

# 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  
01291 622064;  
Mobile 07867803479  
E-mail: frmichael1@aol.com

**3<sup>rd</sup> November 2024**

*kept as*

**ALL SAINTS SUNDAY**

### The Collect

Almighty God,  
you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: grant us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that we may come to those inexpressible joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you;  
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 book of Revelation

I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to damage earth and sea, saying, "Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have marked the servants of our God with a seal on their foreheads." And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the people of Israel. After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

[ 7. 2- 4, 9 - 14]

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

**Psalm 34:** 1- 10

**R/ Those who trust in him will understand truth and the faithful will abide with him in love.**

I will bless the Lord at all times;  
his praise shall ever be in my mouth.

I will glory in the Lord;  
let the humble hear and rejoice.  
Proclaim with me  
the greatness of the Lord;  
let us exalt his name together.

**R/ Those who trust in him will understand truth and the faithful will abide with him in love.**

I sought the Lord and he answered me and delivered me out of all my terror.  
Look upon him and be radiant,  
and let not your faces be ashamed.  
I called in my affliction  
and the Lord heard me  
and saved me from all my troubles.

**R/ Those who trust in him will understand truth and the faithful will abide with him in love.**

The angel of the Lord encompasses those who fear him,  
and he will deliver them.  
Taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are they who trust in him!

**R/ Those who trust in him will understand truth and the faithful will abide with him in love.**

Fear the Lord, you that are his saints,  
for those who fear him lack nothing.  
The young lions lack and suffer hunger,  
but those who seek the Lord  
lack nothing that is good.

**R/ Those who trust in him will understand truth and the faithful will abide with him in love.**

**A reading from the first letter of St John** [3. 1 - 3]

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are.  
The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.  
Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will

see him as he is.  
And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

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

### Gradual Hymn

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Come to me, all you who labour  
and are overburdened,  
and I will give you rest, says the Lord.  
**Alleluia!**

The Lord be with you:  
**And also with you**

**Listen to the Gospel of Christ**  
**according to St. Matthew** [5. 1 - 12]

**R/ Glory to you, O Lord.**

**W**hen Jesus saw the crowds,  
he went up the mountain;  
and after he sat down,  
his disciples came to him.  
Then he began to speak,  
and taught them, saying:  
"Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
"Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.  
"Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.  
"Blessed are those who hunger  
and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.  
"Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will receive mercy.  
"Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.  
"Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.  
"Blessed are those who are persecuted  
for righteousness' sake,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
"Blessed are you when people revile  
you and persecute you and utter  
all kinds of evil against you  
falsely on my account.  
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward  
is great in heaven, for in the same way  
they persecuted the prophets  
who were before you.

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

## For Your Prayers

That we may live conscious of our unity in  
the Communion of Saints.  
All who are caught up in war or conflict  
All those without adequate food or shelter  
The peoples of Gaza, Israel and Lebanon  
& 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  
The people of the  
United States of America 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; Margaret; Margi;  
Althea; Eira Firth; Bob Osborne;

### **For the Departed:**

The recently departed: our own departed  
relatives & friends, and those whose  
anniversaries of death fall at this time:  
Sylvia Gravelle; Richard Leigh Clay

## 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'*

## Mahalon

**Jereboam:** So what's new in the life  
of the Church?

**Mahalon:** Well, we've been  
hearing a lot recently about what a  
wonderful gift faith is. Several of the elders  
have been praising the faith of Abraham,  
for example.

**Jereboam:** You know...forgive my  
rudeness...I never quite see the point of  
commending faith like that. Presumably  
the idea is to encourage you to believe  
more fervently, but that doesn't really  
make sense. Teach people about your  
faith, by all means. Encourage them to  
express their faith through good works:  
fine...but telling them to believe more  
strongly – well, surely they can't achieve  
that just by trying harder, can they?

**Mahalon:** It's not quite like that.  
We reassure one another about the value  
of our faith, encouraging ourselves to  
have the confidence to believe. That's  
important. If you're surrounded by enough  
people who regard your faith as  
unnecessary or inadequate in some way,  
their opinions can easily start to affect  
you. Listen to this: one of our friends was  
recently advised that she ought to give up

her belief in Jesus and her membership of the Church. Apparently she'd become healthier!

**Jereboam:** What? I don't like the sound of that attitude...

**Mahalon:** No: it is an extreme example. But even in everyday life you encounter little criticisms or jokes made at your expense. Sometimes they're genuinely meant in a friendly way, and you like to think that you can laugh them off, but eventually this all starts to have an impact, wearing you down. Then your faith begins to become cautious, wary...it's blunted, if you like. That's one reason why the fellowship of faith within the Church is so important, and why we need to remember the glorious faith of our forefathers. Their resolve reminds us what is possible, encourages us to trust our convictions, and – how can I put this – it urges us to let our faith trickle into every last corner of our being.

**Jereboam:** I see.

**Mahalon:** ...and by the way I didn't think you were being rude at all.

**Jereboam:** Thank you.

## THIS WEEK

On Sunday we celebrate the great feast of All Saints. The living and departed are united in the life and love of the Lord's Resurrection

At the Eucharist this week, in St Luke's Gospel Jesus talks about not only inviting all the "right" people into our lives, but to include "the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind." "For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." Then Jesus tells the parable of the invited guests who made excuses to decline the invitation. He sends his servants to invite everyone. Jesus tells a crowd that they have to renounce their possessions to be his disciple and that to do something really important, we have to prepare and be ready. In answer to the Pharisees' criticism of Jesus eating and drinking with sinners, Jesus tells parables of the man who finds his lost sheep and the woman with the lost coin, both of whom rejoice in finding what was lost. Jesus tells the parable of the dishonest steward who is caught overcharging his master's customers and saves himself by cutting his master's prices. Jesus praises his enterprise: "the children of this world are

more prudent in dealing with their own generation than the children of light." Finally, Jesus says that we can't have two masters, trying to love God and money. When a Pharisee sneered at him, he said: "what is of human esteem is an abomination in the sight of God."

**Next Sunday** is kept as Remembrance Sunday. At the Eucharist we pray for those who have died in war and honour their memory as we pray that we may learn the lessons of their sacrifice and endeavour to live in peace.

## A Homily for All Saintside

+ Our faith isn't something which we somehow pluck out of the air as a personal, private revelation. Inevitably in some way, it has to come to us from others, the community of faith which traces its origins and its beliefs from the Apostles, those who were called by the Risen Lord to be the witnesses of his Resurrection; the community of faith which we believe has at its heart and centre the living person of Jesus himself, crucified, risen, ascended and glorified, made present today in this most holy sacrament of the altar, the Eucharist itself. And whether we like it or not, faith can't exist authentically in isolation from other people. The Lord, as the scriptures faithfully record, founded not a philosophy or a life-style, or even a "religion" but a community of human beings lead by the Apostles. Ultimately we *catch* the faith from other people. These people are not always the ones we see around us, we feel - sometimes it's almost tangible when we celebrate the Eucharist or, as T.S. Eliot so memorably puts it when we stand "in the draughty church at smoke fall" - the continuing influence and inspiration of those whose witness to Christ stretches back down the ages to the Apostles themselves. In this respect at least, if not in so many others - and it's good for us to recognise this, as an understanding and appreciation of spiritual things maybe isn't one of the twenty-first century's most obvious cultural qualities. Perhaps that lack of understanding it goes hand in hand with the desire to cast aside nuance and metaphor in favour of seeking easy answers to difficult questions – the cultural aversion to multilayered complexity of all kinds.

But All Saintside is saying some fairly complex things about the relationship between time and space and the implications of Christ's Resurrection for the Church.

What we're saying is that the Christian belief in the Communion of Saints means that we all, living and departed are united in the life and love of the resurrection. I'm not saying – like that unfortunate out-of-context passage sometimes read at funerals about death being nothing at all and that this is the kind of relationship where we talk to one another from similar, familiar realities as if we had simply gone into another room. We know that our mortality is far more tragically real than that. No, we're speaking about a far more profound mystery than that, of which we can only grasp the barest outline. The Church is saying that we are bound together in a relationship of living prayer, the prayer at the heart of the life of God himself, in the dynamic, ceaseless movement of love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In the resurrection, the boundaries of time and space are broken down, we and those who have gone before us live in this tremendous mystery.

This season of All Saints is the time we recognise what we might call the "ordinary" saints, that huge number, impossible to count from every nation, race, tribe and language as the Book of Revelation says. It's the feast of those who have been gentle and merciful to others. It's the feast of those who have mourned and have been concerned to be pure in heart. It is the feast of those who have striven to follow the words of the Lord in the beatitudes - those who have been peacemakers and thirsted after what is right and good and true. It's the feast of those who have been persecuted in the cause of righteousness. We celebrate the grace of God in the "ordinary" Christian people down the ages who have been extra-ordinary.

All Saints tide is primarily about remembering and giving thanks for those who haven't been formally recognised in any way, the ones who remain nameless perhaps but are all part of that flowing stream of faith and holiness which we call the Communion of Saints. . Some of these "ordinary saints" might be remembered as kind old relatives, or as neighbours who were always there for us and for whom nothing was too much trouble. People we

ourselves will have met but never realised - because they didn't wear their religion on their sleeves - the depth of their faith or their gentle and merciful love or the extent to which their lives were permeated by the grace and holiness of God. Others won't be remembered at all by this or any other generation, only by God himself. Today says to us that that is enough.

The great feast of All Saints is a sign of hope. It's about a recognition that our faith isn't only about a glorious past but a glorious present and an unimaginably glorious future. It's about the realisation that past, present and future are all alive in God.

This feast of All Saints is about the great revelation that heaven isn't for a carefully selected group of the ultra-pious - not for an 'elite' (whatever that is) but for people like you and me, people who started out without any great claims for holiness or outstanding faith, people who have been wounded and scarred in the battles of life, but those whose scars became not a shield to keep others out, but a badge of honour identifying them as open and vulnerable to Christ and his eternal self-sacrificial love - those who in the words of W.H. Auden's Anthem for St Cecilia's Day - the patron of music and musicians - have worn their tribulation 'like a rose.' The saints are those who have become able to love God and to see him in their neighbour. The saints are those who refuse to be defined by their failings, their setbacks or their suffering, and are able to find the will to get up again and continue the long pilgrimage of faith towards the vision of God.

St. John in the second reading today sums up what we believe about All Saints. He says that all we know is that we will be like God, because we shall see God as he really is. The Resurrection of Christ gives us the hope of resurrection and new life, and the saints have walked this way before us. They are the collective memory of the Church, but not confined to the past, because they are also the present and the future. The Church will never be without hope.

We all need some words of encouragement, perhaps particularly at the moment, when for all kinds of reasons life can feel precarious and is hedged around with so much uncertainty. So whenever we are tempted to be afraid, or to sink into despair about the future, we

should call to mind those greater, supernatural, realities which All Saints tide celebrates: forgiveness and redemption and mercy, and the greater and future reality of which we get a foretaste at this Eucharist when we are fed with the living reality of Christ himself. We should remember and never give up hope. The Communion of Saints - the living Church on earth, and in the nearer presence of God - is the reality of our faith lived in the hope of Resurrection. +

## SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES TODAY

**3<sup>rd</sup> November 2024:**

**kept as All Saints**

10 a.m. Sung Eucharist at St Arvans

Hymns: (New English Hymnal)

341; 345; 197; 478

11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

at St Mary's Penterry

4 p.m. All Age Eucharist

at St James', Devauden.

**NEXT SUNDAY**

**10<sup>th</sup> November 2024:**

**Remembrance Sunday**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Kingdom**

10 a.m. Sung Requiem and Act of

Remembrance at St Arvans

*For all services in the wider Ministry Area please see [www.severnwyema.co.uk](http://www.severnwyema.co.uk)*

**St Arvans Drop in Tea & Chat**

2.30-4 p.m. at the Meeting Rooms

Everyone Welcome

**November 9<sup>th</sup> and usually every second Saturday of the month**

Childrens activity table

For assistance or a lift please ring Diane on 628084

## *All Saints & All Soulstide*

With the Solemnity of All Saints, we are reminded of all those whose faithful living of the Gospel is so clear that we are sure we can imitate their lives. These are all the named Saints. It is good to name in our prayers the saints whose example we desire to shape our lives. We ask, too, for the prayers of those, united with us in the Communion of saints, whose holiness is known only to God.

All Souls Day gives us the opportunity to remember and pray for all our brothers and sisters who have died. As we offer the holy sacrifice of the altar, we hope and pray with confidence that they may be embraced by the love and mercy of God, poured forth in the life giving death and resurrection of Jesus.

This is a wonderful time to name in our own prayers and during the Church's liturgy all those for whom we wish to pray, and to include in our prayer also those who have no one to pray for them.

***Eternal rest grant to them,  
O Lord,  
and let perpetual light  
shine upon them  
May they rest in peace.***

**Many thanks!**

Our thanks to all those who worked so hard to make the **St Arvans Autumn Supper** last Friday (1<sup>st</sup> November) such a great success. Our particular thanks to Miriam & Barrie Howells and Sheena & Barney Banfield for all their efforts.