

GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR THE 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



A Change of Heart

Much of television transmission over Christmas will be taken up by soaps. As sophisticated audiences we have become familiar with how soaps work. We understand that soaps have certain character types and that those characters rarely change their spots. We have become accustomed to watching characters making the same old mistakes over and over again. They may show remorse for their failings, they may even promise their loved ones that they can be different, but we know deep down that they cannot change. We know that sooner or later they will go slipping on those same old banana skins.

In today's gospel we are being taught an important lesson. We are taught that repentance is more than just being sorry. We can be sorry yet re-offend. We can be sorry that we have told a lie yet lie again. We can be sorry that we have succumbed to crime or self indulgence, yet go down that path again. The true meaning of repentance means to change direction to choose a different path altogether.

Choosing a new path sounds easy. It obviously isn't or the world would already be a perfect place. We all know what changes we would like to make in our own lives, and we know equally well the excuses we use that bar our path to God.

In Luke's gospel, John tells us, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth..."

We are being told that Advent is a time of preparation and of change. In the same way that Dickens' immortal Scrooge secured his salvation by changing his ways, so too must we choose a new path through life and smooth our way along it by clearing the obstacles. Rebuilding our lives might not be something we can do overnight, but we can all begin with the will to be different the will to change direction a change of heart.

**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

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6TH DECEMBER 2015 – 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Sunday Masses – Page 84 of Parish Mass Book

Saturday	6.00 pm	John & Ivy Jones
Sunday	9.00 am	Holy Souls
	11.00 am	People of the Parish

Music for Sunday Masses - *Setting: Belmont Mass*

Entry 6pm – *Angelus (said)*; Hymn 103 – Promised Lord and Christ is He ...

Offertory Hymn 94 – On Jordan's bank ...

Communion *Instrumental Interlude/Sacred silence ...*

Recessional 11am – *Angelus (said)*; Hymn 110 – The coming of our God ...

CONFESSION/RECONCILIATION - Saturday at 5.30 - 5.55 pm

Weekday Mass Times (2nd week in Advent)

[Psalter Week 2]

Mon.	No Mass Today	- St. Ambrose
Tues.	10.00 am	- The Immaculate Conception of the BVM
	7.30 pm	Queen of Peace Prayer Group – in Emmaus Room
Weds.	10.00 am	- Advent Feria
Thurs.	No Mass Today	- Blessed Martyrs of East Anglia
Fri.	10.00 am	Donor's Intention - Advent Feria
	5.45 pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Silent Prayer
	6.15 pm	Evening Prayer (Vespers)
Sat.	10.30 am	Donor's Intention - Advent Feria
	6.00 pm	People of the Parish – 3 rd Sunday of Advent

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

[Reg. Charity 278742]

Anniversaries this week: George Harmer, Adrian Ring-Davies, Mary Butler, Phyllis Thurstance, Fred Evans, Tony Lovelace, Susan Frosdick, Olive Maude Thompson and John Hauzoter. *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: Michelle Redmond, Joan Blakiston, David Peek, Michael Reavey, Sheila Christie, Robert Nicol, Doreen Kanssen, Shirley Liebenhals, Sarah Chaudri, Anne & Derek Williams, David & Anna Thompkins, Michelle Smith, Rita Smith, Rhonda Darby, Collette Barrow-Nessian and Eileen Brockleby.

Money Matters – The collection last weekend was £445.48. Thank you very much. Next weekend, there will be a retiring collection for the Dependent Priests' Fund – the Sick and Retired Priests of the Diocese.

Please note the changed schedule for Mass this week. I will take Monday as my day off this week and celebrate Mass for the Immaculate Conception on Tuesday. On Thursday, there is a Study Day in Newmarket which I am obliged to attend.

Diary Dates for this week –

- Wed. 9th Dec. – SVP meets – 2pm in Emmaus Room
- Sat. 12th Dec. – Saturday Club meets - 11.00am in Emmaus Room (2nd Nativity Rehearsal)

Advent is progressing with incredible speed. I hope all your preparations are progressing well. I would be very grateful if those who usually decorate the church with Christmas trees etc. would do so again this year. Please consult me about the location of the Crib. The Diocesan Year Book should have been with us by now. Like Christmas, I suppose it is on its way! Mass times for Christmas will be in the bulletin each week and yes, Midnight Mass will be at midnight with carols from 11.30 pm.

Bible Sunday 2015 - On the second Sunday of Advent, 6th December 2015, parishes are invited to celebrate Catholic Bible Sunday. This year's theme is 'Embracing the Gospel of Mercy'. This year's celebration comes just days before Pope Francis will open the **Jubilee Year of Mercy**. An important way in which believers and non-believers alike encounter the 'balm of mercy' is through the Bible stories and texts. It is therefore hoped that on Catholic Bible Sunday this year two things will be invited and encouraged:

- To read the Gospel of Luke, also known as the 'Gospel of Mercy'.
- Once someone has read the Gospel, that they gift it to someone else who perhaps isn't a Christian.

The Immaculate Conception of Mary - December 8th - Like the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, celebrated during Advent, is related to the mystery of Jesus. To fulfil her unique role in the mission of Jesus, Mary was conceived free from original sin through the foreseen merits of her Son.

Year of Mercy - 8th December 2015 - Pope Francis has initiated a 'Year of Mercy' that will be celebrated in the Catholic Church from 8th December 2015. It's a time to focus on God's mercy and forgiveness. To mark this, many of the Bishops of England and Wales have recorded special reflections for Advent. The podcasts, released one a day throughout the season, cover those important themes of mercy, compassion and forgiveness. Listen at.... www.catholicnews.org.uk/Home/Featured/Holy-Year-Jubilee-of-Mercy/Podcasts-Advent-Reflections-2015

Pope Francis's Prayer Intention for December – Forgiveness - Forgiveness is a decision, and it's a decision that we can and must make because it is what Christianity is all about. When we make a decision to forgive, firstly we must try to adopt empathy for the person that has hurt us, but most importantly we must try to remember how good forgiveness has felt in the past when we have been in the wrong. This month we are asked to join in Pope Francis' prayer intention, **"That all may experience the mercy of God, who never tires of forgiving."**



The Parish Christmas Lunch - at the Yaxham Village Hall on Sunday, 20th December from 12.30pm. Tickets on sale after all Masses this weekend and next (Adults £6, Children £3 (incl. a present). A complimentary ticket for each dish you bring to share (please put down what you are bringing on the notice board; hot dishes should arrive hot, and only need warming). If you are purchasing a children's ticket, please put the child's name and age on the other notice, so that Santa can bring an appropriate gift. Hot and cold drinks provided, but please bring your own alcoholic drinks. The lunch will be followed by the Bethlehem Tableaux and Carols, and by a visit from Father Christmas.

Mass Times at Christmas –

- ◇ **Christmas Eve**
 - 6.00 pm - First Mass of Christmas (Private Intention)
 - 11.30 pm - Christmas Carols
 - 12 Midnight – Midnight Mass (Private Intention)
- ◇ **Christmas Day**
 - 10.00 am Mass (People of the Parish)

Bite Size

"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you."

Lewis B. Smedes