

ST FILLAN'S PARISH NEWSLETTER

Dunkeld Diocese, Scottish Charity No: SC001810
Website: stfdac.co.uk

06th December 2020

2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR B

During this very difficult period, it was felt that some form of communication/support network could prove very useful to Parishioners, especially those who are housebound and vulnerable.

Please contact Fr. Les by phone 01877 330 702 or by email: parishpriest@stfdac.co.uk for further information.

THE THINGS THAT HINDER US



We are getting closer and closer to the “day of the Lord,” a term which the authors of the Christian Scriptures carried over from the Hebrew Scriptures.

The author of the Second Letter of Peter describes it this way: “What we await are new heavens and a new earth where, according to his promise, the justice of God will reside.”

It is the day of God’s salvation when “Kindness and truth shall meet; justice and peace shall kiss. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and justice shall look down from heaven.”

We await the day of the Lord, but it is to be an active waiting. John the Baptist echoes the prophet’s message: “In the desert prepare the way of the Lord!”

“Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!” The reading from Peter speaks of our “looking for the coming of the day of God” and of our “trying to hasten it!”

We stand, as it were, in a desert, an empty wasteland of broken lives and discarded people.

The challenge of Advent is to clear a straight path for God: to end injustices, to stop wars and the preparations for wars, to put discrimination behind us, or in the words of the opening prayer, to “remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy.”

The promise of Advent is that “the Lord will come to save all nations.”

Because we believe in the dignity of the person, we must embrace every chance to help and to liberate, to heal the wounded world as Jesus taught us. Our hands must be the strong but gentle hands of Christ, reaching out in mercy and justice, touching individual persons, but also touching the social conditions that hinder the wholeness which is God’s desire for humanity.

Health and Health Care, 1981:13

SUNDAY READINGS – INTRODUCTION

Isaiah 40:1–5, 9–11: *Prepare the way of the Lord.*

Psalm 85

“Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.”

Peter 3:8–14: *We await new heavens and a new earth.*

Mark 1:1–8: *Make straight the paths of the Lord.*

Advent is a season of preparation and today’s readings emphasize our need to prepare for the Lord’s coming. But Isaiah also gives us words of comfort and hope. The Lord’s coming is a sign of God’s generosity. The Second Letter of Peter tells us to conduct ourselves in holiness and devotion, echoing John the Baptist’s call for repentance. As we prepare the way of the Lord, let the word of God inspire us.

SUNDAY READINGS

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: “In the desert prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!” See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial: Psalm 146 (147), 1-6

R./Happy are all who hope in the Lord.

Praise the Lord for he is good; sing to our God for he is loving: to him our praise is due. The Lord builds up Jerusalem and brings back Israel’s exiles.

R./Happy are all who hope in the Lord.

He heals the broken-hearted, he binds up all their wounds. He fixes the number of the stars; he calls each one by its name.

R./Happy are all who hope in the Lord.

Our Lord is great and almighty; his wisdom can never be measured. The Lord raises the lowly; he humbles the wicked to the dust.

R./Happy are all who hope in the Lord.

A reading from the Second Epistle of St. Peter.

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish.

The Word of the Lord.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near.

Alleluia, alleluia!

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the desert: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’” John the baptizer appeared in the desert, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in

the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." **The Gospel of the Lord.**

FAMILY CONNECTION

Gospel Reading

John the Baptist preached repentance and baptized the people, in preparation for the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit.

The season of Advent invites us to renew our lives in preparation for the coming of Jesus. The people who heard the message of John the Baptist repented for their sins and were baptized as a sign of God's forgiveness. In Baptism, our sins are forgiven, and we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, who helps us in our life of discipleship. Led by the Holy Spirit, we use this Advent season to renew our lives so that we, like John the Baptist, might prepare the way for Jesus.

As you gather together as a family, talk about ways in which the example of others has called you to be a follower of Jesus. Name the people who have been examples to you of Christian discipleship and describe their characteristics that you have tried to emulate. Read together today's Gospel, Mark 1:1-8.

As John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, Baptism commissions us to prepare the way of the Lord. The gift of the Holy Spirit leads us to continually renew our lives so that we might lead others to Jesus. As a family, identify at least one action that you will take this week to try to be more faithful followers of Jesus. Conclude in prayer together that God will receive this action and use it to lead others to Jesus. **Pray the Prayer to the Holy Spirit.**

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful. And kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit you have taught the hearts of your faithful. In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right and always rejoice in your consolation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

On Tuesday, December 8th, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

An essential part of God's plan for the mother of his Son was that she be conceived free from Original Sin. "Through the centuries the Church became ever more aware that Mary, 'full of grace' through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception"

DAILY ADVENT PRAYER Second Sunday of Advent

"Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare your praise."

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: People of Zion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.

COLLECT: Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son, but may our learning of heavenly wisdom gain us admittance to his company. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

DAILY MEDITATION: *Comfort, give comfort to my people, says the Lord. ... Prepare the way of the Lord. ... Here is your God! Like a Shepherd.* Today is filled with hope. We are called to prepare his way, to trust that he will come, in spite of the valleys and mountains. Today with ask for the graces of hope and openness.

(CCC, no. 491). In anticipation that she was to bear the Son of God, Mary was preserved from the time of her conception from Original Sin.

We call this the Immaculate Conception. No sin would touch her, so that she would be a fitting and worthy vessel of the Son of God. The Immaculate Conception does not refer to the virginal conception and birth of Christ, but rather to Mary's being conceived without inheriting Original Sin.

In the course of time, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception became more precisely enunciated, as its truth—long supported by the universal popular devotion of the faithful— was better understood by deepening theological inquiry.

In 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed this dogma infallibly: that is, in his role as supreme teacher of the Church, he declared that this doctrine is divinely revealed and must be accepted with faith by the entire Church.



MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, we fly unto you, O Virgin of Virgins, our Mother. To you we come. Before you we kneel, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not our petitions, but in your clemency, hear and answer them. Amen.

— St. Bernard of Clairvaux

You are all welcome to attend a Rosary prayer and candle procession round St Fillan's Church in Doune on Sunday 6th December at 4.30pm for the celebration of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Candles will be provided. Please dress appropriately for the weather. However, if it is raining that day will move inside the church. Hope to see you there.

INTERCESSIONS: To the Lord Jesus Christ, judge of the living dead, let us pray: *Come, Lord Jesus!*

Lord Jesus, you came to save sinners, - protect us in times of temptation. You will come in glory to be our judge, - show in us your power to save. Help us to keep the precepts of your law with the strength of the Spirit, - and to look forward in love to your coming. You are praised throughout the ages; in your mercy help us to live devoutly and temperately in this life, - as we wait in joyful hope for the revelation of your glory.

CLOSING PRAYER: Dear Lord, Through the darkness, I look for your wisdom. I want my heart to be open to you. But sometimes in these days, it seems that so many things come between us. Help me to be awake and aware of the radiance you bring to my life. Help me to be grateful each day for the blessings of family and friends. Let me be a peacemaker in my own life, and in the world. Let me pray especially for this difficult world and those who are so in need of an end to violence. My heart begs for this as my Advent prayer today.

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

MONDAY

“Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare your praise.”

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Hear the word of the Lord, O nations; declare it to the distant lands: Behold, our Savior will come; you need no longer fear.

COLLECT: May our prayer of petition rise before you, we pray, O Lord, that, with purity unblemished, we, your servants, may come, as we desire, to celebrate the great mystery of the Incarnation of your Only Begotten Son. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

DAILY MEDITATION: Our God will come to save us! What an incredible promise! Each of these days uses images to help us to imagine and become excited about the ways our God has tried to prepare us, through the prophets to be ready for the healing and restoration and love that is offered us in Jesus. For all in me that is feeble or weak or frightened I can simply listen to these words: *Strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak, say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; With divine recompense he comes to save you. Isaiah 35*
Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? Luke 5

INTERCESSIONS: To Christ our Redeemer, who will come again to free from the power of death all those who return to him, let us humbly pray: *Come, Lord Jesus!* As we proclaim your coming, Lord, - cleanse our hearts of every vain desire. Lord may the Church which you founded, - proclaim your greatness to all peoples. Your law is a light to our eyes, - let it protect those who trust in you. You allow the joys of your coming to be foretold to us by your Church, - may we receive you with eager devotion.

CLOSING PRAYER: God of Strength, I need your courage. You offer to make firm the knees that are weak. Only you know how frightened I so often am. And you do offer me strength. There is the promise of your Son's coming and knowing that you will save me. I cannot do this on my own no matter how often I think I can.

Give me the humility to ask for your help and open heart to accept your healing and love in my life.

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

TUESDAY

“Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare your praise.”

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Behold, the Lord will come, and all his holy ones with him; and on that day there will be a great light.

COLLECT: O God, who have shown forth your salvation to all the ends of the earth, grant, we pray, that we may look forward in joy to the glorious Nativity of Christ. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

DAILY MEDITATION: *Though the grass withers and the flower wilts, the word of our God stands forever* Our God comes with power to save us. Each of us can name what it is we long to be saved from. Today, let us imagine ourselves freer. Throughout the day, let us picture new ways of responding to challenging relationships, habitual sins, and other ruts we are in. As we envision our freedom, we experience how much our God desires to save us. *It is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little ones be lost.*

INTERCESSIONS: To Jesus Christ our Lord, the light of the world, let us cry out with joy: *Come Lord Jesus!* Dispel our darkness with the light of your presence, - and make us worthy of your gifts. Save us, Lord our God, - that we may praise your holy name this day. Enkindle in our hearts the flame of your love, - and make us long to be united with you. You bore our infirmity, -aid the sick and those who are to die this day.

CLOSING PRAYER: Almighty God, I hear it over and over: you are coming to me. I feel my heart stir in anticipation, and I sense that you are inviting me to enter more deeply into the mystery of your birth. Help me to feel renewed patience settle in my heart, and to lift my face in joy. I have been like a lost lamb, but I hear your voice calling me and I feel how deeply you want me to return. Somehow, I know that you rejoice in my desire to find you. Help me not to be afraid to say out loud, to believe: Here is God, coming into my life.

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

WEDNESDAY

“Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall declare your praise.”

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: The Lord will come, and he will not delay. He will illumine what is hidden in darkness and reveal himself to all the nations.

COLLECT: Almighty God, who command us to prepare the way for Christ the Lord, grant in your kindness, we pray, that no infirmity may weary us as we long for the comforting presence of our heavenly physician. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

DAILY MEDITATION: *They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength.* Our Advent preparation is about growing in confidence that our God can indeed save us. So often our struggles make us very weary and tired. When we really “get it” that the One who made us truly desires to set us free, we really begin longing at a new level to know what it is to be restored to a new vitality. They will soar as with eagles' wings; They will run and not grow weary, walk, and not grow faint.

INTERCESSIONS: To Jesus Christ our Lord, who came among us in his mercy, let us constantly cry out with joy: *Come Lord Jesus!* You came from the Father to take on our human nature, - now set free what was harmed in us by sin. One day you will come again in glory to your chosen people, -come to us today and help us sinners to recognize your mercy and tender love. We glory in praising you, Lord Jesus, -come and bring us your salvation. Through faith you lead us into light, -may we reveal your justice through our deeds.

CLOSING PRAYER: Loving and powerful God, some days I can only be in awe of your power and love. You never tire of supporting me. I constantly ask for help knowing you will always be there. From some place deep in my soul, I hear you calling me by name, and I prepare with a joyful heart for your coming. Grant me the gift of hope, patience and waiting in these Advent days because I want the focus of my waiting to be on you. I want to praise and glorify you with my life. Let me live my gratitude to you, rejoicing!

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

THURSDAY

“Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare your praise.”

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: You, O Lord, are close, and all your ways are truth. From of old I have known of your decrees, for you are eternal.

COLLECT: Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the paths of your Only Begotten Son, that through his coming we may be found worthy to serve you with minds made pure. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

DAILY MEDITATION: The afflicted and the needy seek water in vain The Lord is gracious and merciful; slow to anger, and of great kindness. So often we are “afflicted and needy” and we seem to “seek water in vain.” Today we listen to a refreshing

promise of how much our Lord desires to refresh us. Each of us can fill in what we need the most *I am the LORD, your God, who grasp your right hand; It is I who say to you, "Fear not, I will help you."* Isaiah 41. *Whoever has ears ought to hear. Matthew 11*

INTERCESSIONS: Let us pray to God our Father who sent his Son to save mankind: *Show us your mercy, Lord.* Father most merciful, we confess our faith in your Christ with our words, - keep us from denying him in our actions. You have sent your Son to rescue us, - remove every sorrow from the face of the earth and from our country. Our land looks forward with delight to the approach of your Son, - let it experience the fullness of your joy. Through your mercy makes us live holy and chaste lives in this world, - eagerly awaiting the blessed hope and coming of Christ in glory.

CLOSING PRAYER: Lord, like a loving parent, you offer me your comforting hand Help me to wait for your coming with patience and to listen to what you ask of me. I want so much to be one of "your people" and to live my life in you. Thank you for the way you bless my life. Thank you for listening to my prayers and for planting deep in my heart the knowledge that with you, nothing is impossible.

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

FRIDAY

"Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare your praise."

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Behold, the Lord will come descending with splendor to visit his people with peace, and he will bestow on them eternal life.

COLLECT: Grant that your people, we pray, almighty God, may be ever watchful for the coming of your Only Begotten Son, that as the author of our salvation himself has taught us, we may hasten alert and with lighted lamps to meet him when he comes. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

DAILY MEDITATION: *I, the Lord, your God, teach you what is for your good, and lead you on the way you should go.* In our self-reliant independence, we can easily forget that our God really knows what is good for us and calls us to that goodness. In our rebellion, we sometimes cling to our freedom to be self-destructive or to simply keep our life on a shallow level. Let us let ourselves be drawn into the invitation to live our lives touched by the grace of God-with-us. *Those who follow you, Lord, will have the light of life.* Wisdom is vindicated by her works

INTERCESSIONS: To Christ our Redeemer, who comes to save us from our sins, let us cry out with joy: *Come, Lord Jesus!* The prophets of old foretold your birth among us, - now make virtue come to life in us. We proclaim your saving work, - now grant us your salvation. You came to heal the contrite, - heal the weakness of your people. You came and saw fit to reconcile the world, - when you come again in judgment, free us from the torments of punishment.

CLOSING PRAYER: Jesus, in the darkness of these Advent nights let me be guided by the light of your word. Give me the humility to be led by you and the wisdom to learn from you. I feel your light in my life and in the world. I am grateful for the Savior who awaits us, and eagerly await the time of rejoicing. Let me look forward in hope and turn to you with great trust, knowing you will guide my steps along the unknown path of this day.

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

SATURDAY

"Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall declare your praise."

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Come and show us your face, O Lord, who are seated upon the Cherubim, and we will be save.

COLLECT: May the splendor of your glory dawn in our hearts, we pray, almighty God, that all shadows of the night may be scattered, and we may be shown to be children of light by the advent of your Only Begotten Son. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

DAILY MEDITATION: *Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.*

God seems to like to prepare the way for our salvation. We can experience prophets, even Elijah's on fire with God's word. What are the messages, the stirrings, the signs of fire that are preparing the way for the Lord to enter my life these days? Can we make friends with these preparations for the Lord? *Blessed is he who shall have seen you and who falls asleep in your friendship.*

INTERCESSIONS: To Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, who will come again in glory with great power, let us make our humble prayer: *Come, Lord Jesus!* Lord Jesus, you will come with great power, - look on our lowliness and make us worthy of your gifts. You came to be the good news for mankind, - may we always proclaim your saving work. You are worthy of praises, for you have life and rule all things, - help us to wait in joyful hope for the coming of your glory. We long for the grace of your coming, - console us with the gift of your own divine life.

CLOSING PRAYER: Jesus, in the darkness of these Advent nights let me be guided by the light of your word. Give me the humility to be led by you and the wisdom to learn from you. I feel your light in my life and in the world. I am grateful for the Savior who awaits us, and eagerly await the time of rejoicing. Let me look forward in hope and turn to you with great trust, knowing you will guide my steps along the unknown path of this day.

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.



Scottish Catholic Grandparents Assoc.

BAMBINELLI SUNDAY BLESSING AT ST. JOSEPH'S BLESSING AT ST. FILLAN'S 13TH DECEMBER 2020 (3rd Sunday Advent)



In Rome for the past several decades, each year on Gaudete Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent, Everyone - children and adults - bring their Baby Jesus figures from the crib in their homes to St. Peter's Square where Pope Francis blesses both the people and the figurines during the Angelus Prayer.

This year in our Parish we will celebrate
"Bambinelli Sunday"
at Mass on Sunday, 13th December.

Children and adults are invited to bring their Baby Jesus figure from their home crib to Mass that morning to be blessed in the Church at the end of Mass.

Following the blessing of the baby Jesus, take your "bambinelli" home and place it in a gift box, wrap it, and place it on your Christmas Tree. Let this be the first gift your family opens on Christmas Day, when together you place your Baby Jesus figure in the crib,