

GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Lessons From the Ark

We know that we can die at any time. We all know that we could get run over by a bus before the day is out or get diagnosed at any time with a life threatening illness. Despite this we still naively expect people to die in the right order. We expect a great grandparent to die first, then the old lady who works in the corner shop who has just reached retirement, and lastly the young man who lives in the flat downstairs who runs everyone's messages. So when the young man dies before the great grandparent we are left in a state of bewildered shock. It's just something we weren't expecting. Common sense tells us that we can die at any time, but our hearts tell us something different. Perhaps that is why we are so bad at planning our spiritual future. For most of us, it just isn't high up in our priorities. For most of us, the here and now hasn't got much to do with our spiritual future. Our spiritual future is always something we can catch up on at a later date. That's probably what Noah's neighbours thought too!

Advent is a time of looking at life from a long-term view. In the first week of Advent we are on a journey towards the feast of Christmas, but more importantly we are at the start of a new year in which we are invited to plan time spent between Jesus' first coming as an infant, and his second coming on Judgement Day. We are warned not to spend life as Noah's neighbours did, rushing around determined to realise our own agendas without a thought for God or how we might be judged.

Jesus talks about Judgement Day and its unexpected arrival not to frighten us, but to encourage us to take responsibility for the here and now. Jesus takes a dim view of those who sit back and do nothing. Today's gospel is a wake-up call for all of us who are not fully realising God's possibilities in our lives. We needn't let life pass us by if we have a plan of action. We needn't fear the future if we are prepared. Jesus shows us the lessons from the past so that we might start preparing for our future right now in the present.

Bite Size

"Man is a strange animal, he doesn't like to read the handwriting on the wall until his back is up against it." ~ *Adlai Stevenson*

PARISH PRAYER - Father, pour out your Spirit upon our parish. Grant us a new vision of your glory, a new faithfulness to your Word, and a new consecration to your service; that your love might grow among us and your Kingdom come. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

Useful links: Diocesan Website: <http://www.rcdea.org.uk>
Notre Dame High School, Norwich: Website <http://www.ndhs.org.uk>

PARISH OF THE SACRED HEART AND ST MARGARET MARY [Reg. Charity 278742]

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27TH NOVEMBER 2016 - 1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR A)

Sunday Masses - Page 82 of Parish Mass Book

Saturday	6.00 pm	Donor's Int.
Sunday	9.00 am	Donor's Int.
	11.00 am	Int. People of the Parish

Music for Sunday Masses - Setting: Dom Gregory Murray Mass

Entry 6pm - *Angelus (said)*; Hymn 103 - Promised Lord, and Christ is he ...

Offertory Hymn 110 - The coming of our God ...

Communion *Instrumental Interlude/Sacred silence ...*

Recessional 11am - *Angelus (said)*; Hymn 100 - Come, thou long-expected Jesus ...

CONFESSION/RECONCILIATION: Saturday at 5.30pm, or on request / by appointment

Weekday Mass Times (1st week of Advent - Weekday Cycle I) [Psalter Week 1]

Mon.	10.00 am	Advent Feria - Donor's Int.
Tues.	No Mass today	Advent Feria
	7.30 pm	Queen of Peace Prayer Group - in Emmaus Room
Weds.	10.00 am	ST ANDREW, Patron of Scotland - Int. Sidney Gledhill
Thurs.	10.00 am	Advent Feria - Donor's Int.
Fri.	10.00 am	Votive Mass for World Peace
	5.45 pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Silent Prayer
	6.15 pm	Evening Prayer (Vespers)
Sat.	10.30 am	St Francis Xavier - Int. John Merrick (*Fdn.)
	6.00 pm	2 nd Sunday of Advent - Donor's Int.

*Fdn. = Foundation Mass

The Parish Newsletter (incl. back copies) is available to view on the parish website from Friday onward each week.

Anniversaries this week: Winifred Lovesay, Joseph Barker, Madeline & Mary Lambert, Frederick Shelock, Charles O’Kane, Mona Murphy, John Lawrence, James Hooper, Jean English, Phyllis Howell, Les Rayner and John Merrick. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.*

Hospital Visits – If you or family members are admitted to the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital (NNUH) or Queen Elizabeth II Hospital (QEII), King’s Lynn, and would like a visit from the Roman Catholic Chaplain, please call either St John’s Cathedral, Norwich (01603 624615) for visits to NNUH, or Fr Peter Rollings (01553 772220) for visits to QEII. If you would like to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick before going to hospital, please contact Fr. Brendan on 01362 694066.

Sick List - Please pray for: Joan Blakiston, David Peek, Robert Nicol, Shirley Liebenhals, Sarah Chaudri, Anne & Derek Williams, Anna Thompkins, Michelle Smith, Rita Smith, Eileen Brockleby, Pat Howe, Kathleen (Jenny) Rudd, Ellen Flood, Margaret Leggett, Ken May, Muriel Harmer, Peter Brown and James Maxwell.

Money Matters – The collection for the parish last weekend was £402.83. The collection for the Diocesan Youth Service was £181.46. Standing Orders for the parish in October amounted to £492.00. Thank you very much for your continuing generosity.

Diary Dates for this week –

- Fri. 2nd Dec. – SVP ‘First Friday’ Coffee morning. After Mass. All welcome.
- Fri. 2nd Dec. – Confirmation Candidates meeting – 7.15pm in Emmaus Room
- Sat. 3rd Dec. – Saturday Club meets - 11.00-11.30am in Emmaus Room. Rehearsals start for children to take part in the Nativity on Sunday, 18th December.

Dereham Churches Together invite you to an evening of Praise, Prayer and Fellowship to be held in St. Nicholas Church Rooms, Church Street, Dereham on **Tuesday, 20th December at 7.30 pm**. Everyone is welcome. Please take a leaflet from the back of the church.

Advent is a separate season in the Church’s Liturgical Year. It is the beginning of our Liturgical Year. The Mass Books are changed over. The Sunday Readings will be from Year A (1) Matthew and the Weekday Cycle will be Year 1. We should not just see **Advent** as a countdown to Christmas but as a time of **joyful preparation for the coming of Christ**. The emphasis here is on our readiness to meet Christ when he comes. The huge difficulty here is that we anticipate Christmas with music, parties, Christmas Carol Services before Christmas and forget that Christmas has its own season beginning on Christmas Day. During **Advent** the Gloria is not sung at Mass; there are no flowers in church and the vestments and altar antependia are purple. **Advent** has the wreath with its candles but it is not a penitential season like **Lent**.

The Advent Wreath - Today we light the first of our Advent candles. The traditional use of Advent candles originated in eastern Germany prior to the Reformation. As this tradition came down to us by the beginning of this century, it involved three purple candles and one pink candle. Purple for the royalty of the coming king the pink candle was the third candle to be lit on Gaudate Sunday and represents 'joy'. The gradual lighting of the four candles symbolises the coming light into the world. The wreath itself is also symbolic. The circle of evergreen in which the candles are placed represent everlasting life.



Saint Andrew the Apostle – 30th November - As one of the twelve apostles, Andrew worked closely with Our Lord during his public life. He was present at the Last Supper, beheld the risen Lord, witnessed the Ascension and shared in the graces and gifts of the first Pentecost. The good deeds and preaching of St. Andrew became known in all parts of the world. According to tradition, a part of the remains of St. Andrew were taken to Scotland, and he was chosen as the Protector of the Scottish people. The Cross of St. Andrew also adorns the British flag where it was placed after the union of Scotland and England.

Union of Catholic Mothers - The UCM cake stall last week raised £82.10. Thank you so much for your generosity. The Raffle and Gift Stalls will be available this weekend and next (3/4 December). The Grand Raffle for the hamper and other prizes will be drawn at our meeting on 14th December. With your help this year, we have already given £752 to mainly local charities – see the list on the board!

Forty Hours Devotion. Please let me have your suggestions about how best to achieve this when the Icon comes to Dereham on the 18th December. Ours is the last parish in the Diocese to host the Icon.

The Angelus

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary. **R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.**

Hail Mary ...

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord. **R. Be it done unto me according to thy word. *Hail Mary ...***

V. And the Word was made Flesh. **R. And dwelt among us. *Hail Mary ...***

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. **R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

LET US PRAY:

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel may, by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ, Our Lord. Amen