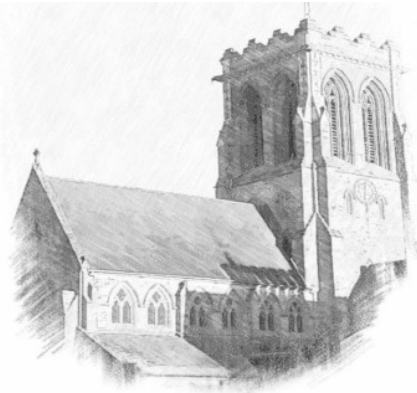


St Michael and All Angels Belmont Abbey



PARISH NEWSLETTER

24 December 2017

4 Advent

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Our short Advent Season is just about over and Christmas Eve is upon us. As the great joy and celebration of this season reaches its climax, do find time today, even for just a few minutes, to escape the manic preparations and present wrapping to spend some time with God, to reflect on this great mystery of love. May the many blessings of this lovely season enrich all our lives as we await the coming of Christ.

Thank you for supporting our parish Christmas Raffle which raised about £1500. The draw took place last Sunday and the winners should have received one of those wonderful hamper type prizes. A full list of winners is on the notice board. Thank you to the organisers and prize donors too.

Please note there are only two Masses on Christmas morning. There will only be one collection on Christmas Day, which will be the traditional Christmas offering to the Clergy.

Today's second collection will be for the Poor at Christmas

Would anyone like to volunteer to be a Welcomer at the 11 am Mass on Christmas Day.

Fr Nicholas

| | | |
|---------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Last Sunday's | 1 st Collection | £384.66 |
| | Standing Orders | £501.23 |

The 1st collection goes towards the maintenance of our Abbey church and parish, diocesan levies and other related costs.

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|----------------|
| | 2 nd Collection | £317.49 |
|--|----------------------------|----------------|

The 2nd collection is reserved for specific charitable causes or appeals and our own Outreach projects as detailed in the Newsletter. Last week was for: **Homeless at Christmas. Thank You!**



Parish Outreach - During December, the Second Collections, marked as Parish Outreach, will be buying for flowers for the Church at Christmas (Dec 3), for the Cardiff diocesan Clergy welfare fund (Dec 10), for the Homeless at Christmas (Dec 17) and Parish Outreach to the Poor (Dec 24).



It is with sadness that we report the death of Philomena Nicholas who died on Wednesday 13 December.
May she rest in peace.
Her memorial Mass is on Thursday 28th December at 12 noon.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**2 January
Diamond Diners
12:45**

The Three Horseshoes

**16 January
Tea & Chat
2:30
Parish Hall**



CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Vigil 'Midnight' Mass
at **10.30 pm**

Tridentine Latin Low Mass
7 am

Parish sung Family Mass at
9 am

Pontifical High Mass at
11 am

Please note there are only
two Parish Masses on
Christmas morning



The Angel

Sadly we only have a couple of articles for the proposed Christmas edition of the Angel. I therefore suggest we postpone publication until the New Year in the hope that a few more articles emerge.



First Holy Communion

classes start on Saturday 13th January 2018 from 10.30 am to 12pm in the Phillips Library at Belmont Abbey. Please contact Fr Nick or Rob and Jacqui Corrigan if you would like your child to receive this special sacrament next year.



Sue and Chris Rogers send their best Christmas wishes to the parish from Jersey. They have both had a difficult year health wise, but are doing much better now. They hope to return to Hereford for a few weeks in February. Please keep them in your prayers.



150 Club

Thank you to everyone in the parish and beyond who supports the 150 Club, your contributions are very much appreciated. May I take this opportunity to remind those members who pay by cash or cheque

that subscriptions for 2018 are now due. Please place these in an envelope marked 150 Club and hand to Chris Moore or Fr Nick. Thank you.



Christmas Envelopes

For those who use **Gift Aid Standing Orders**, please pick up a Christmas envelope from the porch and write your number on it. Please use these for the Christmas Offering. Thank you.



Hereford Hospital Chaplaincy

If you have a relative or fellow parishioner in hospital and they would like to be visited by Fr. Matthew, please contact him with the details on 01432 265177 or fr.matthew@live.co.uk.



Friends of Rotherwas Chapel

The Friends of Rotherwas Chapel invite you to join them at the chapel on Saturday 6 January 2018 from 2 – 3 pm for a Twelfth Night Celebration “Kings & Things.” Come and enjoy the music and readings. Refreshments available. Bring your own chair! Donations to the Chair Fund for the chapel.



Catenians Support Vocations

One of the aims of the Catenians is to help our clergy and to encourage and support vocations to the religious life in appropriate ways. Every Circle of the Catenians has at least one Mass said for Vocations thereby ensuring that Mass for this intention is celebrated almost every day of the year. We actively support the work of the National Office for Vocations in its building of vocations' awareness including prayers and regular financial contributions.



Homily

“Let what you have said be done to me.”

Illustration

Interest in our family histories seems to have become more and more popular as websites offer the opportunity to delve into the past and trace our lineage back down through the ages. Likewise, TV programmes such as *Who Do You Think You Are?*, in which celebrities are invited to share their stories – the series was first broadcast on the BBC, but there have been adaptations of the show in countries around the world – can capture our imagination and

encourage us to try to piece together our own family trees.

Among the interesting aspects of these programmes are the discoveries of eccentric ancestors. Sometimes they are heroic figures who withstood all kinds of adversity and you sense the pride in the celebrities as they reflect on how those same qualities were handed down to their parents or grandparents or even to themselves. By the same token, we sometimes see their distress when they uncover some deeply unhappy or criminal members of the family, whose stories are not so edifying. When this happens, it is interesting how the instinctive response is to look for some redeeming features or for reasons that would explain or excuse their behaviour.

Gospel Teaching

Of course, there is nothing new in all this. The Jewish people were deeply imbued with the story of their ancestors and lived in hope that God would redeem them from past failures. Matthew and Luke provide us with genealogies of Jesus, which do not attempt to hide the rogues and miscreants in his family tree. After all, even King David's personal story is clouded by sin, but he repented and God forgave. Now the long-awaited Messiah is announced and Luke is

concerned that we make the necessary connections, and see that this is God’s plan, so long foretold by the prophets, coming to fulfilment. Isaiah prophesied that a “virgin would be with child”: Mary is that virgin. Joseph, the one to whom she is betrothed, is of the House of David. There is another sign that God is blessing this new generation: it is to be found in the pregnancy of Elizabeth, who will be the mother of John the Baptist, the precursor of Jesus. Like Sarah and Hannah before her, she is, strictly speaking, beyond the age of child-bearing, but nothing is impossible to God.

Application

As we approach the celebration of the great feast of Christmas, once again the Church is inviting us to think about our heritage. Like the Jewish people of old, Christians are generally very conscious of the chequered history of the past two thousand years. It is the story of saints and sinners, struggling with the complexities of life in every age. Pope Francis encourages us to grapple with the complexities of our own age and recognise the presence of God amidst all the confusion. Like the people of the Old Testament, we may often be tempted to imagine that God has abandoned us. But in his letters Paul is constantly reminding us that, while the mystery may have been kept

secret for endless ages, now it has been revealed and is accessible for everyone, including the pagans. We are part of the new inheritance, invited to be brothers and sisters of Jesus and therefore heirs to the kingdom of God. The message announced to Mary is proclaimed again this Christmas and we are to be its heralds.

Once Mary has given her consent – “Let what you have said be done to me” – we know that she hurries off to see her cousin, Elizabeth, and it is then that St Luke places on her lips the words of the Magnificat: “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit exults in God my saviour; because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid. Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed, for the Almighty has done great things for me.” When we are able to allow the Lord to place those same words on our lips, then hopefully we will be beginning to see the connections in our stories and the hand of God at work in them. Likewise, we will be on the way to unlocking the mystery Paul writes about when he explains that God is wisdom itself and that our vocation is to give God glory through Jesus Christ.





Our Hope and expectation
 O Jesus, now appear;
 Arise, O Sun, and banish
 The darkness of our fear!
 With hearts and hands uplifted,
 We plead, O Lord, to see
 The day of earth's redemption
 That sets your people free!

Laurentius Laurentii



The King shall come when morning
 dawns
 and light triumphant breaks;
 When beauty gilds the eastern hills
 And life to joy awakes

John Brownlie



Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
 Thy welcome shall proclaim;
 And heaven's eternal arches ring
 With thy beloved Name.

Philip Doddridge



Midnight Mass

Welcomer: Kath Parry
 1st Reading: Polly Maund Powell
 Collection: volunteer needed



Ministries for Christmas Day

9:00 am Mass of the Dawn
 Welcomers: Ross & Anne Williams
 1st Reading: Monica Tomlin
 2nd Reading: Fran Grant
 Bidding Prayers: Jacqui Ramage-S
 Offertory: Parish Children
 Collections: Ross & Anne Williams
 Extraordinary Ministers: Jan Wyman
 & Monica Russell



11:00 am Mass of the Day
 Welcomers: Volunteer needed
 1st Reading: Patrick Walesby
 Collection: Patrick Walesby &
 another



| Ministers, etc. for next <u>Sunday 31 December - Holy Family; Year B Cycle 2</u> | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | 08:30 | 9:30 | 11:00 |
| Celebrant | Fr Nicholas | | Fr Nicholas |
| Welcomers | Kath Parry | Clare Wichbold | Rita Chamberlain & Monica Russell |
| Sacristan | | | Chris Moore |
| 1 st Reading | Liz Norman | Menna McBain | Rob Corrigan |
| 2 nd Reading | Richard Batho | | Jacqui Corrigan |
| Bidding Prayers | Jacqui R-Smith | | Tony Archer |
| Offertory | Hayes Family | Anthea Morton-S & Maria Large | |
| Extraordinary Ministers | Seamus Hayes & Fran Smallwood | | Gabrielle Stanley & Margaret Evans |
| Next Sunday - Parish Outreach - The Poor | | | |

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Low Mass in the Extraordinary Rite (Tridentine Mass) is celebrated here at Belmont Abbey on Wednesday evenings at 7 pm and Sunday afternoons at 4 pm. | CHILDREN'S LITURGY | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | 24-Dec | Jacqui King & Mary Wood |
| | | |

Please pray for all who have died: **May they rest in peace.** (W/C 24 Dec)

Deaths: Rebecca Dykes, Philomena Nicholas, Sister Mary Clare and David Wood

Anniversaries: Ambrose Rigby, David Bradshaw, Very Rev John Fogarty OSB, Mary Behan, Bede Osmund OSB, Alice Powell, Alan Riddick, Margaret Gellow, Abbot Romuald Leonard OSB, John Sheeran, Ruth de Ropp, May Meekel, Christopher Tilley, Cecil Gethen, Eileen O'Malley and Gerald Hill.

The Sick: Please pray for: Robin Hayward, Julia Davey, Gil Savory, Eddie Wyman, Sam Evans, Denise Ellis, Michael Kennedy, Chris & Sue Rogers, Peter Draper, Dominique Wetz, Sally Hayward, Lillian Allsop, Kenny Hanna, Shirley Brymer, Edward Medicott, Elaine White, Joanne Savory, Dame Catherine, Vincent Hanna and Sadie Bowyer.

Belmont Abbey Parish is part of Belmont Abbey Mission Trust (Registered Charity - 226277)

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| <p>4th Sunday Of Advent</p> | <p>Entrance: Drop down dew from above, you heavens and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.</p> <p>Acclamation: We proclaim your Death</p> <p>Communion: Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.</p> |
|---|--|

| Principal Celebrants, Extraordinary Ministers, Readers, etc. | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| | 08:30 am | 9:30 am | 11:00 am |
| Celebrant | Fr Nicholas | | Fr Nicholas |
| Welcomer | Cooper Family | Patrick Walesby | Monica Russell & Maureen Stacey |
| Sacristan | | | Rob Corrigan |
| 1 st Reading | Adrian Eyre | Basil Nickerson | Monica Tomlin |
| 2 nd Reading | Fran Grant | | Sergio Pavia |
| Bidding Prayer | Fran Smallwood | | Niamh Coyle |
| Offertory | Hayes Family | Gillick Family | |
| Extra-Ordinary Minister(s) | Kath Parry & Jacqui Ramage-S | | Jan Wyman & Gabrielle Stanley |
| Mass Intention | Stephen & Delia Hickey | Ambrose Rigby | David Wood |
| Second Collection - <i>The Poor</i> | | | |
| Food Bank Collection: Kath Parry | | | |

| <i>What's On for the week</i> | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Mon | Nativity of the Lord: Mass at 9:00 am & 11:00 am |
| Tue | St Stephen: Mass at 9:00 am |
| Wed | St John: Mass at 8:00 am: NO Midday Mass in the Oratory |
| Thu | Holy Innocents: Mass at 8:00 am; Memorial Mass for Philomena Nicholas at 12 noon |
| Fri | St Thomas Becket: Mass at 8:00 am: NO Exposition at 11 or Midday Mass |
| Sat | Sixth Day of Octave of Christmas: Mass at 8:00 am: Sacrament of Reconciliation at 10:00 |