

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
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10th November 2024

kept as

Remembrance Sunday

2nd Sunday of the Kingdom

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,

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*

Gradual Hymn

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 everyone 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

For Your Prayers

Those have died in war
 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
 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;
 The Revd Stuart Jackson; 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:
 Donald Sunderland; Vera Witts; Evelyn
 Lloyd; Joyce Furneaux; John Kenneth
 Gravelle

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)

Reflection:

*Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy (1883 –
 1929) was a chaplain in the British
 Army during the First World War. He
 was awarded the MC for outstanding
 bravery during the battle of Messines
 Ridge for helping the wounded in no
 man's land between the opposing
 trenches.
 He became generally known as
 'Woodbine Willie' because of his
 handing out cigarettes to the soldiers
 he met, as well as his devotion in
 giving spiritual aid to injured and dying
 soldiers.
 He went on to write and speak
 extensively, reflecting on his
 experience of war and on the social
 conditions of his time..*

"War is only glorious when you buy it
 in the *Daily Mail* and enjoy it at the
 breakfast table. It goes splendidly with
 bacon and eggs. Real war is the final
 limit of damnable brutality, and that all
 there is in it. It's about the silliest,
 filthiest, most inhumanly fatuous thing
 that ever happened. It makes the
 whole universe seem like a mad
 muddle. One feels that all talk of order
 and meaning in life is insane
 sentimentality."

"There are no words foul and filthy
 enough to describe war. Yet I would
 remind you that this indescribably filthy
 thing is the commonest thing in
 History, and that if we believe in a God
 of Love at all we must believe in the
 face of war and all it means. The
 supreme strength of the Christian faith
 is that it faces the foulest and filthiest
 of life's facts in the crude brutality of
 the Cross, and through them sees the
 Glory of God in the face of Jesus
 Christ."

THIS WEEK

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.
 Monday is the feast day of Saint Martin of
 Tours, bishop.
 The first readings at the Eucharist this
 week are from the pastoral letters
 to Titus, Philemon, and
 the Second and Third Letter of St John.
 Continuing St Luke's Gospel, we hear
 Jesus talk about scandal and about
 forgiveness. He calls us to "have faith the
 size of a mustard seed" in order to do
 extraordinary things in his name. Jesus
 tells us to be obedient to what God calls
 us to do and simply say, "we have done
 what we were obliged to do." We learn a
 lesson about gratitude when Jesus heals
 ten lepers and only one, "foreigner"
 returns to give thanks. Jesus tells the
 confrontational Pharisees that the
 Kingdom of God's coming can't be "seen"
 and it won't be announced. "For behold,
 the Kingdom of God is among you." "But
 first [the Son of Man] must suffer greatly
 and be rejected by this generation." All we
 can do is to be faithful: "Whoever seeks to

preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses it will save it." Finally, Jesus tells the parable "about the necessity for [his disciples] to pray always without becoming weary." God will give justice to those who call out to him with faith.

Next Sunday as we approach the end of the Church's year, we continue with the theme of the end of all things as we hear Jesus remarks about being prepared for the end of days:

"In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, at the gates." We are being told to hold fast to our faith in the good news that we can stay alert and will be ready so we may recognise the Lord's coming in life's challenges today.

A Homily for Remembrance Sunday

+ Today we've come together this morning mainly to remember those who died in the cataclysmic events of the twentieth century, not forgetting the conflicts our country has been involved in since, and those which are still raging virtually on our doorstep.

Today we remember with a mixture of sorrow, pride and gratitude those who have given their lives in war for the defence of those things dear to them and dear to us.

Today - Remembrance Sunday - says something crucial about our sense of identity and our sense of mutual belonging: not only with those around us, but with those who have gone before us – and those who will come after us. We don't come out of nowhere – whether we like it or not, for good or ill the past has made us who we are. We are bound together with the generations who have produced us and with our own children, including those yet unborn. Our obligation to honour the memory of those who have gone before us, especially those whose lives were drastically cut short in war, is of a piece with our obligation to preserve for future generations the kind of society which we value in these islands and which we've advanced and developed at great cost over many centuries and generations, and which we have received on trust: a society which is based on an idea of the good which stems from our shared heritage and the culture which has developed from it.

And that culture, enriched by many different sources speaks to us eloquently of two things. Whatever our view of the Church, and its very flawed past history and present reality, the Christian faith, in effect, and in ways we don't always appreciate, invented the idea of the individual conscience, and our essential equality in the eyes of God, and the rights and responsibilities we have as a result: the value, uniqueness and autonomy of each human being made in the image of God, and whose nature is shared by God's own Son. Above all, our faith speaks to us of hope - a hope that 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 in 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 was tortured and killed because, as St John says, men loved darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil. Our view of human nature is realistic, we're a strange mixture of good and bad, but we believe that our hope and our compassion, and our empathy - what goodness we have - the better angels of our nature, if you like, are there as a result of the divine spark which has been planted in us.

Even though we may regret it, even though we would love to be able to perhaps, we can't ever change the past; but we *are* responsible for the ways in which we remember it and the spirit in which we remember it. Remembrance Sunday isn't the time to delve into the complexities of war and when, or whether, it can ever be justified. There is a time and a place for that, but this isn't it. It's not a time for theorising but for stark reality – for remembering – or to put it another way, not forgetting.

Let's talk instead of what we are doing here today, and how what we do here informs what we can do to make the world a safer, more secure and just place. And I'm not talking about Governments or politics - we tend to have a touching belief in the power of politics and politicians to change hearts and minds - even given all the inevitable disappointments,

compromises and betrayals of the political process - and as Christians and as a Church we should probably grow up and grow out of that – given the realities of human nature and the evidence of our own eyes, to put too much faith in it can be misplaced and sometimes dangerously so. As we've seen. The world seems a darker place even than it did a week ago. But - what I mean is this: We have to *create* the conditions for peace, and honour and self-sacrifice and generosity. That can sound laughably overblown – after all, what can we do? No, what I mean by that is that in whatever ways we can – in the little things that matter most - we have to create those conditions for peace and honour and charity in our own hearts and minds, and follow through on them in the way we live and interact with others. If we don't remember where we've come from, we can't know who we are. If we don't reflect on the past and we allow ourselves to forget it, we are doomed to repeat it's mistakes. We're not very good at that, are we? Very clearly we're not. And it is this hope which can make help sense of the suffering of the world. The Christian faith puts suffering, innocent suffering, the suffering of the Victim who is both God and Man, at the heart of its hope for the salvation of the world. Without the suffering of Our Lord upon the Cross, there is no Christian hope for salvation at all. The suffering of Christ was, is, always must be, unique, for in His suffering, God Himself suffers in the human nature which he took upon Himself at his Incarnation. Out of his suffering comes Resurrection and new life. 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 triumphant Christ is present too, and he hides the wounded in the shelter of his own wounds. So, what about those who have died - those we remember today? We believe that the departed, and among them the countless dead in war, live in Christ. He accompanies them on their final journey, beyond time and human imagining, into the fullness of the vision and presence of God. And here at the altar, where remembrance and suffering and hope all meet in our offering up of the sacrifice of Calvary. We plead Christ's saving death and resurrection for them, as we do for the living. In him all things live. When we offer

his sacrifice we offer all suffering, and the hurts and agonies of all creation – we offer them up for healing, for reconciliation, for renewal. Here the remembrance of the past is brought into the present. them. The world still suffers from the violence of those whose minds and hearts remain closed – locked and barred in some cases - to the value of human life. Who could forget as we worship here in peace and security what is going on in Ukraine, or in the Middle East?

We should utterly reject any political ideology, or any perversion of religious faith which is built on relationships of cruelty and domination rather than compassion; on the dignity stripped from others rather than the dignity we are given as children of God, on the life taken from others against their will rather than the life of Christ offered freely on our behalf. Today is about remembrance, and it's also about repentance. It's about honouring the fallen by trying to make the world a place in which sacrifices and suffering like theirs is no longer necessary. How do we do that? It seems completely, almost laughably unrealistic, in the world in which we find ourselves. In this time of uncertainty and danger, in this new age of anxiety, the challenge for those of us who are called by Jesus Christ is to obey his great commandment of love, and, by his grace, to bring something vital of the Kingdom of Heaven, into the here and now. This isn't a time to be fearful, but a time to be faithful. To light little candles in the darkness, to speak kind words into what sometimes seems a whirling vortex of vituperation and division. To allow Christ to work in us. To allow a new and better world to be born. To witness to Resurrection. In this way we honour the fallen by the way we live. +

St Arvans Drop in Tea & Chat
2.30–4 p.m. at the Meeting Rooms
Everyone Welcome

December 14th and usually every second Saturday of the month

Childrens activity table

For assistance or a lift
please ring Diane on 628084

Many thanks!

Our thanks to all who helped with the Coffee and Chat at St Arvans on Saturday afternoon

Our thanks to Jonathan Jenkins for his very moving Remembrance Sunday display in St Arvan's Church.

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES TODAY

10th November 2024:
kept as Remembrance Sunday
2nd Sunday of the Kingdom

10 a.m. Sung Requiem & Act of Remembrance at St Arvans
Hymns: (New English Hymnal)
498; 492; 333; 417

NEXT SUNDAY
17th November 2024:
3rd Sunday of the Kingdom

9 a.m. Family Service at Devauden
10 a.m. Sung Eucharist at St Arvans
11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
at Holy Cross, Kilgwrrwg

Readings:
Daniel 12. 1-3; Psalm 16;
Hebrews 10. 11-14, [15-18,] 19-25;
St Mark 13. 1-8

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

We hope to resume both the daily celebration of the Eucharist and the Wednesday evening reflection and night prayer at the beginning of Advent.