

MASSES & SERVICES THIS WEEK

Saturday 2nd December	<i>(first Mass of Sunday)</i>
18.00 St Edmund's	Fr Bill Mason †
Sunday 3rd December	First Sunday of Advent (p617)
08.30 St Edmund's	Marie March †
10.30 St Edmund's	Mary & Ricky Lee †
10.30 Our Lady's, Lawshall	Frank Hibbert †
15.00—16.00	<i>Adoration and Benediction</i>
18.00 St Edmund's	For the Parish
Monday 4th December	Advent Feria
07.30 St Edmund's	Louisa & Vale's Intention
19.00	St Benedict's School Carol Service
Tuesday 5th December	Advent Feria
No Mass at St Edmund's today	
09.30 Our Lady's, Lawshall	John O'Shea †
Wednesday 6th December	St Nicholas
10.00 St Edmund's	Bernadette Booker †
10.30—12.00	<i>Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament</i>
Thursday 7th December	St Ambrose
19.30 St Edmund's	Bernadette Ely †
Friday 8th December	Immaculate Conception of BVM
09.30 St Edmund's	Maria Beaumont †
10.15 Our Lady's, Lawshall	Mary Josephine Dove †
19.00	Advent Carol Service
Saturday 9th December	Advent Feria
10.00 St Edmund's	Eddie Booker †
18.00 St Edmund's	Peter Lamont †

MASSES AT 'MONTANA' GREAT BARTON

Sunday 10.30; Mon - Sat 08.15;

FORTHCOMING SPECIAL LANGUAGE MASSES

Saturday 2nd December Malayalam Mass at 16.00 at St Edmund's.
Saturday 16th December Polish Mass at 16.00 at St Edmund's.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Wednesday after 10.00 Mass; Saturday 10.30—11.00 & by appointment



St Edmund's Newsletter

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Twinned with St John's Parish, Siem Reap, Cambodia

Sunday 3rd December 2017 - 1st Sunday of Advent - Year B

WAITING IN JOYFUL HOPE

Advent is a season of joyful anticipation—an eager looking forward to a great event. It IS indeed a season of preparation, and so we need to be busy about our preparations. But we should ensure that we are not too busy to appreciate that is above all a season of **WAITING**.

Now, '**WAITING**' is not an experience that is enjoyed in our society. It was not an experience I enjoyed last week as I stood in a long queue last Monday waiting to board a plane as I set off on my annual Retreat a retreat that focussed on '**WAITING**'! In our society, we are always in a hurry! Some months ago now, someone warned me in apocalyptic tones, that "*There are only 100 shopping days left to Christmas!*" I hope my verbal response was somewhat more measured than my thoughts! Now that December 1st has passed, there is a barrage of reminders that '*It's Christmas!*' But Christmas does not begin until Christmas Day—the day on which we remember the birth of a child who had been quietly gestating and developing within his mother's womb for around nine months. Mary and Joseph, will, like any other prospective parents have been busy during that time, making all sorts of preparations—but they still had to **WAIT**.

Why do I make these observations? Am I trying simply to quash your enjoyment and fun in this season of anticipation? No—I enjoy it well enough myself.

The reason I insist that we must find time and space to experience **WAITING**, is that it reminds us that we do not make Christmas. Christmas is a gift from God Himself. It marks the gift of His Son who comes to us. To fly from **WAITING** in this season, is to fly from God—to remove Him from our Christmas. The world has been waiting for many years. Mankind had been waiting since the Fall. Mary and Joseph had been waiting since they both received the Gabriel's message. Waiting for God!

It is God, who brings us joy. It is God who reveals His great love for us. We cannot make it for ourselves. Christmas without God is an empty vessel—a passing orgy of spending, inebriation and, yes, even generosity—but on 26th December it is over—and we emerge once more into the long cold dark months of winter. (*There's a reason the adverts on Television turn to promoting summer holidays on Boxing Day and thereafter!*) If we **WAIT ON GOD** in Advent—we put the birth of His Son back into our celebrations. We remember His fulfilment of His promise, that Christmas is about God's coming to us. Then our celebrations will enable us to carry the joy He gives us into the coming year—and celebrate Christ's birth for the season that begins on 25th December and into 2018—at the time that so many others are packing it up and counting the cash!

Find times to **WAIT** this Advent—and you can begin simply by joining our Advent Carol Service next Friday at 7pm—an hour of stillness and recollection as well as beautiful music and readings.

With every blessing for this Advent Season, Fr. Mark

PRAYERS FOR OUR PARISH

FOR OUR SICK: Sue & Tony Aldous, Jade Asbury, Imelda Brown, Gerald Curry, Pat Dowson, Bea Edgar, Helen Edrupt, Nicolette Finch, Malcolm & Janis Fincham Jacques, Sr Flora, Marion Fitzgibbons, Monica Gittings, Teresa Gleeson, Rita Grimer, David Higgins, Patti Hickson, Donald Hunt, Priscilla Lupton, Francis Nisbett, Dee Peters, Richard Reid, Bernard Reynolds, Claire Robinson, Mary de Roeper, David Smeeth-Cardy, Evelyn Stirling, Yohanan Suraj, Jason Stronza, Shelagh Szulc, Robin Taylor, Katie Thomas, Susan Toole, John Triggs, Tim Udall, Pauline Wells, Romayne Wright, Jim Whyte. May the Lord bring them comfort and healing.

FOR THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES ARE AT THIS TIME: William O'Keeffe, Elizabeth Deacon, Kazimierz Czaczkowski, Timothy Edwards, Lily Mary Bird, Martin Carter, Christopher Keating, Cyril Gudgeon, Leslie Devereux, William McMahon, Mary Lee, Lorna Cozens, Edward Deacy, June Windsor, Monica Baldwin, Edward Cassidy Dick.

THANK YOU for your generosity last week. You gave **£1367.51** in the collection and **£625** by standing orders and **£235.40** from Lawshall. Collection for the Catholic Education Service came to **£293.60**. Please return all donations to the Gatehouse Christmas project as soon as possible. **This week end there will be a retiring collection for our local branch of the SVP**



THE REPOSITORY is open after Wednesday 10.00 Mass, 10.30 & 18.00 Sunday Masses for cards, statues, gifts, Sunday Missals, gifts etc.

HELPING HANDS' GROUP if you are, or know of anyone who is housebound, lonely or in need of practical help, shopping, changing a light bulb etc, or just a visit, or a lift to the doctors etc., contact Sue Fullman 488147 or Mike Sinnott 764236.



GOING INTO HOSPITAL? If you are, **PLEASE** let us know other-wise the Chaplain will not know you are there; the only way we can find you is if you tell us, **so please let us know if you would like a visit**. If you or one of your relatives needs a priest in emergency, **i.e. imminent danger death**, please ask a member of staff to ring the switchboard & bleep the Catholic Chaplain. We have the pager with us at all times.

UNUSED CHRISTMAS CARDS WANTED. Deacon Alan will distribute them, for use by those in custody at HMP Highpoint. Please hand in at the Presbytery if you can help.

HELP NEEDED WITH CHURCH FLOWERS! Whether you have lots of experience, are a keen amateur, or would like to try - your help would be much appreciated by our team of arrangers at St. Edmund's. Encouragement and guidance given - Please contact the Parish Office 754358.

FROM CHRISTINE & FAMILY: *We would like to thank all at St Edmund's for their help and support during recent weeks. We were deeply touched by the numbers who braved the traffic to attend the funeral. In the Spring we hope to arrange for some of you to come to Kedington where Fr Bill now rests when we erect the memorial stone.*

ADVENT REFLECTIONS continue in the Presbytery 19.00—21.00
All welcome, please bring a Bible

THE HOPE & DESIRE OF CHRISTIANS II - Friday 8th December

The Promise - Jesus's personal return.

Led by Fr Mark reflecting on the prospect of Jesus's Second Coming
Acts 1:10-11 & Mark 13:14-31

THE HOPE & DESIRE OF CHRISTIANS III - Friday 15th December

Our preparation - *be prepared!*

Led by Eilish Heath when we reflect upon the call to prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

Mark 13:32-37 & Matthew 22:1-14 & 25:1-3

THE HOPE & DESIRE OF CHRISTIANS IV - Friday 22nd December

The Glory of God—*Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!*

Led by Christine Mason and Victor Weston and will include a time of prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

1 Thessalonians 3:3-5:11 & Revelation 22:12-21

THE GIFT OF EDUCATION FOR CHRISTMAS!

We have the opportunity to assist our twin parish in Siem Reap in providing education for children and a healthier diet in the poor rural communities.

Could you help us to give this gift this Christmas either by:

- Purchasing a Gift Card for £10 towards the £2,500 cost of the salary and training for one Kindergarten teacher;
- Purchasing a Gift Card for £5 which provides an egg a day for 40 children.
- Rather than send individual cards to friends and parishioners place one of our special greetings tags on the special Christmas Tree that will be in Church throughout Advent and Christmas, donate the saving to our friends in Cambodia.
- **Please hand cards and donations in at the Presbytery.**



Gatehouse Christmas Lunch at St Benedict's School is open to everyone who might be on their own on Christmas Day, or whose circumstances make cooking a lunch difficult. We offer a traditional home cooked meal, companionship and fun. So if you, your family or anyone you know would like to join us please pick up a leaflet from the back of the church or contact Amanda info@gatehouse.org.uk or 01284 754967

are not working out the way you want. Are you in pains? Are you feeling disappointed, depressed, rejected, frustrated? Do you feel like your world is falling apart? Have you received a news that broke your heart of lately? As any of these are happening to you, do you feel like giving up on God? Are you feeling hopeless? Beloved, I want to assure you with the words of St Paul in Romans 8:35-39, all these things can never separate us from the love of Christ, because "in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. So don't give up hoping on God because at his own time, He will make all things beautiful for you. Wishing you a very lovely and spirit filled advent.

Fr Alvan (fralvanibe@yahoo.com)

YOUTH MINISTRY CHRISTMAS PARTY.



Are you 13 and above? Why not join us at our Christmas party coming up on the **Saturday 9th December**. It promises to be fun with dancing competition, games, nice food and exchange of Christmas gifts (come along with a gift to exchange), come along with a friend. Time: 4pm-6pm. Venue: Crypt.

PARISH ADVENT YOUTH RETREAT for 13yrs+

There is to be a one day retreat on **Saturday 16th December** at Moreton Hall School, arrival and registration at 09.00, with the retreat beginning at 10.00 with Mass. Lunch, hot chocolate and snacks will be provided and the day will finish around 5pm. Come and join other young ones from around the parish to reflect on the meaning of Christmas for all of us. It promises to be enriching and fun. The Ignite Team will be present too. If you would like to take part, please contact Fr Alvan fralvanibe@yahoo.com, or st.edmunds@btinternet.com by **13th December**.



'THEOLOGY ON TAP'.



It is hoped that a new parish group can be set up if there are any young adults aged from school year 13 to 30 who would like to meet up on a weekly basis for a social get together. Please get in touch with Louise Green on **724125** if you are interested.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: If you are able to help with Children's Liturgy on Sundays during 10.30 Mass, please contact Fr Mark. Until we have more help CHILDREN'S LITURGY will take place on the 1st & 3rd Sunday of the month only. Help is also urgently needed for the Faith Club, Fridays, 15.30—16.30. Please contact Hedwige 732064 if you can help.

THIS WEEK

SUNDAY 3rd DECEMBER

ST EDMUND'S CHRISTMAS FAYRE after both morning Masses. Come along for Christmas shopping, stalls, raffles and refreshments. All welcome.

20.00 - 23.00 ST EDMUND'S SOCIAL CLUB in the Crypt. Bar open.

MONDAY 4th DECEMBER

19.00 ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL CHRISTMAS CONCERT. All welcome to this enjoyable evening of festive music.

TUESDAY 5th DECEMBER

19.30 ST EDMUNDS LADIES CLUB meet for an evening to enjoy each other's company, with a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie, as we look forward to Christmas.

WEDNESDAY 6th DECEMBER

16.30 CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP meet in the Presbytery

FRIDAY 8th DECEMBER

10.30 MOTHERS PRAYER GROUP at 11 Bridgeman Walk. Contact Eileen 763580. All welcome, when we pray for our children and all children around the world.

15.30—16.30 FAITH CLUB in the Crypt for Years 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 to **learn**, to **understand** and to **celebrate** our faith. *Last meeting of the term*). Contact Hedwige 732064.



19.00 PARISH ADVENT CAROL SERVICE. A selection of Music and Readings leading us towards the celebration of Christmas, led by the adults and young people of our Saturday Evening Choir. Followed by Mulled Wine & Mince Pies in the Crypt. All welcome to come along and enjoy festive carols.

SATURDAY 9th DECEMBER

11.00 ST EDMUND'S GARDENERS gather in the Crypt for coffee/tea and mince pies before they continue with their fine efforts keeping the around the Car Park tidy.

16.00 - 18.00 YOUTH MINISTRY CHRISTMAS PARTY for 13-25yrs . Come along for food, games, dancing competition, exchange of gifts (bring a gift along to participate) and lots of fun. Invite a friend along.

17.00 - 19.30 TAKE AWAY CURRY SUPPER from 'Montana', East Barton Rd, Great Barton to raise funds for their residents. Delicious food vegetable biriyani & white rice, chicken curry, fried chicken, dhal curry, poppadam, fried chilli mousse. £13 adults, £7 children under 14. Please contact Sr Thaya on 787321 to book a **take away** meal.

20.00 - 23.00 ST EDMUND'S SOCIAL CLUB in the Crypt. Bar open. Christmas Fun Quiz

SUNDAY 10th DECEMBER

16.30 - 17.45 CONFIRMATION CLASSES continue in the Crypt.

20.00 - 23.00 ST EDMUND'S SOCIAL CLUB in the Crypt. Bar open. Bingo 20.00



THE WORD OF GOD

Mark 13:33-37

33 Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. 35 So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; 36 if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'

REFLECTION

The season of Advent begins, and with it we begin to read from the Gospel of Mark. We do not begin at the beginning. The opening verses of the first chapter will be heard next week, and will introduce us to the figure of John the Baptist. Today's reading is from the speech of Jesus about waiting for the return of the Lord. This is the most prominent theme in the first weeks of Advent.

With the coming of the Lord we are forced to wait. This is just as well, for we need to grow in maturity and generosity, in wisdom and love, in order to be ready for our encounter with the one who is wisdom and love made flesh.

Jesus speaks about the future and the end of time in chapter 13 of the Gospel of Mark. This is a gospel with limited accounts of the actual teaching of Jesus. In this chapter Jesus speaks of the trials which people will have to face, and especially of the need for steadfastness among Christians. But the coming of the Lord, to gather together his people from the ends of the earth, is nevertheless assured. The verses we hear today repeatedly encourage us to be watchful for the Lord's coming.

Our reading from the opening verses of St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians strikes a similar tone. Paul speaks of 'the last day', 'the day of our Lord Jesus Christ'. He assures the Christians of Corinth that they are already united with Jesus and can therefore rely on the fidelity of God.

The reading from the last chapters of the book of Isaiah expresses a deep yearning for the coming of the Lord. 'Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down!' The people have experienced exile and the return to their own land is beset with difficulties. Trust in God's goodness is expressed by the image of the potter and his clay: 'we are the clay, you the potter, we are all the work of your hand'.

Do I wait in joyful hope for the coming of the Lord?

What do the words 'stay awake' mean in my life?

Let us welcome this liturgical time of waiting which will teach us how to wait for the Lord.

Let us welcome the good news again as we begin to read from the Gospel of Mark.

Reflections on the Sunday Gospels, written by Fr. Adrian Graffy

WEEKLY FOOD FOR THOUGHT FOR YOUTH

Theme: The hope God brings

With joy dear friends, I welcome you to the first Sunday of Advent. We thank God for the grace to see the last month of this year. It is a thing of thanksgiving because it is not all that started this year with us that are still with us today. For such people, we pray and ask God to grant them eternal rest.

The word Advent means 'coming' or 'arrival.' We are looking forward to the birth of Jesus. The circle of the Advent wreath reminds us of God, his eternity and endless love and mercy has no beginning or end.

The candles on the Advent wreath symbolize the light of God coming into the world. For the four Sundays of Advent, we shall reflect on, what each candle signifies. The purple candles remind us of prayer and penitence as we look to the coming of Jesus. The first candle that we light today is the candle of Hope. What do you think hope means? Many years before Jesus was born, God told certain men (prophets) that He would send a special person to be their savior and Lord, Refer to Isaiah 7:14. He gave hope to people about the coming of Jesus."

According to *The Dictionary of the New Testament*, translated by Terrence Prendergast, to hope is to wait for the object of one's desire to be realized. This feeling relates to the object which one does not yet possess, thereby implying perseverance.

During Advent, we wait in hope for the coming of the Messiah. We wait in hope for the one who it was prophesied about in the scripture that He is coming to save His people. We do not know how much we may be waiting for, but yet, the scripture assures us that we will not be waiting in vain. The hope we have is not a hope which disappoints. This is because we are fully aware that God's promise is sure. He has promised to send His Son to us, for our redemption, and He will surely fulfil His promise. This is why we will never give up our hope in His coming, even when it seems as if His coming is been delayed. We should be aware that God is never late. He has no word like "delay" in His dictionary. Therefore like the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 8:17, let us say, "I will wait for the Lord, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob. I will put my trust in Him.

Beloved, do you know who Jesus is coming for? Do you know the reason why He is coming? He is coming for no other person than YOU who is reading this write up now. It is because you are so special in His sight that He accepted to come and take flesh in the body of an ordinary human being specially chosen by God. It is because of the unfathomable love He has for you, that even when He knew He was coming not for any kind of jamboree, but just to suffer and die, yet He willingly accepted to come. Is He not worth waiting for you?

There may be a lot of things happening around you at this moment. May be things