

The Little Flower Messenger

Year A SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT 8th December 2019

Welcome to our Parish Community of St. Theresa of Lisieux

The Presbytery, High Lane, Stansted Mountfitchet CM24 8LQ

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Parish Deacon: Rvd Des Connors desconnors@dioceseofbrentwood.org

Gospel: Matthew 3: 1-12

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.

Mass book (P. 85)

1st Reading:

Isaiah 11: 1-10

Psalms 71:

In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.

2nd Reading:

Romans 15: 4-9

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon:
(P. 87)

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

This Week's Good News

Dear Friends

In this week's Gospel Reading and next week's, our Advent preparation for Christmas invites us to consider John the Baptist and his relationship to Jesus. In this week's Gospel, Matthew describes the work and preaching of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist appears in the tradition of the great prophets of Israel, preaching repentance and reform to the people of Israel. In fact, the description of John found in this reading is reminiscent of the description of the prophet Elijah in the book of Kings. In this reading, John directs a particularly pointed call to repentance to the Pharisees and Sadducees, parties within the Jewish community of the first century.

John marks the conversion of those who seek him out with a baptism of repentance. Other groups in this period are thought to have practised ritual washings for similar purposes, and John's baptism may have been related to the practices of the Essenes, a Jewish sect of the first century. John's baptism can be understood as an anticipation of Christian baptism. In this passage, John himself alludes to the difference between his baptism and the one yet to come: "I am baptising you with water, for repentance . . . He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire." (Matthew 3:11).

In this reading, John makes very clear that his relationship to the Messiah yet to come (Jesus) is one of service and subservience: ". . . the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals" (Matthew 3:11). In the context of Matthew's Gospel, today's passage is followed by Jesus' baptism by John, an event that is attested to in all four of the Gospels and appears to have been the start of Jesus' public ministry. John's preaching of the coming of the Lord is a key theme of the Advent season. As John's message prepared the way for Jesus in the first century, we, too, are called to prepare ourselves for Jesus' coming. We respond to John's message by our repentance and reform of our lives. We are also called to be prophets of Christ who announce by our lives, as John did, the coming of the Lord.

Deacon Des

Prayer & Liturgy

Intercessory Prayer Group.

Third Friday of each month. A time to bring our needs and prayers to the Lord. If you would like prayers said but cannot make it, feel free to email Deacon Des with your prayer requests.

Christian Meditation.

Every Wednesday evening in St. John's Church, 7:00 p.m. -7:45 p.m.

Sacramental Preparation

Sacrament of Baptism: The next Baptism Preparation Course will take place in Church on **Tuesday 17th December at 7:30 p.m.** The following meeting will take place on **Wednesday 15th January 2020 at 7:30 p.m.** Do please let Deacon Des or Fr. Lee know if you would like to attend this course.

Sacrament of Marriage: Catholics must approach the Parish Priest / Deacon, at least 6 months prior to their intended wedding, and before setting a wedding date.

Social News and Events

Quarant' Ore (Forty Hours Devotion):

A huge thank you to everyone who came along to Church and prayed for an hour (or more) during the Forty Hours Devotion. I thought it was an incredibly powerful and grace filled time. I hope that you found it a moving experience. I am sure we will experience the benefits and great blessings in our parish over the coming weeks and months. This time of prayer before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is incredibly important.

General Election 2019:

We go to the polls again on Thursday of this week to elect our Member of Parliament and the Government. The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have produced a document to help us think about who we might vote for as faithful Catholic Christians. Do please have a read before you go out and vote.

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2019/11/2019-General-Election-Message.pdf>

Christmas 2019:

Christmas will soon be upon us, so I can confirm the times of the Christmas Services at St. Theresa's are as follows:

Sunday 22nd December: 6:00 p.m. Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols followed by Mulled Wine and Mince Pies. – This is a traditional service of Christmas scripture readings and carols. Everyone welcome, do bring family and friends along with you.

Tuesday 24th December: 4:00 p.m. Family Mass with Pop Up Nativity; **12:00 Midnight.** Mass with Carols.

Wednesday 25th December: 8:00 a.m. Mass of the Dawn (Shepherd's Mass); **10:00 a.m.** Mass of Christmas Day.

Thursday 26th December (St Stephen): 9:30 a.m. Mass

Friday 27th December (St John): 9:30 a.m. Mass.

Do please come along to these services and bring any family, friends and neighbours to join you.

Christmas Cards:

A box has been placed in the Church porch for the distribution of Christmas Cards. Please place the cards in the A-Z index by surname only.

Advertising and Outreach:

We have produced two thousand Christmas Cards to advertise our Christmas Services and would like help in delivering them around the parish. We don't have enough cards to deliver one to every home but would like a number of cards delivered to every village in the parish and, in particular, the new housing estates, and those who would welcome an invite to the Masses. Could you help with this? If so, could you please sign up on the sheet at the back of Church to volunteer to deliver cards in the area in which you live. We hope to deliver these next weekend 14th/15th December after the General Election.

Children's Service and Christmas Party: Sunday December 15th December 2019

The Children's Christmas Service will be on Sunday 15th December at 2:00 p.m. and will be followed by the Christmas party in the Parish Centre. All are very welcome to the service but please let us know if your child / children wish to attend the party so that we may cater for everyone. Please email us at helenhall5@yahoo.co.uk or phone 01842 879766 with your child's name and age as soon as possible. A voluntary donation of £3.50 can be given on the day of the party. We are very excited because Fr. Christmas has contacted us to say that he will prioritise a visit during this very busy time for him. There are invitations at the back of the church with further details. Please let Helen and Mark know asap.

Christmas on the Green:

Come and join in Churches Together "Celebration Of Christmas" at Mountfitchet Green on Saturday 21st December at 4:00 p.m. for Carols and the telling of the Christmas Story.

Children are encouraged to bring lanterns and dress in biblical costume. This is a non-seating event, so please bring your own chair if needed. Refreshments available. No charge.

Christmas Flowers:

A collection will be taken next weekend (14th/15th December) for Flowers for Christmas. Do please be as generous as you possibly can to help make the Church look even more beautiful for Christmas.

Minutes of the Parish Pastoral Council:

The minutes of the PPC meeting of 15.10.19 are now on the noticeboard in the church entrance and on the website. Please do take a look: <https://www.sttheresastansted.org>

Change of Mass Times:

After Christmas: The week commencing Sunday 5th January 2020, there will be a change to our weekday Mass Schedule. We will be introducing The Latin Mass on a Tuesday evening at 8:00 p.m. This Mass sometimes called the Extraordinary Form Mass was the Mass used by the Church for nearly 1500 years before the changes brought about in 1969 bringing into use the Novus Ordo. The introduction of this Mass comes from a request from a number of people in the parish. This means that we as a parish will be in the unique position of celebrating three forms of the Roman Rite: The Extraordinary Form, the Novus Ordo, and Divine Worship: The Missal (the Ordinariate Rite). Everyone is welcome to attend the Latin Mass, again we will provide the booklets for this, and as the Mass and readings are in Latin, each week we will produce a separate sheet with the readings in Latin and English. Any questions about this Mass, do please speak with Fr. Lee.

The New Mass schedule will be: Monday: 9:00 a.m. Confessions, 9:30 a.m. Mass. Tuesday: 7:15 p.m. Confession, 8:00 p.m. Mass (Latin). Wednesday: 12:00 noon Confession, 12:30 p.m. Mass. Thursday 9:00 a.m. Confession, 9:30 a.m. Mass, 7:30 p.m. Holy Hour - Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction. Friday 9:00 a.m. Confession, 9:30 a.m. Mass.

Talks series: How to defend your faith without raising your voice

This series of exciting talks continues this Wednesday. (11th December).

At the heart of the talks is a method called Reframe, which aims at avoiding the defensiveness and self-defeating responses which many of us instinctively deploy in the face of hostility.

The talks will take place on **Wednesday evenings:**

- What's wrong with Assisted Suicide? - **11th December**
- Top ten principles for civil communication when defending the faith – **18th December**

Arrivals and light refreshments at 7:00 p.m. Talk starts at 7:30 p.m. - Cost: Free (*Donations Welcomed*) Register at: <https://www.sttheresastansted.org/events>

The Sacrament of Reconciliation: takes place half an hour before each Mass.

Home Visits for the Sick and Housebound: Please let us know if anyone is housebound (even if it is TEMPORARY) so they can be visited and have the opportunity to receive Holy Communion at home. Mass is regularly broadcasted on the internet from the Catholic Church in Bishops Stortford: <http://www.churchservices.tv/bishopsstortford>

Admission to Hospital: Catholics in hospital are unlikely to receive an automatic visit from the Catholic Chaplain. If someone is sick in hospital, please let Fr. Lee and/or Deacon Des know so that your loved one can be visited and receive Holy Communion, and any other Sacraments from the Chaplain.

Other House Visits: If anyone would like a visit or a house blessing please contact Father Lee / Deacon Des.

Mass Times and Intentions

Saturday 7 th December	Confessions: 5:15 – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m.	Maria Mastrandrea & Maria Anna Mastrandrea (T Mastrandrea)
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT Year A		
Sunday 8 th December	Confessions: 9:15 – 9:45 a.m. Mass: 10:00 a.m.	People of the Parish
Monday 9 th December <i>THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BVM</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m.	Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham
Tuesday 10 th December	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m.	Ronnie Jackson RIP (Ann) (Jackson Family)
Wednesday 11 th December	Confessions: 12:00 noon. Mass: 12:30 p.m. Rosary Group: 1:30 p.m. Wednesday Club: 2:00 p.m. Talk Series: 7:30 p.m.	Michael Bambridge (J. Bambridge)
Thursday 12 th December	Confessions: 7:00 p.m. Mass: 7:30 p.m. Followed by Exposition & Benediction:	All candidates and those who will vote in the General Election
Friday 13 th December <i>St. Lucy</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m.	Patrick Walls RIP (H Bennett)
Saturday 14 th December <i>St. John of the Cross</i>	Confessions: 5:15 – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m.	James McCreanor (S Wood)
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT Year A		
Sunday 15 th December 1st Reading: <i>Isaiah 31: 1-6,10</i> Psalm: 145 2nd Reading: <i>James 5:7-10</i> Gospel: <i>Matthew 11:2-11</i>	Confessions: 9:15 – 9:45 a.m. Mass: 10:00 a.m. Children's Service & Christmas Party: 2.00 p.m.	People of the Parish