will also be a Mass on Friday 20 December in Church, with a retirement farewell to Mrs Shaw (Site Manager) and carols in school at 2.40pm.

St John's School: The joint Carol Service for St John's School (Yrs 5&6) and Eagley Junior School Choir is on Wednesday 18 December at 7pm in Church.

Thornleigh Salesian College: The Carol Service will be held on Tuesday 17 December at 7pm.

Reconciliation Service

Sunday 22 December (3pm) at St Columba's. This service is for all three parishes.

Christmas Mass Times

Christmas Eve: 5pm First Mass of Christmas (SC)
6.30pm First Mass of Christmas (SJ)
8.30pm First Mass of Christmas (SB)

Christmas Day: 9.15am Christmas Mass (SJ)
10.15am Christmas Mass (SC)
11.15am Christmas Mass (SB)

Nelson Mandela

This reflection is adapted from Fr Cooke's broadcast on Bolton FM's It's the Thought that Counts on 7 August 2013. The full text and recording are on the parish website.

It was on 5 August 1962 that Nelson Mandela was arrested before, later that year, facing trial and being sentenced to life imprisonment. As we know, he was to serve 27 years of that sentence and then, four years after his release, become the first black President of South Africa. A life sentence would ordinarily have curtailed any ambition or political activity but it did not dampen the spirit of this man.

Nelson Mandela's story is one of triumph through adversity. There are, of course, controversial aspects to it – not least the militant activities that led to his arrest. But there is also international recognition of the legacy he leaves through his anti-apartheid work, seeking to overcome racism, poverty and injustice. When his term as President was over, he devoted himself to charitable work through the Nelson Mandela Foundation, again addressing poverty and the HIV/Aids situation. In Nelson Mandela we have an example of someone using their own experience of life's difficulties to make the world a better place for others.