

Parish of St Margaret Clitherow

3rd Sunday of Advent (B)

14th December 2014



PASTORAL AREA TEAM

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Deacons: Rev. Robert Hewertson & Rev. Anthony Arrowsmith

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Psalter Week 3
Readings Sunday - 3rd Sunday of Advent (B)
Weekdays - 3rd Week of Advent

Today 3rd Sunday of Advent (B)
(*Gaudete Sunday*)
Sunday 4th Sunday of Advent (B)



Third Sunday of Advent

GOSPEL REFLECTION

Today's Gospel begins with the absence of light. John the Baptist is a witness to speak for the light, but he is not the light in person. John is the rugged figure whose task is described by the evangelists as laying low mountains and hills, shaping a path through the wasteland. He is God's sculptor, giving shape and form to the masses of people who come to see him, enabling them to see God's light. When he faces critical opposition, he points away from himself to his work in preparing for the one who is to come. John keeps declaring "I am not" in order to point to the one who can say "I am". The identity of the one coming after John is unknown at this time, but John is clear in his own mind that he is not the light. He must make way for the light and create a space for the light to shine through. And when people see the light, his own task is finished. John the Baptist's role can be appreciated fully only when the light does arrive in the person of Jesus. Only then can people realise the true measure of John's worth and the unique place the man has in Christian tradition.

It is interesting to recall that John's stature among his own people was so great that many of them came to believe that he was the Messiah. Indeed, when Jesus asks his own followers who people think he is, the first answer is "John the Baptist" come back to life. Even in the early Church, sometime after the completion of Jesus' ministry, a sectarian Baptist group still held on to the belief that John, NOT Jesus, was the Christ. And that is why the fourth Gospel is so clear about John's role. It stresses that John is a "witness" to the light, but NOT the light himself.

Like John, we are asked to make way for the light. None of us is the light: our role is to allow the light of God to shine through us. This can appear like a mountainous task, especially when we think about how our own abilities and commitment can seem very small. Advent calls us to make whatever contribution we can. To look first at ourselves and work quietly on the darkness that hides within us – the selfishness, the lack of forgiveness and love that keep the light of the Good News from so many people. On larger social issues, such as Justice and Peace, which require the witness of a caring community, we are challenged by the Gospel to work together.

Like a talented sculptor carving through stone until they can see the light at the other side, we have to keep working our way towards the light that is Christ. Our work may appear fruitless or just odd to those who look from the outside, but the space we create for Christ is important. Holiness is not just about avoiding sin, it is the constant struggle of letting Christ be the light that shines through everything we do.

Psalm Response

My soul rejoices in my God.

Gospel Acclamation

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



LEIGH PASTORAL AREA

Parish of St Margaret Clitherow

St Ambrose Barlow
Astley

St Gabriel's
Higher Folds
Holy Family
Boothstown

Sacred Heart
Hindsford
St Richard's
Atherton

Parish of St Edmund Arrowsmith

Our Lady of the Rosary
Sacred Heart
St Joseph's
Twelve Apostles
Leigh

Archdiocesan Mission Statement



Taking to heart the last words of the Lord Jesus, we will go into the world to proclaim the Good News to the whole of creation.



Third Week of Advent

Advent Collections

The Advent Collections for Barnabus, the Windsor Drop-In Centre, Manchester Children's Hospital and Animals in Distress end today. All the items collected will be delivered to their various destinations on Tuesday and Wednesday this week. Thank you so much for your generosity.

Carol Singing

Astley Churches Together will be singing carols at Astley Independent Methodist Church on Manchester Road at 7.00 pm on Monday 15th December. Father Christmas is scheduled to make an appearance at some point. There will be tea, coffee and mince pies in the church after the Carol Singing. All are welcome.

Carols on the Common

Originally scheduled for 16th December, the Mosley Common 'Carols on the Common' will now take place at the 'Wheel' on Monday 15th December at 7.30 pm. All welcome.

St Mary's Senior Citizens Christmas Party

Tuesday 16th December, 12.00 - 2.00 pm. Refreshments and entertainment will be provided, along with a raffle and prize bingo. If you would like to attend, please phone Holy Family (0161 790 2390) or St Richard's (01942 883395). Many thanks.

Advent Service of Reconciliation

Tuesday 16th December at 7.00 pm at St Richard's

Advent Taize Service

Thursday 18th December at 7.00 pm at St Ambrose Barlow.

Advent Service of Reconciliation

Friday 19th December at 7.30 pm at Holy Family



Fourth Week of Advent

Children's Advent Carol Service

The annual children's advent carol service takes place on Sunday 21st December at 4.00 pm in St Ambrose Barlow Church. Take time out from your busy schedule to find some peace and joy as the children reflect on the true Christmas story. The service will be followed by seasonal refreshments in the church hall.

Festival Carol Service

Festival Carol Service next Sunday, 21st December, at 5.00 pm at Holy Family, followed by mince pies and mulled wine.



Alternative Christmas Cards

Rather than spending money on Christmas Cards to give to people you see on a regular basis at church, why not donate your money to CAFOD, where it will be put to good use to help those suffering in the Ebola crisis, in Syria and the Philippines? If you would like to join in this initiative, please place your money in the blank envelopes, which are available at the back of St Ambrose Church, then write your Christmas message on the star in the envelope. Stars will then be displayed at the back of the church.

St Gabriel's & Holy Family Christmas Flowers

If you would like to make a donation towards the Christmas flowers in memory of loved ones who have died, please write the names of your loved ones on one of the lists available at the back of church. The names will be placed near the Crib during the Christmas Season.

Holy Family - Ministers

Altar Servers, Readers and Eucharistic Ministers at Holy Family: please sign the appropriate sheet at the back of church if you are available to help at the Christmas Services.

Christmas Mass Times

Christmas Eve

6.00 pm	St Gabriel's*, St Richard's St Joseph's & XII Apostles
8.00 pm	St Ambrose Barlow
11.30 pm	Holy Family
12.00 am	St Joseph's

Christmas Day

9.00 am	Holy Family*
9.30 am	St Richard's & Sacred Heart
10.00 am	St Joseph's
11.00 am	St Ambrose Barlow & Holy Family*
11.15 am	Our Lady of the Rosary

**Children are invited to bring a home-made birthday card for Jesus to Mass.*

PARISH NOTES

Newsletter

Please ensure items for the newsletter are sent in by Wednesday evening. Thank you.

Clergy Addresses

Fr Paul Seddon

St Richard's Presbytery, Mayfield Street, Atherton, Manchester M46 0AQ

Fr Dave Heywood

Holy Family Presbytery, 208 Chaddock Lane, Boothstown, Worsley, Manchester M28 1DN

Finance

The monies for the five church communities of the Parish of St Margaret Clitherow are held in one account. So please make all cheques payable to **St Margaret Clitherow** (Please note the spelling of 'Clitherow'). Thank you.

Pastoral Area Website

www.leighpastoralarea.co.uk

Catholic School Websites

www.st-maryshigh.wigan.sch.uk

www.athertonsacredheart.wigan.sch.uk

www.boothstownhollyfamily.wigan.sch.uk

www.saintambrosebarlow.co.uk

www.saintgabrielsprimary.co.uk

www.saintrichards.wigan.sch.uk

PARISH NEWS

Give Blood

Sunday 14th December: 10.00 am - 12.30 pm & 2.00 - 4.00 pm at the Novotel, Worsley.

Atherton & Leigh Food Bank

Atherton & Leigh Food Bank are holding a number of food collections. If anyone would like to help, then you can contact Warren on 07980 881925 info@athertonleigh.foodbank.org.uk The Food Bank are short of a number of items at the moment, such as coffee, fruit juice, mashed potatoes. The next collection will take place at Leigh Asda on 18th & 19th December.

Christmas Fair

With the help of many people, the Parish Christmas Fair raised £1589.27. Many thanks to all who gave their time, energy and money!

200 Club

St Ambrose Barlow 200 Club is to start again soon. Steve Cooper will be collecting names from this weekend. As usual the 200 Club costs £20 payable in one go, or four payments of £5, or £1 per week. For your money you will be entered into a monthly draw for £100 and £50 - January to April. Then at a free night out in the Parish Hall in April, you could win the £1000 jackpot. See Steve to join or give him a call on 01942 876487.

St Richard's 500 Club December Winners

£150	145	S Haslam
£75	35	J Rowan
£50	90	K Walsh
£25	225	S Rickard
£25	46	J Brundrett
£15	427	S McCoy
£15	362	F Balmer
£15	250	W Croughan

Thank you for your continued support

Annual CAFOD Fun Run

The 30th Annual CAFOD Fun Run takes place at Wavertree Park in Liverpool on Saturday 27th December at 1.00 pm. Entry £10 per family or £5 per individual. Full run is 7k, one lap mini run of 3k, plus an alternative route for walkers, wheelchairs and push-chairs. Festive stalls and live jazz music. Please arrive a little earlier to ease congestion at the registration desks.



New Year's Eve Dance

Celebrate the arrival of 2015 with a New Year's Eve dance with 'Gary Quinn' in the small hall at St Joseph's, Leigh. Tickets £8 (limited number available - it was a sell out last year!) Please bring your own drinks. Free tea, coffee and nibbles. Doors open 7.00 pm until late. For more details, call 01942 792293.

New Year's Eve Party

Back by popular demand, Eddie Robbins and the Jetsons, at St Joseph's Hall, Leigh. Welcome drink, Hot Pot Supper, Free Raffle. Tickets £15 available from Des Cooney (01942 674868) or Parish Office (01942 673517). Doors open at 7.00 pm.

Thank You

Sr Megan would like to say a big thank you to the SVP and all those who have responded to her appeals for help during the year. Currently, she is asking for help for a family who need a vacuum cleaner and a chest of drawers.

A Tweet a Day for Advent from Pope Francis



Sunday: Let us learn from the Virgin Mary how to be bolder in obeying the word of God.

Monday: There is the tendency to place ourselves and our ambitions at the centre of our lives. This is very human, but it is not Christian.

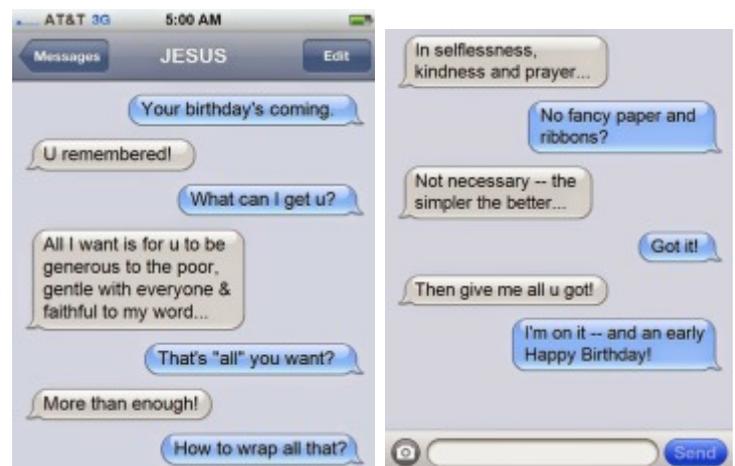
Tuesday: Jesus understands our weaknesses and sins; and he forgives us if we allow ourselves to be forgiven.

Wednesday: Listen within: Christ is knocking at the door of your heart.

Thursday: The Lord is always there waiting to give us his love: it is an amazing thing, one which never ceases to surprise us!

Friday: Despite our sins, we can say with Peter: Lord, you know everything, you know that I love you.

Saturday: We cannot trust in our own strength, but only in Jesus and in his mercy.



SERVICES OF RECONCILIATION

Tuesday 16th December at 7.00 pm

St Richard's, Atherton

Friday 19th December at 7.30 pm

Holy Family, Boothstown

Unburdening ourselves, pouring out our sins, disappointments, weaknesses and fragility not only makes us feel better, but makes room for God to come closer to us.

LAST WEEK'S PARISH COLLECTIONS

Offertory Collection

£2065.58

Thank you so much for your generosity

SECOND COLLECTIONS

Today
Next Weekend

Advent Collections (see page 2)
CAFOD Fun Run

PARISH MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

WEEK BEGINNING 14th December	HOLY FAMILY	ST AMBROSE BARLOW	ST GABRIEL'S	ST RICHARD'S
SUNDAY	9.00 am Vinnie Cross 11.00 am Danny Williams 12.30 pm Baptisms	11.00 am Joan Clegg	(Sat) 6.00 pm People of the Pastoral Area	(Sat) 6.00 pm Lilian & Patrick Welby 9.30 am Shaun Murray 6.30 pm Maureen Brough
MONDAY	<i>No Mass at St Joseph's, Leigh, today</i>			
TUESDAY		9.15 am Michael Hession		9.15 am Neil O'Rourke 7.00 pm Reconciliation Service
WEDNESDAY	6.30 pm Exposition 7.00 pm Mamie McAllister			9.00 - 10.00 am Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
THURSDAY		7.00 pm Taize Prayer	10.00 am School End of Term Mass (Kath Johnson) 6.00 pm KS2 Carol Service	9.15 am Successful Operation
FRIDAY	10.00 am Tony Huish 7.30 pm Penance Service			9.30 am Win Connor <i>In Sacred Heart School</i>
SATURDAY	10.00 am Margaret & Tony Huish	10.00 am Padre Pio Prayer Group	6.00 pm Edna Unsworth	6.00 pm Pat Shaw
SUNDAY	9.00 am Eileen Coates 11.00 am Christopher Tickle 5.00 pm Festival Carol Service	11.00 am Bernard Hughes		9.30 am Alfred Jackson 6.30 pm Edna Bennett

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Services of Reconciliation

Tuesday: 7.00 pm at St Richard's

Friday: 7.30 pm at Holy Family

Individual Confession

Saturday: 10.30 - 11.00 am at Holy Family

After 6.00 pm Mass at St Richard's

(or by appointment with one of the priests)



READINGS FOR NEXT WEEKEND

4th Sunday of Advent (B)

First Reading

2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14-16

King David wants to build a house, a temple, for the Lord; but the Lord promises to build a house, a dynasty, for David.

Second Reading

Romans 16:25-27

The mystery of God, revealed in Jesus, has to be made known to people everywhere to bring them to faith.

Gospel Reading

Luke 1:26-38

The Angel Gabriel reveals to Mary that she is to be the mother of God's Son. He will be given the throne of his ancestor David and his reign will have no end.

LET US HOLD IN PRAYER

Those who have died, especially:

Sacred Heart & St Richard's
Archdiocese

Theresa Bateson
Fr Bill Redmond

Those who are sick, especially:

Holy Family

Connie Crilly
Kathy Kenyon
Dorothy Hampson
Claire Barlow

Emma Oldham
Rev Jim Melia
Pat O'Neill

Sacred Heart & St Richard's

Fred Lyth
Agnes Pilkington
Shirley Leggett
Bessie Hulme
Enid Scott
Eileen Sherrington
Eugenie Cheetham

Margaret Hurley
Arthur Lucas
Phil Tomkins
Ronnie Scott
Thomas McLoughlin
Irene McIntyre

St Ambrose Barlow

Norah Atkinson
Margaret Ross

Alan West
Claire Barlow

St Gabriel's

Anne Broad

Pat Waring

If you wish to add (or remove) someone from the prayer list, please contact Fr Dave by phone or email.