

# 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.,** 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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**20<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

## EASTER SUNDAY

### The Collect

Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty resurrection of your Son overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him: grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ, may reign with him in glory; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour, glory and might, now and in all eternity. **AMEN**

### A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter began to speak to those assembled in the house of Cornelius: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ – he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that

John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

[10. 34; 37 - 43]

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

### Psalm 118. 1–2, 14–24

**R Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!  
This is the day the Lord has made.**

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his mercy endures for ever.

Let Israel now proclaim,  
'His mercy endures for ever.'

**R**

The Lord is my strength and my song,  
and he has become my salvation.  
There is a sound of exultation and victory  
in the tents of the righteous:

'The right hand of the Lord has triumphed!  
the right hand of the Lord is exalted!  
the right hand of the Lord has triumphed!'

**R**

I shall not die, but live,  
and declare the works of the Lord.  
The Lord has punished me sorely,  
but he did not hand me over to death.  
Open for me the gates of righteousness;  
I will enter them; I will offer thanks to the Lord.

**R**

'This is the gate of the Lord;  
whoever is righteous may enter.'  
I will give thanks to you, for you answered  
me  
and have become my salvation.  
The same stone which the builders  
rejected  
has become the chief corner-stone.

**R**

This is the Lord's doing,  
and it is marvellous in our eyes.  
On this day the Lord has acted;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

**R**

### A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians [3. 1 - 4]

If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

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

### Gradual Hymn

Alleluia, alleluia,  
I am the first and the last, says the Lord,  
and the living one;  
I was dead, and behold  
I am alive for evermore.  
**Alleluia, alleluia**

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

### Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St. John. [20, 1 - 9]

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

**E**arly on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and

went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

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

## For Your Prayers

That we may rejoice in the new life of the Resurrection

The government & people of Ukraine and a just and peaceful end to Russia's war of aggression there.

All who are caught up in war or conflict  
All those without adequate food or shelter  
The people of Gaza, Israel, Lebanon & Syria, & for lasting peace in the Middle East

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, & 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; Mary; Peter; Kenneth Cameron; Margaret; Althea; Naylor & Eira Firth; Margi & Bob Osborne, Yvette; Val Higgs, Jeab Papps.

### **For the Departed:**

The recently departed: Ron Painter; Moya Bowen; our own departed relatives & friends, and those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Craig Octon; Matthew Hoskins; Keith Jones, priest

## 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 people whose lives have been affected in some way by Jesus Christ and his teaching.*

## Gardener, Sharon and Esther

**Gardener:** 'Morning.

**Jereboam:** Lovely day, isn't it?

**Gardener:** Makes you glad to be alive, a morning like this...

**Jereboam:** Oh, yes. I tell you what: we could do with some good weather, after all the terrible goings-on of the last few days. What with...Look, would you excuse me, I've just seen that woman over there. She's a friend of mine, and she looks rather upset. I

ought to go and check she's all right.

**Gardener:** Of course; you do what you need to do. It was good to meet you.

**Jereboam:** Sharon, are you all right? I imagine you're still upset about Jesus.

**Sharon:** It's even worse than we thought. Jereboam, someone's stolen his body.

**Jereboam:** They've what?

**Sharon:** Exactly what I say. I went to the tomb where they laid his body on the eve of the Sabbath. Someone has rolled away the boulder that was covering the entrance, they've unwrapped his body and removed it. After all we've been through! You wouldn't imagine that people could stoop so low.

**Jereboam:** I must say, that's really awful. I feel quite shaken myself, and I wasn't even one of his followers. People like you must be...

**Esther:** Sharon! Sharon!

**Sharon:** Oh, Esther, have you heard about Jesus? His body's been... **Esther:** No, he's alive!

**Sharon:** What?

**Esther:** Mary's just seen him. She started off thinking he was the gardener, but it was Jesus. He's alive!

**Sharon:** But he's dead – I was there when they took his body down from the cross. Mary's making a mistake: she's just too upset to think straight.

**Esther:** She's not upset; she's...she's radiant. There's no question about it: he's alive.

**Jereboam:** Excuse me, but did you say that Mary had thought Jesus was the gardener?

**Esther:** Yes. They were talking for quite a while about this and that. At first she just didn't recognise him, didn't realise what had happened. Mind you, it's understandable. Things like that don't exactly happen every day, do they?

**Jereboam:** No, I suppose not. As a matter of fact I rather think I've just seen him myself, except I didn't notice who he was either. I can't believe I

was so stupid: he was with me and I didn't realise it! Come on; let's see if we can find him. He was over here...

## THIS WEEK

On Easter Sunday, we hear from the Acts of the Apostles Peter's preaching about the Resurrection. The letter to the Colossians reminds us "You have died and your lives are hidden with Christ in God." The gospel is from St John and gives us the first story of that Easter morning - Mary Magdalene discovers the empty tomb and runs to Peter and the "disciple Jesus loved" to tell them. They run to the tomb and discover for themselves that it is empty.

The weekday first reading for Easter Week is from the Acts of the Apostles. We hear Peter's preaching the Good News and experience the first deeds of the Apostles, which parallel the acts of Jesus, including the conflicts he experienced and his power to heal.

The gospels this week are all resurrection appearances. These wonderful stories contain some common elements. They appear designed to make it clear that this was not a group of disciples who dreamed up the resurrection, because they were hoping for it so much. In fact, they found it difficult to believe. The Jesus they saw and experienced was not a "ghost." Instead, he had a body.

Monday, is the story of Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, as well as the "cover-up story" and pay off of the guards. Tuesday, we read of Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalene, through the eyes of **St John's Gospel**. Jesus missions her to announce the Good News to his brothers. On Wednesday we are treated to **St Luke's** story of Jesus' appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were sad, because they had hoped the story would have turned out differently. Jesus tells them why he had to first suffer and die in order to enter into his glory. As they stopped to eat, "he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread." Thursday Jesus appears in the room where the disciples are gathered. "Peace be with you" he says and then eats with them and shows them his wounds. On Friday, we have the Risen Lord's appearance in **St John's Gospel** at the Sea of Tiberias. Peter decided to

return to fishing. Jesus appears and re-missions him. On Saturday, the week concludes with the summary of appearances in what appears to be an addition to the end of St Mark's Gospel.

**Next Sunday**, the Second Sunday of Easter, we are given a picture of how the early community gathered around as "Many signs and wonders were done among the people at the hands of the apostles." St John's Gospel gives us two post-resurrection stories that feature St Thomas, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

## A Homily for Easter Sunday

+ We've emerged from Holy Week, and the strange, unreal quiet of last Saturday, through the fire and light of last night's Vigil ceremonies into the joy of Easter morning.

But why is Easter so hard to talk about? The events of last week – Holy Week – speak to a profound experience of anxiety, fear and dereliction; it addresses the complexities of human relationships, all the loyalties and betrayals of personal and public life along with the expediency and amorality of those who wield power. The story is so gripping because it speaks to us about the things we know, or can see, in the world around us.

I've always found it's so much easier to speak about Holy Week than it is about Easter – although of course we find the meaning of Resurrection precisely in those events of Holy Week.

Why is the Resurrection itself so hard to talk about? Today's Gospel as St John tells it was a frantic matter of shock, running feet and the discovery of a empty tomb – there was no one there. There were no eyewitnesses to Christ's rising, and no attempt to describe something not seen.

How do you put into words a mystery that is beyond words? The resurrection is poetry, metaphor – fable made reality. It is very much reality. But how do we engage with it? It's an indefinable *experience*, true and valid, but one which like water, escapes and flows through our cupped hands when we try to hold on to it. Like the Risen Christ himself in the Gospels, it vanishes as soon as we realise we've encountered it. To base the proclamation

of an entire faith around this elusive Resurrection feels like madness, yet that's exactly what we are called to do..... and we find redemption and new life there. And what we discover isn't the wiping away of pain, grief, and death as if they had never been, but all those all too real things transcended and transformed. That's where our hope springs from. The Resurrection, like the Risen Lord himself, comes to us on silent feet. It creeps up on us unexpectedly, it enters the locked rooms of our hearts and minds, and when we turn to face it – it's wild, untameable; it darts away and hides .... And yet somehow we know its reality, and we see its meaning barely concealed at the heart of all things. And when we find it, we know we've come to a place that is home, the kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world..

"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"  
This is poet Rainer Maria Rilke, here in a translation by Robert Bly ....

My eyes already touch the sunny hill.  
going far beyond the road I have begun,  
So we are grasped  
by what we cannot grasp;  
it has an inner light, even from a distance-  
and changes us,  
even if we do not reach it,  
into something else, which,  
hardly sensing it,  
we already are; a gesture waves us on  
answering our own wave...  
but what we feel is the wind in our faces.

## Fr Michael is off duty after Easter Sunday until May 3rd.

The next weekly newsletter will be for the Third Sunday of Easter (May 3<sup>rd</sup>)

## SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES

### TODAY

### EASTER SUNDAY

20<sup>th</sup> April 2025

10 a.m. Sung Eucharist  
at St Arvan's

11.30 Holy Eucharist  
at St Deiniol's, Itton

## **NEXT SUNDAY**

**The Second Sunday of Easter  
27<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

10 a.m. Liturgy of the Word  
at St Arvan's

11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
at St Deiniol's Itton

*Readings:*

Acts 5.27-32

Psalms 118.14-29 or 150

Revelation 1.4-8

John 20.19-31

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

## **The Ministry Area Prayer Group**

meets every Thursday 7.45pm – 9pm  
at David Carne's house, The Cedars,  
Chapel Lane, Pwllmeyric.  
email [david@bedlambeds.com](mailto:david@bedlambeds.com)

## **St Arvans Tea and Chat**

**April 12<sup>th</sup>** and usually every second  
Saturday of the month  
Childrens activity table

*For assistance or a lift  
please ring Diane on 628084*

**Many thanks to everyone who has  
helped decorate our churches so  
beautifully for Easter and to all  
those who have taken part in our  
Holy Week and Easter liturgies**

## **THE RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS AT EASTERTIDE**

(This replaces the Nicene Creed on  
Easter Sunday)

Dear friends,

through the Pascal mystery we  
have been buried with Christ in  
baptism so that we may rise with  
him to new life. Now that we have  
completed our Lenten observance,  
let us renew the promises we  
made in baptism when we rejected  
Satan and his works, and promise  
to serve God faithfully in His Holy  
Catholic Church.

And so I ask you:-

Do you reject Satan? **I do**

And all his works? **I do**

And all his empty promises? **I do**

Do you believe in God the Father  
Almighty, creator of heaven and  
earth? **I do**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his  
only Son our Lord, who was born  
of the Virgin Mary, was crucified,  
died and was buried, rose from the  
dead and is now seated at the right  
hand of the Father? **I do**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Holy Catholic Church, the  
Communion of Saints, the  
forgiveness of sins the resurrection  
of the body and the life  
everlasting? **I do**

God, the all powerful Father  
of our Lord Jesus Christ, has given  
us a new birth by water and the  
Holy Spirit and forgiven all our  
sins. May he also keep us faithful  
to our Lord Jesus Christ,  
for ever and ever. **AMEN**

*[The priest may then sprinkle those  
present with blessed water as a  
reminder of the water of baptism.]*

