

BRINDLE St JOSEPH'S

Chapel Fold, Houghton, PR5 0DE

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Ampleforth Abbey Trust – Registered Charity no: 1026493

Third Sunday of Advent

17th December 2023

(Sunday cycle year B, weekday cycle year 2, psalter week 3)

GAUDETE SUNDAY



Prayer for the light of the world

God of light, shine brightly, show us how to bring hope to others. God of mercy, help us to comfort people and to share in their joy. God of hope, help us to share your light with others this Advent.

Amen

THIS WEEK

Sat 16 th	10.30am	Hilda Martindale	Saturday of Advent 2
	6.00pm	Joseph and Margaret Jamieson	Third Sunday of Advent
Sun 17 th	9.30am	For the Parish	
Mon 18 th	No Mass today		Monday of Advent 3
Tue 19 th	9.30am	Denis and Irene Loram	Tuesday of Advent 3
Wed 20 th	9.30am	Margaret Mary Cowsley	Wednesday of Advent 3
	6.00pm	Taizé Service (in the Parish Room)	
Thu 21 st	10.30am	Requiem: May Elliott	Thursday of Advent 3
Fri 22 nd	9.30am	John and Margaret Thompson	Friday of Advent 3
Sat 23 rd	10.30am	Barbara Phelan	Saturday of Advent 3
	6.00pm	For the Parish	Fourth Sunday of Advent
Sun 24 th	9.30am	Maureen Dignon	
	6.00pm	For the children of the Parish	Christmas Day
Mon 25 th	9.30am	For the Parish	

First Saturday of the Month: Confessions at 10.00am, Anointing of the Sick during 10.30am Mass

This week	Reader	Eucharistic Minister	Bookshop
Sat 16 th	M Sherry	P Fawcett	L Lomax
Sun 17 th	K Slater	M Gardner	K Slater
Bidding prayers	n/a	Children's Liturgy	F Fordyce, G Fowler
			Collection counters
			P & J Kitchen
Next week	Reader	Eucharistic Minister	Bookshop
Sat 23 rd	C Williamson	J Hothersall	R Smith
Sun 24 th	C Snape	B Gore	B Gore
Bidding prayers	L Russell	Children's Liturgy	As arranged
			Collection counters
			L & M Gardner
Christmas Masses	Reader	Eucharistic Minister(s)	
Sun 24 th	L Gardner	J Hothersall, P Cook, G Hopkinson	
Mon 25 th	R Conboy	tba	

Last weekend: attendance: 114 (collection not yet counted)

Readings: Isaiah 61:1-2,10-11, Thessalonians 5:16-24, John 1:6-8,19-20.

The soul cannot enter into the treasures of the Wisdom of God unless it first crosses and enters into the thickets of suffering... it is in such a way that the soul finds there its consolation and desire. (St John of the Cross)

*Let us love him enough to suffer for him whatever he chooses; even griefs of soul and aridities, anguish... ah! that is indeed a great love... **to love Jesus without feeling the sweetness of that love... martyrdom.** (St Terese of Lisieux)*

With such a view of suffering, were such Saints ever able to enter into the spirit of Gaudete Sunday which takes its name from our introit/entrance antiphon *Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say, rejoice...* (Phil 4: 4-5)

Could they with joyful hearts enter into the spirit of our psalm with its refrain *My soul rejoices in the Lord?*

With their souls centred upon suffering, could they *be happy in the Lord at all times* as St Paul exhorts the Thessalonians?

How happy and joyful was John the Baptist living in the wilderness, berating the onlookers in his camelhair shirt and living off locusts and wild honey... how often he must have been stung by those bees?

From the witness of these Saints, it is clear that happiness and joy are not to be found in comfort, riches and wealth... one may feel replete and contented, with moments of "happiness" but only very fleeting, and all at the cost of those cares and worries not to lose it all.

But what of the poor, the oppressed and abused, the innocent victims of war... can they be *happy and rejoice* in the Lord at all times let alone give thanks?

It sounds a rather grand and pious thing to say but whether rich or poor, oppressed or free, no one can be truly happy, that is, in the centre of their being, unless the One towards whom St John the Baptist points, speaks of and gives witness to – Jesus Christ – occupies that centre... your centre and my centre, for nothing that is *passing* can ever make us truly happy, only the One who is eternal can do that.

Which is why, elsewhere, St Paul is able to say: *For I am quite certain of this, that neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists and nothing still to come, no power, no height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Rm 8: 38-39.)

So, in this last week of Advent, as we continue to *clear a way for the Lord*, let us find time to pray. But if we find it hard to find time to pray formally, then pray informally, for how could our Lord resist a spontaneous heart-felt prayer.

Or, as St Augustine would advise: just be aware of his presence and have a *desire* for him as we go about our day, but, as we were reminded by St Teresa, it is not so much a *feeling, which could so easily be a delusion*, but the **knowing** he is near, because that is what he has told us.

Most importantly, let us try to be always happy in the Lord and to give thanks, *for that is what God expects us to do in Christ Jesus.*

Reflections

Seek out with jealous care the place, time and means most suited to quiet and contemplation, and lovingly embrace silence and solitude. (St Albert the Great)

Happiness can only be achieved by looking inward and learning to enjoy whatever life has: this requires transforming greed into gratitude. (St John Chrysostom)

With prayers,

Fr Raphael.

MASS ON THURSDAY is at **10.30am**, Requiem Mass for May Elliott.

CHRISTMAS POSTERS are available from the Bookshop. Donations to defray the cost would be appreciated.

WE WELCOME INTO OUR CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY Hollie Victoria Haydock who was baptised last Sunday.

Joseph and Niamh are collecting items for the **FOXTON CENTRE** again this Christmas. They'd welcome donations of tinned food, warm clothes (new or used), toys and gifts, toiletries, long-life milk and juice, rice, pasta and cereal bars. Contact their mum (Claire) on 07968254860 or drop off at 29 Bank Head Lane. Thank you!

There is a **DEANERY SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION** at St Gregory's, Weld Bank, Chorley, PR7 3NW **THIS SUNDAY** at 3.00pm.

THIS WEDNESDAY there will be a **TAIZÉ SERVICE** starting at 6.00pm in the Parish Room.

PLEASE PRAY for May Elliott who has died, for those who are sick or housebound including Fr Laurence Mayne, John Morton, Rita Gorrell, Rose Higginson, Fr Jonathan Cotton OSB and Bill Warbrick, and for those whose anniversaries occur about this time.

100 CLUB: The winner for week 3 is number 42, Pauline Fazackerley. The new year for the club has started so subs are due. You can pay for the full year (£50) or in blocks of 10 weeks (£10, 5 times over the year). Payment can be by cash, cheque (payable to Brindle Books) or, if you prefer, by bank transfer – see Lesley or Mick for the account details. Last year, despite losing a few members, we paid out £1,500 in prize money and raised £1,360 for church funds – thank you! New members are always welcome – again, please see Lesley or Mick or leave your name and contact details in the bookshop with your subs.

DURING ADVENT AND CHRISTMASTIDE we are asked to pray for Migrants and Refugees, Expectant Mothers.

PRIMARY SCHOOL PTFA CHRISTMAS RAFFLE TICKETS are on sale after Mass again this weekend.

HOSPITAL CHAPLAINS: If you or someone you know would like a visit from the Catholic Chaplain while in hospital, please ring 01257 262713 (for Chorley hospital) or 01772 719604 (for Preston). For St Catherine's Hospice, contact Brownedge St Mary's on 01772 335168.

TEA & COFFEE are served after Mass on Sunday mornings. Please come along – you'll be very welcome.

The **KEY FOR THE TOILETS** is available at the back of church during Mass.

BRINDLE PLAYERS pantomime, Knight Fever, will be staged in the Parish Hall on 9th, 10th, 11th, 16th and 17th February 2024. Tickets can be purchased at: www.ticketsource.co.uk/brindle-players. For large group bookings please contact them via ticketsbrindleplayers@gmail.com or call 07711 848994. More details at: www.brindleplayers.co.uk.

Bidding Prayers for the Third Sunday of Advent, 16th/17th December 2023

Priest

My brothers and sisters, as we rejoice on this Gaudete Sunday let us offer our prayers to our Lord.

Reader

For the Church; we pray for all who follow Christ that they may be happy as they prepare for the Lord's coming. Let us pray for our school children and ask your blessing on their Christmas celebrations. Lord in your mercy...

For the world; we pray for all those who suffer from hunger and want; that those with more than enough may share with those in need this Christmas. Lord in your mercy...

We pray for our families and ourselves as we all prepare for Christmas; that our material preparations may not blind us to God's love which should be central to our celebrations. Lord in your mercy...

Let us pray for all who have died especially friends who have died at this time of year. May eternal joy be theirs. Lord in your mercy...

We ask Mary, the Mother of Christ to pray with us and for us – Hail Mary...

We now pray for a few moments in the silence of our hearts.

Priest

Father we offer you our prayers in trust and love through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

<p style="text-align: center;">PRAYER FOR THE SICK</p> <p>Priest: As we thank God for the gift of his Son in Holy Communion, let us remember those of our Parish who are sick or housebound.</p> <p>All: May the body and blood of your Son, which we now send to them through our Eucharistic Ministers, bring them consolation and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord. Amen.</p>
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