

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, private prayer and a time of stillness.

Our current live-streamed services are as follows:: Sunday Eucharist at 10. a.m., and it can be accessed on the St Arvans Parish Group page on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/vicaragecello1/>

and available to watch later

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 April 2026

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

The Collect

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; 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 Acts of the Apostles

But Peter, standing with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. "You that are Israelites, listen to what

I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know - this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will live in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' [2; 14; 22-28]

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

Psalm 116 1-3, 10-17

R Gracious is the Lord and righteous;

I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.

R Gracious is the Lord and righteous;

The cords of death entangled me; the grip of the grave took hold of me; I came to grief and sorrow. Then I called upon the name of the Lord: 'O Lord, I pray you, save my life.'

R Gracious is the Lord and righteous;

How shall I repay the Lord for all the good things he has done for me?

I will lift up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord.

I will fulfil my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.

R Gracious is the Lord and righteous;

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his servants.

O Lord, I am your servant; I am your servant and the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.

R Gracious is the Lord and righteous;

I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord.

I will fulfil my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.

In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Alleluia!

R Gracious is the Lord and righteous;

**A reading from the first letter
of St Peter** [1: 17-23]

If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God. Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

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

Gradual Hymn

Alleluia, alleluia!

Lord Jesus, explain the scriptures to us.

Make our hearts burn within us as you talk to us.

Alleluia!

The Lord be with you:
And also with you

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St Luke

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.

On that same day, two of the disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' Jesus asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see Jesus.' Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then

their eyes were opened, and they recognized Jesus; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

[St Luke 24.13–35]

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

For Your Prayers

That we, too, may recognise the presence of the Risen Lord in the breaking of the bread of the Eucharist.
The peoples of Middle East and the Persian Gulf. For peace and justice throughout the region.
All those caught up in hostilities.
For world leaders – for wisdom, restraint and respect for human life.
The government & people of Ukraine and a just and peaceful end to Russia's war of aggression there.
The people of Sudan.
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; the 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; Margaret; Althea; Margi & Bob Osborne.

For the Departed:

The recently departed; Graham Jeremy; our own departed loved ones, and those whose anniversaries of death at this time: Craig Octon; Keith Jones, priest; Jonathan; Isabelle Ingledew; Rose Jones; Harvey Banks; Patrick Semple, 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

Cleopas

Jereboam: So is it true about your journey to Emmaus? You just didn't recognise Jesus?

Cleopas: No, we didn't. I know it seems extraordinary. It was only when he broke the bread that we suddenly realised who he was.

Jereboam: I suppose it's not every day that you come across someone who's risen from the dead.

Cleopas: No...That's obviously the point. It marks him out as totally unique. To me it proves that he is indeed the Son of God, as many of us had suspected. I can't see any other explanation.

Jereboam: I suppose not.
Cleopas: And if you accept that he's the Son of God and has come back from the dead, you surely have to accept his teaching too.

Jereboam: Yes: personally I always found him a most interesting teacher.

Cleopas: I'm sorry, but it's not just a question of being interesting. All sorts of things can be interesting, whether you agree with them or not. But if the Son of God comes back from the dead, surely you have to start taking his teaching pretty seriously. You can't just dismiss it as "interesting". Anyway, considering the sorts of things Jesus has said, no-one can stay neutral about him. You either try to follow his principles or you don't. I can't see any other option.

Jereboam: Some people from other countries feel that Jesus didn't fully address their circumstances.

Cleopas: Well yes, maybe, but he obviously couldn't refer directly to every tradition in every part of the world. People in the future might as well grumble that he didn't talk about things in their lives that haven't been invented yet. The point is that his principles don't need to change: they're universal.

Jereboam: Can I ask about the people who have seen the risen Jesus, or at least heard about his Resurrection? Presumably they now feel persuaded that they should live according to his values.

Cleopas: Yes...although so far I think he's appeared only to fairly close followers and friends. As for the coming months and years, who knows how things will develop? I have my doubts, I must admit. Lots of people, if you press them, will agree that there's something very special about Jesus. Curiously, many of them still don't show much respect for his teaching. So let's give it a few years. I shouldn't be surprised if people turned the Resurrection into a sweet little story, just as happened with Jesus' birth. It's a neat way of dodging the challenges he sets...Forgive me, *Jereboam:* it's hardly the right time to be gloomy.

Jereboam: Don't worry, *Cleopas.* I can see your point. Let's hope you're wrong though.

THIS WEEK

On the Third Sunday of Easter St John's Gospel brings us the story about the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. We are prepared to encounter a familiar pattern with his followers: they don't recognise Jesus, but he opens their eyes with the breaking of the bread.

On Saturday we celebrate the feast of St. Mark, the Evangelist.

In our first readings from Acts of the Apostles this week, we read of Stephen, one of the earliest martyrs, and of Philip converting an Ethiopian slave along the road. Next is the story of Saul, persecutor of Christians being blinded and then healed by Ananias in the name of Jesus. The week ends with Peter traveling the region and healing.

The Gospels this week are from Chapter 6 of John's Gospel on Jesus as the "Bread of Life." Like so many stories in this Gospel, Jesus teaches from one layer of understanding to another, taking us deeper into understanding his gift of himself to us in the Eucharist. Jesus says, "Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life." "The bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst." "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my Flesh for the life of the world." "Whoever eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood remains in me and I in him." This marvelous dialogue ends with this exchange with his disciples: "Jesus then said to the Twelve, 'Do you also want to leave?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.'"

Next Sunday : On the Fourth Sunday of Easter we reflect on the Paschal Mystery more deeply. Peter quotes psalm 119 in preaching that the crippled man was healed, "in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead." In John's Gospel, Jesus tells us, "A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

A Homily for the Third Sunday of Easter

+ We may think each time we hear it, or read it for ourselves, that today's Gospel about the disciples on the road to Emmaus is more than a little puzzling. How on earth could the two disciples fail to recognise Jesus, someone clearly they had met and heard speak and teach time after time? Why wasn't it immediately obvious to them who it was who was walking along the road with them? On the other hand, if we are looking for natural explanations, perhaps we could say that psychologically it wasn't at all surprising that they didn't know him. He was dead - he would be the very last person they would be expecting to join them on their journey to Emmaus. They were in shock and grief - their world had been utterly changed, all their hopes had been taken away from them. Before they set out - this was only a half day's journey of about seven miles or so - they had clearly heard the stories about the tomb having been discovered empty, but no more than that. Perhaps, too, this stranger who was walking with them may have been muffled up against the cold wind or the sun's heat or whatever. But there is also a sense here, and the other accounts of Our Lord's resurrection appearances seem to bear this out, that Jesus didn't want them to recognise him, his presence is somehow veiled, kept deliberately mysterious while he speaks to them and explains the Scriptures. Whatever the reasons, the two disciples fail to understand what they are seeing and hearing. The risen Jesus is at their side, but their minds remain closed to him and they will need Jesus himself to lead them step by step until they understand who he is, and why the events of the last few days had to happen. Throughout his time with them he has prepared them to understand the teachings of the prophets that 'the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory', and so once again he patiently explains to them that scriptures are pointing to precisely what has happened recently in Jerusalem. Even after all this careful explanation of the scriptures, the two disciples still don't recognise Jesus; they still can't make the necessary connection. Their minds are so weighed down with the violence of the

crucifixion that they can't begin to imagine how God can bring new life from death. So at the end of their journey, Jesus gives them a sign, familiar but new, a mysterious sign but an immediately recognisable one, 'He took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them.' It is in that moment that we are told that 'their eyes were opened and they recognised him.' The sign was his gift to them, just as it is his eternal gift to all of us so that we can see the reality of Resurrection and share its life. He then vanishes, his work is done - they get the message. In all the accounts of his appearances we see Jesus in his Risen Body sharing the physicality of human life yet in a strikingly different way - this is the one in whom death is vanquished and humanity restored. And here at Emmaus - at the end of the story - by performing the characteristic action of breaking the bread he shows himself, but only by vanishing does he become fully recognisable - again the paradoxical teaching continues, something that becomes apparent at Pentecost with the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church - it's only by his going from us can he remain with us for ever... 'at all times and in places'

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES

TODAY

The Third Sunday of Easter 19th April 2026

- 9 a.m. Family Service
at St James, Devauden
- 10 a.m. Sung Eucharist
at St Arvan's
- 11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
at Holy Cross, Kilgwrrwg

NEXT SUNDAY

The Fourth Sunday of Easter 26th April 2026

- 10 a.m. Liturgy of the Word
at St Arvan's
- 11.30 a.m. Liturgy of the Word
at St Deiniol's, Itton

Readings:
Acts 2.42-47
Psalm 23

1 Peter 2.19-25
St John 10.1-10

The Fifth Sunday of Easter 3rd May 2026

- 10 a.m. Liturgy of the Word
at St Arvan's
- 11.30 a.m. Pets to Church
Pet Blessing Service
at St Mary's Penterry
- 4 p.m. All Age Eucharist
at St James, Devauden

The Sixth Sunday of Easter 10th May 2026

- 10 a.m. Sung Eucharist
at St Arvan's
- 11.30 a.m. Liturgy of the Word
at St Deiniol's, Itton

Fr Michael is on pilgrimage over the next few weeks, and back on duty on 9th May.

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

St Arvans Tea and Chat

2.30 – 4 p.m.
Saturday May 9th
and usually every second
Saturday of the month
Children's activity table
For assistance or a lift
please ring Diane on 628084

The Ministry Area Prayer Group

Thursdays at 7.45 – 9.00 p.m.
From 9th April until 24th
September 2026 we will be
meeting in Churches
around the Ministry Area:
23rd April Mounton
30th April St Arvans

Please join us, everyone is welcome and no experience is necessary!

Please contact David
on 07887 853479

(david-carne@outlook.com)
for any prayers that you would like us to include or for any questions that you have.

Daily Prayer

This can be a very good week to grow in a sense of and practice with the notion of being a "contemplative in the midst of action." We have practically a whole week of gospels about Jesus' gift of himself to us as the "Bread of Life." This gives us the opportunity to let that mystery be in the background of our consciousness every day this week, as we go about our everyday tasks. What makes it "contemplative" is that we will be asking for graces each morning, and we will let our desires and our activity interact. We can begin reflecting upon how often we "work for food that perishes." The payoff, the success, the accomplishment, the reward we receive for what we do is often quite passing and unsatisfying. It would be important to be able to sense anything that appears to be food that doesn't last and name it as such this week. The real food, the life-giving nourishment that our Lord offers us is himself. If we can't celebrate the Eucharist daily this week, we can make what we used to call a "spiritual communion" simply by opening our hearts and desiring to receive our Lord, so that he remains in us and we remain in him. We can practice consciously choosing union with Jesus, our Risen Lord and only Savior, and experiencing how that would affect the choices we need to make throughout our day. If we begin each day, asking for the grace of this union, and renew the desire at brief moments we have at various times in the day, our focus and attention begins to change. We will experience a peace and a gifted lack of hunger and thirst for so many of the things that draw us away from him, from loving, from mercy, from consciousness on those in need.

If the background focus of each day this week is to desire to be fed by a closeness with my Lord, it doesn't matter how busy I am, or how many conflicts I have to face, or what suffering I or my loved ones must endure. His flesh and blood are real food and drink because they are the real sacrifice that takes away the power of sin and death itself. United with his surrender to the Father, we set free from whatever can take away the life he gained for us. For this gift, for this faith, we can give thanks for every night, as we review our union with our Lord each night.

*With thanks to Creighton University's
Online Ministries*