

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

There is an online only reflection, meditation and celebration of Night Prayer (Compline) on Tuesdays..

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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9th August 2026 The Tenth Sunday after Trinity

The Collect

Let your merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of your humble servants; and that they may obtain their petitions make them to ask such things as shall please 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 first book of the Kings [19. 9-18]

When Elijah reached Horeb, the mountain of God, he came to a cave, and spent the night there. Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' He answered, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of

hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.' He said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by.' Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' He answered, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.' Then the LORD said to him, 'Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill; and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.'

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

Psalm 85. 8-13

**R/ Show us your mercy, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.**

I will listen to what the Lord God is saying, for he is speaking peace to his faithful people

and to those who turn their hearts to him. Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

**R/ Show us your mercy, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.**

Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

**R/ Show us your mercy, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.**

The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase. Righteousness shall go before him, and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

**R/ Show us your mercy, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans [10. 5-15]

Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that 'the person who does these things will live by them.' But the righteousness that comes from faith says, 'Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?"' (that is, to bring Christ down) 'or "Who will descend into the abyss?"' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? 'The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart' (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, 'No one who believes in him will be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' But how are they to

call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'

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

Gradual Hymn

Alleluia, alleluia!
My soul is waiting for the Lord,
I count on his word
Alleluia!

The Lord be with you:
And also with you

Listen to the Gospel of Christ
according to St Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

Immediately after feeding the crowd with the five loaves and two fish, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking towards them on the lake. But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.' Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' He said, 'Come.' So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?' When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.' [14. 22-33]

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

For Your Prayers

That we may seek the Lord in the stillness and silence of our hearts
The people of Europe
Those preparing for marriage
Peace and reconciliation
in our own society
The peoples of Palestine and Gaza, Israel and the wider Middle East and the Persian Gulf. For peace and justice throughout the region.
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; Jenny Sherwood, Bob Main, Diane Parnell;.

For the Departed:

The recently departed; John Williams; Ray Howell; Arthur Parkes, priest; Katie; our own departed loved ones, and those whose anniversaries of death fall this week: Ray Bull; Marion Webster.

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

Nathan

Jereboam: These tiles are lovely, Nathan. Did you say they're for the people in that new house?

Nathan: All of them except that tile in the middle there.

Jereboam: I do like your designs: they're so fluid and expressive.

Nathan: Thank you; I'm delighted you think so.

Jereboam: By the way, didn't I see you with Jesus the other day?

Nathan: Quite possibly: I'm often there listening to him. He's a remarkable man.

Jereboam: Some people seem to be puzzled by what he says. He encourages them to lose their life, take up their cross and follow him.

Nathan: I think he's referring to that awful practice of killing people on a cross. Crucifixion they call it, don't they?

Jereboam: Yes, but what I mean is that it makes him sound rather grim, doesn't it?

Nathan: As I see it, Jesus is saying: "follow me, whatever it takes and however much suffering is entailed." Perhaps I'd call it challenging rather than grim.

Jereboam: Have you managed to

put his principles into practice?

Nathan: I try. They have a definite bearing on my work, certainly. You see that tile in the middle – I can't allow it to be used by anyone. It's awful, isn't it?

Jereboam: Pardon?

Nathan: Yes, look. There's something so rigid and inflexible about it. When I painted that one, I don't know what came over me, but I was hoping to impress people. I wanted to do something that would be noticed. That's the equivalent of wanting to "save my life" in Jesus' terms. Whereas with these other ones, which I think I could say are rather better, I tried to allow God to speak through my craft. In a sense I tried to be invisible, to "lose my life for his sake", as it were.

Jereboam: That's very honourable, I'm sure, but some people have altered their whole way of life after hearing Jesus teach. Can you really be taking up your cross, if you're still painting tiles? You've done that for years anyway.

Nathan: I asked myself that question too...but Jesus told me to take up my cross, not anyone else's. This is the way I think I serve him best. It may even be that part of the cross I need to bear is to realise how trivial my contribution seems.

Jereboam: That's an interesting point. Well, personally I'm glad you're still producing your tiles. In fact, I was wondering if you'd consider doing one or two for us...

Nathan: I'd be honoured.

THIS WEEK

On the Tenth Sunday after Trinity, Elijah finds God not in the thunder and driving wind, but in silence and a gentle breeze. Peter's fear gets the best of him, when Jesus calls him out of his boat in a stormy sea. Peter takes his eyes off Jesus and would have perished without Jesus' rescuing him.

Monday is the Feast of Saint Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr. Tuesday we celebrate Saint Clare, and on Friday Saint Maximilian Mary Kolbe, priest and martyr. At the Eucharist this week we begin a two-week series of readings from the Prophet Ezekiel. His vivid visions tell of the destruction of Israel to come and the salvation that will follow.

St Matthew's Gospel offers us a number of familiar and powerful stories as we reflect upon God's mercy and our call to imitate God's love. Jesus predicts his passion and miraculously resolves a conflict over temple tax. It is not the temple tax for which he will be executed, but for what he reveals about God's love and mercy to sinners. Unless we are humble and trusting like children, we will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus tells us the hard work we should go through to reconcile with a sinner. He says that whenever we are gathered together, in his name, he is with us. He tells us to forgive - over and over again - and tells the parable of the servant who is forgiven but won't forgive a fellow servant. Children were not regarded very highly and the disciples tried to bar them from bothering Jesus. Jesus welcomes them - and all the powerless they represent: "for the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Next Sunday is kept as the great feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As she was the first to believe in her son we believe Mary was singled out to share body and soul in the Resurrection of the Lord.

A Homily for Trinity 10

+ We've all experienced moments when we've been confronted with the frightening power of the natural world - a storm at sea, summer electrical storms – even in the midst of an extraordinarily hot few months at least we've been spared those so far. I remember a couple of notable occasions walking the Camino to Santiago de Compostela, firstly over some very isolated and unpopulated mountains towards the sea, when the weather suddenly closed in and the temperature dropped dramatically as an Atlantic storm swept in from the coast, and also on my first pilgrimage walking out of Pamplona towards the hills being chased by what turned out to be a rather violent thunderstorm: walking in the open wasn't exactly the best place to be! On these kind of occasions suddenly we feel things could so easily go wrong, our carefully ordered plans so easily descend into chaos, apprehension and uncertainty - or worse...

Similarly for the disciples - presumably the apostles - who find themselves up against the ferocity of a storm on the Sea of Galilee - in a small boat in danger of being overwhelmed by the waves. This situation clearly wasn't just a passing squall as they seem to have been battling the elements all night until Jesus appears to them.

Again, as with so many of the Gospel stories their sheer familiarity to us tends to get in the way of our understanding their true significance. Miracles have so often been presented to us as just random, magical, supernatural happenings - about which, as twenty-first century people, we are understandably sceptical - that we don't realise what is being said to us. In this case 'walking on water' has entered the language - not necessarily in the most reverent (or relevant) way - and we treat it less seriously and probably with a bit more levity than perhaps we should.

The clue to the meaning of this incident on the lake is given to us by Matthew when Christ reaches the boat and calls to the disciples, 'It is I, do not be afraid' We are very much meant to pick up on this greeting as a divine claim, linked with similar proclamations in the Gospel according to St Matthew in which Jesus reveals that He is God, and, of course, those well-known declarations of Our Lord in St John's Gospel when he begins with the words, I AM.

Here of course, Jesus identifies himself with the divine power which alone can bring order out of chaos. The evangelists - the writers of the Gospels - all recognise, and want us to recognise too, that this power of Jesus is not some magical ability out of myth and legend but springs from his very identity, his very being. Here Jesus deliberately echoes the words of the Lord to Moses on Mount Sinai: I AM who I AM. Say this to the People of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'

So, what the original Greek has Jesus saying to the disciples - and it's obscured in English translation unless we make ourselves aware of it - is not so much 'It's me! Don't be afraid,' as "I AM -- do not be afraid" - very much a claim in keeping with the Christian Church's ancient and constant belief that Jesus is the Incarnate Son of God. We are being told here that, just as with the terrified disciples on the lake, we should be unafraid of the storms of life because of who Jesus is: the Lord,

the Creator God who moves over the stormy waters, who walks upon the primal chaotic waves of the sea and brings from them life, meaning and goodness. And if a story appears in all four Gospels echoing this theme of Jesus' power over the waters of the sea, then we may be sure that it is telling us something absolutely essential to our faith - something Christ himself intends us to take on board. Here we have perhaps the most central theme of all - from which everything else flows - that Jesus Christ is 'I AM', the Creator God of the Old Testament, 'And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.' Without this there is nothing: but from it flow forgiveness, redemption, resurrection, and an eternal future for each one of us. And the second part of today's Gospel takes up that theme, that very point: Peter walks out on the water towards Jesus, but he is overcome in fear by the violence of the storm. This is often how we find ourselves. In the face of the destructive voices which dominate our world we can feel helpless, unable to resist the terrible destructive power of the violent, and the irrational, the seeming randomness of what the world throws at us.. Yet Jesus Christ reaches out to hold us as we begin to sink beneath the waves. As with St Peter, he raises us up to be with Him, so that our hearts and hands and voices can be used to build God's Kingdom.

Peter recognises the claim Our Lord is making and he says to him - again, literally in the Greek - 'If you are, tell me to come to you?' He doesn't want to share in what appear to be Jesus' magical powers, but rather he sees that if the God of all things who alone can bring order out of chaos, who strides the waters of the deep as the psalmist says, is revealing himself in the person of a human being, is sharing in our humanity, then it is possible for us to share in his divinity, to allow us to conquer in ourselves the chaos and destructiveness of our fallen world. He has come into the world to us to invite us to come to him, over the water. But Peter also sees that this is possible only in response to an invitation from Jesus to come to him; the way to walk the waters of the deep is to keep his eyes fixed firmly on Jesus - when he turns away and notices the frightening power of the

wind and the waves, it is then that he begins to sink.

We have to keep our eyes fixed on the eyes of our fellow human being, Jesus of Nazareth, true God and true man, Son of Mary, Son of God, our Creator and our Saviour.

Again, our faith is not about magic, or random miracles, or demonstrations of power but about a relationship, lived in love, with the Living God who transcends the limitations of the world and our own earthly existence.

And we see this relationship most clearly in our lives of prayer, in our attentive listening to the still, small voice of God speaking to our hearts - to the "sound of sheer silence" in which the prophet Elijah in the first reading encountered the Lord. We meet him not in the earthquake, the wind and the fire, but in the silence.

We meet him, too, here at the altar where Christ is sacramentally present, feeding us with his life, drawing us to himself, leading us to share his divine life. +

St Arvans Tea and Chat

2.30 – 4 p.m.

Saturday September 12th
and usually every second
Saturday of the month
Childrens activity table

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES

TODAY

**The Tenth Sunday
after Trinity
9th August 2026**

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

NEXT SUNDAY

16th August 2026
kept as
**The Assumption
of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

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

Readings:

Isaiah 56.1, 6-8
Psalm 67
Romans 11.1-2a, 29-32
St Matthew 15. [10-20,] 21-28

Please note: the Eucharist will be celebrated at St Arvans on Tuesday Thursday and Saturday at 10 a.m.
Fr Michael's day off this week is Friday

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

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:

13th August St. Tewdric, Mathern
20th August St. Arvans
27th August St. Thomas Becket,
Shirenewton
3rd September St. Andoenus,
Mouton
10th September St. James, Devauden
17th September St. Peter,
St. Pierre
24th September St. Christopher,
Chepstow

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 week

Finding time and space to be in the presence of the our Lord is not limited to people who can go away on a retreat. We can all be contemplatives in action, if only we can focus on our relationship with the Lord in the background, every day. This week we can feed on the words of life which Jesus gives us. And, we can ask for the graces we need, in the midst of our busy lives. With the celebration of the Assumption toward the end of the week, we can ask Mary to help us keep our consciousness on connecting our desires with the concrete details of our life this week.

Throughout this week, we can wake up and go through our morning routine asking for the grace that God's mercy might flow through us this day. One day, I might take notice of those in my life who need my forgiveness. I might pay attention to the one who frustrates me or has hurt me or has hurt those I love -- real people I know (living or dead) or the anonymous people who represent the systems, institutions and structures that seem unjust or sinful. There are people who benefit from war, the poverty or slavery of others, the sacrilege against the dignity of life itself, the drug trade and the destruction of the environment. I can actually take the grace-filled moments of brief intimacy with Christ this week to forgive! This week of mercy can be a powerful blessing for our whole lives.

This can be a wonderful week for us to remember how many times we are called to forgive. And, we might want to take a few extra moments to reinforce this by re-reading the parable of the servant who has been forgiven himself but refuses to forgive. If we are really stuck in our struggle to forgive, we can find times to beg for the grace: "Dear Lord, you keep forgiving me, please let me experience the intimacy of forgiving as you have forgiven me. Give me the humility of a little child to remember how often I need to forgive others."

Throughout this week, our hearts go out to little children and other "little ones" because we will be delighting in being one with him and his being one with us. And, we'll give thanks and praise.

*With thanks to Creighton University's
Online Ministries (adapted)*

Devauden Photography Competition 2026

We STILL want to see your best photograph!

What is the best photograph you have taken recently?

What picture are you most proud of?

Perhaps you haven't taken it yet!

It could be a landscape, a sunset, your family in their finest (or in their PJ's), your dog, the view from your window, a still life, or some wildlife!

There will be an exhibition of the entries in St James' Church in September, and the 12 best pictures will be made into a calendar for 2027

How do you enter?

We can only accept digital photographs, so please email devauden.photos@gmail.com with your best photograph by Sunday 6th September.

If you are under 16, please let us know when your picture is emailed in by your parent or responsible adult.

Mega Mondays Saints, Chepstow

August 10th, 17th, 24th

10 a.m – 12 noon

**St Mary's Priory, Chepstow
Crafts, games & fun for the
summer holidays**