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. 00 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 a online only reflection, meditation and celebration of Night Prayer (Compline) on Tuesdays at 7 p.m..
The St Arvans Parish website: 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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1st November 2026
ALL SAINTS DAY

The Collect

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: grant us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that we may come to those inexpressible joys that you have prepared for those who truly love 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 book of Revelation

I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to damage earth and sea, saying, "Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have marked the servants of our God with a seal on their foreheads." And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the people of Israel. After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, singing, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen." Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

[**7.** 2- 4, 9 - 14]

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

Psalm 34: 1- 10

***R*/ Those who trust in him will understand truth and the faithful will abide with him in love.**

I will bless the Lord at all times;
his praise shall ever be in my mouth.
I will glory in the Lord;
let the humble hear and rejoice.
Proclaim with me
the greatness of the Lord;
let us exalt his name together.

***R*/ Those who trust in him will understand truth and the faithful will abide with him in love.**

I sought the Lord and he answered me
and delivered me out of all my terror.
Look upon him and be radiant,
and let not your faces be ashamed.
I called in my affliction
and the Lord heard me
and saved me from all my troubles.

***R*/ Those who trust in him will understand truth and the faithful will abide with him in love.**

The angel of the Lord encompasses
those who fear him,
and he will deliver them.
Taste and see that the Lord is good;
happy are they who trust in him!

***R*/ Those who trust in him will understand truth and the faithful will abide with him in love.**

Fear the Lord, you that are his saints,
for those who fear him lack nothing.
The young lions lack and suffer hunger,
but those who seek the Lord
lack nothing that is good.

***R*/ Those who trust in him will understand truth and the faithful will abide with him in love.**

A reading from the first letter of St John [**3.** 1 - 3]

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

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

Commented [M1]:

[Gradual Hymn]

Alleluia, alleluia!
Come to me, all you who labour
and are overburdened,
and I will give you rest, says the Lord.
Alleluia!

The Lord be with you:
And also with you

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St. Matthew [**5.** 1 - 12]

R/ Glory to you, O Lord.
When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:
"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
"Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
"Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
"Blessed are the merciful,or they will receive mercy.
"Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
"Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you
and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
Rejoice and be glad,
for your reward is great in heaven,
for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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

For Your Prayers

That we may be numbered among the saints in glory
The peoples of Palestine and Gaza, Israel, Iran 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, Diane Parnell, Val Thompson, Liz Hall, Carole, Sue, Bruce Matthews

For the Departed:
The recently departed; our own departed loved ones,and those whose anniversaries of death fall this week:
Sylvia Eileen Gravelle, Richard Leigh Clay

A Prayer of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are
present 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)

ALL SOULS LIST

Is at the back of St Arvans Church. Please add the names of those you wish to be prayed for at the altar on Monday November 2nd (10 a.m.)

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
This week's Jereoboam is based on the readings for the 20th Sunday after Trinity.

Mahalon

Jereboam: So what's new in the life of the Church?
Mahalon: Well, we've been hearing a lot recently about what a wonderful gift faith is. Several of the elders have been praising the faith of Abraham, for example.
Jereboam: You know...forgive my rudeness...I never quite see the point of commending faith like that. Presumably the idea is to encourage you to believe more fervently, but that doesn't really make sense. Teach people about your faith, by all means. Encourage them to express their faith through good works: fine...but telling them to believe more strongly – well, surely they can't achieve that just by trying harder, can they?
Mahalon: It's not quite like that. We reassure one another about the value of our faith, encouraging ourselves to have the confidence to believe. That's important. If you're surrounded by enough people who regard your faith as unnecessary or inadequate in some way, their opinions can easily start to affect you. Listen to this: one of our friends was recently advised that she ought to give up her belief in Jesus and her membership of the Church. Apparently she'd become healthier!
Jereboam: What? That's a strange attitude...
Mahalon: It is an extreme example. But even in everyday life you encounter little criticisms or jokes made at

your expense. Sometimes they're genuinely meant in a friendly way, and you like to think that you can laugh them off, but eventually this all starts to have an impact, wearing you down. Then your faith begins to become cautious, wary...it's blunted, if you like. That's one reason why the Church is so important, and why we need to remember the glorious faith of our forefathers. Their resolve reminds us what is possible, encourages us to trust our convictions, and – how can I put this – it urges us to let faith trickle into every last corner of our being.

Jereboam: I see.

Mahalon: ...and by the way I didn't think you were being rude at all.

Jereboam: Thank you.

THIS WEEK

On Sunday November 1, we celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints (All Saints Day). The gospel is the great message of Jesus recounting the eight Beatitudes. It is good for us to look at who he says are "blessed."

On November 2, we celebrate the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls Day).

The first readings this week are from St Paul's letter to the Philippians. Continuing St Luke's Gospel, Jesus talks about not inviting all the "right" people into our lives, but to include "the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind." "For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." He tells the parable of the invited guests who made excuses to decline the invitation. He sends his servants to invite everyone. Jesus tells a crowd that they have to renounce their grudges and forgive to be his disciple and that to do something really important, we have to prepare and be ready. He tells two parables: the shepherd who leaves the 99 sheep to look for one lost one and the woman who searches for a gold coin. "In just the same way, I tell you, there will be rejoicing among the angels of God over one sinner who repents." The story of the dishonest steward who is caught over-charging his master's customers and saves himself by cutting his master's prices prompts Jesus to say, "the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than the children of light." Finally, Jesus says that we can't have two masters, trying to love God and money. When a Pharisee sneered at him, he said: "what is of human esteem is an abomination in the sight of God."

Next Sunday The gospel is the parable Jesus tells about the ten wise and ten foolish attendants. The foolish ones did not bring enough oil for their lamps. It is an encouragement for us to keep ready and to be prepared for what "oil" we need to meet now and prepare to meet our Lord when he comes.

St Arvans Tea and Chat

2.30 – 4 p.m.
Saturday November 14th
and usually every second Saturday of the month
Children's activity table

The Ministry Area Prayer Group

Thursdays at 7.00
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.

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES

TODAY

ALL SAINTS DAY
1st November *2026*

10 a.m. Sung Eucharist at St Arvan's
11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist at St Mary's, Penterry
4 p.m.. Family Eucharist at St James, Devauden

NEXT SUNDAY

The Second Sunday of the Kingdom
8th November *2026*
Remembrance Sunday

10 a.m. Sung Requiem & Act of Remembrance at St Arvan's

Readings:
Wisdom 3. 1 – 9
Psalm 130
Romans 8. 31- 39
St John 6. 37 - 40

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

Please note: this week the Eucharist will only be celebrated at St Arvans on Monday at 10.00, Tuesday at 9.00, Wednesday & Thursday at 10.00

There will be a live-streamed only Reflection, meditation and celebration of Night Prayer on Tuesday (3rd) at 19.00

Fr Michael's day off this week is Friday

A Homily for All Saints Day

+ Have you noticed the current preoccupation with lists of things? The greatest culprits seem to be social media (surprise, surprise!) and the weekend newspapers: we open them – physically or online - and we're confronted with articles entitled; 'what

are the 'top 10' *whatever* - it could be 1990s pop songs, or European holiday destinations, or UK seaside resorts, the best beaches and so on: even - one I saw the other day – the best world pilgrimage trails!
We seem to be in a perpetual crisis of identity - we need to know that our own choices are shared by everyone else. So much for the age of individualism! But, then, I have always had a little bit of a phobia about lists - even as a child I could never see the point of the *Guinness Book of Records*.
In today's Gospel, a lawyer comes forward and asks Jesus a question about what is probably , for those of us in the Judeo-Christian tradition anyway, the greatest list of all - the Ten Commandments, and he wants to know which one is the greatest - which is the most important? We should be aware at this point that this isn't just an innocent request for information, the question isn't asked in the interests of intellectual enquiry, it is meant to discredit Our Lord's authority as a teacher - "Come on tell us what you think and we'll make you look really stupid!" They should know better and Jesus turns the tables on them once again with a masterly encapsulation of the Law of Moses. There are two principles, he tells them, which sum up all the other laws and commandments - love of God and love of neighbour: or to quote what he said in full:
"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it:
"You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'
Everything else, he is saying, depends upon these two commandments.
This episode occurs quite late on in St Matthew's Gospel; the tension is building, the opposition to Jesus and his message from the religious establishment is growing. It will lead to the cross.
Now, of course, the Gospels are not straightfoward biographies and nor are they just collections of sayings and actions of Jesus put together at random; they are written in the order they are for a reason - they tell a coherent story. Jesus, life and teaching are tending in the direction intended by the Father and this is the last question the religious teachers get to ask Jesus before the final questions he has to answer before Caiaphas and Pilate after his betrayal and arrest.
But in the confrontation we see in this morning's Gospel, Jesus doesn't leave it there after the question put to him about the commandments: he goes on to ask his questioners something in return about the origins of the Messiah, who they were all awaiting for the deliverance of the Jewish people.
Whose son is he? Jesus asks the crowd of teachers of the law.
Their answer is the conventional one - "the son of David." but the verses form the psalms Jesus quotes to them in return make it very clear that the messiah, the anointed one of God, the Christ, is very much more than just the son of David, he has a far higher dignity even than that, his royalty isn't human, it's divine.
When we put this passage form the Gospel into context we can see its real meaning - and its challenge to each one of us. "What do *you* think of the Messiah, whose son is he?"
As we said, this passage comes towards the end of Matthew's Gospel, just before the start of the Passion story itself. The questions come thick and fast to us as we read it or hear it. "What is the greatest commandment? Who is the messiah? And we are meant to take the sequence a step further - "Who in reality is Jesus? How do we *know* who he is? How do *we* know who he is? Who is he for *us*? The teachers, the experts in the religious law knew very well about what the Old Testament tradition has to say about the love of God and the love of their neighbour and in a way they tried to follow it with all their heart, yet we can see that they fail to perceive who it is who they are accusing and trying to destroy.
Matthew is actually saying that we cannot understand the meaning of the two greatest commandments and their summing up of the whole Jewish tradition apart from the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. And it is in his life and death that we see the painful, tragic gap between what we *know* about love and what we *do* about it. We, like the experts in the law, are those who are only too capable of betraying the Son of God and Son of David to his death.
And it's only the cross and resurrection of the Christ which is able to bridge that gap in us between our good intentions and what we actually do.
The cross is the true interpretation of the two commandments which are the greatest of all. As someone has said, the way of the cross is what love of God and neighbour looks like in our fallen world, the imperfect, alienated world of which we are a part and to which we ourselves contribute..
And St Matthew's message is that we too must take up our crosses if we are to unite ourselves to Christ and truly love the Lord our God with all our hearts and souls and minds, if we are to join him in his divine mission to love, forgive and heal. Human effort isn't enough, unredeemed human nature isn't enough: it will betray us every time. We need the grace of God, given to us by the cross and resurrection of Christ his Son. And we come into his presence - to the altar - to receive it. +

Daily Prayer this week

This week it is clear that Jesus is calling us to a deeper love of our neighbour. He is telling us that we need to expand the list of those we are to love. He is telling us to have more passion in our desire to love others and he is urging us to prepare for how we will do that. Finally, Jesus makes it clear that we can't try to love money or honours and at the same time love God.

This is a wonderful background reflection for us this week. All week we can ask the Lord to help us. The quality of our asking will make all of the difference.

Dear Lord, help me today when, in my busyness, I become self-absorbed. Help me with my intensity when I take things personally. Help me, in the burdens I bear, to give up my escape into self-pity.

Dear Lord, thank you for loving me and for showering so many gifts on my family and me. Help me to be more grateful and more generous. Today, help me notice the needs of others. Help me to hear the news with more compassion. Help me imagine what I can do for others in need. I know the cost of discipleship with you will be easy when I remember your love.

Dear Lord, I am really getting it that the lure of "riches and honours" can easily seduce my heart. Why is it so tempting to like and want to be with the beautiful people, the "successful" people? Why do I get sucked into these values and these ways of valuing myself and others? Let me choose "simple," Lord. Let me choose "solidarity." And, when I resist, call me.

These kinds of prayers, or the prayers that come to my heart in this or that daily situation - so simple to express to the Lord in 20 or 30 seconds as I walk down a hall or do any ordinary thing that allows me to turn to God - can transform our days. These are words of intimacy, faith, trust, and reliance. They acknowledge small graces and ask for bigger ones. They come out of a desire to grow in our relationship with the Lord and out of a confidence that with his grace, we can enjoy the blessing of being his disciples. Each night this week, let us give thanks.

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

Very many thanks to Miriam & Barrie, Sheena & Barney, and all those who helped organise the really enjoyable and successful St Arvans Harvest Meal on Friday 23rd!

Our gratitude also to all those who contributed to the Clothes for Homeless People appeal this year. **The appeal is now closed**

Harvest Appeal : St Arvans Church 2026. Knickers or Snickers! Now Closed

Last year we very successfully collected chocolate for our Harvest Appeal. The girls at the Refuge are so grateful for these personal items……..you are all life savers. Thank you for all your support of this worthwhile appeal!

Aging Well

As we get older some things in life become more of a challenge, physically, legally and often from advances in technology.

We are running a set of talks by people who may be able to help in some of these on **the first Monday of the month from 1.00 till 2.00 at St. Christophers Church, Bulwark, CHEPSTOW**

We have been able to secure people who can help lead us through some if these matters and we have a number of other organisations in the wings for future dates in the New Year.

Monday November 2nd
First Aid and advice on what to do in the event of trips or falls at home
Monday December 7th
Police and Monmouthshire Building Society staff helping on cyber security and scams
Monday January 4th
A local solicitor talking about wills, power of attorney etc.
Monday February 8th
MIND 5 ways to wellbeing
(Due to holidays this will be on the 2nd Monday)
This is open to all the churches within the Ministry Area