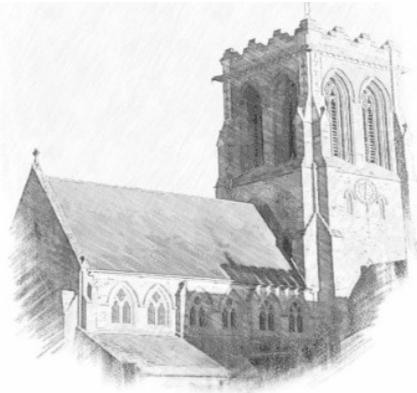


# ***St Michael and All Angels Belmont Abbey***



**PARISH NEWSLETTER**

**3 December 2017**

**1 Advent**

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The Advent season begins today and allows us to clearly focus on the coming of our Lord. (Advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning 'coming'). The Catechism stresses the two-fold meaning of this 'coming': *'When the Church celebrates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviour's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for His second coming' (No. 524)*. Our Sunday Mass liturgies celebrate Advent in this double perspective of waiting for the Second Coming of the Lord (First and Second Sundays) and the immediate preparation for the feast of Christmas (Third and Fourth Sundays). Through the Advent Liturgy we share in the longing and preparation for the coming of the Messiah by the ancient Chosen People. This in turn helps us to long for and be prepared for His Second Coming.

Churches Together in Ewyas Harold - Advent Ecumenical Service in St Michael's Church tonight at 6 pm.

Today's second collection will be for Christmas Church Flowers

*Fr Nicholas*

Last Sunday's	1 <sup>st</sup> Collection	<b>£677.47</b>
	Standing Orders	<b>£457.76</b>

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

	2 <sup>nd</sup> Collection	<b>£257.08</b>
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The 2<sup>nd</sup> collection is reserved for specific charitable causes or appeals and our own Outreach projects as detailed in the Newsletter. Last week was for: **Hereford Homeless. 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).



A **new rota of ministries** is due from 31 December to and including 15 April 2018. Could I please have your non-available dates by 17 December at the latest. Please contact me on [frangrant235@btinternet.com](mailto:frangrant235@btinternet.com) or Hfd 266307. Many thanks for your help.



### 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](mailto:fr.matthew@live.co.uk).

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

5 December  
Diamond Diners  
Three Horseshoes 12:45

10 December  
Christmas Draw

13 December  
Retired Persons Lunch

15 December  
Church Cleaning 9:00 am



### A HUG TO PORTUGAL

Special Christmas Fundraiser for the victims of the fires in Portugal this summer. A charity Christmas sale to be held at Our Lady's Church on Saturday 9th December from 12-4 pm. Hot dogs and refreshments available.



### Parish Retired Person's Christmas Lunch -

12.30 pm Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December at Hedley Lodge. Tickets £10.00 – please return completed leaflet to Parish Office.



**Amazing!** Although at the moment only a few parishioners are active on **Easygiving**, they have just helped us to achieve the **£1000** mark in donations to the parish! Thank you!



EMMAUS Youth are meeting on Saturday 16 December 2.30-5.30 pm when we will also include our Christmas party. Come and join us for some fun!! Rob and Jacqui Corrigan, Annie Ridgway and Ben Aldridge 01432 352241 and 07739 566578 jacqui.corrigan@btopenworld.com



### The Angel

It is hoped to produce a **Christmas Angel**. If you have anything that could go in the Angel, please send it to the admin e-mail or hand in to Father Nicholas. Pictures are also welcome.



**Easygiving** - With so many of us doing our Christmas shopping online these days, there is an excellent way to turn your shopping into a fundraising opportunity for the Parish. Go on line to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) to register and depending on which shop you are using, a percentage of the money you spend will be allocated to the Belmont Parish. It does NOT cost

you anymore! There are hundreds of retailers (including M & S, John Lewis, Amazon, Argos, Tesco and Selfridges) who are quite happy to give money to charities and it really is only a matter of getting into the habit of going through the Easyfundraising website. Please give it a try and see how simple it is and how much more we can raise for the Parish.



### 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.



Draw Tickets are now available for the **Christmas Raffle** – lots of wonderful Christmas hamper type prizes to be won!



Our **Parish Council** these days is now more of a small parish advisory group, which meets from time to time to advise the parish priest and to raise ideas or concerns. If you would like anything discussed, please email [admin@belmontparish.org.uk](mailto:admin@belmontparish.org.uk). The group hope to meet again before Christmas.





**Thank you** to all those parishioners who have responded so generously to our recent Finance appeal by increasing their Offertory giving or joining the Gift Aid scheme or supporting one of our other fund raising projects. This is tremendously important to us and allows us to plan ahead with more certainty. Thank you.



**Carol Service**

Monastery of the Poor Clares  
 Much Birch  
 Sunday 10 December  
 Evening Prayer 3 pm  
 Carol Service 3.30 pm  
 Refreshments follow



**Take the Pledge  
 Come Clean  
 Fill the Vacuum  
 In your Life**

Join the happy band of Belmont Abbey church cleaners. Meet fortnightly after the 8 am Mass. Dates in the Parish newsletter. Equipment and material provided.



**SFX FILM NIGHTS**

Presents  
 "THE WAY BACK"  
 FRIDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER  
 7:15 pm in SFX Hall



**Walk With Me Advent 2017**

This pocket-size booklet of prayers and reflections for Advent and Christmas is now available. Archbishop George Stack, Bishop Tom Burns and Bishop Peter Brignall have written a forward to the booklet and recommend it as an aid to prayer. In their introduction they remind us that "Our watchwords for Advent are: Watching, Waiting, Hearing, Hoping, Seeing and Believing. They are repeated time and again in our prayers and hymns for this season, as well as in the beautiful prophecies of the Old Testament and reach their climax in the response of Mary who pondered and treasured these things in her heart."



**The Advent Wreath**

A lovely way to help our Advent preparation is the use of the Advent wreath. The Wreath, a venerable European tradition, can be a way to involve even very little children in learning about Christian preparation - not only for celebrating Our Lord's birth, but to make our hearts truly ready to receive Him.

The wreath's symbolism of the advent (coming) of Light into the world is clear. The wreath is a circle, which has no beginning or end, symbolising the eternity of God. The wreath is made of evergreens representing ever-

lasting life. The lit candles represent Christ, who entered this world to scatter the darkness of evil and show us the way of righteousness. The progression of lighting candles shows our increasing readiness to meet our Lord.



### **HOMILY**

*“And yet, Lord, you are our Father; we the clay, you the potter, we are all the work of your hand.”*

### **Illustration**

The Great Pottery Throw Down is a BBC reality TV series in which experienced, amateur potters are put through a series of tests. Set in Stoke-on-Trent, the home of British ceramics, the competition tests the contestants’ skills in all areas of pottery design and construction. Whether it involves throwing small, intricate pots and vases, or building large, complex articles, competitors work against the clock to produce their best work.

Each week, as well as focusing on their main build, participants have to take on a speedy “throw down”. This is a test to see if they can quickly mould and shape clay on the potter’s wheel under pressure. The results can be surprisingly good but, at other times, the judges will take the finished article and throw it into the bin. If it’s not up to scratch, it’s time to start

again. To win The Great Pottery Throw Down, a great attention to detail is required, along with a gentle but sure touch, patience and vigilance throughout the whole process.

### **Gospel Teaching**

In today’s first reading Isaiah bemoans the way the Lord has seemingly abandoned the people as they have distanced themselves from God through their waywardness. Since returning from exile, the people have had a tough time and, forgetting God’s kindness to them, have reverted to pagan practices. A people who have been shaped by the master potter feel as though, due to their unfaithfulness, they have been tossed into the waste bucket. Yet, despite their sense of distance from God, the prophet acknowledges a desire for the Lord’s presence to surround them. The marvellous work of God’s hands longs to feel that caress as God moulds, smooths and soothes them: “Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down.”

Jesus in the Gospel speaks of the need to be prepared for God’s coming. Referring specifically to his second coming, Jesus urges hearers to be attentive and vigilant. In effect we’re called to remind ourselves not to allow the divine potter to take his hands off us. If we do, it could be that we wobble and collapse. Staying

awake spiritually is to ensure we remain on the potter's wheel, a place of safety. We can hear the words of Paul encouraging us in this venture, as he reminds us that the Lord will keep us steady and blameless until the last day, if we just let the Lord hold on to us.

### **Application**

As we begin our Advent season, the readings are an encouragement to us, even if they may seem quite stark. We're called to remember that God respects the choices we make and so, if we choose to distance ourselves from God, it becomes harder to hear God's voice. If we choose a path that obviously deviates from the one that God has set out for us, it can be difficult to see the signs pointing back to the right route. Advent is a wake-up call to bring us from potential slumber to a new alertness of the immediacy of God's presence. God is never distant from us. It's just that sometimes we don't allow God's closeness to be apparent to us. Advent can bring us back on track. Advent gives us the opportunity to be further shaped on the potter's wheel. God the potter will never discard us into the waste bucket, even though we do at times find ourselves out of shape, or with fractures opening up. Life and our choices do that to us.

In the production of pottery, the potter will sometimes use what is called slip. Slip is a liquid mixture of clay suspended in water. It is often used to decorate pots, or to help to join parts of a pot, or to cover up cracks. At the beginning of this special season, perhaps we can imagine God's grace being poured over us like potter's slip. The Lord wants to pour his love out upon us, gently filling in the imperfections and smoothing out the inconsistencies. God wants to join us where there is brokenness. Having an image such as that of the divine potter forming us in the palm of his hand may help us. What is certain, though, as we consider our readiness for Christ's second coming and prepare to celebrate his incarnation, is that God will never abandon us. Fired in a kiln of pure love, we are a delight in God's eyes.



### **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.



**Ministers, etc. for next Sunday 10 December -2nd<sup>e</sup> Sunday of Advent; Year B Cycle 2**

	<b>08:30</b>	<b>9:30</b>	<b>11:00</b>
Celebrant	Fr Nicholas		Fr Nicholas
Welcomers	Kath Parry	Anne Stapleton	Ross & Anne Williams
Sacristan			Jeremy Hogan
1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	Fran Grant	Clare Nickerson	Jennifer Hackman
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	Adrian Eyre		Lucy Reed
Bidding Prayers	Richard Batho		Jacqui Corrigan
Offertory	Parish Children	Paul Nickhold & Lucy Zammit	
Extraordinary Ministers	Jacqui R-Smith & Fran Smallwood		Chris Moore & Tony Archer

**Next Sunday - Parish Outreach** - Diocesan Clergy Welfare

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	
	03-Dec	Jacqui Moore & Rachel Cowdery
	10-Dec	Pat Wood & Rob Blackburn
	17-Dec	A Morawiecki & Pauline Gill
	24-Dec	Jacqui King & Mary Wood

Please pray for all who have died: **May they rest in peace.** (W/C 3 Dec)

**Deaths:** Sister Mary Clare and David Wood

**Anniversaries:** Frances Bold, William Thomas, Monica Mary Thomson, Mary Crump, Winifred Dodd, Mary Watkins, Jean Cocksedge, Mark Evans, Jeanne Harding, Margaret Florence Cox, Eileen Diamond, Jackie Jones, Abbot Aidan Williams OSB, Albert Bray and Kathleen Desmond.

**The Sick:** Please pray for: Philomena Nicholas, Robin Hayward, Julia Davey, Gil Savory, Eddie Wyman, Sam Evans, Denise Ellis, 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)

<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent</b></p>	<p><b>Entrance:</b> To you I lift up my soul, O my God. In you I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me and let none who hope in you be put to shame.</p> <p><b>Acclamation:</b> We proclaim your Death ....</p> <p><b>Communion:</b> The Lord will bestow his bounty and our earth shall yield its increase.</p>
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<b>Principal Celebrants, Extraordinary Ministers, Readers, etc.</b>			
	08:30 am	9:30 am	11:00 am
Celebrant	Fr Nicholas		Fr Nicholas
Welcomer	Cooper Family	Brenda Warde	Rita Chamberlain & Monica Russell
Sacristan			Tony Archer
1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	Bill Jackson	Patrick Walesby	Gabrielle Stanley
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	Fran Grant		Pat Wood
Bidding Prayer	Ann Jackson		Tony Archer
Offertory	Hayes Family	Nickerson Family	
Extra-Ordinary Minister(s)	Seamus Hayes & Kath Parry		Joao & Andre Pavia
Mass Intention	<b>James Codrington</b>	<b>Pro Populo</b>	<b>Holy Souls</b>
<b>Second Collection - Christmas Flowers</b>			
<b>Food Bank Collection: Ray &amp; Margaret Rose</b>			

<b>What's On for the week</b>	
Mon	<b>Advent Feria:</b> Mass at 8:00 am
Tue	<b>Advent Feria:</b> Mass at 8:00 am
Wed	<b>St Nicholas:</b> Mass at 8:00 am: Midday Mass in the Oratory
Thu	<b>St Ambrose:</b> Mass at 8:00 am
Fri	<b>Immaculate Conception BVM:</b> Mass at 8:00 am: Exposition at 11 with by Midday Mass
Sat	<b>Advent Feria:</b> Mass at 8:00 am: Reconciliation at 10:00 am