

Third Sunday of Advent

First Reading Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11

This radiant song of praise reminds us that our experience of human love is a foretaste of the joy promised to those who open their hearts to God.

Responsorial Psalm Luke 1:46-48,49-50,53-54

My soul glorifies the Lord.

Second Reading 1 Thess 5:16-24

We are reminded that we can trust God to be alive and active in our world and in our lives, come what may.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor.

Alleluia!

Gospel John 1:6-8. 19-28

The story of John the Baptist reminds us that we also are called to give witness to Jesus and prepare a way for him wherever we are.

Parish of Corpus Christi

Sacred Heart (Goldthorpe), Sacred Heart & St Helen (Hoyland) and St Michael & All Angels (Wombwell)



PARISH PRIEST: Fr Declan Brett.

23 Park Street, Wombwell Barnsley, S73 0HQ

01226 752372

email: parishofcorpuschristi@gmail.com

Website: <https://corpuschristi.hallam-diocese.com>

Facebook: Corpus Christi Dearne Valley

Parish Safeguarding Representative:

Sheila Marren 07932 722188

Roman Catholic Diocese of Hallam Trust • Registered Charity Number 512021

Sunday 17th December 2023

Sunday Year B

Third Sunday of Advent

Weekday Cycle II

"For as the earth sends up its shoots and a garden makes seeds sprout, so the Lord makes saving justice and praise spring up in the sight of all nations."

Service Times & Intentions

Saturday Vigil (St Michael's)	16 Dec	5.30pm	People of the Parish
Sunday (Sacred Heart)	17 Dec	9.00am	Margaret Bennett RIP
Sunday (St Helen's))	17 Dec	11.00am	Andrew J Marren RIP
Tuesday (St Helen's)	19 Dec	10.00am	Tony and Barbara English RIP
Wednesday (St Michael's)	20 Dec	10.00am	Shaun Barrett RIP
Thursday (St Helen's))	21 Dec	10.00am	Peter, Yvonne and Damian Flynn RIP
Friday (Sacred Heart)	22 Dec	10.00am	Gordon English, The Gough Family RIP
Saturday Vigil (St Michael's)	23 Dec	5.30pm	People of the Parish
Sunday (Sacred Heart)	24 Dec	9.00am	Elizabeth Awuah RIP
Sunday (St. Helen's)	24 Dec	11.00am	Rowland and Harriet Swallow RIP

Divine Mercy Chaplet is at 3.00pm on Fridays at St. Michael's Church

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is always available upon request.

The Rosary is every **Wednesday** at 1.30pm in Sacred Heart, Goldthorpe

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at Goldthorpe every Thursday 7.00-8.00pm

In winter it is difficult to believe that our gardens and fields will ever again enjoy the flowering and fruition of what has been sown in them. The ground is like stone; the earth looks dry and unyielding; and it seems as if everything has died. But keen gardeners and farmers know how to be patient and to stay hopeful that all their hard work will be rewarded come spring and summer. No true gardener or farmer spends wintertime digging down into the soil to see what is going on there. That would be the surest way to ruin a harvest. It's a question of holding on in faith and confidence in the God of life.

The prophet Isaiah uses agricultural images for an audience that lived off its own produce. Most of us nowadays live removed from such direct contact with the earth, but we know how heavily we depend on crops growing well to feed ourselves, and what a threat to the earth's future it poses when the good health of our natural environment is ignored. Environmentalists have taught us to be alert to the signs of the times. Like John the Baptist, they are the prophets of our era, who warn us to keep awake and to prepare for the coming of God in all the calls of our day to conversion and right living.

Today's Gospel reading has clear links with the two readings that precede it. The setting is the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist as the announcer of the Messiah. John makes clear to the religious authorities that his is a preparatory role. Like a gardener or farmer, he makes the ground ready for the seed of faith to be sown to grow well and unhindered. John sees himself as the preparer of the soil where Jesus will sow the seed of God's word and make it become flesh through his own life and ministry. In the verses that follow, we see the impact of this and the way that faith and commitment are spread. John has already prepared Philip and Andrew, who meet Jesus and are captivated by him. Immediately they call their brother and friend respectively, so Peter and Nathanael become disciples. They will in turn go out to spread God's word and minister through healing. Faith and commitment can be contagious.

Advent is a time for thinking about our own preparedness to receive God's word and God's call in our hearts. In what way does the soil of our heart need preparing, the paths of our life need making straight? It's also a time for reflecting on how we prepare the ground for the faith of those around us to grow and flourish.

Many of today's Christians worry about the loss of faith within their families and within society. The statistics in the northern hemisphere are not encouraging – the faith and practice of previous generations seem, in some senses, to be disappearing. It requires considerable faith and self-effacement on our part to prepare the ground for the faith journey of others without having any reassurance that this will ultimately prove successful.

For some of our family, friends and neighbours, we ourselves will be the only Gospel that they ever read, the only sermon they will ever hear. It's not so much a question of thinking up clever and convincing arguments as of living our faith genuinely and convincingly. We may not always be able to use overtly religious language with those who are unable to accept it, but within the widest implications of our living justly, loving tenderly and walking humbly, there lie the seeds of faith, waiting to grow in God's good time and in ways that perhaps only God can see. The Fourth Eucharistic Prayer prays for "all who seek you with a sincere heart [...] and all the dead, whose faith you alone have known". Faith is found and fostered in many hidden ways. The challenge to us is to have confidence in God's call even when we cannot see the proof.

Every baptised person shares in the threefold ministry of Christ as prophet, priest and king. We are prophetic when our faiths open up paths of faith for others. We are priestly when we affirm the sacredness of life in every human person and in our universe, and we are proclaimers of the kingdom when we do justice in all our social and personal relationships. That is how Advent is lived within the world.

Reflection by Redemptorists Publications. Used with permission

Prayers for the Sick

We pray for our sick and/or housebound parishioners. We remember especially Margaret Thornton, Ethel O'Connor, Julia Hill, Christine and Bill Mays, Marie Bray (nee Walsh), Percy Winterton, Kath Hardy, Carole Dyson, Bernadette Houlton, Michael Bennett, Janette Barber, Paddy McNicholas, David Hardy, Tess Lynch, Justin Phillip Collins, Hannah Prentiss, Pat Hermitage, Thomas Collins, Norma Marshall, Val Armstrong, Terry Mullins, Matthew Deakin, Margaret Booker, Michael Foy, Shirley Broadhead, Norah Preuss.

Christmas Flowers

Thank you for your very generous donations for Christmas Flowers for our three churches. The sum of £214.06 has been raised.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN HOYLAND & DISTRICT

Annual Carol Service is on Tuesday 19 December at 2.45pm outside Hoyland & Birdwell Methodist Church, Birdwell. Please see notice in the church porch at St. Helen's for full details.

Bonus Ball - Goldthorpe and Hoyland

The winning number was 30. The winner in Goldthorpe was H Bainbridge, winning £25. There was no winner in Hoyland.

Change to Mass

First of all, the Saturday morning mass at St Michael's has been discontinued. There has been no congregation at the mass for a few weeks and it is costly to heat the space when there are no people there.

Secondly, please note there will be no weekday masses for the week after Christmas.

Craft Group Knitted Animals

The Craft Group have been busy making the animals on the run up to Christmas to raise money for the Parish. They have made a fantastic sum of £420! A big Thank You to those talented ladies.

If you are interested in joining the Craft Group, it meets fortnightly on Thursday mornings in the Parish rooms at Wombwell from 10.00am until 12.30pm. The next meeting will be on 11th January 2024.

All are welcome, and please feel free to come to knit, sew, crochet and natter, or just for a cuppa!

Christmas Card at Goldthorpe

As last year, we are going to have a big Christmas card at church during Advent for people to sign rather than sending individual cards. There will be a Collection box with the card for donations in lieu of buying individual cards and we plan to support Bishop Ralph's Bethlehem Fund.

Christmas Mass Times			Intention
24 th Dec Vigil	St Michael's	5.30pm	Shaun Barrett RIP
Midnight Mass	St Helen's	12.00am	Margaret and Mint Burkinshaw RIP
Christmas Day	Sacred Heart	10.00am	People of the Parish

Prayer for Vocations

Loving and generous Father: it is you who call us by name and ask us to follow you. In particular, you call some to serve you as ministers in your church. Bless our Diocese of Hallam by raising up faith-filled and dedicated priests, deacons and religious. Bless our families and choose from our homes those who are needed for your mission.

Blessed John Anne	Pray for us
Blessed Robert Ludlam	Pray for us
Blessed Nicholas Garlick	Pray for us
Blessed William Richardson	Pray for us
0 Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help	Pray for us