



Our Lady Help of Christians & St Helens

Sunday 3rd December 2017

Parish Priest: Fr Joseph Whisstock 27 Milton Rd, Westcliff-on-sea, SS0 7JP.

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Reflection for 3rd December 2017 By Fr Adrian Graffy First Sunday of Advent - Year B

Gospel reading: *Mark 13:33-37*
Other Readings: *Isaiah 63:16-17, 64:1,3-8*
1 Corinthians 1:3-9

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.

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention for December 2017 – The elderly

That the elderly, sustained by families and Christian communities, may apply their wisdom and experience to spreading the faith and forming new generations.

Please continue to pray for the sick especially;
Vincent MacCormac and Niqui Denkmeyer

Please pray for the recently departed especially;
Avril Anne Mulcahy RIP, whose Requiem will take place here at St Helen's on Friday 15th December 9.45am
Please keep Avril and her family in your prayers.

Walk with Me Advent 2017
Available at the back of church -
Price **£1**

Church Diaries for 2018
Available at the back of church *Suggested donation* **£1**

Brentwood Diocesan Directory 2018
Available at the back of church
Ringbound **£4**
Book **£2.75**

First Holy Communion 2018
Please return registration forms today!
Sunday 3rd December 2017.

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

Sunday 3rd December – First Sunday of Advent (Year B)

(Migrants Day)

9.30am Julia Henry RIP
11.15am Private Intention
6pm People of Parish



Monday 4th December

{9.30-noon} *Advent Reconciliation Services in church for St Helen's School - Years 3-6*

12.15pm Sidney George & Louise White RIP

Tuesday 5th December

12.15pm Deceased Relatives & Friends of Henrietta Bonga

Wednesday 6th December - St Nicolas

9.15am Dec'd Relatives & Friends of Carmen & John O'Brien

Thursday 7th December - St Ambrose

8am Dec'd Rels & Friends of Herrigan & Doherty families

Friday 8th December –

The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary

12.15pm Holy Souls (Burzotta) (in Church)

1-4pm *Exposition in the Adoration Chapel*

Saturday 9th December

10.30am Dec'd Relatives & Friends of Yvonne Myers-Lampzey

11am Confessions & Exposition

6pm Polish Mass

Sunday 10th December – Second Sunday of Advent (Year B)

9.30am Parish Community

11.15am C.W.L. – Members' Intentions

6pm Private Intention

Second Collection next week is for Christmas flowers & decorations

PARISH DIARY

Wednesday 6th December

7pm – R.C.I.A

7pm – St Bernard's High School Carol Service
@ Avenue Baptist Church

CHRISTMAS 2017 MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve – Sunday 24th December

6pm Vigil Mass for families

11.30pm Carols followed by Midnight Mass



Christmas Day – Monday 25th December

9.30am Mass and 11.15 am Mass

Steward of the Gospels – First Proposal

Documents are now available on-line to view (available on both St Helen's & Brentwood Diocese website). If you wish a hard copy then please see Fr Joseph.

St Helen's Parish Notices

CWL Christmas Hamper Raffle

The CWL will be selling tickets after all Masses today Sunday 3rd and 10th of December for their wonderful Christmas Hamper full of goodies. Tickets are £1 and all proceeds will go to the Transport fund,

The raffle will be drawn on December 17th at our annual Mince Pie and Mulled Wine event after the 9.30 mass.

Greenery for Church Christmas Decorations

you can supply any Holly, Ivy or any greenery for decorating for Christmas, please deliver to the church on 17th December or by 10.30am 23rd December Thank you! Flower arranging team.

Monday 2nd – Saturday 7th April 2018 - St Helen's Pilgrimage to Lourdes

By air. Staying at the fabulous 4* Hotel Grande Moderne closest to the Sanctuaries. Full board basis. All rooms are en-suite. Price is £630 per person based upon 2 people sharing a room. Full spiritual programme and free time. **£100 deposit secures place!** For further info contact Sue Baillie on 07979 746707

St Helen's Catholic Church Building & Restoration Fund

For the week to 19th November, £103 was collected from cash, postal order and envelopes. When grossed up for gift aid this comes to £114 against a weekly target of £150. For the week to 26th November, £26 was collected from envelopes. When grossed up for gift aid this comes to £32 against a weekly target of £150. The cumulative position for the 30 weeks since the relaunch is that £2,022 (including gift aid tax relief) has been collected against a 30 week target of £4,600 and an annual target of £8,000. We can only maintain St Helen's with your help, the Collection box is at the back of church. **Thank you, Fr Joseph & Parish Finance Team**

If you are able to help clean the church on Friday mornings from 9.30am for one hour, please sign up on the form at the back of church. Thank you Fr Joseph

Deanery Reconciliation Services 18th December 2017 – 8pm @ Our Lady of Ransom, Rayleigh

**21st December 2017 – 7pm
St Helen's, Westcliff-on-Sea**

Catholic Schools U-turn

Do you support Catholic schools and the right of Catholics to send their children to them? Then we need you to make your voice heard. The Government is making a critical decision on whether to overturn the admissions cap which prevents Catholic schools from allowing all Catholic pupils to attend. They have acknowledged that this policy discriminates against Catholics and promised to abandon it, now we need to you to tell them not to u-turn on their promise to Catholics. Visit <http://catholicnews.org.uk/education-cap> or search for 'Catholic Education' in your search engine to write to the Government and urge them to drop their policy which bans new Catholic schools.

Deanery & Diocesan Notices

Thursday the 7th December, the vigil of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia in this Country. Your prayer and fasting is urgently needed, and it really does save lives. **Please also pray that buffer zones around abortion centres won't be introduced.** For information on the days of Prayer and Fasting see: www.GoodCounselNetwork.com

Saturday 9th December - "Walsingham House Canvey Island – Goodbye, and thanks for the memories!"

12noon – 4pm, Everyone welcome to pop in to Walsingham House, Lionel Road, Canvey Island SS8 9DE for a final look around. There will be Adoration in the chapel, an exhibition of Walsingham House history from Chingford and Canvey Island in the Ark, and refreshments in the dining room.

Saturday, 9th December 2017: "Stepping into Advent"

A day of recollection, leading up to Christmas. There will be an opportunity to hear two reflections on Advent themes, celebration of Mass using the Ordinarate Rite, confessions and adoration. 11am – 2.30pm, St Peter's Catholic Church, Eastwood. Please bring a packed lunch. Fr Michael Halsall.

Saturday 9th December - The Deanery Orchestra

Christmas Concert 7.30pm @ St. Augustine's Church, St. Augustine's Avenue, Thorpe Bay, SS1 3JH Tickets £5 each (16 and under FREE) Includes refreshments, mince pies and mulled wine. Tickets may be reserved by calling 07810 707910, visiting <https://thedeaneryorchestra.weebly.com>, or purchased at the door on the evening. *The concert will be a wonderful selection of Christmas and popular music*

Wednesday 13th December - Deanery Vocations Holy Hour, 7.30pm at Sacred Heart Church (418 Southchurch Road, Southend)

"Come and Pray for Vocations..." This year the Diocese of Brentwood celebrates its centenary. In honour of this milestone, the Vocations office has planned to host a Holy Hour in all 12 deaneries within the Diocese, one for every month in 2017. All are welcome, whether you are discerning a vocation to the priesthood or want to pray for those who are and support them. This event will have a Vocations testimony from Fr. Graham Smith who is the parish priest of Southend on Sea and Prittlewell and vocations director. Refreshments will be served in the hall afterwards. For more information on Brentwood Vocations follow us on Twitter and Facebook (@BrentwoodVocs) or visit our website (www.brentwoodvocations.org)

29th December 2017 - A Mass for those enquiring or discerning a vocation to the priesthood will be at Our day of Lourdes at Leigh on Sea at 12noon on the feast of St. Thomas Becket. Bishop Alan will preside. All are welcome to come and pray for vocations and to meet our seminarians.

28th May – 2nd June 2018– Diocesan Pilgrimage to Knock Inaugural Diocesan Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine, Ireland, led by Bishop Alan Williams. **£699 per person sharing.** Price includes flights from London Stansted with 15Kg checked in bag, all taxes, transfers, 5 nights in Knock House Hotel, in the grounds of the Shrine, with full Irish Breakfast each morning, light lunch and 4 course dinner each evening. All entertainment and guided tours included. Wheelchair accessible rooms in the hotel. Limited single rooms available. Programme of prayer time, Masses, excursions and activities including a visit to Ballintubber Abbey, Croagh Patrick, Westport. contact 01268 762278 or email knockpilgrimages@gmail.com

Sunday 22nd July – Sunday 29th July 2018 – BCYS Summer Lourdes Pilgrimage.

Applications for Summer Lourdes are **now open!** To apply please visit <https://bcys.net/events/summer-lourdes-2018/> (You will need to create an account online to be able to apply. If you have applied online for any other event with us, please use the account you already have to sign in and apply.) Please do be aware that 2018's pilgrimage will run from **Sunday 22nd July, leaving Brentwood at around 5pm – Sunday 29th July, returning at around 6pm.** You will need a valid passport to be able to travel, as well as a Visa and EHIC card where these apply. **Applications will be open from now until 31st January 2018.** Each form will be date marked as they are received and then will be allocated to ensure that as many schools and parishes from across the diocese are represented.

NO PLACES WILL BE ALLOCATED OR CONFIRMED UNTIL FEBRUARY 2018.

If you have any questions or concerns please speak to us as soon as possible, by emailing gabriellafusi@dioceseofbrentwood.org or frdominic@dioceseofbrentwood.org

9th - 11th February 2018 - Vocations weekend at the Bar Convent in York.

Have you thought about the religious life? The Congregation of Jesus is hosting a discernment weekend in York for women considering religious life. The weekend offers guidance on how to discern a vocation, and which congregation would suit. The weekend is open to women of any age, and there is no charge (although you are welcome to make a contribution). If you are interested, please contact us first, via vocations@congregatiojesu.org.uk, so that we can make sure the weekend is appropriate for you, and ensure there is a bedroom available.

MEDJUGORJE IRISH CENTRE PILGRIMAGES 2018: 7 nights B&B and Airport Shuttle service from €279 per person. Book any flight - any time and we provide guaranteed airport shuttle service. Call us for further info and book the dates that suit you. Tel. Jackie on 0203 239 8662 or email reservations@med-irishcentre.com, jackie@med-irishcentre.com Website: www.med-irishcentre.com