

NEWSLETTER

for the Churches of St Arvans, St Mary, Penterry,
St Deiniol, Itton, St James, Devauden & Holy Cross, Kilgwrrwg
forming part of the Severn Wye Ministry Area

IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE

St Arvan's Church is open during the day both for worship and private prayer, Following the lifting of Covid restrictions, Holy Communion may once again be received in both kinds, although there is, of course, no obligation to do so.

Our live-streamed services are as follows: Sunday Eucharist at 10. a.m., and a reflection & celebration of Night Prayer on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. They can be accessed on the St Arvans Parish Group page on Facebook here:

<https://www.facebook.com/vicaragecello1/>

and are available to watch at any time The St Arvans Parish website can be found here:

<http://www.starvanschurch.org.uk/>

Please help to keep us informed of anyone who is in need or is isolated over the next weeks and months, and anyone in need of our prayer and support
Fr Michael Gollop,
The Vicarage, St Arvans
01291 622064;
Mobile 07867803479
E-mail: frmichael1@aol.com

12th November 2023

**The Second Sunday
of the Kingdom**

3rd Sunday before Advent

Remembrance Sunday

The Collect

Almighty everlasting God, who sent your Son to die that we might live, grant we pray, eternal rest to those who gave themselves in service and sacrifice for their country; through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **AMEN**

A reading from the book of Wisdom

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be an affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them. In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. They will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them for ever. Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones. [3. 1-9]

Reader / This is the Word of the Lord
Response / Thanks be to God

Psalm 130

R/ My soul waits for the Lord

Out of the depths have I cried to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice; let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication. If you, Lord, were to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you, so that you shall be feared.

R/ My soul waits for the Lord.

I wait for the Lord;
my soul waits for him;
in his word is my hope.
My soul waits for the Lord,
more than the night watch

for the morning,
more than the night watch
for the morning.

R/ My soul waits for the Lord.

O Israel, wait for the Lord,
for with the Lord there is mercy;
With him is plenteous redemption
and he shall redeem Israel
from all their sins.

R/ My soul waits for the Lord.

A reading from the letter of St Paul
to the Romans [8. 31-39]

If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Reader/ This is the Word of the Lord
Response / Thanks be to God

Alleluia, alleluia!

It is my Father's will, says the Lord,
that I should lose nothing
of all he has given to me, and that
I should raise it up on the last day.
Alleluia!

The Lord be with you
R/ And also with you

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St John

R/ Glory to you, O Lord

Jesus said, "All that the Father gives me will come to me; and him who comes to me I will not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me; and this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up at the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that every one who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

[St John 6. 37 - 40]

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ

A Prayer of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are in the Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.
(The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament)

For Your Prayers

For those who have died in war
The peoples of Gaza and Israel
& for lasting peace in the Middle East
The people of Ukraine and a just and peaceful end to the war there
Those who suffer as a result of the climate emergency
For responsible stewardship of our planet
For compassion and responsibility in those elected to govern us.
For migrants & refugees, and all forced to flee from their homelands

For the Church:

For the bishops of the Church:

Cherry, Bishop of Monmouth, Philip, Episcopal Visitor of the Society of the Holy Cross in Wales, Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury. & for all who hold and teach the Catholic faith that comes to us from the Apostles.

All bishops, priests and deacons and all baptised Christians

For the reunion of all Christians: for Pope Francis, for Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew, & for the leaders of the Reformed traditions

For the Severn Wye Ministry Area, for its priests, licensed lay ministers and all its people.

For the Sick & those in need:

Roy Staples, Ralph Hamilton, Sylvia; The Revd Helen Rodwell; Elisabeth; Lisa; Anne-Louise; Helen; Abigail; Mary; Peter; Kenneth Cameron; Ken Reece; Margaret; Margot Davies, Margi.

For the Departed:

The recently departed; our own departed relatives & friends, & those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Evelyn Lloyd; Joyce Furneaux;

The Jereboam Interview

We continue our series of extracts from the Jerusalem and Galilee Gazette, an imaginary first-century newspaper. Week by week the correspondent Jereboam interviews various people whose lives have been affected in some way by Jesus Christ and his teaching.

Our thanks to the Parish of St Catharine's Chipping Campden & to the author for permission to reproduce 'Jereboam'

Basemath

Basemath: I do like Jesus: he's so warm-hearted and patient.

Jereboam: Patient? Yes, but I'd say he's sometimes quite impatient too...in a good way, I mean. He wants people to reform their lives urgently.

Basemath: Ah, but when I hear him speak of the impending coming of the Lord, I think of the glorious moment when God will summon me to his right hand. I know he needs to cajole people into repentance, into changing their ways, but I long to meet God face to face, for all eternity.

Jereboam: You're not at all worried at the prospect?

Basemath: Not really. I can't see I've got anything to fear. Only sinners have cause for worry. I already sense that I have a close relationship with God, which can only intensify when that great moment comes.

Jereboam: We can certainly both hope that you are granted a place in the Kingdom of Heaven. That's what Jesus calls it, isn't it?

Basemath: Yes: an odd expression, isn't it? Makes it sound like an entire nation. Of course the important thing is one's own relationship with God, the consoling, all-embracing God.

Jereboam: I'm not sure that you can discount the communal aspect of Jesus' claims. It sounds to me as if the Kingdom of Heaven will be anything but solitary. If you ask me, the self-discipline he demands grows out of his vision of a heavenly people molded and perfected according to his principles.

Basemath: But he befriends all sorts of people. You're not suggesting that they'll all reach this Kingdom of Heaven?

Jereboam: I imagine that they all hope to.

Basemath: How ghastly! I think I'll keep myself to myself when I'm there -- aside from my relationship with God, naturally. You're not telling me that's forbidden.

Jereboam: How am I supposed to know? We'll just have to wait and see.

THIS WEEK

On Sunday we observe as Remembrance Sunday -- we offer the Eucharist for those who have died in war

As we draw toward the end of the liturgical year, our first reading this week is taken from the book of Wisdom, a book written to encourage a downtrodden Jewish community. The vivid imagery offers us a view of the glory and justice of the Lord. "The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them." In Luke's Gospel, Jesus turns his focus away from the Pharisees and back to his followers. "If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him." He tells them the duties of discipleship, asking if a master should be grateful to a servant who does what is commanded. "So should it be with you." We read of the

curing the ten lepers - yet only one returns to give thanks. "Stand up and go; your faith has saved you." He also tells us that we should not spend our lives looking for the coming of the Kingdom "for behold, the Kingdom of God is among you." The Kingdom of God is coming, when we least expect it and, "Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses it will save it." We must "pray always without becoming weary."

Next Sunday brings us the familiar and powerful parable from St Matthew's Gospel about the servants who are each given sums of money to invest. We are all called upon to use the gifts we have received as gifts, and to return them, fully developed and utilised.

A homily for Remembrance Sunday

+ + I'm going to be fairly brief this morning, and I want to say a few words about why what we are doing today is so important. Remembrance is in the news at the moment – we see it being used and abused and weaponised by all sorts of not very responsible people for personal or ideological purposes and in some cases for both.

But what we are doing today shouldn't be controversial – or turned into a political football.

We are here to remember especially those who lost their lives in conflicts which have torn the world apart. We remember them and their sacrifice today and we are also here to commit ourselves to making the world a place where these things can't happen again.

That may seem a strange, counter-intuitive thing to say at the moment when we see exactly the same kind of madness, destruction and sheer barbarism gripping so many parts of the world, as we know particularly in Gaza and Israel, and in Ukraine. As a human race, it seems, we learn nothing. We seem powerless to prevent unimaginable cruelty and slaughter. And we are.

But part of our purpose for being here at all is to make a commitment to one another to do even what little we can to create the conditions for peace, and honour, self-sacrifice and generosity.

And I'm not talking mainly now about Governments or politics, although we're fortunate – because of those we remember today – unlike so many others in today's world to be able to cast our votes and to have the freedom to be able to raise our voices in discussion and argument and protest, and to influence the way things are. But the point that we are making today is that we have first to create those conditions in our own hearts and minds and follow through on them in the way we live, otherwise the future lies with those who want to inflict disorder, violence and tyranny on the world.

The Christian faith speaks to us eloquently of hope – at its heart is a belief in the hope which overcomes death and disaster, which triumphs over horror and violence, over oppression and tyranny, a hope that holds true despite the passing away of familiar and comfortable things – to the end of the ages.

This hope is the resurrection of Christ who overcomes death so we too can share in his life. The hope is one which shines out in the darkness of human history because it is the story of the One who becomes one of us and who has himself undergone crucifixion as the innocent victim of the darkness and violence which lurks in the depths of human hearts.

And for us our observance of Remembrance is nothing without this Christian hope, this hope in the Word-made-Flesh, this hope that neither death nor life...nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is the only this Resurrection hope, properly understood, which alone can preserve our commemorations at this time of year from the danger of mere sentimentality. We are not here to disguise or glorify the awfulness of war, and the atrocities to which it can give birth but to look beyond the horror to the Kingdom where the Son of Man reigns in glory. I'll go so far as to say that it is only this hope which alone can *begin* to make sense of the mystery of suffering: the suffering of the family of the young soldier blown to smithereens by the

land-mine, those killed by the deadly activity of the suicide bomber, the innocent victims of insane religious ideology, or men, women and children wiped off the face of the earth as part of a desire for revenge and retribution, or even, tragic irony that it is, in a search for security. It's the possibility of hope which can begin – and again I stress that word '*begin*' – to make sense of suffering. At the heart of what we believe is that God Himself has suffered in the human nature which he took upon Himself at his Incarnation. And we can go further than that and say that in all who suffer, in the maimed and disfigured, in all those who bear the wounds of war in body, mind and spirit, in the bereaved and those who mourn, the suffering yet glorious Christ is present too, hiding the wounded in the shelter of his own wounds.

And what about those who have died? The departed, among them the countless dead in war, are no less present to Christ.

So this morning at the altar we plead the sacrifice of Christ's perfect sacrifice for all those whom we remember, for all the Fallen. We remember them as living, breathing men and women and not as the impersonal statistics of history. But we come to this Requiem, as we come to every celebration of the Eucharist, in penitence and contrition. And our Act of Remembrance today not only honours those who have died, and laments the fact that their sacrifice became necessary, but also serves as a warning - a warning about the unspeakable things that we as human beings are capable of doing to one another. *Lest we forget.*

We live in a divided world, where we are encouraged to uncritically take sides on all kinds of issues, and irresponsible and malign people try to persuade us to opt for crudely simplistic solutions to increasingly complex problems and situations. There's a lot going on out there to disturb us and even to make us angry and demoralised and, worst of all, despairing. It takes a toll on us all. But what we do today in remembering – that is, *in not forgetting* – is part of a

process by which hope becomes a reality, where we commit ourselves not to destroy but to build up, to preserve and develop everything that is good and gives life, which contributes to human thriving and gives us all the freedom to flourish and grow in peace and harmony. In other words, to advance the values Jesus teaches us in the Gospel and help further the kingdom of God among us.

Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them. +

Thought for the Week

“Waste of Blood, and waste of Tears
Waste of youth's most precious years,
Waste of ways the saints have trod,
Waste of Glory, waste of God, War!”
— Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy –
from ‘More Rough Rhymes of a Padre’

Geoffrey Anketell Studdert Kennedy MC was an English Anglican priest and poet. He was nicknamed "Woodbine Willie" during World War I for giving Woodbine cigarettes to the soldiers he met, as well as spiritual aid to injured and dying soldiers.

What's On

St Arvans Drop in Tea & Chat

2.30–4 p.m. at the Meeting Rooms
Everyone Welcome

*December 10th
& every second Saturday
of the month*

Childrens activity table

For assistance or a lift
please ring Diane on 628084

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES

12th November: Remembrance Sunday

**The Second Sunday
of the Kingdom** (3rd before Advent)
10.30 a.m. Requiem and Act
of Remembrance at St Deiniol's, Itton
Hymns (Hymns Old & New)
372; 19; 494 & National Anthems

This is the only service today

*The Eucharist is celebrated at 9 a.m.
on weekdays (There is no service on
Mondays)*

NEXT SUNDAY

**19th November 2023:
The 3rd Sunday of the Kingdom**
(2nd before Advent)

*9 a.m. Holy Eucharist at
St James', Devauden
10 a.m. Sung Eucharist at St Arvans
11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
at Holy Cross, Kilgwrrwg*

Readings at the Eucharist:
Zephaniah 1. 7, 12-18; Psalm 90. 1-8;
1 Thessalonians 5. 1-11;
St Matthew 25. 14-30

*For services in the wider Ministry Area
please see www.severnwyema.co.uk*

**St James Church, Devauden
invites you to**

Sponsor a Slate

to help much needed roof repairs.
£10 per slate. Forms available from
Devauden Village Shop.
Please help to preserve this wonderful
listed building.

**The Severn Wye Ministry
Area Prayer Group meets
each Thursday at 7.30 p.m.
In one of our churches
All are welcome!**

16th November
Chepstow (07887 853479 for
address) - Movie showing
of ‘The Shack’

23rd November
St. Pierre Church

30th November
St. Pierre Church - Rev
Robert Sanday (retired) will
be following a Celtic form
of prayer

7th December
St. Pierre Church

14th December
St. Pierre Church

21st December
St. Pierre Church – with
mince pies!

Future dates to follow

Ministry Area Prayer

Dear Lord,
we thank you for the opportunity
to work together as a Ministry Area.
May we engage with each other
with faith and encouragement.
May we manage each situation
with wisdom and mutual respect.
May we serve with integrity,
creativity and purpose.
May we speak with openness
and gentleness.
May we offer our gifts, time
and finances with generosity.
May we face each challenge
with courage and the desire
to grow through it.
May we all be drawn deeper
into our relationship with you
and be known as your disciples.
Help us to show your love, proclaim
your Good News and grow your Kingdom
in this place.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ,
our Lord and Saviour. **AMEN**

A Prayer for Ukraine

written by Ukrainian Christians

O Lord our God, look down with
mercy on the Ukrainian people.
Protect and save them from the unjust
aggressors who seek to subdue them.
Grant them steadfast trust in your
mercy and protection.

O Mother of God, who gave us your
miraculous icon at Zarvanytsia,
intercede for the Ukrainian people,
who run to the shelter of your mercy
in their times of need.

O Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on
us. Grant peace and protection to the
people of Ukraine. Give them strength
and courage to defend what is good,
right, and holy. Keep them safe from
harm and provide for all their needs,
both temporal and spiritual.

Hear our prayers, O Lord, and deliver
us from distress, for You are merciful
and compassionate and love mankind.
To you we give glory: the Father,
the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever. **Amen.**