

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, **Our live-streamed services are as follows: Sunday Eucharist at 10. a.m., and a reflection & celebration of Night Prayer usually on Wednesdays at 8 p.m.** They can be accessed on the St Arvans Parish Group page on Facebook: <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
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26th May 2024

TRINITY SUNDAY

The Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you have given us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity and in the power of the divine majesty to worship the Unity: keep us steadfast in this faith, that we may evermore be defended from all adversities; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **AMEN**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two

they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.' The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: 'Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!' Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: 'Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.' Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'

[6; 1 - 8]

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

Psalm 29

R/ In God's temple all cry 'Glory!'

Ascribe to the Lord, you gods,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
Ascribe to the Lord the glory
due to his name;
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

R/ In God's temple all cry 'Glory!'

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;
the God of glory thunders;
the Lord is upon the mighty waters.
The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice;
the voice of the Lord
is a voice of splendour.

R/ In God's temple all cry 'Glory!'

The voice of the Lord
breaks the cedar trees;
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.

R/ In God's temple all cry 'Glory!'

The voice of the Lord
splits the flames of fire;
the voice of the Lord
shakes the wilderness;
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
The voice of the Lord
makes the oak trees writhe
and strips the forests bare.
And in the temple of the Lord
all are crying, 'Glory!'

R/ In God's temple all cry 'Glory!'

The Lord sits enthroned above the flood;
the Lord sits enthroned
as king for evermore.
The Lord shall give strength to his people;
the Lord shall give his people
the blessing of peace.

R/ In God's temple all cry 'Glory!'

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans [8; 12 - 17]

We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh – for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ – if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

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

Hymn

Alleluia, alleluia!
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit,
The God who is, who was,
and who is to come.
Alleluia!

The Lord be with you:
and also with you

For Your Prayers

Listen to the Gospel of Christ
according to St. John [3: 1 - 17]

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.'

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

That we may witness to the overflowing love of the Holy Trinity in our lives
For all pilgrims to the holy places of the faith and all who support them
All who are caught up in war or conflict
All those without adequate food or shelter
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; Anne-Louise; Helen; Mary; Peter; Kenneth Cameron; Ken Reece; Margaret; Margot Davies, Margi; Althea; Eira & Naylor Firth; Ivor Cavill; Jenny Sherwood; James Burnam; Anne Octon..

For the Departed:

The recently departed: Hugh Balmer; our own departed relatives & friends, and those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Rhian Hatcher; Peter Cobb, priest; Thomas Hudson; Karl Lodwick; Alan Kennard

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)

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'

Leah and Solomon

Jereboam: Congratulations, Leah. Congratulations, Solomon. Is everything going well?

Solomon: Not so badly, thanks, Jereboam. We're a bit tired, but that's to be expected, really.

Jereboam: I suppose so. He's a lovely little boy, isn't he? How old is he now?

Leah: He's eight days old. Would you like to hold him for a while?

Jereboam: Well...if you're sure, thank you...This really brings back memories: I probably haven't held a baby for fifteen years. What a sweet boy... Look, here we are, I'd better give him back to you now.

Solomon: I'll take him: Leah's arms could probably do with a bit of a rest.

Jereboam: Well, he seems to recognise his parents all right. He's obviously very comfortable with both of you. Personally I always think that babies can sense the bond of love between their parents as well. I reckon it gives them an extra feeling of security.

Solomon: I can believe that.

Leah: I didn't realise you were

a follower of Jesus, Jereboam.

Jereboam: Strictly speaking, I'm not. What makes you say that?

Leah: You've just neatly described our idea of the Holy Spirit, that's all.

Jereboam: Really?

Leah: Yes: as you know, we worship God the Father and also his Son Jesus. Then there's also the Holy Spirit, which draws us into the loving relationship between God and Jesus. It's a bit like your theory about babies sensing the love between their parents. You've come up with a rather apt metaphor, if you ask me.

Jereboam: Always glad to oblige...

Solomon: You're obviously a natural. You ought to become one of us, you know.

Jereboam: I'll think about it. Anyway, it's lovely to see you all. Best wishes to the whole family.

Leah and Solomon: Thank you.

THIS WEEK

This week begins with Trinity Sunday, which always follows Pentecost. It celebrates the mystery of the relationship between the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit - and their loving support for us in our lives.

"When he comes, the Spirit of truth will guide you to all truth..."

Friday is the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The first readings this week are from one of the pastoral epistles, The First Letter of St Peter.

During the week, we resume reading St Mark's Gospel where we left it when Lent began. It offers us stories about sacrificing part of ourselves. We hear of the Rich Young Man: "Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." At that statement, his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions. Peter tells Jesus, "We have given up everything and followed you." Jesus responds, "there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the Gospel who will not receive a hundred times more." When the disciples squabble over who will sit in glory with Jesus, he tells them, "the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Bartimaeus, a blind man recognizes Jesus as "Son of David" and is healed.

Bartimaeus follows Jesus. He drives money changers out of the Temple saying, "My house shall be called a house of prayer ... but you have made it a den of thieves." We end the week with Jesus evading the trickery of the chief priests who ask him "by what authority are you doing these things?"

Next Sunday we keep as Corpus Christi, Our celebration of the Body and Blood of Christ, given to us in the Eucharist.

A Homily for Trinity Sunday

+ It's not unusual to hear people say that the Holy Trinity doesn't really connect with anything much in the life and worship of most Christians. One reason alleged for this is that what has been said about the Trinity by theologians is just too subtle, too complex, too difficult to understand, that, without a solid grounding in the study of theology, one can't even begin to grasp what the Church is talking about.

But the irony is that the Fathers of the Church - those who we could say devised this difficult and obscure language about the Holy Trinity did so only in order to safeguard the truth that the God who reveals himself to us in fact does connect, and connect immediately and relevantly, with the lives and the worship of all Christians.

And it's because of this direct connection of the Trinity with our life and worship that this feast of the holy Trinity falls when it does: at the end of Eastertide, our celebration of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, and of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; it is in the Easter mystery that the triune God connects with us, that we encounter the one God as Trinity, as three-in-one.

The question of a Trinity arises for us because of what must be said about who exactly is the God who encounters us in the person of Jesus Christ.

All the other great Christian doctrines we celebrate during the course of the Church's year are relatively easy to speak about, but many people seem to panic when it comes to the Holy Trinity because it's generally thought to be confusing and inexplicable.

Which, of course, it is and it has to be. What I *mean by that* is that as soon as we begin to think about God, our reason

breaks down because we are very clearly out of our depth, our minds, much less our faltering words simply cannot encompass the height, breadth and depth of God. The distance between the omnipotent, ineffable and unknowable God and we his creatures seems immense.

But, of course, that won't do at all. It's the exact opposite of what we celebrate today on the Feast of the Holy Trinity. Yes, our minds simply cannot comprehend the immensity of the mystery of God. But we are not kept at a distance from him; more than that he refuses to keep at a distance from *us*, as, through the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus, he has taken the whole of humanity into his own three-fold life of love.

As what we are doing this morning in the Eucharist makes absolutely clear: there is no distance between us and God, as we exist *in God*, and there is no distance in God himself between the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit as they form a perfect and complete unity.

It's all too easy for those foolhardy enough to preach on Trinity Sunday to present the inner life of God as a weird form of theological abstraction, but what we are doing today is celebrating the way God has chosen to reveal himself to us, not our own feeble attempts to define him and understand him, although, of course, even then our language falters before the reality of the mystery.

There is no distant God just managing the universe, but only the God who loves the world so much, that he brings the world into his own communion of love, his own eternal friendship.

Our faith really does stand or fall by this message of the closeness of God who is Triune Love. Maybe that's why one of the meanings of the word Gospel means "Good News". There have been many alternative ways of looking at God throughout human history, many alternatives to this Gospel of love. One would be to turn God into pure transcendence, a being with no connection with us whatsoever, far beyond the little petty concerns of human history. But when we as Christians speak of God as 'Father' we don't mean an authority figure, nor do we mean the traditional western absentee father - away at work all day - and, above all, we certainly don't mean any kind of abusive patriarchal monster, but someone who

knows and cares, as Jesus himself says, even for the sparrows; the one who is pictured in Our Lord's parable of the prodigal son rushing towards his child and embracing him and restoring him to life. Our language is always by way of analogy, always groping for the truth – but the mystery Trinity redefines our idea of fatherhood and makes it a matter of love, compassion and mercy. We are talking about the One Jesus calls "Abba", a word which virtually defies our attempts at translation, but if anything is much closer to the familiar "daddy" than to anything more formal and correct - or anything more coolly distant. St Paul picks up on the word in the second reading today. As Christians we proclaim the Son who comes to save the world, to draw us to him as, entirely helpless, he offers his outstretched arms to us on the cross. And we believe there is only this God who does not spare himself in coming to us and thereby freeing us from all the false gods of human merit and self-congratulation - we cannot save ourselves, we can only freely respond to the love freely offered through the Holy Spirit, the one who is the personal, searching, healing and transforming one, who even searches the hidden depths of God as St Paul says in 1 Corinthians, and who communicates that life, that energising love, to us.

Today we are meant to feel uncomfortable about the doctrine of the Trinity, because it throws down a pretty radical challenge to each one of us.

God is love, the first letter of St John tells us, and at its deepest level, love is self-sacrifice: a total giving of one's self to another. We know that ourselves from our own experience of love, and we see this expression of God's inner life, his own infinite capacity to give of himself without limit, revealed in human history in the death of Jesus, God the Son, upon the Cross.

The true centre of our faith is that love that results in sacrifice, and the centre of all our worship is what we are doing now as we gather around not only a communion table of loving hospitality but also an altar of sacrifice as in thanksgiving we offer the Son's death and resurrection to the Father. Here we see revealed the mystery of God in Christ, not only coming among us but giving his own life that we might live. Here we are brought to a living

expression of God the Holy Trinity who shares his love and his life with us from this altar, a God who is love and **cannot** but share his life and his love with us all.
+

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES TODAY

26th May 2024:

THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

10 a.m. Sung Eucharist at St Arvans
Hymns: (New English Hymnal)
146; 360; 343; 358

*The St Arvans Annual Meeting
will be held after the Eucharist*

NEXT SUNDAY

2nd June 2024:

kept as *Corpus Christi*

10 a.m. Sung Eucharist at St Arvans
11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
at St Mary's Penterry
4 p.m. All Age Eucharist
at St James', Devauden.

Readings at the Eucharist :

Genesis 14. 18-20;
Psalms 116. 12-19;
1 Corinthians 11. 23-26;
St John 6. [47-50,] 51-58

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

St Arvans Drop in Tea & Chat

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

**June 8th and usually
every second Saturday
of the month**

Childrens activity table

For assistance or a lift
please ring Diane on 628084

The Severn Wye Ministry Area Prayer Group meets each Thursday at 7.30 p.m. All are welcome!

Coming Dates & Locations:

30th May St Pierre
6th June: St Peter's, Newchurch
13th June: St Mary's, Penterry
20th June; Holy Cross, Kilgwrrwg
27th June: St Christopher's
Chepstow
4th July St Mary's Priory, Chepstow
11th July St. Deiniol, Itton
18th July St. James, Devauden
25th July St. Arvans
1st August St. Thomas Becket,
Shirenewton
8th August St. Tewdric, Mathern
15th August St. Andoenus, Mounton
22nd August St. Peter, St. Pierre
29th August St. Peter, Newchurch
5th September St. Mary, Penterry
12th September Holy Cross,
Kilgwrrwg
19th September St. Christopher,
Chepstow
26th September St. Mary's Priory,
Chepstow
3rd October St. Deiniol, Itton
10th October St. James, Devauden
17th October St. Arvans
24th October St. Tewdric, Mathern
31st October St. Thomas a Becket,
Shirenewton

Churches Unlocked Diary

Saturday 8th June:

“ Tea & Chat “

in Meeting Rooms as usual.

Please feel free to come over to the church for a visit.

Monday 10th June:

“ Open Session “ for local schools to visit.

Refreshments provided.

Tuesday 11th June 7 p.m.

Illustrated talk on

THE CAMINO

TO SANTIAGO

with INTERVAL for SPANISH SNACKS!

with Father Michael Gollop

Wednesday 12th June:

Meditation Day.

St Arvans Church will be OPEN all day for silent reflection or meditation. Come and go as you like. Take in the awe of our beautiful church.

Refreshments will be available.

The day will end at 8.00 when Father Michael will close with Night Prayer.

Wednesday 12th June:

St Deiniol's Itton

at 2.30 p.m.

A Walk on the Wild Side

An illustrated talk on the history and planting of the High Line Garden in New York

Given by Lesley Kelly

Admission free

Followed by Tea and Cakes

Concert at Itton Thursday

13th June: 7.30 pm.

A Tale of Joy

With the Amalthea Ensemble

Chamber music including works

by Bach, Beethoven & Villa Lobos

in aid of Joy of Learning

Friday 14th: 7.30 pm.

Illustrated talk on The

Reverend Arthur Purchas

by David Priddis who has carried out extensive research into this missionary who has links to St Arvans.

FREE ADMISSION/DONATIONS TO ST ARVANS CHURCH WELCOME.

PLEASE SEE NEWSLETTERS, POSTERS/ & FLYERS NEARER THE DATES IN JUNE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON ALL EVENTS.

ADVANCE NOTICE

ST ARVANS PATRONAL FESTIVAL CONCERT

With Kate Price, Charles Matthews and friends

A rare opportunity to hear a live performance of

Schubert's

TROUT QUINTET

& other well-known classics

St Arvans Church

Sunday 23rd June 2024

at 7 p.m.

Tickets £20

Bar and light refreshments

available from 6.30 p.m.