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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22nd November 2026
Christ the King

The Sunday before Advent

The Collect

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. A**MEN**

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

Thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice. Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

[34. 11-16,20-24]

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

Psalm 100

R/ **We are his people and the sheep of his pasture**

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands;
serve the Lord with gladness and come before his presence with a song.
Know this: The Lord himself is God;
he himself has made us and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

R/ **We are his people and the sheep of his pasture.**

Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise;
give thanks to him
and call upon his name.
For the Lord is good;
his mercy is everlasting;
and his faithfulness
endures from age to age.

R/ **We are his people and the sheep of his pasture.**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians [1.15-23]

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

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

Alleluia, alleluia!
Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!
Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David!
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

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.' *[25.31–46]*

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

For Your Prayers

Young people, especially those of our own commuities and families
The peoples of Ukraine, 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.
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:
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, Arwel Griffith

For the Departed:
The recently departed; our own departed loved ones,and those whose anniversaries of death fall this week: Edward Roderick Hill.

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)

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.

Gehazi

Jereboam: You were very kind to that blind boy just now, Gehazi.
Gehazi: I don't think I did anything extraordinary.
Jereboam: I'm not so sure: people can be cruel sometimes. It's hard to understand, to be honest. Whenever I see anyone with a disability, I always sense this wave of compassion inside me. I suppose they look helpless in a way, and I respond to that. The trouble is that it almost sounds as if I benefit from their disability, when it gives me that lovely feeling. That doesn't sound quite right, does it?
Gehazi: I can't believe that disability is any way desirable. Mind you, the Lord did tell Paul: "My strength finds its full scope in thy weakness." Look, perhaps we can learn a lesson here. That blind boy may look helpless, but, of course, we're all helpless without God's care. Maybe we should aim to look on everyone with that same tenderness that you described. Maybe everyone deserves our compassion. And you know what Jesus said: "In so far as you as did this to the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me." That's significant: if we treat someone kindly, we aren't merely being kind.
Jereboam: What do you mean?
Gehazi: Well, when you realise that Jesus identifies with a person, you're motivated by more than goodwill. You're also honouring them as...how can I put it?...as a sort of embodiment of our Lord. In a sense you're meeting Jesus.

Jereboam: You're talking about members of the Church, presumably?
Gehazi: I'm talking about anyone. Think back to those words of Jesus: "In so far as you did this to the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me." He didn't explicitly mention anything about the people's beliefs or traditions. He certainly didn't say that they'd prayed for his help. I'm inclined to think that he can be present in anyone's life. And anyway, it's not up to us to decide who is Jesus' brother or sister. It's probably wiser if we look for him in everyone.
Jereboam: I'm heartened to hear what you say. Thank you, Gehazi.

THIS WEEK

Sunday is last Sunday iof the Church's year, Christ the King. Jesus tells the parable about how we will all be judged - as a shepherd separates sheep from goats, based upon our care for the poor: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me."
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The first readings this week continue from the mystical Book of Revelation. In this last week of Ordinary Time, we have readings from Luke's Gospel, which grow more explicit about the end time as Jesus and his disciples draw closer to Jerusalem. Jesus watches rich people make donations at the Temple but when a poor widow drops in two small coins he notes that her donation is far larger for "she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood." He speaks of the end time, and cautions that many will claim to come in Jesus' name. "Do not follow them!" He says that the cost of following him may be high, and may lead to trials and divisions in families. But, he says, "By your perseverance you will secure your lives." Just as we know what the signs in nature tell us - fig trees in bloom announce the coming of summer - Jesus want us to be aware of the signs of the coming of the Kingdom: "when you see these things happening, know that the Kingdom of God is near." Finally, he tells us not to let our "hearts be drowsy" from drunkenness or anxiety but to be vigilant at all times and to pray for the strength we will need for the "tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man."
Next Sunday is the beginning of a new liturgical year with the First Sunday of Advent. The first reading is from the prophet Isaiah as the people repent before God: "Would that you might meet us doing right, that we were mindful of you in our ways!"
St Mark's gospel offers the image of the master who leaves his servants in charge while he is away. Be watchful! Be alert!

St Arvans Tea and Chat

2.30 – 4 p.m.
Saturday December 12th
and usually every second Saturday of the month Childrens 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
Christ the King
22nd November 2026

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

NEXT SUNDAY
The First Sunday of Advent
29th November *2026*

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

Readings: Year B

Isaiah 64.1-9
Psalm 80.1-7, [17-19]
1 Corinthians 1.3-9
Mark 13.24-37

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 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 (24th at 19.00

Fr Michael's day off this week is Friday

A Homily for Christ the King

+ The law which runs through the New Testament is the law of love. Throughout the Gospels it is constantly underlined by Our Lord himself, not only in his teaching but above all by what he does, and above all by his sacrifice of himself on the cross of Calvary, where he loved us all to the end, without limit, at the highest price. Christ in the Gospels identifies himself completely with those in need and those who suffer. Today's Gospel shows us unequivocally that if we wish to serve Christ, we must do so in the poor, the needy and the suffering. What will count most when we stand before the Judge of all is in what way we loved and cared for others.
The last Sunday of the Church's year is a celebration of our Lord Jesus Christ as Universal King, the ruler of all peoples, and of the whole creation.

At the year comes to an end in the damp, cold and darkness of the beginning of winter, Christ the King is a celebration in hope of the return of Christ in glory, as Lord and Judge of all. It looks forward to that point at the end of time when the Lord will come to claim for his own the community of his faithful people for whom he shed his blood.

According to St Paul, this is the point when Christ hands over the kingdom to God the Father, having done away with every earthly sovereignty, authority and power... It is the moment when his lordship and his kingdom of love will be established once and for all.

The Kingship of Christ, the Lordship of Christ has a deep resonance for us. We think, perhaps, of those great masterpieces of the Middle Ages - the sculptures of the last judgement over the west doors of our Gothic and Romanesque cathedrals. Even today, we can still just about point to the over-arching importance for the development of the English language and English literature, of the Authorised Version of the Bible, the presence everywhere of religious buildings and the religious origins of many of our most valued institutions. Even the BBC - a relatively modern institution when compared to many others, has as its motto words which derive from verses of the prophets Micah and Isaiah, looking forward to the coming of the Christ, the Messiah "Nation shall speak peace unto nation" .We are all familiar with that phrases *'Jesus is Lord,' and 'Christ is King,'* but who now really believes it? The world according to social media seems split between those who reject such concepts out of hand as primitive superstition, and those who use them as a means of as a means of peddling cruel political agendas millions of miles away from the spirit of the Gospels or the social teachings of the Christian faith that are directly derived from them.

And that's significant in itself because the modern liturgical origins of this Feast of Christ the King lie only as far back as the 1920s as a truly Christian celebration intentionally designed to counter the blasphemous claims and demands of the totalitarian State and the ideologies of both the extreme right and left - to total control over the human personality. It has been said that the feast of Christ the King was introduced against the background noise of broken glass and marching jackboots, and since that time it has been taken up enthusiastically by Christians of many traditions as saying something vital about the person of the Risen, Ascended and Glorified Christ.. What the celebration of Christ the King, is saying quite explicitly is that not only is Christ the Lord of all things, but that he is the Lord of grace, compassion and freedom and not one who seeks to enslave the human body, mind and spirit.

We don't live - here in the West anyway - in that kind of violent, threateningly thuggish world today - although sometimes we seem to be getting there - but the control which is sought by some over our lives, our very minds and thoughts, is just as dangerous and often hides behind ideas and values which may seem good in themselves but which end up trying to assert a kind of thought-control - a sort of coarseness and thuggery of the spirit – we've see it again and again on social media and in the newspapers and on our television news - which is opposed to that true freedom of the person which we seek in the Kingdom of God…... and, comes perilously close in practice to saying along with the crowds on the first Good Friday, "we have no King but Caesar."

All this is by means of saying that this Feast of Christ the King is just as meaningful and as necessary to us today as it was to the Church nearly 100 years ago - it sums up so many truths about the person of Christ and how we are meant to perceive him and receive him in our lives. What today's feast of Christ the King is meant to say to us on this last Sunday of the Church year, when we are also urged to stir up our wills and our hearts to redouble our efforts as disciples of Christ - what it says to us is that the Lord has shared our human condition to redeem us, to save us from our sins, and also in order to teach us how to live and love and forgive; how to give of ourselves in sacrificial love, how to spend our lives seeking the will of the Father. This we are being told is the expression of the Kingdom of God on earth, this is 'all empire power and glory.' this is the way to the Lord whose kingdom is not of *this* world. It remains the only response today which is capable of beginning again the process of converting hearts and minds…..

It's also absolutely vital to recognise that when we speak of Christ as Lord and King we are using those words in a way which God himself has *redefined* in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. We are speaking not of an authority imposed by overwhelming force and power but of a force of humility, gentleness and service which is built into the *fabric of things* by the one who created them.

Today we celebrate the Kingship of Christ over all creation; we can't do that without also thinking at the end of our lives and the inevitable but, we are promised, merciful judgement which awaits all of us. Today's Gospel reinforces that with St Matthew's account of Jesus' words concerning the last judgement. It's natural when hearing that, if mixed with hope there's more than a certain apprehension, fear and awe. It's a sobering thought, but probably among those separated from Christ, the goats on his left hand in his own analogy, aren't only those who have committed the monstrous crimes of history, but are people very much like ourselves who perhaps fail through indifference, coldness of heart, self pre-occupation and cynicism, along with the others of the seven deadly sins we commit amidst

the ordinary, everyday events of life. I don't say this to cast doubt on our confidence and trust in the Lord's promises to his people: God's love for us in Christ is infinitely greater than all our sins and weaknesses, infinitely more understanding of our conflicted human nature we all share than we are ourselves. Yes, there's always the possibility that we make choices throughout life which perhaps slam the door in the face of God's mercy and forgiveness, and not anything specific we can ever do in isolation. But we should remember, too, that God's mercy isn't cancelled out by own coldheartedness. How could it be? Don't we believe that - in the end, at least - 'not one shall be lost?' God doesn't coerce or browbeat or threaten anyone into the Kingdom of heaven, he rules with the force of love, with the gentle but firm persuasion of truth. The rule of God isn't one of fear and it's a travesty of Christian faith to present it that way. It can be very difficult for us to grasp that God's judgment and justice is exactly the same power as his mercy, love and forgiveness. And we've all experienced that, time and time again throughout our lives, which we experience here in Sacramental form as we receive before the altar his life into ours. As St Benedict has it, 'always we begin again.' As we seek to deepen our relationship with Christ, to grow in grace and love and service, we are called to recognise and serve him in one another, and in the world, and that we are called to look forward 'in joyful hope for the coming of God's Kingdom'. +

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Daily Prayer this week

This last week of the Church's year we might be inspired by the gospels to ask God to help us be attentive for the signs of God's presence in our lives each day. We can ask Jesus to help us open our hearts and be more generous in our daily lives. Inspired by the poor widow, we can ask ourselves, in faith, "How willing am I to share? Do I give from my surplus or is it a real sacrifice?" Are we generous with our time and talents? Perhaps we spend too much time at the computer, at work, or on various other projects, neglecting our family and other relationships. Are there places where we could give more of ourselves to people who need us? When Jesus speaks of the "tribulations" that are ahead for all Christians, this might prompt me to ask myself how willing I am to live my faith courageously. Caring for the poor, seeking justice and self-giving love are basic elements of following Jesus, but they are not valued by our culture. Am I willing to face the objections of family and friends for being so "counter-cultural" in following the gospel? Perhaps we are distracted by the pressures of daily life, or as Jesus says so aptly, we allow our hearts to grow drowsy from "carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise…." What is it in our lives that keeps us from recognising God's Kingdom here on earth? Maybe we abuse alcohol, are greedy, or know deep inside there is a basic selfishness we don't even want to recognise in ourselves. We can only rely on Jesus for an "awakeness" that will help us to see ourselves as Jesus sees us, with love and forgiveness. It is in that moment, when we recognise that we are "loved sinners" that we can ask for the strength to make changes in our lives. As we awake each morning and sit by the side of the bed before we begin our day, we can ask Jesus for the grace to see his presence in our lives today and beg him for the help we need. And in all of the smallest moments of the day, we can ask him from the deepest part of our hearts for the mercy and grace that will keep our eyes and hearts open this day. Then we can say, from our hearts, "Thank you."

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

2027 St James, Devauden Calendars are now on sale

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 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

ADVENT GROUPS

Mondays at 7 p.m. at St Christopher's, Bulwark
Reflecting on Bl Mary, Mother of Jesus

Tuesdays at 3.30 p.m.
'Advent: A Season of Surprises'
Contact Carol 07380 992494
For further details

Walk with Me
Advent Booklets
are available free at the back of St Arvan's Church. Please take one as we begin our Advent journey to Christmas