

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 at 7 p.m..

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

**13th September 2026
The Fifteenth Sunday
after Trinity**

The Collect

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **AMEN**

A reading from the book of Genesis

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said,

What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?' So they approached Joseph, saying, 'Your father gave this instruction before he died, "Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you." Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.'

Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, 'We are here as your slaves.' But Joseph said to them, 'Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.' In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

[50. 15-21]

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

Psalm 103 8 - 13

R/ The Lord is full of compassion and mercy

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and of great kindness. He will not always accuse us, nor will he keep his anger for ever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

R/ The Lord is full of compassion and mercy

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is his mercy great upon those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our sins from us. As a father cares for his children,

so does the Lord care for those who fear him.

R/ The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans [14; 1-12]

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgement on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgement on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

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

Gradual Hymn

Alleluia, alleluia!

I give you a new commandment:

love one another, just as I have loved you,
says the Lord .

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.

Peter came and said to Jesus,
'Lord, if another member of the church
sins against me, how often should I
forgive? As many as seven times?'
Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but,
I tell you, seventy-seven times. For this
reason the kingdom of heaven may be
compared to a king who wished to settle
accounts with his slaves. When he began
the reckoning, one who owed him ten
thousand talents was brought to him; and,
as he could not pay, his lord ordered him
to be sold, together with his wife
and children and all his possessions, and
payment to be made. So the slave fell
on his knees before him, saying, "Have
patience with me, and I will pay you
everything." And out of pity for him,
the lord of that slave released him and
forgave him the debt. But that same slave,
as he went out, came upon one of his
fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred
denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he
said, "Pay what you owe."
Then his fellow-slave fell down and
pleaded with him, "Have patience with me,
and I will pay you." But he refused; then
he went and threw him into prison until he
would pay the debt. When his fellow-
slaves saw what had happened, they were
greatly distressed, and they went and
reported to their lord all that had taken
place. Then his lord summoned him and
said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave
you all that debt because you pleaded
with me. Should you not have had mercy
on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on
you?" And in anger his lord handed him
over to be tortured until he would pay his
entire debt. So my heavenly Father will
also do to every one of you, if you do not
forgive your brother or sister from your
heart.'

[18. 21-35]

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

For Your Prayers

That we may learn to forgive as we
ourselves have been forgiven by God.
That the Cross and Resurrection of the
Lord may be at the centre of our lives
That Blessed Mary may be our support in
times of distress
Those preparing for or celebrating
their 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.
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; Mary; Margaret; Althea;
Margi & Bob Osborne; Jenny Sherwood,
Bob Main, Diane Parnell, Val Thompson.

For the Departed:

The recently departed; our own departed
loved ones, and those whose
anniversaries of death fall this week:
Nancy Bull; Mary Impanni;

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*

Berzellai

Berzellai: That man is a breath of
fresh air!

Jereboam: You like Jesus then?

Berzellai: Oh, yes. Normally these
religious types are so stuck in their ways,
but this guy understands the new ideas.
This stuff about forgiving people who owe
money...he's got it. Ownership is an
outdated concept, borne of conflict and
oppression. The earth is for everybody.
Everything is for everybody.

Jereboam: He didn't quite say
that...

Berzellai: Oh, come on! If debts
don't exist, then money doesn't have any
meaning any more, then ownership is
dead.

Jereboam: Maybe he doesn't so
much reject ownership as...how can I say
this?...sanctify it.

Berzellai: It's the same with our
bodies too, of course. We're all flesh and
bone, so let's just share and rejoice in our
oneness of being. I am you; you are me.

Jereboam: Look, I don't think
you've quite...

Berzellai: Let's reject those old
barriers!

Jereboam: I should point out that
Jesus has always adopted entirely
scriptural principles with regard to

personal relationships and the meaning of personhood – as with everything else, indeed. Yes, there's a lot we all share, but...well, it's rather like the ownership question really. We're all...oh, I don't know!

Berzellai: You're resisting the power of new ideas.

Jereboam: Can I suggest that you check with Jesus, because I shouldn't want there to be any misunderstanding?

Berzellai: I'd love to share ideas with him – sure.

Jereboam: I'll leave you to do that. He's probably still over there by the market-place.

THIS WEEK

On Sunday, Jesus talks about mercy in the gospel. He tells the parable of the unforgiving servant. It's a powerful message for us.

Monday is the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. Tuesday is Our Lady of Sorrows. Wednesday is the feast day of Saints Cornelius & Cyprian, martyrs. In the first readings at the Eucharist, St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians continues to feed us with good community behavior and powerful messages about the Eucharist and the mystery of the Resurrection.

We experience more of the beauty of St Luke's Gospel this week. Jesus encounters a widow whose only son had died. "He was moved with pity" and raises the son from the dead. Jesus tells the people how inconsistent their responses are. At a dinner, Jesus encounters a weeping, sinful woman who washes his feet with her tears. "So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love." We hear that Jesus is accompanied by a group of women "who provided for them out of their resources." Jesus tells the parable of the sower and breaks it open for a large crowd of listeners.

Next Sunday we hear in the Gospel the powerful parable about the landlord who represents God's way of caring for us. Though workers go out into his vineyard at various times of the day, he pays them all the same. When they grumble, he simply explains that he desires to be generous. How this can change our view of God and our own sense of justice?

A Homily for the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

+ Perhaps today, anticipating tomorrow's Feast of the Triumph of the Cross, Holy Cross Day, is a good time to reflect upon the subject of power - what it means and how we use and misuse it.

At a time of multiple social and international crises, these are not comfortable issues to address, but that doesn't mean we should shy away from them, even if the conclusions we reach - always having searched our consciences in faith - may differ greatly. And we should always respect that, however difficult that may be at times.

However much we recognise the realities of the political world - and they are not always very pleasant, even in a representative democracy such as ours - the Church for all its historical mistakes and compromises - and there have been many of the centuries - has always at the heart of its message had something very different to say on the subject of power and authority. For the *world*, *realpolitik*, however it is dressed up, will always be the bottom line, however, benevolent the system under which we live may be - most of the time.

But Christians preach a strange Gospel about power: that the power of *God* was once made most visible in a condemned man dying on a cross. And if that is so, then what the Church, what the Gospel, means by 'power' has to be understood and has to be transformed directly in the light of that. Very often what we refer to as 'power' is really not so much the responsible use of it as the abuse of it, using power, influence, authority in ways they shouldn't be used. For the Gospel & for the Christian tradition power, authority, dominion is that capacity, that openness to God's love, which shown to us in the life and death of Christ, and is never something to be understood in terms of domination, manipulation, coercion or force.

And one sign as to how far the presence of Christ and his Gospel has penetrated the substance of our lives is exactly how far that way of looking at things has become part of us and the way we act.

Whatever the Divine plan, whatever the necessity of accomplishing his Divine Mission,

it took enormous human courage for Christ to die on a cross out of love for humanity. Likewise with those who are called to follow Christ in this way - the Saints and Martyrs:

it took enormous courage and the gift of grace given to them by the Word made Flesh for men and women down the centuries not to give in to outside pressures which sought to distort both their vision of God and the essential humanity which is derived from that vision.

The history of the Church, *our history*, is littered with such stories from the very earliest persecutions of the Church under the Roman Empire - one only has to think of the stories surrounding St Lawrence, St Ignatius and many others who we regard as martyrs for the faith. Closer to our own time we can think of the Polish Saint Maximilian Kolbe who in the Auschwitz death camp exchanged places with another man singled out for punishment and death. We are led to ask the question, who in that situation exercised true power, those who took pleasure in the arbitrary unleashing of death, or the one who freely embraced death in order to save another?

And the shortest period of reflection should be enough to remind us that the themes of this story of violence and abuse of power remain very much part of our present day world. Part of this contemporary story are the power struggles going on across the globe, as well as the violence we sometimes come across closer to home in our neighbourhoods and towns. In society and in the Church, too, we have to be very concerned with the ruthless imposition of the will of the majority upon the consciences of others. It

won't do.

But the Gospel tells us that it's not good enough simply to condemn the abuse of power on the part of other people. We have always to look inside our own hearts and minds at our own tendencies - however small-scale they may be - towards the abuse of power and towards the tendency to use and manipulate others for own ends. Conversion, which as we know well, is a continual process of turning to Christ, and not a one-off experience, always begins with ourselves and our own hearts and minds and never with the faults and failings of others - that's too easy and it leads nowhere - certainly not to redemption. Our lives and the life of the world itself are littered with the consequences of this refusal to take into our very selves the message of the cross: damaged relationships, a loss of the ability to hear what others are saying to us, and above all a deafness to the voice of God speaking to us in the daily events of our lives.

Life itself can be very difficult, it's not an exaggeration sometimes to describe it, as the Salve Regina does, as "a vale of tears." The cross itself might seem to bear this out, but only if we take it out of context. In reality the cross is both an event and symbol which gives us the greatest hope imaginable. It only seems depressing and hopeless when we forget what true power is. The Christian response is a ringing proclamation that the consequence of the exercise of real power is a victory of the deepest kind, an ultimate victory which overcomes death itself and everything which brings about death both of the body and of the soul, something which we infected by the secularism all around us can very easily tend to forget. Because the Cross turns human expectations upside down. That's what the Christian faith does. At its heart is the story of a man whose death looked like the most abject failure, but who was vindicated by the Father raising him

up. And the Faith tells us that if that is true of Jesus Christ, then it can be true for us too. We look at the life of people like Maximilian Kolbe as a kind of victory, not only because we admire his courage, but because we see in it a total overthrowing of what is wrong with both our world, and also with ourselves.

And what makes the victory of the cross an ultimate one, the supreme example of God's authentic power, is that we believe that this overcoming of evil - the evils of the world and the evils within our own hearts - will prevail ultimately and eternally, and that as a result of the death and resurrection of Christ, true God and true man, this victory is built into the very fabric of the universe. It is inescapable: we cannot avoid it however hard we might try. That is what we call the Christian hope. Our view of the world is very different when we are able to see it in the light of the death and Resurrection of the Lord. +

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:

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.

St Arvans Tea and Chat

2.30 – 4 p.m.

Saturday October 10th

and usually every second

Saturday of the month

Childrens activity table

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES

TODAY

The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

13th September 2026

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

11.30 a.m. Liturgy of the Word at St Deiiniol's, Itton

NEXT SUNDAY

The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

20th September 2026

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

Readings:

Jonah 3.10 - 4.11

Psalms 145.1-8

Philippians 1.21-30

St Matthew 20.1-16

Please note: this week the Eucharist will be celebrated at St Arvans on Monday, Wednesday & Thursday at 10.00.

There will be a live-streamed only Reflection, meditation and celebration of Night Prayer on Tuesday (15th) at 19.00

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

Daily Prayer this week

This is a good week to imagine how much we are like Jesus' disciples. We clearly

want to be his follower, and we do follow him. The humbling reality is that we are inconsistent. At the very time that Jesus is telling us that he wants us to find ourselves by losing ourselves, we are too often being competitive and trying to be on top somehow. Fortunately, he keeps telling us about the real meaning of discipleship. St Paul lays it all out in this week's first readings. The parable of the sower is quite helpful this week. We can imagine ourselves as each one of the soils Jesus describes.

Each morning, as soon as we can after waking up, perhaps associated with some automatic behavior like putting on slippers or a robe or getting a cup of coffee, we begin the day in the presence of our Lord. We can get into the habit of greeting our Lord, "Good morning, Lord. Thank you for this day." Even if we didn't have a good night's sleep and we are waking up fairly tired, this habit can part of our routine. Naming our desire for the day can become the way we begin our day with the Lord. Repeating it, with more details, as we encounter the people and responsibilities of our day, will deepen our relationship with the Lord. Brief conversations (what we normally call "prayers") sustain the connection all day.

In one circumstance this week, I might say, "Lord, here I am being that very hard ground. Please get through to me in the part of me that is still 'receptive soil.' " Another day, I might catch myself trying to make myself look good and I can say, "Dear Jesus, your reminder helps me right here. Let me be a servant in this situation, with these people - forgiving, listening, compassion and freer." Sometime this week we might encounter someone who needs us to be like Jesus - healing something that is broken, or even deadly and we can say, "Lord, let me do your will, imitate your faith in God here. Thank you for being with me."

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

Devauden

Photography Competition 2026

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

Clothes for Homeless People

Please donate warm clothes clean and in good condition for homeless people this winter

Please bring to

St Arvans Church, NP16 6ET

or St Thomas a Becket Church ,
Shirenewton NP16 6RQ
(which are both open daily)

Underwear and socks
to be new please

The collection will be open
until Sunday 18 October

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
KINDNESS AND
GENEROSITY!**

**Early Warning!
Harvest Appeal :
St Arvans Church 2026.
Knickers or Snickers!**

Last year we very successfully
collected chocolate for our Harvest

Appeal. We were overwhelmed by your generosity in response and the women and children at the Refuge were so grateful.

This year we will be collecting SNICKERS CHOCOLATE BARS (or any chocolate) and most importantly packs of small KNICKERS (Tesco/Peacocks? sell reasonably priced packs of ladies size 8/10/12 small) .

The girls at the Refuge are so grateful for these personal items.....you are all life savers.

So for our KNICKERS OR SNICKERS APPEAL a box will appear at the back of St Arvans Church so that we can collect during September/October for distribution to the relevant centres in early November. Thank you in anticipation of a good turn out of KNICKERS & SNICKERS.