

Our Lady of Beauchief & Saint Thomas of Canterbury

Meadowhead, Sheffield, S8 7UD

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Chapel of Ease: English Martyrs, Baslow Road, Totley S17 4DR

Parish Priest: Father Stephen Ssekiwunga

St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Chancet Wood Drive, Sheffield S8 7TR

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The Month of November is devoted to All Saints

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

29 November 2020 Psalter 1

Saturday

NO Private Prayer

Mass Intention - People of the Parish

Sunday

10.00 a.m.

Private Prayer

Mass Intention - Dead List

Monday

ST ANDREW, APOSTLE, PATRON OF SCOTLAND

10.00 a.m.

Private Prayer

Dead List

Tuesday

Advent FERIA

10.00 a.m.

NO Private Prayer

Requiem for

Wednesday

Advent FERIA

10.00 a.m.

Private Prayer

Mass Intention - Dead List

Mass resumes from today

Thursday

St Francis Xavier, priest

10.00 a.m.

Dead List

Friday

Advent FERIA

10.00 a.m.

John Walton

Next Week's Masses

Saturday (Meadowhead)

5.00 p.m.

John Walton

Sunday (Meadowhead)

9.15 a.m.

People of the Parish

11.15 a.m.

Catherine Mary Tetzlaff

Please Pray for:

Our sick: Rosalie Travis, Anne Brown, Rae Goodlad, Marie Lennox, Sr Emma Bechold, Katie Glackin, Neville Garratt, Pauline Souflas, Lucia Fojut, Michael Goodfellow, Pauline Collins, Sheila Ryan, Linda Costello, and Edward Keefe.

Lately dead: Pat Kirk, Bridie Pakenham, Mgr Peter Moran, Fr Michael Horrax and John Walton RIP

And let us remember in our prayers Zisimos Souflas who is missing.

Sunday Collections

Please remember, you can pay your weekly contributions directly into the parish account. The details are below.

If you are paying by cheque and sending the money to the presbytery, please remember cheques MUST be made payable to

'Woodseats R C Parish Account'. The bank will not accept any variation.

Weekly Offertories – If you would like to make a bank transfer for your weekly offering instead of the loose plate or your weekly envelope you may do so using the following details.

Sort Code: 40-41-07 Account Number: 01095153

Please put Offertory in the Reference box. Please include your name also if it is to replace your envelope or for gift aid.

Anyone wishing to set up a Standing Order, the account name you should use is: **Diocese of Hallam Woodseats RC Parish.**

Registered Charity No 512021

Public Worship - Following lockdown, it has been agreed that public worship may resume - regardless of any tier restrictions which may be in place at the time. Therefore, from Thursday, 3rd December you will be able to come to Mass. The time will remain the same as before and booking will be required for the Sunday Masses. The same restrictions will be in place, ie: limited numbers, social distancing and the wearing of masks.

Pastoral Letter - There is a Pastoral Letter for Advent from Bishop Ralph at the back of the newsletter. Please take your time to read it.



Mass Times for Christmas

To allow as many as possible to attend Mass over Christmas, there will be 5 Masses covering Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. It is also hoped that more will be allowed to attend by altering the numbers to allow for households and bubbles sitting together up to a maximum of 6 people. If there are more than 6 in ONE household, please ring to arrange separately.

Booking will be required for all Masses over Christmas.

PLEASE NOTE - IF YOU DO NOT BOOK YOU CANNOT ATTEND

Christmas Eve	Christmas Day	Feast of St Stephen	The Holy Family
Vigil Mass - 5.00pm	Early Morning - 8.00am	Mass - 10.00am	Mass - 9.15am
Night Mass - 10.00pm	Morning Mass - 9.15am	Holy Family Vigil - 5.00pm	Mass - 11.15am
	Mass - 10.30am		

You may start booking from Monday, 7th December. If the phone goes to answer, please leave your name, number of seats required and a contact number.

Support our Outreach collections in kind As we reported last week, the Outreach Committee has just distributed the £2,000 that parishioners so generously donated during the autumn to our parish Outreach partners locally and overseas. Read more about another two of our partners, Sheffield Samaritans and Grace Food Bank, in our latest updates below. In the lead-up to Christmas we invite you to support some of the local Outreach partners with gifts in kind through our Advent Collections. And please keep our Outreach partners in your prayers. Thank you again.

Sheffield Samaritans - offers a listening ear and helpful advice to anyone who is struggling to cope. With so many people from all walks of life struggling with the extra stresses resulting from the Coronavirus and the effects of lockdown, the service is busier than ever – as this thank-you letter following our recent donation demonstrates:

“On behalf of Sheffield Samaritans may I extend my heartfelt thanks for your incredibly generous donation of £200 to our funds at this strange time. Currently Sheffield Samaritans are providing round the clock support to all vulnerable people through our free 116 123 phone line and a new NHS helpline. The helpline provides round the clock support to those people in critical roles fighting the coronavirus epidemic; NHS and social care workers, first responder emergency services and other key workers who are putting themselves at physical or mental risk – for example, shop assistants, cleaners and transport workers. Your donation will help Sheffield Samaritans continue this valuable work.”

Grace Food Bank – need no introduction. But just to recap, they a community group covering Lowedges, Norton, Batemoor, Jordanthorpe and the surrounding areas. They provide parcels of food that has been donated or bought with donated money to families and individuals who find themselves in short term financial crisis. In “normal” times we have a food collection at church on the third weekend of each month. During the first lockdown, when the church was closed, parishioners who were unable to support the Food Bank via the donation points at Sainsbury’s on Archer Road and Morrison’s on Meadowhead* donated **over £550** in cash with which our Outreach “shopping team” bought foodstuffs for Grace. You will have seen details of the Food Bank’s Christmas appeal at the back of the newsletter in the past two weeks. You can also drop items off at church at set times (see the Advent Collections article).

*The Morrison’s donations are shared between Grace and Gleadless Valley Food Banks. Tesco at Abbeydale Road also has a food banks donation point. It’s not specifically for Grace, but that’s no reason why you shouldn’t use it.

Stewards - Please note, if you have any questions regarding what the stewards do, or you are interested in becoming a steward please speak to Maria Mahon or Alexis Tucker who are the lead stewards. Maria can be contacted on 07904 499610; Alexis can be contacted on 07870 422479.

St Wilfrid's Centre is selling their popular Christmas Cards online through their website. This year's card image "Looking out from the Warmth of St Wilfrid's" is taken from a painting by their Head of Centre, Ruth Moore. Cards are only £4 for a pack of 10 cards and postage for up to 10 packs is only £2.95 Please visit <https://www.stwilfridscentre.org/online-shop/christmas-cards-1>



For Sale; Nativity Christmas - Cards to help establish the very first Hospice in Bethlehem .
Available In church or from Philomena and Joe McNally 0114 236 4076 or Graham and Valerie Smith 0114 236 8859. Price same as last year £3.50 packet of 10.

CAFOD on-line events

- ◆ **CAFOD Advent Prayer - A Journey To The Manger Every Sunday from 29 November to 6 January, 6pm-6:30pm**
Join us for some simple and peaceful prayer and reflection as we share our journey of Advent together. We will gather around a candle and be gently led in a short time of prayer. No need for a computer camera or microphone or worrying about what to say. Just register then click the link on Sundays through Advent and on to Epiphany, the 6th of January. All are welcome to join in this journey. Register to the series.
Advent Service Thursday 3 December, 7pm
- ◆ **CAFOD Celebrity Ambassador** Julie Etchingham (ITV News at 10) and CAFOD celebrity supporter Adrian Chiles (BBC Radio 5 Live) will be with us, along with Bishop Patrick McKinney, Bishop of Nottingham and CAFOD Trustee, who will lead us in prayer and reflection. Music by the Schola, baritone Christopher Faulkner, the novices of the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Zambia, and electronic pop group Ooberfuse. Register to join us.
- ◆ **Messages to the Brave** Last chance to get cards and messages in before 7th Dec deadline, to support communities under threat for speaking up for justice, trying to protect their lands and nature, to halt the climate crisis or stand up for peace and human rights. Details at [www.cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Latest campaigns/](http://www.cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Latest_campaigns/) Messages to the brave



ADVENT OFFERTORY COLLECTIONS – may be a bit different from usual this year but the needs are still here in our local community and we know parishioners value this opportunity as part of the preparations for Christmas to focus on what helps to spread the real message of Good News. So, here's the list of needs for over the 4 weeks, though there are more ways for you to deliver items because of restrictions. (Alternatively you can send financial donations via Outreach. Details on the parish website.)



2nd Sunday - 6th December for St Wilfrid's Centre (needed by 11th)
Men's toiletries of shower gel, shampoo, roll on deodorant, shaving foam, tooth paste and toothbrushes, Men's medium underpants/boxers. Tubs and boxes of wrapped chocolates (Celebrations, Heroes etc), Christmas crackers. Donations can be made directly to St Wilfrid's or to OLST.*



3rd Sunday - 13th December for our parish SVP (needed by 13th) Boxes of chocolates and biscuits. Donations to OLST.*



4th Sunday - 20th December for Ben's Centre (needed by 20th)
Men's new medium underwear- pants & vests, hats & gloves (no scarves please) and new or second-hand CLEAN sleeping bags for outdoor use.

Donations can be made directly to Ben's or to OLST.
*Donations can be left in the church porch on Monday, Wednesday, Saturday or Sunday, from 9.45 -11.30am., Meadowhead ONLY
PLEASE LABEL your gifts with the name of the charity. THANK YOU.

The Gospel of Mark

The season of Advent marks the start of a new liturgical year for the Church. The readings for Sunday Mass are arranged on a three-year cycle. Each year features a different Gospel - Matthew, Mark, or Luke. Readings from the Gospel of John are interspersed throughout all three years. With this year's first Sunday of Advent, we begin Cycle B of the Lectionary, which focuses our attention on the Gospel of Mark.

Scholars believe that Mark's Gospel was written around the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. Mark's audience consisted of Christians who were living in difficult social and political times, times of conflict. They were likely beginning to face persecution as followers of Jesus. In this difficult time, it helped to recall that Jesus had foretold of such difficulties. Early Christian communities took courage from Jesus' warning to remain alert and watchful, and they found in his words a way to persevere through suffering.

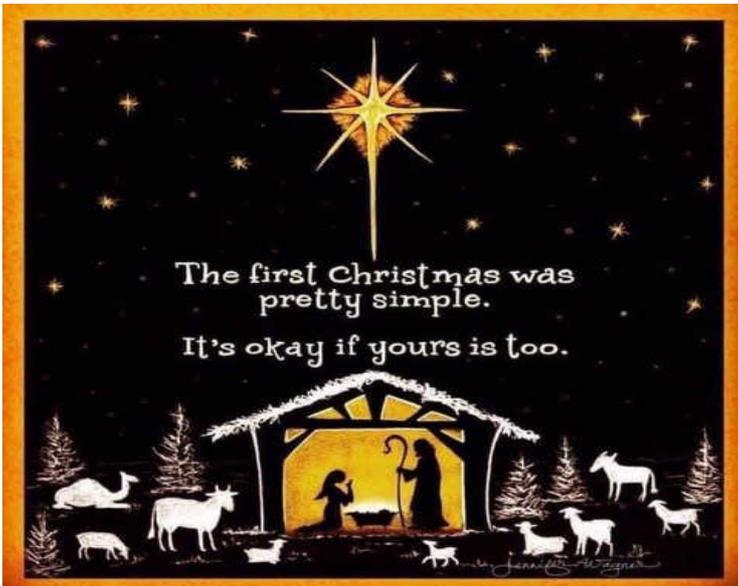
This week and next week, our readings from Mark's Gospel present two important Advent themes: the Lord's return at the end of time and John the Baptist's preparation for Jesus. Today's Gospel reminds us that Advent is about more than our preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas. Advent is also about preparing ourselves for Christ's return in glory at the end of time. Like the disciples and the faithful in Mark's community, we must also stay alert and watchful. Our faithfulness to God, through the good times as well as the difficult times, shows us to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man.

Thought for the Week

**Do not lose your inner peace
for anything whatsoever,
not even if your whole world seems upset.**

If you find that you have wandered
away from the shelter of God,
lead your heart back to Him
quietly and simply.

(Saint Francis de Sales 1567-1622)



Prayer for the Week

Grant to us, O Lord,
to know that which is worth knowing,
to love that which is worth loving,
to praise that which pleases You most,
to esteem that which is most precious to You,
and to dislike whatsoever is hateful in Your eyes.
Grant us with true judgement
to distinguish things that differ,
and above all to search out
and to do what is well pleasing to You,
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen

(Thomas a Kempis 1380-1471)

This Week's Readings

First Sunday of Advent (B)

First Reading: *Isaiah 63:16-17*

Responsorial Psalm: 79

Second Reading: *1 Corinthians 1:3-9*

Gospel: *Mark 13:33-37*

Next Week's Readings

Second Sunday of Advent

First Reading: *Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11*

Responsorial Psalm: 84

Second Reading: *2 Peter 3:8-14*

Gospel: *Mark 1:1-8*

A medieval tale. Sound familiar?

“If the king has said he will remain in a place for a day – and particularly if he has announced his intention publicly by the mouth of a herald – he is sure to upset all the arrangements by departing early in the morning. And you then see men dashing around as if they were mad, beating packhorses, running carts into one another. If, on the other hand, the king orders an early start, he is sure to change his mind, and you can take it for granted that he will sleep until midday. Then you will see packhorses loaded and waiting, the carts prepared, the courtiers dozing, traders fretting and everyone grumbling. I hardly dare say it, but I believe he took delight in seeing what a fix he put us in.”

*(Peter of Blois, courtier to
King Henry II 1154-1189)*

Diocese of Hallam
Pastoral Letter - On the weekend of the First Sunday of Advent 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

Today, we begin our preparations to celebrate, once again, the Christmas story. It is the story that marks the beginning of our salvation. At Christmas, we recall and give thanks for that moment in history when our God stooped down to meet us in the guise of a vulnerable child.

In his Christmas Novena, St Alphonsus describes this moment in these words:

Behold, then, the Immensity becomes an infant, whom the heavens cannot contain: see him imprisoned in his poor rags and laid in a narrow manger on a bundle of straw which was at once his only bed and pillow.

On Christmas Eve 1223, Francis of Assisi was determined to give the people of his town an experience of the first Christmas. So, he assembled a cast of people and animals and arranged them in a cave in the small Italian town of Greccio. From that day, the Crib has been at the heart of the liturgical and devotional life of Christian families at Christmas time. Children love to re-tell the story for us. In our churches and homes, the figures of the Holy Family, the shepherds, the Magi and the animals tell the story in picture and colour for all to see.

This Christmas, as always, the crib will be placed in a prominent place in our churches. In previous years, it has provided a special focus for our prayer. As individuals and families, we have gathered before the child in the crib and lingered awhile in prayer; perhaps to take a moment to give thanks for graces and blessings received or maybe to petition the infant before us on behalf of the family, of the church, of the world.

This Christmas, when you come to celebrate Mass and visit the crib, covid-19 restrictions will mean that it is not possible to linger before the crib as in previous years.

This Christmas then, perhaps, we are being asked to do something different, namely, to find a special place for the crib in our homes along with all the decorations, lights and tree.

This year, it is in the home that we are invited to find the time and space as family or individual members to pray before the scene that recreates for us the beginning of the story of our salvation.

This year, it is in the home that we are invited to pray in thanksgiving for faith, family and friends.

This year, it is in the home that we are invited to linger before the Holy Family with the prayers and petitions that are urgently on our minds and in our hearts in a wave of prayer and supplication.

This year is a moment for us to create in our homes a little Church of the Nativity.

We are not quite sure yet what Christmas will look like this year, but we do know that it is likely that it will be like no other in living memory. However, there is no reason why it cannot be better than any other in living memory, if our minds and hearts are fixed on the child "laid in a narrow manger on a bundle of straw" and the truth, he reveals to us: our God Emmanuel. Our God has been with us in the darkest days of 2020 and now His light is being brought to bear on us as we look to 2021.

With my prayers for a blessed Advent and Christmastide and health in 2021.

Yours sincerely in Christ, the Redeemer,

+ Ralph

Grace Food Bank - Collecting Christmas Food

We will be giving out Christmas food on December 8th, 10th, 15th and 17th. The food we give out is non-perishable and by giving it out in plenty of time for Christmas we hope that people won't end up going into debt trying to buy extra nice things. We also give food (particularly chocolates) to local community groups.



SO, that means that we would really like Christmas food to arrive at the foodbank by Monday 7th December. We have to weigh it, sort it and pack it and then buy items to fill any gaps in what we need. We will happily receive it earlier and will still be able to use things arriving the week after but we need at least half of it to arrive by 7th. I hope I have explained why but please do ask if you want any more information!

Some of the traditional Christmas foods that we might enjoy are less popular with our clients – they are not part of their own Christmas traditions. And while we might stock up on dried fruits and mincemeat for Christmas baking, many of our clients don't have the right equipment or experience to make use of those items.

We can't give out alcohol or liqueur chocolates so please don't send us those. If you have to be 18 to buy it then we can't give it out! We can't accept donations of chilled goods because we have to be able to prove that the cold chain has been maintained.

We will always try to pass on things that we can't use to a good home, but the earlier things arrive at the foodbank the more chance we have of being able to do this before Christmas.

Our Christmas Wishlist

Christmas biscuits – MEDIUM or small boxes (large tins are harder to fit into the bags. The picture here is a good size and most supermarkets seem to sell similar sized boxes.)

SMALL Christmas cakes or packs of Christmas chocolate mini rolls, etc

Chocolates/sweets (medium sized boxes) anything that looks festive!

Selection boxes/chocolate coins etc.

Pringles, cheddars or similar crisps In a cardboard tube (more robust for packing and transporting) (Aldi sell a cheap version)

Bottles of fizzy grape juice or similar

Tins of salmon

Tins of ham

Sachets of instant custard

SMALL boxes of crackers/biscuits for cheese

Boxes of mince pies –preferably without lots of brandy (last year we did get rather a lot of mince pies so if in doubt, perhaps buy something else!). Mince Pies do come with a shorter shelf life so please check before you buy!

All with a Use By date that's after 25th December and nothing that needs refrigerating.

Please remember that these items will all be packed into bags then transported to our collection sessions. So, for example, small bags of solid milk chocolate Santas are more useful than hollow and very fragile chocolate Santas!

Reverse Advent Calendars

Some of you will have seen this idea on Facebook. The suggestion is to get a cardboard box and put an item of food or basic toiletries in it every day in Advent. Then they suggest that you take the box to a foodbank on Christmas Eve. This is a really lovely idea and we were very grateful for all the reverse Advent calendars donated by schools and individuals last year! BUT – please don't phone up on Christmas Eve and say that you want to drop off one or several reverse Advent Calendars at the foodbank. There won't be anyone there. Lots of our volunteers are from churches and Christmas is rather a busy time at churches, even when church is virtual.... If you would like to adopt the idea of a reverse advent calendar then we would suggest that you start it early and deliver it to us the week commencing 7th December. OR you could start on 1st December but don't add festive items like Christmas cakes, just put in basic foodstuffs or toiletries. Then you could give the box to us in the New Year.



Sorry if I sound like the world's biggest killjoy, but we need to be realistic about when our volunteers are available and how quickly we can get food out. One week last

December we had nearly 3 tonnes of food arrive in the foodbank. We really do have to be as organised as we can!

No Coats for Christmas this year

Because we are currently delivering all our food parcels we are not able to work with PreLoved Uniform to make coats or warm jumpers available to our clients this year. We're sad about this but, for 2020, please don't donate any coats to us.