

**THE YEAR OF SAINT MARK**  
**EATING WITH THE BRIDEGROOM**  
**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR B**

**NEW BEGINNINGS?**

*10 December 2017 - Psalter Week 2 – Missal Page 85*



Saint Mark opens by summarising all that will follow - 'The Beginning of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.' But when we get to the end of his Gospel and look back, we realise how bold Mark is being. Every word, "beginning", "good news", "Jesus", "Christ", "Son of God", feels different because of the story which has been told. Mark knows that something has begun that will never end. This is not the standard story of political fame, triumph and glorious recognition. Mark even reverses the conventional meaning of "Christ", and "Son of God". In this Gospel, the main character has no privilege or prestige. The destiny of Jesus was to face fierce resistance from his own religious leaders. He was abandoned and misunderstood by his own disciples. And then to suffer and die and rise again. For Mark, all of this is Good News, and, for those who are ready, his Gospel will provide a deeper and deeper insight into the true meaning of these titles.

And so it begins before it begins. John the Baptist is hard at work. His message is one of repentance or metanoia. John lives like a prophet, eats like a prophet, dresses like a prophet and talks like a prophet. John gives voice to Gods' eternal plea, "Come back to me with all your heart".

As a prophet, John must liberate people from the sin which ensnares them. He does this by asking them to have a new mind and changing their behaviour. He uses Baptism as a powerful symbol of this great undertaking. Those who go down into the water must first have made a rigorous self-examination of the life that they are living. In Baptism, they experience a new sense of freedom. They have shaken off the shackles of the past and are ready for something new. Which is exactly the impression John wants to make. Newly Baptized people are not completed, they are only ready for the main event. In most adventure stories, the hero or heroine must overcome many obstacles in their path to reach their goal. For John, the obstacles are not in the way of the one journeying but in the way of the One arriving! The whole point of clearing the ground is to allow this One to arrive. It works like this; God and the ones who work with God go after people. God is always searching for us and we must cultivate the art of welcoming Him when he comes.



The question then is whether or not we are ready for this new beginning. Are we willing and open? Can we engage with Jesus and his teaching? We can be presented with many opportunities for spiritual formation, but seize none of them. This question of readiness might explain why the teaching of Jesus fell on so many deaf ears.

But I imagine a different kind of scenario for being ready. It might, as Mark suggests begin with a life changing insight into the horror of sin and our need for forgiveness. Perhaps it is more likely that people just wake up one day and find that there is no life in their lives. The passion, pleasure and purpose of what they do and who they are is no longer there. The flow of life and love has dried up and, underneath the surface of things, people are hungry for change. These are the moments when, realising that we are dying at our own hands, we risk it all. If this is true, our encounters with dissatisfaction or desperation might turn out to be our best moment of Grace. The waters of the river Jordan will carry our sins away. The Baptist watches. He deflects our gratitude and praise. He tells us this is only the first step. That someone is coming who will pour Spirit like water into our desert lives. We are on the edge. We hear the Baptist speak, "I am the beginning before it begins".

## TIMES OF MASSES AND MASS INTENTIONS

### SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR B

Saturday	9 <sup>th</sup>	6.00pm	Mass	Peter Meehan, RIP
Sunday	10 <sup>th</sup>	8.30am	Mass	Mrs McAvoy, RIP
		10.30am	Mass	Jose Coelho, RIP
Monday	11 <sup>th</sup>	<b>No Mass</b>		
Tuesday	12 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Mass	Peggy Pendergast, RIP

### ST LUCY, Virgin, Martyr

Wednesday	13 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Mass	Arlette Ryan
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### ST JOHN OF THE CROSS, Religious, Doctor of the Church

Thursday	14 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Mass	Michael O'Grady, RIP
Friday	15 <sup>th</sup>	11.00am	Exposition	
		12.10pm	Mass	Sean Robinson, RIP
Saturday	16 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Mass	Canon Jack Madden, RIP

### THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT – YEAR B

Saturday	16 <sup>th</sup>	6.00pm	Mass	Mike Chapman, RIP
Sunday	17 <sup>th</sup>	8.30am	Mass	Parish Intentions
		10.30am	Mass	Sarah Davis, RIP

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*Tuesday to Thursday: 9.10am Morning Prayer; Thursday: After Mass Novena to Mother of Perpetual Help, 10.15 am Mother's Prayers; Saturday: 9.30am Rosary, 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month 9.30am Pro-Life Rosary. Confessions: every Saturday at 10.45am or prior appointment,*

**Parish Office:** 39 Braccan Walk, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 1BE  
Monday – Friday 9.30am-2.30pm

**Telephone:** 01344 425729 **Email:** [stjb@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:stjb@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org.uk](http://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org.uk)

**Please make cheques payable to (full name):** "PRCDTR Bracknell St Joseph".

**Parish Priest:** Fr Daniel McAvoy

**Parish Secretary:** Elizabeth Fisher **Pastoral Assistant:** Mary McNab

**Safeguarding Representatives:** Marion McGuire, Sarah Birch, Paula Read  
**Safeguarding email:** [safeguarding@bracknellcatholicchurch.org](mailto:safeguarding@bracknellcatholicchurch.org)

**PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH and ST. MARGARET CLITHEROW CHURCH**

# DID YOU KNOW...?



**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE – NEW DEADLINE: Midday on Tuesdays**, please email your newsletter item(s) to the parish office [stjb@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](mailto:stjb@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk).



**PARISH CHRISTMAS CARD** – Please collect from the porch your parish Christmas Card which contains Fr Danny's beautiful reflection, Penitential Service times, Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord Mass times and the Christmas Octave Mass times.



**CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR** – The Parish Office will be closed from **Friday 22 December 2017** until **Monday 1 January 2018** inclusive.



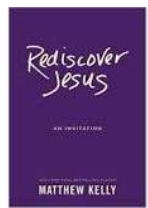
**SOUTH BERKSHIRE PASTORAL AREA** - Co-ordinating Pastor: Fr Danny McAvoyn, St Joseph & St Margaret Clitherow Church, Bracknell, 01344 425729; Fr Kevin Bidgood, St Francis of Assisi, Ascot 01344 620591; Fr Marcus Brisley Immaculate Conception, Sandhurst & Holy Ghost, Crowthorne, 01252 876820; Fr David O'Sullivan, Corpus Christi, Wokingham 0118 9780348



**CHURCH SHOP** – We have lovely Church Art 2018 Calendars, 2018 diaries and a selection of beautiful Christmas Cards available in the shop along with other items that would make thoughtful Christmas gifts, all very reasonably priced.



**STREET EVANGELISATION IN BRACKNELL** spreading the Truth of the Church to the world. To join us or want to find out more, please contact John: [johnrodger1@me.com](mailto:johnrodger1@me.com) or follow this link: <http://streeevangelization.com/>



**"REDISCOVER JESUS" - HOW TO HAVE THE BEST ADVENT EVER!** - Bishop Philip has sent a Christmas gift of Matthew Kelly's brilliant book **REDISCOVER JESUS** to every parishioner in the diocese, please collect your free copy from the porch. Have you ever had a Christmas where you felt like you were really prepared? Where you walked into Christmas Mass and you felt focused and peaceful and ready? We prepare for everything we consider important in life and Advent is the time we prepare for Christmas. For many people, preparing for Christmas includes shopping, cooking, wrapping presents, hanging decorations, etc. Often these activities are stressful, chaotic and they easily become a distraction from what Christmas is really all about.

**BEWARE: LIGHTING CANDLES** – Adults must accompany all children at the candle trays when lighting candles. Please ensure your children do not play around the candle trays, in the sand or with the lighted candles. Care must be taken reaching across lighted candles wearing loose clothing, etc. It is important to remember that they can be the cause of major fires and serious injury.



**LITURGICAL CALENDAR - DECEMBER** – 13<sup>th</sup> St Lucy; 14<sup>th</sup> St John of the Cross; 25<sup>th</sup> The Nativity of the Lord; 26<sup>th</sup> St Stephen; 27<sup>th</sup> St John; 28<sup>th</sup> The Holy Innocents; 29<sup>th</sup> St Thomas of Canterbury; 31<sup>st</sup> The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph.

**GOSPEL CHALLENGE** – Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays 7.45pm to 9.30pm in the **Church Hall**. All are welcome. Last meeting 11 December 2017, resumes 8 January 2018

**KEEP FIT CLUB** – Closed, will resume January 2018.

**TODDLER GROUP** – Every Tuesday 9.30am to 11.30am in the hall Last group 12 December 2017, resumes 9 January 2018

**PRAYER GROUPS** – Evening Group: 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays 7.45pm – 9.30pm Hall. Day Group: 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays 10.30am – 11.30am Hall. Last meeting 20 December 2017, resumes 2 January 2017

**SOUP & ROLL** – Every Friday after Mass **during term time**. Last soup & roll Friday 15 December, resumes Friday 5 January 2018.

**YOUTH GROUP** – Closed until further notice.



**MASS OFFERINGS: £1753.07 THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY.**

Please make cheques payable to (full name) "PRCDTR Bracknell St Joseph". **Gift Aid envelopes and bankers/standing order forms available in the porch.**



**CAFOD** is part of the DEC Rohingya crisis appeal. You can donate direct to CAFOD at [cafod.org.uk/RohingyaCrisis](http://cafod.org.uk/RohingyaCrisis) or by calling 08085 858885



**CAFOD WORLD GIFTS** – Catalogue of special world gifts through which our refugee neighbours can continue to feel the warmth of our love including **Emergency Shelter** and **Help a Refugee Child**. Pick up your catalogue from the porch or the hall.

**We pray for those in our parish community who are sick, housebound or in hospital and for those who care for them.**

Brenda Theobald, Olga Maguire, Betty Winn, Peter Dossett, Johanna Lenz, Ena Stanton, Inge Walker, Jadwiga Butcher, Lilijan Rodenburg, Josephine Timms, Robert Mulcahy, Eddie Moore, Peggy Pendergast, Ann Newton, Bridie Maughan, Emma Flavelle, Angelina Ediale, Maurice TimmsUna Gilligan, Freda Edgington, Anne Hardy, Patricia Holmwood, Fr Vincent Convery, Evie & Ruby Shallom, Blanche Shap, Mike Garnham, Ethna Sweeney, Mary Carpenter, Mary King, Anna Tighe, Mary Phelan, Mary Sol Faulkner, Tony Andrews, Adrian Sweeney, Derek Alexander, Brenda Lynch.



## LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING.....

"Giving is not just about making a donation.  
It is about making a difference."  
Scotty Carter

**ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFT** – Can't decide what to buy as a gift, wandering around the stores undecided? How about making a donation to a loved one's favourite charity as their Christmas gift from you. You can find the favourite charity by googling the charity's name and then click on their donation link or button, you will receive an acknowledgement which can be placed in your Christmas card to them. Suggestions for donation are the diocese charities are CAFOD <https://cafod.org.uk/> and Bamenda <http://www.bamendaandportsmouth.com>



**TODDLER-TIVITY** – Christmas Celebration for families of under 5's. Christmas story told with puppets, music, carols, ribbons, instruments, Christmas crafts and refreshments on **Monday 11 and Monday 18 December 2017**, 9.45am AND 11.00am in the parish hall, cost per family £1. Please see the poster in the porch.



**CHRISTMAS CAROLS IN LEXICON – Wednesday 20 December 2017**, 6.00pm – 8.00pm. 'We are the Fair' will be singing carols in the Lexicon, Christmas Tree between Waitrose and Marks & Spencer's. An open invitation for everyone to join in with the carol singing and uplifting start to Christmas.



**PENITENTIAL SERVICES** – For the South Berkshire Pastoral Area are:

**Tuesday 12 December 2017**, 7.30pm at St Francis of Assisi, Ascot SL5 9HG;  
**Thursday 14 December 2017**, 7.30pm at Holy Ghost, Crowthorne RG45 6JG;  
**Thursday 21 December 2017**, 7.00pm at Corpus Christi, Wokingham RG40 2HE



**ST JOSEPH & ST MARGARET CLITHEROW JOINT CAROL SERVICE** - Our two primary schools will be gathering on **Thursday 14th December 2017** at 6.00pm for a Carol Concert outside the Church, town centre. Please come to support our children and join in with the beautiful carols. Mulled wine and mince pies in the hall after the service.



**A GOLDEN CHRISTMAS THAMES VOYCES** – Christmas Concert on **Saturday 16 December 2017** at 7.30pm. Exactly fifty years to the evening that New Thames Singers (now Thames Voyces) presented their first concert and the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of performing at St Joseph and St Margaret Clitherow Church and they very much hope that the parishioners and their families will join again this year following the 6.00pm Mass. It will have the usual mixture of Christmas readings and well-known carols for choir and audience. The choir's conductor is Nick Austin. Tickets £12/£10 (concession) or free for Under 16's, buy on the door or telephone 0118 9677319. Wine and mince pies will be served at the interval.



**SENIOR CITIZEN'S EPIPHANY PARTY – Sunday 14 January 2018** in the hall after 10.30am Mass. Invitations will be sent out in the next few weeks, don't forget to put the date in your new Catholic diary that you bought from the church shop.



**LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR – CORPUS CHRISTI, WOKINGHAM - Pope Francis said:** 'This current of grace (the Charismatic Renewal) is for all the Church, not just for some... Share with all in the Church the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.' (June 2017 – Pentecost Mass in Rome). Please join us at Corpus Christi, Wokingham, RG40 2HE for the **Life in the Spirit Seminars, every Wednesday from 7 February to 21 March 2018, 8.00pm to 9.30pm**



### THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD and OCTAVE

Mass times are as follows:

**Saturday 23 December - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent: 6.00pm Mass**  
**Sunday 24 December – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent:**  
**8.30am Mass & 10.30am Mass**  
**Sunday 24 December: 5.00pm Children's Mass**  
**Sunday 24 December: 11.30pm Carol Service**  
**Sunday 24 December: 12.00 Midnight Mass**  
**Monday 25 December: 10.00am Morning Mass**  
**Tuesday 26 December to Saturday 30 December:**  
**12.00 noon Mass each day**  
**Saturday 30 December: 6.00pm Mass**  
**Sunday 31 December: 8.30am and 10.30am**  
**Monday 1 January 2018: 12.00 noon Mass**