

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
Fr Michael Gollop,
The Vicarage, St Arvans
01291 622064;
Mobile 07867803479
E-mail: frmichael1@aol.com

19th October 2025 The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity Harvest Thanksgiving at Kilgwrrwg

The Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; 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 Genesis

At night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak.

When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, 'Let me go, for the day is breaking.' But Jacob said, 'I will not let you go, unless you bless me.' So he said to him, 'What is your name?' And he said, 'Jacob.' Then the man said, 'You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed.' Then Jacob asked him, 'Please tell me your name.' But he said, 'Why is it that you ask my name?' And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, 'For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved.' The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip.

[32. 22-31]

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

Psalm 121

**R/ My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

**R/ My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

**R/ My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.

**R/ My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.

The LORD will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time on and for evermore.

**R/ My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to Timothy [3; 14 - 4. 5]

Continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

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

Gradual Hymn

Alleluia, alleluia!
May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
enlighten the eyes of our mind,
so that we can see what hope his call
holds for us.

Alleluia!

The Lord be with you:
And also with you

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to
St Luke **Glory to you, O Lord**

Jesus told his disciples a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, 'In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, "Grant me justice against my opponent." For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, "Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming."' And the Lord said, 'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?' [St Luke 18.1-8]

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

For Your Prayers

For perseverance in prayer
Thanksgiving for the harvest; for all who
earn their living on the land or the sea.
All pilgrims – especially for Fr Philip as he
walks to Rome, and all who journey to
Santiago de Compostela and all the holy
places of the faith.
The people of Gaza, & Israel, & for lasting
peace in the Middle East
For wisdom, restraint and a desire for
peace among the nations of the world.
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
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, &
Archbishop of Wales; 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 Leo, 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
Jackson; The Revd Helen Rodwell;
Elisabeth; Anne-Louise; Mary; Peter;
Margaret; Althea; Margi Osborne,
Ken Smith

For the Departed:

The recently departed: Marilyn
Humphries; our own departed relatives
& friends, and those whose anniversaries
of death fall at this time: Lewis Webster;
Eric Henderson; George Hodgkinson;
Horace Collard

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*

Demas

Demas: Jereboam, I hope you
won't mind if I ask you a question.

Jereboam: By all means... This is
novel: I'm usually the one that asks the
questions.

Demas: Well, first of all can I
check that I've understood things
correctly? You're not yourself a
member of the Church, are you?

Jereboam: No: I'm interested in
the Church and in Jesus' teaching, but
I'm what you might call an old-style
Jew. Ultimately my faith has not been
changed that much by Jesus.

Demas: That's more or less
what I thought. So could I ask whether
you consider the Scriptures to be the
Word of God?

Jereboam: Yes, I suppose I
do...although I think there's also an
important role for the rabbis, who help
us to interpret Scripture in a balanced
way. But the answer to your question
is yes: I do regard Scripture as the
Word of God.

Demas: The reason I'm asking
is that we in the Church hold the same
attitude. As it was explained to us the
other day: "All scripture is inspired by
God and can profitably be used for
teaching, for refuting error, for guiding
people's lives and teaching them to be
holy." The confusing thing is that
Jesus' message often feels quite
different from what we find in the
Scriptures. For example, Jesus taught
us to love our enemies. Now surely
that doesn't sit naturally with all the
war-mongering we hear about in
Scripture. How can I believe that it's all
the Word of God?

Jereboam: I must admit that

some of us also have difficulty with the more violent aspects of Scripture. Quite recently I came across some beautiful quotations from the book of Judith – things like: “The prayer of the humble and meek hath always pleased Thee.” These passages seemed to evoke such wonderful sentiments, but then I was rather shocked to discover the blood-thirsty context in which Judith actually said them. On the other hand, some of the loveliest passages directly concern our relationship to God. I often remind myself of passages like: “I delight to do Thy will; Thy Law is within my heart.” Or when Moses commanded the public reading of the Law: “that children may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God.” Perhaps we can regard Scripture as being essentially a document recording devotion to God. So maybe we should fix our attention on this devotion, and not judge too harshly the ways in which our forefathers expressed it.

Demas: That’s useful; thank you. You see, I have desperately wanted to accept the Scriptures, despite these difficulties. I think that we in the Church need to remain aware of our Jewish heritage.

Jereboam: I’m sure it’s always good to acknowledge your roots.

Demas: You’ll have heard that there have been all sorts of new theories about Jesus and interpretations of his message. The Church accepts some of these, but rejects others. I’ve found that I need a way of assessing these various claims, even before the Church passes judgement on them. In my experience, the most reliable teachings tend to be the ones that match best with the Jewish tradition.

Jereboam: Maybe that’s as it should be.

TODAY

Sunday’s Gospel is the parable of the persistent widow wearing down the unjust judge, Jesus urges us to have faith. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them?

At the Eucharist this week we continue with the second of four weeks of weekday readings from St Paul’s Letter to the Romans. This is Paul’s longest letter and was written from Greece as he prepared to visit Rome.

The weekday gospels continue with St Luke’s Gospel and multiple stories of Jesus exhorting us to be prepared, to beware of greed and that our “life does not consist of possessions.” Jesus’ mission is to bring peace and healing. We are to be prepared for the times our Lord comes to us. Much is expected of us who have been entrusted with so much. Jesus has come to set a fire among us, which will probably also place us at odds with others, even others we love. Yet, Jesus calls us to read the signs of our times and to make peace with our opponents if we can. We are being prepared to bear fruit for God’s kingdom.

Next Sunday we hear Jesus’ dramatic story of the Pharisee and the tax collector standing in the temple, the Pharisee relieved that “I am not like the rest of humanity” and the tax collector with eyes down, begging for mercy. “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

.A Homily for Trinity 18

+ There’s a story about a devoutly religious American walker on the Appalachian Trail, who is hiking through the woods when he hears a rustling in the undergrowth alongside the path. He feels a bit scared but keeps on going until after quite a few miles he realises he’s being followed by a bear. In the end he decides to run and prays really hard that the bear will give up and won’t follow him. Eventually he gets to the top of a hill where the trees clear and he’s presented with a panoramic view of the countryside. ‘Good,’ he thinks, ‘my prayers have been answered and I’ve shaken him off.’ But at that moment the bear crashes out of the trees and moves straight towards him.

The hiker desperately thinks, ‘I know what I’ll do, I’ll pray for the bear to become a Christian.’

And no sooner are the words out of his mouth when, much to his relief, the bear sinks to his knees and crosses himself. And he looks at the man and says, ‘For what we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful. Prayer then is a complex matter. It can be answered in ways we might not expect. But what do we think about it? Is it a waste of time? Is it trying to tell God something he already obviously knows? Is it trying in some way to change his mind and somehow second guess the workings of Divine Providence? What is it about? The readings today in the Liturgy are meant to say something to us about just one part of the relationship between God and human beings, the part we traditionally call the ‘prayer of petition’. ‘Petition’ - of course - means asking God for things. Jacob in the Old Testament reading is pictured as literally striving or wrestling with God. In the Gospel Jesus commends something similar in our own relationship with God - a kind of insistent hammering away.

There are many other important aspects to our relationship with God - thanking him for what he has done for us in creation and salvation; adoring him for who he is, the endless source of everything that is good and beautiful and holy; or, most simply of all, just sitting and ‘contemplating’ him, just being in his presence, in his company.

But from this Sunday’s Gospel, one equally important feature of our relationship is bringing requests to God, petitioning him for what we want - in Our Lord’s own words “bothering” him until we get it.

Now there are those, as I hinted at the beginning, who are not happy about the idea of the prayer of petition at all and have considerable reservations about the whole concept of prayer as being something which involves as it were asking for things. And they are both right and wrong at the same time.

One of the things people say is : doesn’t asking for things encourage an immature attitude to God? Isn’t it a kind of self-centredness, a bit like a child asking Father Christmas for a bicycle- even if it’s dressed up in rather more high-flown spiritual language? Well, we know it *can*

be like that in certain instances, we've probably been guilty of it ourselves & asked for things which we probably shouldn't have done! But reverse that argument and we could say that even then there's a kind of child-like honesty about that. We come to God as we are, not pretending to be someone else.

As someone has said "prayer is the articulation of desire." Ok, by itself perhaps not that helpful, but the meaning of that is bringing our own innermost wishes and feelings and desires out into the open, and being honest with ourselves and with God. We all have all kinds of desires, big and small, good and bad, selfish and generous. That's just how human nature is and if we don't have the basic truthfulness to bring our whole make-up as desiring, wanting, beings into relationship with God, that won't just disappear, it'll be a part of ourselves where we try to keep God firmly out. And if we keep God out, something else will be there to fill the vacuum and we can so easily end up acting in a way which simply makes a mockery of our best intentions and deepest beliefs. If we are simply misrepresenting ourselves to God, then we will never come to that degree of self-knowledge which can lead us to holiness, and to fulfilling that vocation given - really to us - of becoming a Saint. Without self-knowledge there can be no repentance; without repentance there can be no desire for salvation; without that desire, we cannot find God.

But it is possible that our prayer lives can mature, just as we get older our wants and desires can grow up. - no, let's say *our lives with God* can mature - it's a better way of putting it, because it doesn't try to isolate a spiritual bit of ourselves which we can keep separate from the rest of what we do and what we are.

A large part of the actual practice of Christian prayer consists in clearing away the debris of our more superficial desires, so that the really deep ones, the ones fully in tune with our true nature, can actually come out- those deepest desires which only God can fulfil.

So asking for things need not imply selfishness or immaturity because our coming into the presence of God should imply a willingness to bring our wishes and desires into line with his. When we pray, we try to tune in to his frequency and not to start broadcasting for ourselves.

That's the fundamental point. We don't just have a child's Christmas wish list; we ask that his will be done, in his time and in his way and that our view of what that might be will become more and more the same as his, even if that means we get the answer "no" to the things we are asking for, even if it is his will to bring us to that point, a point to which we all at some time come in our lives where we can only say: "here I am, crucified with Christ". And Christ crucified is all we have, all we can offer, all we can plead here at this altar today - asking mercy for our weakness and the weakness of others and to be renewed for our own part in the salvation of the world.

Sometimes people make the additional objection that petitionary prayer makes God into a kind of celestial magician or a behind-the-scenes wonder-worker, rather like the descending Gods in the final scenes of ancient Greek theatre - there to pull us out of the mess we human beings tend to make of things. But, according to the Gospels, God *is* always at hand. God *is* our Saviour; but again, perhaps not always in the way we think he should be! Prayer shows us that it's not about us, is it, it's about him. It's difficult to see ourselves other than as the centre of the universe sometimes, as Thomas Merton says, taking the starring role in the movie of our lives- but we're not, He is! He always is, and if we forget that, our egos are standing in the way of our future with God.

Prayer brings home to us in a fairly direct way that it is God who is humanity's Saviour; that God, not ourselves, is Lord of our existence and of our lives. Our attitude to prayer, then, takes in so much else besides ...+

CLOCKS GO BACK NEXT WEEKEND

British Summer Time ends next Sunday morning. Don't be caught out!

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES TODAY

Trinity 18 19th October 2025

9 a.m. Family Service

10 a.m. at St James, Devauden
Sung Eucharist
at St Arvan's
11.30 a.m. Harvest Thanksging
at Holy Cross, Kilgwrrwg
(non-eucharistic)

NEXT SUNDAY

**The Last Sunday after Trinity
26th October 2025**

10 a.m. Sung Eucharist
at St Arvan's
11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
at St Deiniol's, Itton.

Readings:

Sirach 35.12-17

Psalms 84.1-7

2 Timothy 4.6-8, 16-18

St Luke 18.9-14

Daily Celebrations of the Eucharist at St Arvans: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday at 10.00, Friday at 09.30

Fr Michael's day off is Monday.

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

**'Jazz in the Arv' with
The Fraser Smith Quartet
Friday 21st November 7 p.m.
St Arvans Church
Tickets £20
Bar and raffle**

The Ministry Area Prayer Group

meets every Thursday 7.45pm – 9pm
4th September St. Andoenus, Mounton
For further details
email david@bedlambeds.com

23rd October and onwards at *The Cedars*

**Harvest Thanksgiving Appeal
St Arvans Church.**

On Sunday 12th October we held our Harvest Festival in St Arvans.

As usual we like to have a contemporary appeal at the same time, to mark that we have plenty and to share with others.

The days of apples, 🍏 pears 🍐 and 🌾 wheat sheafs are gone, but in the past we have donated to the local hospitals and food banks.

This year I thought we could collect CHOCOLATE 🍫🍫🍫🍫

The homeless refuges and food banks like to give out chocolate bars at Christmas time so please can we all bring a bar of chocolate to church throughout October.

These will be collected in early November and taken to the appropriate refuges etc. for distribution.

CUT OFF DATE FOR COLLECTION FROM CHURCH : SUNDAY 16TH NOVEMBER (This will give Verena time to get them to their destination).

Thank you all in anticipation
BOX IN BACK OF THE CHURCH AS USUAL.

St Arvans Tea and Chat

November 8th and usually every second Saturday of the month
Childrens activity table

For assistance or a lift
please ring Diane on 628084