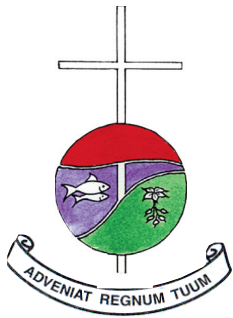


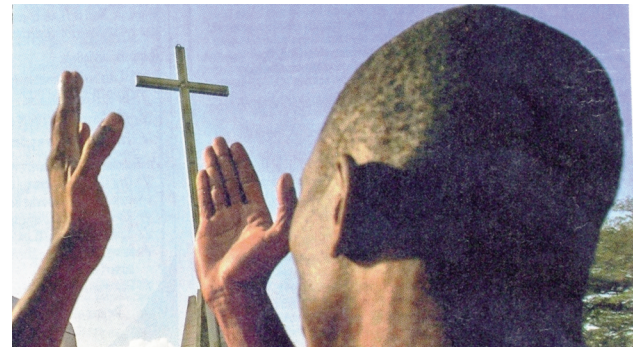
*2017: Marking the first 60 years
of our Diocese*



The Diocese of Banjul
NEWSLETTER

Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter

**Advent:
time of preparation**



**There's much more
to Christmas
than parties...**

**Thoughts, readings
and prayers for Mass
at Christmas and
every Sunday**





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3. Barra, North Bank Region	6868858	22. Kololi Hlghway	6868832
4. Banjul Leman Street	6868806	23. Lamin Village Opp Galp	6868815
5. Bansang	6969915	24. Latrikunda Sabiji	6868847
6. Basse Santa Su	6868839	25. London Corner	6868807
7. Basse Highway	6969865	26. Old Jeshwang	6868831
8. Brikama Nyambai	6968874	27. Old Yundum Market	6868843
9. Brikama Hawla Kunda	6868810	28. Sanyang	6868824
10. Brusubi Mini Market	6868819	29. Sayer Jobe Avenue	6868808
11. Brusubi Galp Station	6969873	30. Serrekunda Bartess	6868836
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By way of introduction

What matters to us all



AROUND this time, with elections in mind, Gambian Muslims and Christians have been at one in praying for continued peace and social harmony - attributes that this nation has long enjoyed and which have enabled us to progress socially and economically.

Then we all look forward to Christmas - a red-letter day which Christians share with millions in all five continents for whom Christmas takes no account of Christ, nor the Mass. For them, Christmas is a time for presents and parties, and the touching story of the Babe of Bethlehem takes second place to the fictional 'Father Christmas'.

This represents a challenge to Christ's Church. First, we need to make sure that we celebrate Christmas not only by party-going but by giving Jesus his place in our hearts. Then we should, as occasion arises, let others know what Christmas means to us - and what we believe it should mean

to the whole world.

Christmas celebrations of all sorts bring families together, and spread goodwill. And at this time of year especially, Christians and non-Christians alike talk of peace, reminding us how much our world needs an end to conflict and division.

In our Gambian family, the various Christian communities celebrate Christmas with joy. Christians give thanks, too, that they share respect for the Creator and for moral progress with their Muslim brothers and sisters.

As we move past Christmas towards the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, let us pray that all Christ's servants may become more open and trusting; and that men and women of all religious faiths and none may seek to build mutual respect and a common care for true progress in the family of mankind.

That, surely, is why Christ came among us.

*The Editor and Staff of The Diocese of Banjul Newsletter
wish all readers a Happy and Holy Christmas*

Suggestions for a 'Good Neighbour' New Year

page 10



Recalling Mother Teresa of Kolkata

End-piece, page 30

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Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter

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Our calendar for the Year of Our Lord MMXVII

The Epiphany of the Lord	Sunday 8th January
The Baptism of the Lord	Monday 9th January
Ordinary Time begins	Tuesday 10th January
Ash Wednesday	1st March
Palm Sunday	9th April
Good Friday	14th April
Easter Sunday	16th April
Ascension Day	Thursday 25th May
Pentecost	Sunday 5th June
Trinity Sunday	11th June
Ordinary Time resumes	Monday 12th June
Corpus Christi	Sunday 18th June
Sacred Heart	Friday 23rd June
Sang Marie	Tuesday 15th August
All Saints	Wednesday 1st November
Christ the King	Sunday 26th November
Immaculate Conception	Thursday 8th December
Pilgrimage to Kunkujang Mariama	Saturday 10th December



YEAR by year, the Church celebrates the mystery of the world's salvation in Jesus by highlighting in particular seasons his incarnation, his suffering, resurrection and ascension, and his sending of the Holy Spirit.

The liturgical year is a journey in which we pilgrim members of the Church seek through the Word of God and the sacraments to grow nearer to Jesus. Accompanying us are the saints, whose feast days we celebrate on the way.

The liturgical year encompasses four seasons:

- * ADVENT - focusing on the coming of the Lord as the Babe of Bethlehem and as Judge at the end of time
See page 8 of this *Newsletter*
- * The CHRISTMAS SEASON - from December 25th until the Baptism of the Lord (Monday 9th January)
- * LENT - the 40-day penitential preparation for Easter
- * The EASTER TRIDUUM: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Sunday - the very heart of the Christian year and the Christian faith
- * EASTER TIME: fifty days of joy, culminating at Pentecost

There are special readings at Mass for all the days in these great seasons.

The rest of the liturgical year is known as 'ORDINARY TIME'.

This doesn't mean ordinary in the sense of having no particular meaning. In Ordinary Time the Sundays and weeks are listed in numerical order as 1st, 2nd, 3rd and so on - the 'ordinal numbers'.

Ordinary Time in 2017 consists of 34 weeks. There are eight of these before Lent, running from Tuesday 10th January until Tuesday 28th February. After Pentecost, Ordinary Time resumes from the 9th week on Monday 5th June.

On the Sundays and weekdays in Ordinary Time the Gospel readings tell us of Christ's ministry of teaching and healing. The Sunday lectionary spreads over three years: the readings for Year A come mostly from St Matthew's Gospel, those for Year B from St Mark, and those for Year C from St Luke.

The year we are just beginning is Year A.

The weekday readings in Ordinary Time follow a two-year cycle - Year I and Year 2. This year, we have Year 1.

On specified days throughout the year we celebrate the saints: the great feasts of Our Lady, St Peter, St Paul, St John the Baptist, and the feasts of apostles, martyrs and other saints. There are special readings for these days.

We also commemorate other saints on their memorial days - when the readings usually come from the regular cycle for that year.

O Lord, may we follow you faithfully throughout the coming year

Here & there

NEWS FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE



The story of a premier school

'ST Augustine's School: Its History & Accomplishments', a 61-page book by George F. Gomez, was launched at the school on Monday 14th November.

Among those taking part were Bishop Robert Ellison, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Education, Baboucar Boye, and the Managing Director of Africell, Baboucar Mbye – the last two being former pupils of the school.

Opening prayers were offered by Imam Tafsir Gaye and the Rt Revd James Odico, Anglican Bishop of Gambia, and closing prayers by the Methodist Bishop, the Rt Revd Hannah Faal Hein. *Book review: page 7*

All for God through holy love'

TWO young Gambian women on Saturday 1st October at Shalom, Fajara, made their First Profession as Sisters of the Presentation of Mary.

In the presence of the Presentation Sisters, sisters from other congregations, their families and friends, Ellen B. Mendy and Harriet B. Mendy made their profession at a Mass, followed by a joyful reception.

The celebrant was Fr Godwin Nnadozie MSP, who reminded the new sisters that their religious life would have its ups and downs, but they should always respect God and his people with trust, love, obedience, perseverance, and a sense of belonging.

Charismatic revival at St Kizito's

'BREAKING generational curses' is the theme of a four-day revival meeting at St Kizito's Church Bakoteh from Saturday 26th to Tuesday 29th November.

The leaders are Fr Victor Ndecky, Fr John Mendy, Fr Godwin and Fr Moses Drammeh. Each evening's session begins at 6pm.

The theme relates to Galatians 3:13-14: 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us - for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs from a tree" - in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.'

Prayers for Gambia and the diocese

MANY Catholics throughout the Diocese of Banjul observed Friday 21st October and the week leading up to it as days of fasting and prayer for the recognition of rights, security, peace and the religious freedom of all - especially Christians - in The Gambia.

The observance was announced by the 'Ad hoc Committee on the Challenges to the Domestic Church', who also asked Catholics to 'pray for peace in our beloved country, so that God's will be done as we approach the elections on 1st December 2016.'

Subsequently, The Gambia Christian Council organised an ecumenical gathering at Bakau Stadium on Saturday 19th October.

Praying for peace

BISHOP Robert Ellison has approved a 'daily prayer for peace in respect of the challenges facing the domestic Church'.

The prayer reads:

'Almighty and ever-living God, you care for every human being, especially the poor, the weak, the marginalised, the oppressed, the persecuted and the hungry.

'We present before you our country, The Gambia. Help us, Lord, that we your children resident in this nation shall endeavour to continue to live in peace.

'Lord Jesus, we want to please you, rather than sin. Make us fearless in the face of danger; give us the strength to persevere in the challenges of life; give us a heart to love you unconditionally.

'O Spirit of God, Lord of Light, in this year of election we pray for justice, tolerance and a peaceful co-existence of all people in The Gambia. When temptations abound, and your judgment is made manifest, Spirit of God, comfort us.

'Mary, help of Christians, pray for us.

St Michael, pray for us.

St Raphael, pray for us.

St Gabriel, pray for us.

Our Lady, Queen of Peace, pray for us.

All you Saints of God, pray for us.

Amen'

Voting in elections

THE DUTIES of Catholics as citizens are outlined in the 'Catechism of the Catholic Church':

'IT is the duty of citizens to contribute along with the civil authority to the good of society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity and freedom. The love and service of one's country follow from the duty of gratitude, and belong to the order of charity. Submission to legitimate authorities and the service of the common good requires citizens to fulfil their roles in the life of the political community.' (2239)

'SUBMISSION to authority and co-responsibility for the common good make it obligatory to pay taxes, to exercise the right to vote, and to defend one's country.' (2240)

Pay to all what is due to them, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honour to whom honour is due. (Romans 13:7)

Gambian pilgrims enter the Holy Door

THIS year's pilgrimage from 14th October to 4th November in Israel and Jordan and to Mount Sinai in Egypt included a six-night stay in Rome - a unique 'bonus'.

The pilgrims spent All Saints Day and All Souls Day in Rome, 'the Eternal City', where they received the Papal Blessing and walked through the Holy Door.

The pilgrimage was led by Fr Peter Lopez.

Pope closes the Holy Door - page 22.

Fr Sean in town

Fr Sean Devereux, who spent many years in the Diocese of Banjul, notably at St Kizito Bakoteh and St Francis Bwiam, paid a short return visit from 22nd to 29th November.

He inspected various projects in the diocese on behalf of supporters in Ireland. Fr Sean has now resumed his ministry as a priest of the Diocese of Ferns.

** It has been announced that Pope Francis will visit Ireland in 2018.*



Why should we pray for unity?

DESPITE doctrinal differences, all Christians want to communicate God's love, and accept that God's purpose is to unite all things in Christ. They seek to pray with Christ 'that there might be one flock and one shepherd' (John 10:16). Christians also seek to portray their beliefs and practices as the instrument of God's kingdom, accepting that their worldwide community can only be the Church that God wills if all churches acknowledge their mutual independence.

By praying together, Christians experience a unity often hidden by denominational differences. But many churchgoers take little notice of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: they feel happy with their own traditions and are

ignorant or dismissive of other Christians.

The Week of Prayer was devised in 1908, and given a wider remit in the 1930s through a French Catholic, the Abbé Paul Couturier, who taught, 'We must pray not that others may be converted to us, but that we may all be drawn closer to Christ' in 'the unity that Christ wills, by the means he wills'.

Since 1966 the week has been a joint project of the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches.

Theme for January 2017

Resources for the Week of Prayer 2017 have been provided by the Council of Churches in Germany to mark the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation. The theme is: 'Reconciliation: The love of Christ compels us' (2 Corinthians 5:14-20). It urges reflection on the concerns of the churches marked by Martin Luther's Reformation, and recognition of the pain caused by the subsequent deep divisions that afflicted the Church.

As this Newsletter goes to press, we have no details of the observance in The Gambia in January of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

OBITUARY

Death of leading educationalist



THE DEATH occurred on Sunday 20th November of a leading educationalist, Delphine Carrol.

Delphine Eileen Sarah Carrol was born in Freetown, the eldest daughter of Oliver and Marie Macaulay, in November 1932.

After primary and secondary education in Freetown, she obtained a BSc at Manchester University in England. She married in England Reynold Oshowole Williamson Carrol, who at Independence was the leading dentist in The Gambia, and who pre-deceased her.

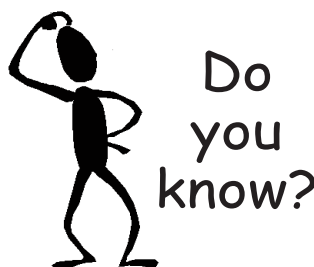
After a short spell at the Bathurst School of Science, Mrs

Carrol spent her entire teaching career - from 1959 to 1989 - at Gambia High School, where she taught biology and became Senior Mistress, then Vice Principal. She was Principal from 1984 to 1989.

After retirement, Mrs Carrol served in the Public Service Commission from 1991-1999, becoming Vice Chairman. She was a member of the Lands Commission from 1995 to 1999, and was made an Officer of the Order of the Republic of The Gambia (ORG).

As a devoted Anglican, Mrs Carrol was elected Lay Vice-President of the Diocesan Standing Committee, and was Priest's Warden at St Paul's Church, Fajara.

Mrs Carrol's funeral and requiem were held at St Mary's Anglican Cathedral, Banjul, on Friday 25th November, prior to interment at Banjul Cemetery.

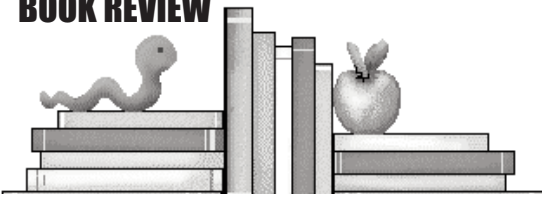


Do
you
know?

- 1 Where in the Old Testament can you read about the 'valley of dry bones'?
- 2 What is the meaning of the term, *Gentile*?
- 3 Which Gospel writer produced a second work which also appears in the New Testament?
- 4 What position is held in The Gambia by Miroslaw Adamczyk?
- 5 What does the illustration on the right signify?

Answers on page 27
Christmas Quiz: page 11



BOOK REVIEW

St Augustine's School: Its History and Accomplishments

By George F. Gomez

'LONG overdue', writes Fr Joseph Gough, past Principal of St Augustine's Senior Secondary School, in a foreword to George F. Gomez' newly-published history of the school. He is echoed by Abdou Amadou Samba, former Secretary-General, who describes the book as 'very timely'. St Augustine's past pupils and many others who recognise the school's substantial role in the development of this country will no doubt agree, and find the book absorbing.

Mr Gomez reminds us that in 1857 (almost 160 years ago!) when St Augustine's predecessor was founded, 'The Gambia was mostly an assortment of small states', which included Niumi, Niani, Kiang and Tumani and Wuli. The British presence was restricted to Bathurst and Georgetown. The small Catholic community was served by French missionaries posted from St Louis, then the capital of Senegal.

St Augustine's had its origin in a school started by Fr Blanchet, Parish Priest in Banjul, to train boys in metalwork, carpentry and construction. The school was built of rhun palm and krinting with a grass roof, and teaching was in English and Wolof. In 1873 60,000 bricks and 1,000 tiles brought from France were used in erecting a more permanent, three-classroom building, and in 1886 classes in English and arithmetic were introduced.

Mr Gomez calls the 1880s St Augustine's 'glorious years' under the direction of Brother Florentine Matthews. In 1882 the pupils' performance earned the school a grant of 3,000 francs - as much as all the colony's other schools put together. In 1895, music was introduced, together with singing lessons and a school band. Fr Amman, then Superior of the Catholic Mission, thought of building a new school, and bought more land in Hagan Street. But in 1900 he died. In 1902 building began, a fifth of the cost being met by the government and the rest by the mission. Classrooms were completed in 1904, and in January 1905 were opened by the Governor, Sir George Denton, under the title, 'St Augustine's Elementary School', with Fr John Meehan, recently arrived, as head.

Until the 1920s, schooling was limited to primary teaching. Following the establishment in 1921 by the Cluny Sisters of secondary teaching for girls, the need for such provision for boys became urgent. A second storey to the existing building was built, and in 1929 the boys' school was officially opened, with Fr Harold Whiteside as its head. In 1938 the school presented its first candidate for the Junior Cambridge examination. In 1939 there were three candidates. In 1940, Eric Christenson, passed the Senior Cambridge (he was later to become first Gambian Secretary-General).

Brother Healy, a keen sportsman, organised athletics and football, and by the end of the 1940s the school won the national football shield eight times out of 12.

The school's first speech day, attended by the Governor,

What we owe to St Augustine's



Sir Hilary Blood, was held jointly with St Joseph's girls' school in December 1946.

At speech day in 1949 the Principal, Fr Francis Farrel, was able to report, 'For me, the important things in school life are the ordinary things, and the things that matter are the small things... The pupils are happy and contented... their rate of progress is at least satisfactory, and the spirit of the school is excellent... the number on the roll has varied slightly, with a general average of 100. We have continued to offer candidates for the Cambridge Junior and Senior Certificate examinations, and though our successes have not been all that we would wish them to be, our hopes for the future are bright...'

Amalgamation resisted

In 1951 the government-commissioned Baldwin Report recommended that all four secondary schools in Banjul - St Augustine's, St Joseph's, Methodist Boys and Methodist Girls - should be replaced by one Government secondary school. Bishop Moloney resisted, and the two Catholic schools continued, while the two Methodist schools were amalgamated at the end of the 1950s.

By 1953 St Augustine's had 153 students. In 1964 it was decided to move the school to Campama. The new school building was officially opened in September 1968, when Fr Michael Cleary (now Bishop Emeritus) was Principal.

More recent St Augustine's history is, of course, better-known. Mr Gomez was Executive Director of the Gambia National Olympic Committee, and points out that under successive principals St Augustine's has long been the country's leading sports school. Throughout his book, too, are the names of many former pupils, Christian and Muslim, who have contributed notably to the social and economic development of The Gambia, and remember their school days with gratitude and affection.

Of the school's 19 heads, the first Gambian was Samuel Njie. Mr Gomez says that the present Principal, Fr Bruno Toupan, who took office in 2014, is intent on injecting afresh the spirit of hard work, academic success and discipline. Everyone will wish Fr Toupan, his staff and pupils every success.

Mr Gomez writes simply and succinctly, and his book makes good, upbeat reading.

St Augustine's School: its History and Accomplishments.

By George F. Gomez.

61 pages, with black-and-white and colour illustrations.

Advent: season rich in themes and challenges

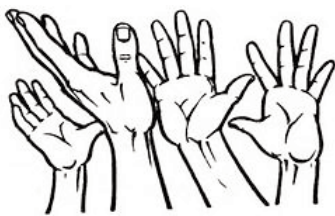
Let us greet Jesus anew, and make him welcome

WE begin a new Church year with the season of Advent. Advent (in Latin, *adventus*) refers to the 'coming' or 'arrival' of Christ in the flesh at Christmas, which foreshadows his Second Coming on the Day of Judgment.

Advent is a season rich in themes and challenges. We meditate on

- the Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming of Christ
- the need for repentance, as preached by Christ's forerunner, John the Baptist
- death, judgment, heaven and hell
- the celebration of Christmas
- the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time

Old Testament yearning



The history of God's ancient people, the Jews, is the dominant theme of the Old Testament. The Jews, buffeted by their enemies, bruised by their own all-too-frequent idolatry, yearned

for better times: they yearned for a Saviour, the promised Messiah.

Such anguished yearnings infuse many of the psalms, and they are a frequent theme of the Old Testament prophets. In Advent we share these yearnings as we read, at Sunday and daily Mass, the prophecies of Isaiah concerning the coming of the Messiah.

We read Isaiah and the other old Jewish prophets in the light of Christ - who is for us (and, we believe, for the whole world) the fulfilment of every yearning for salvation.

The Forerunner

Apart from Isaiah, the great prophet to whom we turn in Advent is John the Baptist.

John is the link between the Old and New Testaments. John is the Forerunner of Christ, born shortly before him. He is the only prophet to greet Christ in person. He points to Christ as the Lamb of God. Like Christ, he endures a barbaric and unjust death. Christ told his disciples that John was the greatest of all the prophets.

Isaiah and John are our companions during Advent. They point to Jesus, whose birth at Bethlehem we are soon to celebrate.



The Last Things

A contrasting theme of Advent is our meditation on the 'Four Last Things': death, judgment, heaven and hell. Two of these 'Things' we shall all experience. But is the third to be heaven - or hell?

We do well to remember that Christ was born to save the fallen human race. We are all sinners. If we want after death to be near to God, to experience eternal, inexpressible happiness, we need to prepare for Christmas by repenting of our sins. That is the message of John.

Advent, like Lent, is a penitential season. What better time to avail ourselves of the Sacrament of Penance?



The Second Coming

We think also during Advent of the Second Coming of Christ: the end of time, as the world knows it.

In earlier centuries many Christians thought that the end of the world was imminent. But Christ told his disciples, 'We know neither the day nor the hour' (Matthew 24:25-26)

We do know, however, that sooner or later for each of us 'this world' will end: we shall die. The prudent Christian behaves as though every day is his or her last. Like a wise virgin (Matthew 24:1-12) he is always ready for the end.

'God with us'

Many a preacher at Mass this Advent will remind us that Christ's coming is not only marked at Christmas, but at every Mass, when Christ becomes present on the altar.

And Christ is in everyone we know or will ever know. Because he is God as well as man, he dwells in every human being - acknowledged or not. That is why all human life is sacred.

Christ dwells in friend and foe, in those known to us, and in every stranger. No one is ultimately beyond God's love. That is why Christ was born for us, lived for us, died for us, rose for us, and lives in the Church and the world for us. Acknowledging Christ's coming, and his presence always with us, is what Advent is about.

Let us greet Christ anew, and make him welcome.

Let our happy Christmas be preceded by a happy and fruitful Advent.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

From the Roman Missal:

KEEP us alert, we pray, O Lord our God, as we await the advent of Christ your Son, so that, when he comes and knocks, he may find us watchful in prayer and exultant in his praise...
(Monday of the first week of Advent)

The coming light

IT'S difficult for Gambians to imagine cold, pre-Christian Germany. There, in the dark winter, pagans made wreaths and lit bonfires to express their longing for spring and the coming of new light and life. When Christianity came to Germany, people continued this custom by making wreaths and lighting candles to celebrate the Advent hope in Christ. By the 16th century Catholics and Protestants alike were making Advent wreaths, and the custom has since spread to many parts of the world, including The Gambia.



The **wreath** is a circle which has no beginning or end. It symbolises the God who was, who is, and will be for ever.
The **greenery** symbolises life.

The lighting of the **candles** - one the first week, two the second week, and so on - symbolises the progressive revelation of God's saving plan for mankind.

By lighting a new candle each week, we signify our hope in the coming light of Christ.

Lighting the Advent wreath in our homes and churches enacts our faith in John's testimony:

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it (John 1:5)

Making the wreath

Making an Advent wreath is simple. It provides a focus for family prayer which will involve the children.

To make the wreath you need some sort of circular framework on which to fix greenery; four candle-holders; and four candles.

Fresh greenery is best, but as it withers you will need to renew it. If you prefer shop-bought artificial greenery, make sure it is inflammable.

Traditionally, three of the candles are purple (or blue) and the fourth is pink. But candles of any colour may be used. Some wreaths have an additional white or gold candle in the middle to be lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Don't allow candles to burn down into the candle-holders. Don't place candles near curtains or anything that could catch alight. Don't allow small children to touch the wreath.

*Here are some prayers and readings to help you
- but you may devise prayers of your own.*

A prayer of blessing

O GOD, by whose Word all things are made holy, bless this wreath, and grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the coming of the Light of the World, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

First week (one purple candle is lit)

GOD of Abraham and all the patriarchs of old, we acknowledge you as our Father. Your love is revealed to us in Jesus Christ your Son, and Son of David. Help us to prepare to celebrate his birth.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, Light of the World. Amen.

Hail Mary. Our Father.

Suggested readings: Isaiah 7:10-14. Isaiah 11:1-10. Matthew 1:18-24.

Second Week (two purple candles are lit)

GOD our Father, you spoke to the prophets of old of a Saviour who would bring everlasting peace. Help us as we prepare to celebrate our Saviour's birth to share with those around us the good news of your love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, Light of the World. Amen.

Hail Mary. Our Father.

Suggested readings: Isaiah 2:1-5. Micah 5:2. Matthew 2:1-2. Matthew 3:1-6.

Third week (two purple candles & the pink candle are lit)

GOD our Father, you gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth in their old age a son called John. As John the Baptist, he spoke to his people of the coming of Jesus and baptised them in the River Jordan to wash away their sins. Help us who have been baptised into Christ to welcome him into our hearts and grow strong in the faith.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, Light of the World. Amen.

Hail Mary. Our Father.

Suggested readings: Malachi 3:1-5. Romans 8:18-25. Luke 1:5-17.

Fourth week (all four candles are lit)

GOD our Father, the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that she was to be the mother of your Son, and she responded with joy. Help us, like Mary, to share in your work of salvation by showing others your love and healing.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, Light of the World. Amen.

Hail Mary. Our Father.

Suggested readings: Isaiah 52:7-10. Luke 1:26-38. Revelation 21:1-4.

May our Lord Jesus Christ
illumine our lives this coming Christmas



2 Suggestions for a 'good neighbour' New Year

1 LOOK around outside your compound. Is there anything you can do to make the environment cleaner by removing rubbish and sweeping pathways?



Don't leave it to your local council or to the neighbours. Set a good example. You may well arouse local awareness of the need for cleaner streets, and a new co-operative spirit.

No need to wait for *set-settal* day - which anyway, in Shakespeare's phrase, is 'more honoured in the breach than in the observance'.

2 MALARIA is always a threat - even in the dry season. At the very first sign of fever, seek medical help and treatment, especially for infants and young children.



You should keep anti-malaria tablets in the house, along with first-aid items, so that when a doctor or pharmacy is not within reach, you can take immediate action to counter the attack. A recommended medicine is Co-Arinate, which may also be bought as a syrup for children.



3 ARE you and your family getting enough exercise?

Middle-aged people who do no manual work, and follow what's called a 'sedentary' regime, should make sure they do some brisk walking each working day and at the weekend - activity which gets them on their feet and exercises their muscles.

Why not take up a sport, or join a gym?

4 HOW often do you look at your children's exercise and text books and discuss their home and school work with them? Do you know which school subjects they're doing well at, and which subjects they find boring or difficult? Do you attend parents' meetings and co-operate by paying fees on time?



Make sure, every school day, that your children are properly dressed and punctual.

5 MOST of us have neighbours. We may know them well or little. We may not even know what they look like! In most circumstances it is good to know your neighbours and to be on friendly terms with them. Our urban districts are more and more crowded with people who come and go, people of varying social backgrounds and nationalities. They need not be strangers living among strangers. The Christian and common-sense way of living is to extend friendship to those around us. (It's a good idea, by the way, to exchange telephone numbers with neighbours, which can be very useful in an emergency.)



6 IF you're a 'Sunday Mass Catholic' as you should be (why else are you reading this *Newsletter*?) do consider if you could join in parish programmes more actively. Is what you regularly give your parish in time, talents and money commensurate with your circumstances and opportunities? As well as prayer and devotional groups, there are probably activities concerned with developing the parish, visiting the sick and lonely, and so forth. Do join in!



7 TELEVISION - local or satellite - is watched every day by most families. Much of what's broadcast is informative, educational or entertaining. But there's something wrong if the television set is continually on in your house for hour after hour. How can anyone enjoy every programme, whatever it's about?

Too many parents are prone to say to their youngsters, 'Stop bothering me and watch the television!' Ration your watching. Watch with discrimination. Don't let your children (or 'kids', as television often calls them) become addicted to television, when it's late.

8 DO you know of anyone who is housebound, unwell or lonely? Do you keep in touch with your relatives and old friends? Are you estranged from a relative, neighbour or friend? Do seek to help people who need help. The empty life of an elderly person living alone with few visitors and perhaps with money worries could be transformed by a little kindness from you.



As for those with whom you've quarrelled, don't wait for them to make the first move: even if it means risking another rebuff, try to become friends again.

Don't drop litter!

Help keep your neighbourhood and the nation clean



Unhappy consequences

'TAKE a little wine for your stomach's sake and for your frequent ailments,' was the advice of St Paul's to his protégé, St Timothy (1 Timothy 5:23). Today's medical advice is that indeed a little wine - a glass a day - is good for you: especially for the health of your heart.

Centuries before Paul, the Psalmist sang of drinking wine 'to gladden the heart of man' (Psalm 104:15).

Wine and alcohol generally are not forbidden to Christians. Indeed, our Lord's first miracle was the changing of water into wine. But common-sense, let alone our religion, tells us that being addicted to alcohol has unhappy consequences.



Holiday dangers

At Christmas and New Year, even occasional or moderate drinkers may take too much to drink: not 'a little', as St Paul advised, but much too much.

This is good time to remind ourselves that

- * Too much alcohol causes absence from work, car accidents, violence in the home, the break-down of marriages, cruelty to children, sexual assault and other violent crimes.

- * Heavy drinkers commonly suffer problems with the liver and heart, high blood-pressure, strokes and digestive disorders.

- * Those who drink too much tend not to eat a healthy, balanced diet, and to suffer from nutritional disorders.

- * Long-term over-indulgence in alcohol leads to impairment of the brain, affecting intellect and movement.

- * Young people who drink heavily are likely to experiment with other even more dangerous drugs.

- * Women who drink too much while pregnant are likely to damage their unborn children's physical and mental health.

The Bible says...

Back to the Bible. Proverbs tells us (20:1): 'Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.'

Or turn to Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 31:28-30: 'Wine drunk in moderation and in season and temperately is rejoicing

of heart and gladness of soul. Wine drunk to excess is bitterness of soul, provocation and stumbling. Drunkenness increases the anger of a fool to his injury, reducing his strength and adding wounds.'

Let it not be said that the Bible is out of date!

In vino veritas?

Many men, and not a few women, having drunkenly been rude to their friends, apologise to them 'the morning after', when they're sober again.

But the fact is that drink cannot put unfriendly and aggressive thoughts into a man's head. Normally we suppress our unkind thoughts for the sake of social decency. But alcohol takes away our inhibitions, and when drunk we may show our friends what we're really like - all the jealousy, resentment and lack of self-confidence that we normally keep to ourselves.

Remedies?

If you drink too much, you are punishing yourself and your family. But you may deny that you are addicted.

Don't be ashamed. Face up to the truth and seek help - from your doctor, your family and friends, and in the Church. There's lots of advice on the internet.

If you have a friend who is addicted to alcohol, seek practical ways to help.

There's no easy formula for helping an alcoholic or a frequent drunkard out of his addiction, and if you hint that he has a problem, your friend may become angry. Alcoholism often stems from loneliness and frustration. It takes careful handling. Don't nag. But don't forget the power of prayer!

Moderation

If you don't usually drink much, go easy over Christmas. Be careful at parties. Have a big drink of water beforehand.

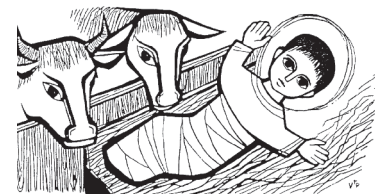
At the party, intersperse alcoholic drinks with soft drinks. Sticking to one kind of alcoholic drink is best. Don't mix wine or beer with spirits.

When you're back home, a glass of water before you sleep may not be easy to take, but it will help deal with the dehydration brought about by the consumption of alcohol.

*Kaadu Dunda-Gi: The Living Word
GRTS every Sunday at 2 pm*

A Christmas Quiz

- 1 Before the birth of Jesus, why did Mary and Joseph travel from Bethlehem to Nazareth?
- 2 By what name is Christmas known in Senegal and other French-speaking countries?
- 3 In which country did the Christmas tree originate?
- 4 Who is known as the 'Forerunner'?
- 5 Isaiah speaks of the birth to a virgin of 'Immanuel'. What does this name mean?
- 6 Who is said to have made the first Christmas crib?
- 7 From whom is the make-belief character, 'Father Christmas' derived?
- 8 Which words of Mary are said or sung every day at Evening Prayer?
- 9 Which saint is celebrated the day after Christmas Day?
- 10 What is a *bambino*?
- 11 How many 'wise men' visited the Infant Christ?
- 12 For how many days was Christmas traditionally celebrated?
- 13 Besides Christmas, what other feast days in the English-speaking world may be given a name ending with 'mas'?
- 14 What does the name 'Jesus' mean?
- 15 Which two of the four Gospels provide accounts of the birth of Jesus?



Answers, page 27

Lighten our darkness, O Lord

The Great Advent Antiphons come from the Old Testament. They reflect the Hebrew people's yearning for the coming of the Messiah. For us, too, they are a call for Christ to come among us.



O Wisdom



O Adonai



*O Root
of Jesse*



*O Key
of David*



*O Rising
Sun*



*O King of
the Nations*



O Emmanuel

SINCE the 7th century, as Advent draws to a close, the Great Advent Antiphons have been recited daily at Evening Prayer before and after the Song of Mary (the *Magnificat*).

Each antiphon addresses God with a Biblical name, and concludes with a call for the coming of the Saviour.

The antiphons feature in the hymn, 'O come, O come, Emmanuel'. *In the days leading up to Christmas, why not use the Great Advent Antiphons in your private prayers?*

Saturday 17th December *O Sapientia*

O WISDOM, you come forth from the mouth of the Most High. You fill the universe and hold all things together in a strong yet gentle manner. O come to teach us the way of truth.

O Sapientia, quae ex ore Altissimi produisti, attingens a fine usque ad finem fortiter, suaviterque disponens omnia. Veni ad docendum nos viam prudentiae.

Readings: Ecclesiasticus 24:1-9. 1 Corinthians 1:1-13

Sunday 18th December *O Adonai*

O ADONAI and Leader of the House of Israel, who appeared to Moses in a burning bush, and on Sinai gave him the Law: come to redeem us with outstretched arm.

O Adonai et Dux Domus Israel, qui Moyse in igne flammae rubi apparuisti et ei Sina Legem dedisti: veni ad reimendum nos in brachio extento.

Readings: Exodus 3:1-6. Acts 7:20-36

Monday 19th December *O Radix*

O ROOT of Jesse, you stand as a sign for the people. Kings stand silent before you, whom the nations will worship. Come to set us free, and do not delay.

O Radix Jesse, qui stas in signum populorum, sine quem continebunt reges os suum, quem gentes deprecabuntur: veni et liberandum nos, jam noli tardare.

Readings: Isaiah 11:1-10. Romans 15:7-13

Tuesday 20th December *O Clavis*

O KEY of David and Sceptre of the House of Israel, what you open, no one can close; and what you close, no one can open. Come to lead the captive from prison, seated in darkness and in the shadow of death.

O Clavis David et Sceptrum Domus Israel, qui aperis et nemo claudit; claudis et nemo aperuit: veni, et educ vincitum de domo carceris, sedentem in tenebris et umbra mortis.

Readings: Isaiah 22:20-33. Revelation 3:7-13

Wednesday 21st December *O Oriens*

O RISING SUN, splendour of eternal light and Sun of Justice: come and shine on those seated in darkness and in the shadow of death.

O ORIENS, splendor lux aeternae et sol justitiae: veni et illumine sedentes in tenebris et et umbra mortis.

Readings: Numbers 24:15b-19. Revelation 22:10-21

Thursday 22nd December *O Rex*

O KING of the Nations, whom all the people desire: you are the Keystone which makes all one. Come and save mankind whom you formed from clay.

O REX gentium, et desideratus earum, lapsique angularis qui facis utroque unum: veni et salva hominem qui tu limo formasti.

Readings: Jeremiah 30:7-11a. Acts 4:1-12

Friday 23rd December *O Emmanuel*

O EMMANUEL, our King and our Judge, the One awaited by the gentiles, and their Saviour: Come and save us, Lord our God

O Emmanuel, Rex et Legifer noster, expectatio gentium at Salvator arum: veni et salvandum nos, Domine Deus noster.

Readings: Isaiah 7:10-14. Matthew 1: 18-23

Lord Jesus,
teach us the way of truth and set us free

Would you like to say **Morning** and **Evening Prayer** every day, in company with priests and lay-people throughout the world?



Go to **Universalis** website and click on Morning Prayer, or Mass, or Vespers – as you wish – and you will find the complete Office



CHILDREN'S PAGE

Here is a
picture for you
to colour



All babies are loved by their father, their mother and their family.

Here is a picture of a baby loved by everyone. His name is Jesus.

We love Jesus because he loves us.

Jesus is the Son of God.

Jesus was born for us, lived and died for us, and rose for us.

At Christmas we thank Jesus for all he does for us.

We ask Jesus to help us to love each other as he loves us.

Suscipe, quæsimus, Domine, sacrificia tuis instituta præceptis

Accept, O Lord, we pray, the sacrifices instituted by your commands

Sunday Reflections

**Reflections, readings and prayers for the Sundays in October & November
and for All Saints and All Souls**



During Advent, the priest wears purple- or violet-coloured vestments. The Gloria in Excelsis is not said or sung at Mass.



27th November 1st Sunday in Advent

'Stand ready'

THIS morning, at the very beginning of a new Church year, our first reading is a noble passage from Isaiah. He prophesies universal peace, when all will acknowledge

that the God of Jerusalem is King of all the earth.

Alas, every news broadcast, every single day, reminds us that Isaiah's vision is far from fulfilment: our world is as unhappy and divided as ever.

What can we as individuals do? St Paul advises us to live as decent people, in the light. We should 'stay awake'. And today's Gospel recounts how Jesus told his followers to stay awake, to 'stand ready'.

A recurrent theme in Advent is that we should always be prepared for the Great Day - for judgment. An ancient collect expresses this memorably:

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness and put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; so that at the Last Day, when he will come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever...

Collect

GRANT your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming; so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom...

Readings: Isaiah 2:1-5. Psalm 121:1-2,4-5,6-9. Response: I rejoiced when I heard them say, 'Let us go to God's house.' Romans 13:11-14.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... Let us see, O Lord, your mercy, and give us your saving help.

Gospel: Matthew 24:37-44

Prayer over the Offerings

ACCEPT, we pray, O Lord, these offerings we make, gathered from among your gifts to us, and may what you grant us to celebrate here below, gain for us the prize of eternal redemption...

Preface

.... For he assumed at his first coming the lowliness of human flesh, and so fulfilled the design you formed long ago, and opened for us the way to eternal salvation; that, when he comes again in glory and majesty and all is at last made manifest, we who watch for that day may inherit the great promise in which we now dare to hope...

Prayer after Communion

MAY these mysteries, O Lord, in which we have participated, profit us, we pray; for even now, as we walk amid passing things, you teach us by them to love the things of heaven, and hold fast to what endures...

4th December

2nd Sunday in Advent

Time of challenge

OUR Sunday and weekday readings during Advent remind us of the yearning of the Hebrew people for Christ.

Christians interpret the prophecies of Isaiah in the light of our faith in Jesus as the fulfilment of the deepest needs not just of the Jews, but of all the world. This is why the Old Testament is so important to us.

St Paul writes in today's Second Reading: 'Everything that was written long ago in the scriptures was meant to teach us something...'

In the Gospel we hear John the Baptist's proclamation of Christ. John is the link between the Old Testament tradition of prophecy and the New Testament proclamation of 'God-with-us' in the person of Christ.

John was the greatest of the prophets. His style of living and preaching was austere, and his message uncompromising and simple. John's admonitions were certainly unpalatable to those in his own day whose object in life was affluence and ease. And today, we may not welcome being told to repent - nor warned of the consequences if we don't. Whatever our own circumstances, we should listen to what John is saying.

Advent is a time of challenge!

Collect

Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son, but may our learning of heavenly wisdom gain us admittance to his company...



Readings: Isaiah 11:1-10. Psalm 71:1-2,7-8,12-13,17.
Response: In his days justice shall flourish, and peace until the moon fails. Romans 15:4-9.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

Prayer over the Offerings

BE pleased, O Lord, with our humble prayers and offerings, and, since we have no merits to plead our cause, come, we pray, to our rescue with the protection of your mercy...

Preface as 27th November, First Sunday of Advent (opposite page)

Prayer after Communion

REPLENISHED by the food of spiritual nourishment, we humbly beseech you, O Lord, that, through our partaking in this mystery, you may teach us to judge wisely the things of earth, and hold firm to the things of heaven...

11th December
3rd Sunday of Advent



Gaudete: Rejoice! He is coming...

IN today's readings we're confronted again with those two great prophets, Isaiah and John the Baptist.

Isaiah told his people to be joyful: their God was coming.

In the Gospel reading, Jesus, when questioned about John, said that no greater man had ever been seen - which is to say that John's message of repentance should be heeded by everyone. Then Jesus enigmatically added, 'Yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he'. He meant that John, who had been wrongfully imprisoned and would soon be beheaded, would not experience in this life the kingdom soon to be inaugurated by Jesus.

Ever since the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles following the Lord's ascension, Christians have been privileged to know that the hopes and prayers of Isaiah, John the Baptist and all the prophets have become reality in the person of Jesus Christ.

For today's second reading, we have St James' advice: 'For your example, brothers, in submitting with patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.'

Collect

O GOD, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing...

Readings: Readings: Isaiah 35:11-6,10. Psalm 145:6-10.
Response: Come, Lord, and save us. James 3:7-10

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

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11.

Prayer over the Offerings

MAY the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray, be offered to you unceasingly, to complete what was begun in sacred mystery, and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work...

Preface as 27th November, First Sunday of Advent (opposite page)

Prayer after Communion

WE implore your mercy, Lord, that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults and prepare us for the coming feasts...

18th December
Fourth Sunday
of Advent
'Emmanuel'

ADVENT has two parts. The first, which ended two days ago, concerns the coming of Christ not only as the man who shared our earthly life, but as the Judge of the living and the dead who will come again at the end of time.



From yesterday, 17th December, the emphasis shifts to the imminent celebration of Christmas, the feast of Jesus' birth. Most of us have actually been preparing for Christmas for some time: arranging parties, buying presents and new clothes. But that's not the kind of preparation the Church is mostly concerned with.

Consider Isaiah's prophecy: Emmanuel is at hand: 'God with us'. We believe that God is with us in Jesus' birth, death, resurrection and ascension. Jesus is God with us through the Holy Spirit, in the Mass, in every aspect of life.

Our faith in Jesus, 'God-with us', calls for more than Christmas parties. It calls for a much deeper joy, a joy which suffuses every day of our life. Through Jesus, Paul tells us, we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the good news. And our reading from Matthew today reminds us that the angel revealed to Joseph that the Son to be born to Mary would save his people from their sins.

What better news could there be than that? Let every day of the year be a celebration of 'God-with-us'.

Collect

POUR forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of your Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection...

Readings: Isaiah 7:10-14. Psalm 23:1-6. Response: Let the Lord enter! He is the king of glory. Romans 1:1-2.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Emmanuel, a name that means 'God-is-with-us'.

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-24.

Prayer over the Offerings

MAY the Holy Spirit, O Lord, sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar, just as he filled with his power the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary...

Preface:

..For all the oracles of the prophets foretold him, the Virgin Mother longed for him with love beyond all telling, John the Baptist sang of his coming and proclaimed his presence when he came. It is by his gift that already we rejoice at the mystery of his Nativity, so that he may find us watchful in prayer and exultant in his praise...

Prayer after Communion

HAVING received this pledge of eternal redemption, we pray, almighty God, that as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer, so we may press forward all the more eagerly to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's Nativity...

CHRISTMAS TIME

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



The colour for Christmas Time is white or gold

For the Feast of the Nativity, the Church provides four Masses:

- * **Mass of the Vigil** (evening of Christmas Eve, Tuesday 24th December)
- * **Mass of Midnight**
- * **Mass of the Dawn** (early Christmas Day)
- * **Mass of the Day**

Christmas Mass of the Vigil**Collect**

O GOD, who gladden us year by year as we wait in hope for our redemption, grant that, just as we joyfully welcome your Only-Begotten Son as our Redeemer, so we may merit to face him confidently when he comes again as our Judge...

Readings: Isaiah 62:1-5. Psalm 88:4-5,16-17,27-29. Response: I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord. Acts 13:16-17,22-25.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... Tomorrow there will be an end to the sin of the world and the Saviour of the World will be our King.

Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25 (or 18-25)

Prayer over the Offerings

AS we look forward, O Lord, to the coming festivities, may we serve you all the more eagerly for knowing that in them you make manifest the beginnings of our redemption...

Preface

... For in the mystery of the Word made flesh a new light of your glory has shone upon the eyes of our mind, so that, as we recognise him as God made visible, so we may be caught up through him in love of things invisible...

This is Preface I of Christmas. Instead, the priest may use Preface II (see below, Mass of Midnight) or Preface III (see page opposite, Mass of the Dawn).

Prayer after Communion

GRANT, O Lord, we pray, that we may draw new vigour from celebrating the Nativity of your Only-Begotten Son, by whose heavenly mystery we receive both food and drink...

Mass of Midnight**Collect**

O GOD, who have made this most sacred night radiant with the splendour of the true light, grant, we pray, that we, who have known the mysteries of his light on earth, may also delight in his gladness in heaven...

Readings: Isaiah 9:1-7. Psalm 95:1-3,11-13. Response: Today a saviour has been born to us; he is Christ the Lord. Titus 2:11-14.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... I bring you news of great joy: today a saviour has been born to us, Christ the Lord.

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14.

Prayer over the Offerings

MAY the oblation of this day's feast be pleasing to you, O Lord, we pray, that through this most holy exchange we may be found in the likeness of Christ, in whom our nature is united with yours...

Preface

...For on the feast of this awe-filled mystery, though invisible in his own divine nature, he has appeared visibly in ours, and begotten before all ages, he has begun to exist in time; so that, raising up in himself all that was cast down, he might restore unity to all creation, and call straying humanity back to the heavenly Kingdom...

This is Preface II of Christmas. Instead, the priest may use Preface I (see above, Mass of the Vigil) or Preface III (see Mass of the Dawn, opposite page)

Prayer after Communion

GRANT us, we pray, O Lord our God, that we, who are gladdened by this participation in our Redeemer's Nativity, may through an honourable way of life become worthy of union with him...

Mass of the Dawn**Collect**

GRANT, we pray, almighty God, that as we are bathed in the new radiance of your incarnate Word, the light of faith, which illumines our minds, may also shine through in our deeds...

Readings: Isaiah 62:11-12. Psalm 96:1,6,11-12. Response: This day new light will shine upon the earth: the Lord is born for us. Titus 3:4-7.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to men who enjoy his favour.

Gospel: Luke 2:15-20.

Prayer over the Offerings

MAY our offerings be worthy, we pray, O Lord, of the mysteries of the Nativity this day; that, just as Christ was born a man and also shone forth as God, so these earthly gifts may confer on us what is divine...

Preface

...For through him the holy exchange that restores our life has shone forth today in splendour; when our frailty is assumed by your Word not only does human mortality receive unending honour, but this wondrous union we, too, are made eternal...

This is Preface III of Christmas. Instead, the priest may use Preface I (see opposite, Mass of the Vigil) or Preface II (see opposite page, Mass of Midnight)

Prayer after Communion

GRANT us, Lord, as we honour with joyful devotion the Nativity of your Son, that we may come to know with fullness of faith the hidden depths of this mystery, and to love them even more and more...

**Mass of the Day****Collect**

O GOD, who wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and still more wonderfully restored it, grant, we pray, that we may share in the divinity of

Christ, who humiliated himself to share our humanity...

Readings: Isaiah 52:7-10. Psalm 97:1-6. Response: 'All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Hebrews 1:1-6.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... A hallowed day has dawned upon us. Come, you nations, worship the Lord, for today a great light has shone down upon the earth.

Gospel: John 1:1-18 (or 1-5 & 9-14)

Prayer over the Offerings

MAKE acceptable, O Lord, our oblation on this solemn day, when you manifested the reconciliation that make us wholly pleasing in your sight and inaugurated for us the fullness of divine worship...

Preface

... For in the mystery of the Word made flesh a new light of your glory has shone upon the eyes of our mind, so that, as we recognise him as God made visible, so we may be caught up through him in love of things invisible...

This is Preface I of Christmas. Instead, the priest may use Preface II (see opposite page, Mass of Midnight) or Preface III (see above, Mass of the Dawn).

Prayer after Communion

GRANT, O merciful God, that just as the Saviour of the world, born this day, is the author of divine generation for us, so he may be even the giver of immortality...

*May we so celebrate the Feast of the
Nativity that Christ may be born
in our hearts
and in our way of life*

Sunday 1st January**New Year's Day****Mary, Mother of God****God's Mother, God's peace**

TODAY is the eighth day after Christmas Day. In the Jewish tradition, on the eighth day after a boy's birth his mother would take him to be circumcised and given his name.



For centuries the first day of January was celebrated as the Feast of the Circumcision, or the Holy Name of Jesus. But now the Church gives this day the title, 'Mary, Mother of God'. There is no contradiction. In becoming man, Jesus became subject to every aspect of the human condition. Like us, he needed his mother to feed him and take care of him. And we may be sure that Mary fulfilled the role of mother fully and faithfully.

Mary conformed to her people's traditions by having her Son circumcised on the eighth day; and on the fortieth day she presented him in the Temple (a feast we shall celebrate on Thursday 2nd February, 40 days after Christmas Day).

From the early days of the Church, Mary was given the Greek title *Theotokos* - Mother of God. This title honours Mary as the most blessed of all women. But more importantly, the title tells us that Mary's Son is divine - true God and true man. No wonder the angels sang, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to men who enjoy his favour!' We need to feel God's peace in our hearts, express it in our way of life, and pray for peace in The Gambia and throughout the world.

Collect

O GOD, who through the fruitful virginity of Blessed Mary bestowed on the human race the grace of eternal salvation, grant, we pray, that we may experience the intercession of her through whom we were found worthy to receive the Author of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son...

Readings: Numbers 6:22-27. Psalm 66:2-3,5-6,8.

Response: O God, be gracious and bless us. Galatians 4:4-7.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... At various times in the past, and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son.

Gospel: Luke 2:16-21.

Prayer over the Offerings

O GOD, who in your kindness begin all good things and bring them to fulfilment, grant to us, who find joy in the Solemnity of the Holy Mother of God, that, just as we glory in the beginnings of your grace, so one day we may rejoice in its completion...

Preface

...For by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit she conceived your Only-Begotten Son, and without losing the glory of virginity brought forth into the world the eternal Light, Jesus Christ our Lord...

Prayer after Communion

WE have received this heavenly Sacrament with joy, O Lord; grant, we pray, that it may lead us to eternal life, for we rejoice to proclaim the ever-Virgin Mary Mother of your Son and Mother of the Church...



THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Where are we heading?

A PILGRIMAGE is a journey of faith. Most pilgrims follow in others' footsteps, as we do when we make the pilgrimage to Mariama Kunkujang. But the magi, the 'wise men', did not know where they were heading, nor what they would find. They eventually found a baby in a manger: an animal feeding-trough. But they recognised him as the world's Saviour; and offered him gold (symbolising his kingship), frankincense (his Godhead), and myrrh (his death).

The witness of the magi and the saints shows their steadfastness as pilgrims seeking Christ - and having found him, their eagerness to respond to his love.

In contrast, rather than worshipping our Saviour in the crib, we often prefer to worship at the altar of money and social standing rather than worship him who came among us in Bethlehem, and is ever-living for us. Instead, 'Let us adore him, Christ the Lord!' That is the invitation, the adventure, the imperative of our faith in our Lord.

Vigil Mass of the Epiphany

Saturday Evening, 5th January

Collect

MAY the splendour of your majesty, O Lord, we pray, shed its light upon our hearts, that we may pass through the shadows of this world and reach the brightness of our eternal home...

Readings: Isaiah 60: 1-6. Psalm 71:2,7-8,10-13. Response: All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord. Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6.

Gospel acclamation: We saw his star as it rose, and have come to do the Lord homage.

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Prayer over the Offerings

ACCEPT, we pray, O Lord, these offerings in honour of the appearing of your Only-Begotten Son and the first fruits of the nations, that to your praise may be rendered and eternal salvation be ours...

Preface ..For today you have revealed the mystery of our salvation in Christ as a light for the nations, and, when he appeared in our mortal nature, you made us new by the glory of his immortal nature...

Prayer after Communion

RENEWED by sacred nourishment, we implore your mercy, O Lord, that the star of your justice may shine always bright in our minds and that our true treasure may ever consist in our confession of you...

Sunday 8th January

Collect

O GOD, who on this day revealed your Only-Begotten Son to the nations by the guidance of a star, grant in your mercy that we, who know you already by faith, may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory...

Readings: Isaiah 60:1-6. Psalm 71:2,7-8,10-13. Response: All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord. Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6.

Gospel acclamation: We saw his star as it rose, and have come to do the Lord homage.

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Prayer over the Offerings

LOOK with favour, Lord, we pray, on these gifts of your Church, in which are offered now, not gold or frankincense or myrrh, but he who by them is proclaimed, sacrificed and received, Jesus Christ...

Preface

...For today you have revealed the mystery of our salvation in Christ as a light for the nations, and, when he appeared in our mortal nature, you made us new by the glory of his immortal nature...

Prayer after Communion

GO before us with heavenly light, O Lord, that we may perceive with clear sight and revere with true affection the mystery in which you have willed us to participate...

15th January

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Lamb, our salvation



'BEHOLD, the Lamb of God!' cried John the Baptist when he saw Jesus. To the Jews, the sacrifice of a lamb was readily understood. But this Lamb, Jesus Christ, was to die for the sin of all the world. John the Baptist had no other mission than to point to Christ, Lamb of God and Son of God.

'Behold, the Lamb of God,' declares the priest at Mass when he lifts up the Host and invites us to Holy Communion. How wonderful our Christian faith is! We are invited to intimate contact with none less than the Author of all life.

This year, from next Sunday, the Gospel reading is taken from the Gospel of Matthew. Let us resolve to be open to God's Word so that it may take root in our hearts and fill our lives with peace and purpose.

Et Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us

Collect

ALMIGHTY ever-living God, who govern all things both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people, and bestow your peace on our times...

Readings: Isaiah 49: 3, 5-6. Psalm 39: 2, 4, 7-10. Response: Here I am, Lord. I come to do your will. 1 Corinthians 1:1-3.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heavens.

Gospel: John 1:29-34

Prayer over the Offerings

GRANT us, O Lord, we pray, that we may participate worthily in these mysteries, for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished...

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight Prefaces provided for Sundays in Ordinary Time*

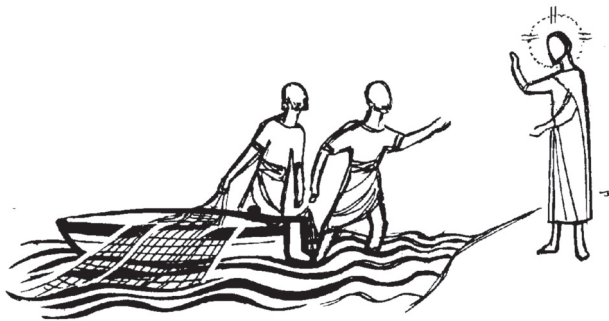
Prayer after Communion

POUR on us, O Lord, the Spirit of your love, and in your kindness make those you have nourished by this one heavenly Bread one in mind and heart...

22nd January

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Following the Leader



TODAY we begin our Sunday Gospel readings from St Matthew, and hear how Christ began his ministry in Galilee by telling his hearers, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!'

When the fishermen Peter and Andrew heard Jesus, they 'immediately' followed him. Then, James and John 'immediately' abandoned their nets and followed him.

Are we followers of Jesus ready to put our trust in him as Peter, Andrew, James and John did? Are we ready to follow him 'immediately'? Or are we waiting for tomorrow - 'the day that never comes'?

A further thought. In this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, let us bear in mind Paul's injunction to the people of Corinth: 'Let there be no dissensions among you, but be united...' True followers of Christ don't squabble; their eyes are fixed on him, the source of all human unity.

Collect

Almighty and ever-living God, direct our actions according to your good pleasure, that in the name of your beloved Son we may rejoice in good works...

Readings: Isaiah 8:23 - 9:3. Psalm 26: 1-4, 13-14. Response: The Lord is my light and my help. 1 Corinthians 1:10-13,17.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Jesus proclaimed the good news of the kingdom and cured all kinds of sickness among the people.

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-17 (18-23)

Prayer over the Offerings

ACCEPT our offerings, O Lord, we pray, and in sanctifying them grant that they may profit us for salvation...

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight Prefaces provided for Sundays in Ordinary Time*

Prayer after Communion

GRANT, we pray, almighty God, that, receiving the grace by which you bring us to new life, we may always glory in your gift...

29th January

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Authority and compassion



'THE SERMON on the Mount' provides our Gospel reading today and for the next five Sundays (until the end of next month). Jesus carried his message throughout Galilee, and healed many sick people. Hoping for deliverance, crowds flocked to him from Galilee and beyond.

Jesus was a mesmerising speaker. His message was one of comfort and hope. He taught that right-minded people, however they might seem to be on the losing side in life, would not be disappointed: 'Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven.'

Throughout the ages, many have mocked this message - a message which urges us to be patient, to fight for what we know is right despite the odds, despite the rebuffs, because God is on our side and will - eventually - vindicate us.

Jesus sided with those who in the world's terms had little or nothing. He spoke to the heart. He knew his hearers' frustrations. Today, he knows our own frustrations. He urges our understanding and our loyalty, and asks us to seek authentic goodness - not just outward show. Jesus speaks - as we see in these timeless words - with authority and compassion.

Collect

GRANT us, Lord our God, that we may honour you with all our mind, and love everyone in truth of heart...

Readings: Zephaniah 2:3 & 3:12-13. Psalm 145:7-10, Response: How happy are the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children.

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

Prayer over the Offerings

O LORD, we bring to you altar these offerings of our service: be pleased to receive them, we pray, and transform them into the Sacrament of our redemption..

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight Prefaces provided for Sundays in Ordinary Time.*

Prayer after Communion

NOURISHED by these redeeming gifts, we pray, O Lord, that through this help to eternal salvation true faith may ever increase...

Date to remember: Thursday 2nd February: Candlemas



The chapel at Keur Moussa

Gambian Christian Anniversaries

December and January

TEN YEARS AGO The Very Revd Philippe Champetier de Ribes, OSB, former Abbot of the Benedictine Abbey at Keur Moussa in neighbouring Senegal, died on Tuesday 19th December 2006.

Kerr Moussa was founded in 1962 by six monks from Solesmes, in France - the first such foundation in West Africa. Kerr Moussa became autonomous in 1988. Abbot Philip ruled from 1962 until his retirement in 2000, when he was succeeded by Dom Ange-Marie Niouky. Abbot Philippe was an astute administrator who made Keur Moussa a centre for retreats and spiritual exercises. Under him the abbey excelled in the composition of hymns in French and Senegalese languages sung to a kora accompaniment.

During December 1823: Arrival of Hannah Kilham and English Quaker missionaries, who opened an agricultural centre at Bakau and a girls' school in Banjul.

18th January 1848: Arrival of Fr Ronarc'h, from France, and Fr Warlop from Belgium, to begin the Catholic mission.

26th December 1873: Blessing by Bishop Durët of Dakar of the school in Hagan Street (now Daniel Goddard Street).

29th December 1875 (140 years ago): Death of Bishop Durët (born 1824), who became Prefect of Senegal in 1856 and Vicar-Apostolic, with the rank of Bishop, in 1873.

9th January 1881: Death from pneumonia of Fr Samba, first Gambian priest. He had been ordained in 1869.

3rd December 1887: Fr Massart died while saying the Last Gospel at the conclusion of Mass.

12th January 1920: The SS Afrique, en route to Dakar from Bordeaux, sank at sea. Among the 563 who perished were Bishop Jalabert of Dakar and 18 missionaries.

19th December 1931: Last entry in French in the Mission Journal, the Mission having been declared self-governing.

10th January 1932: Fr John Meehan was named first Ecclesiastical Superior of the self-governing Mission.

21st December 1933: Fr Doody, who had been taken ill while travelling from Ireland to Banjul, died while returning on the same boat that had brought him.

1st December 1948: St Therese's Elementary School Kanifing opened with 114 pupils.

16th December 1952: Departure of Fr Coughlin after four years in The Gambia.

3rd December 1953: Arrival from Nigeria of Fr Michael Frawley to be Principal of St Augustine's High School Banjul, where he was to remain for 7 years.

24th December 1954: Arrival of Fr Michael Flynn.

1st January 1956: Opening of the convent at Kanifing, with Mother Angela, Sr Magdalene and Sr Anne-Marie in residence, all teaching at St Therese's School.

24th December 1957: Fr Michael Moloney was appointed first Bishop of Banjul; the announcement was not made locally until 12 days later.

8th January 1964: Bishop Moloney blessed St Martin's Church Kartong

25th December 1968: The Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Mariani, blessed and opened Holy Spirit Church Banjul.

21st January 1977 (40 years ago): Fr Edward Grimes became first Director of the newly-formed Gambia Pastoral Institute.

16th December 1977: Opening of the Diocesan Development Office (now CaDO)

3rd January 1978: Opening of Christ the King Darsilami.

3rd January 1978: The Gambia Christian Council called on President Jawara, inaugurating what was to become an annual event.

30th December 1985: The first pastoral assembly for clergy and religious opened at Shalom, Fajara.

5th December 1987: First pilgrimage to Kunkujang Mariama.

21st January 1989: Ordination at Kanifing of Fr Anthony Sonko.

28th December 1989: The second pastoral assembly opened at St Peter's Technical High School Lamin and included participation by members of the laity.

31st December 1991: Death in Ireland of Bishop Moloney.

1st January 1995: Death in Ireland of Fr Michael Flynn.

9th January 1998: Death in Banjul of Mrs E. Senghore, aged 113.

29th December 2005: Abbé Blaise Malou and a group from Balandine, Casamance, began a 4-day visit to Fatima Parish Bwiam.

During January 2007 (10 years ago): Working with the poor was the focus of a 10-day meeting at Shalom of 43 Presentation Sisters from ten countries.

26th December 2007: Death in Suffolk, England, of Sir Philip Bridges, former Chief Justice of The Gambia. He was a stalwart of St Paul's Anglican Church Fajara.

19th January 2008: The Imam Ratib of Banjul, Alhaji Cherno Alieu Mass Kah, visited the Cathedral of the Assumption.

17th January 2010: Blessed Sacrament Kanifing Estate became an independent parish.

12th December 2010: Sr Josephine of Senegal and Sr Mary of Ghana took their final vows as Marist Sisters.



29th December 2012: Sr Calixte Thomas left for India, her home country, after 12 years in educational work in this country. She died in India almost four years later - on 16th September 2016.

3rd January 2014: Bishop Robert Ellison received the keys of Centenary House, the diocesan commercial building in Kairaba Avenue.

22nd January 2014: Sudden death of Archbishop Tilewa Johnson, sixth Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Gambia, who since October 2012 had also been Archbishop of the Anglican Province of West Africa.



24th January 2016: The Rt Revd James Yaw Odico was consecrated seventh Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Gambia.



Pious practices

MANY devotional practices in the Church are so habitual that we don't think about them. But whenever we make the sign of the Cross, for instance, or dip our fingers into holy water, we should do so in awareness of what the action means. We shouldn't perform such actions to impress others or to tell ourselves how holy and good we are. We perform them to honour God and our membership of his Church.

Church bells

IN churches, bells are rung to signify the time for worshippers to go to church, or are used during the liturgy.

The ringing of church bells from a bell tower is analogous to the Islamic tradition of the *adhan* from a minaret.

Many Catholic and some Anglican churches ring a bell three times a day at 6am, noon and 6pm, reminding the faithful to recite the Angelus, a prayer in honour of the Incarnation.

Bells are commonly rung in celebration, such as after a wedding, and sometimes (usually just a single bell) after funerals as the coffin leaves or is interred. The ringing of a bell to announce a death is called a 'death knell'.

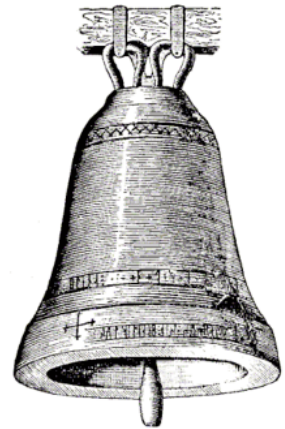
In small communities, before modern communications, church bells were the common way to call the community together for all purposes, both sacred and secular.

The only time of the Christian Year when bells are not rung is from Maundy Thursday to the Easter Vigil.

During the Mass, a small hand-bell or set of such bells (called altar bells or sanctus bells) is rung shortly before the consecration, and again when the consecrated elements are shown to the people.

The term 'sanctus bell' also refers to a bell in the church tower rung at the singing of the Sanctus and again at the elevation of the elements, to indicate to those not present in the building that the moment of consecration has been reached.

A church bell consists of a cup-shaped metal resonator with a flared thickened rim and a metal clapper inside. It is usually mounted in a bell tower so that it can be heard by the surrounding community. The bell is suspended from a horizontal axle so it can swing from side to side. A rope is tied to a pulley on the axle, and hangs down to ground level. To ring the bell, the bell-ringer pulls on the rope, swinging the bell. The motion causes the clapper to hit the inside rim of the bell as it swings, making the sound.



In the Catholic Church, bells are 'baptised'. The bishop washes the bell with holy water, anoints it outside with the oil of the sick and inside with the oil of chrism. A censer is placed under it, and the bishop prays that the sound of the bell will put demons to flight, protect from storms, and call the faithful to prayer.

Among churches with bells in the Diocese of Banjul are the Cathedral and Holy Spirit Church Banjul; St Therese's and Blessed Sacrament Kanifing; Star of the Sea, Bakau; St Peter's Lamin; Christ the King Darsilami; and St Martin's Kartong.

Congratulations

During January, three Gambian priests celebrate the Anniversary of their Ordination

Fr Antony Sonko	21st January 1989
Fr James Mendy	24th January 2015
Fr Tanislaus Ndecky	24th January 2015

O JESUS, our great High Priest, hear our humble prayers for the priests of this Diocese of Banjul and priests everywhere.

Give them a bright and firm faith, and a burning love which will ever increase in the course of their priestly life. In their loneliness, comfort them. In their sorrow, strengthen them. Show them that they are needed by the Church, they are needed by souls, they are needed for the work of redemption. Amen.



from beyond the diocese



Pope closes Holy Door at St Peter's

ON Sunday 20th November, Feast of Christ the King, Pope Francis closed the Holy Door at St Peter's Basilica, formally ending the Holy Year of Mercy he had declared to stress the need for greater reconciliation and forgiveness in the Church and in the world.

After closing the door, Francis urged some 70,000 people attending Mass in St Peter's Square to stay open to reconciliation. 'Let us ask for the grace of never closing the doors of reconciliation and pardon, but rather of knowing how to go beyond evil and differences, opening every possible pathway of hope.'

A day earlier, at a ceremony to give the church 17 new cardinals, the Pope lamented a surge of hostility and polarisation in the world.

The Holy Year of Mercy, which started on 8th December 2015, drew roughly 20 million pilgrims to Rome, where they passed through the Holy Door at the Vatican and at other Rome basilicas.

Gambian pilgrims pass through the Holy Door: page 6

Papal commission studies role of women deacons

A COMMISSION appointed by Pope Francis is studying the issue of women deacons. The commission is made up of seven men and six women.

The Pope has said that the historical role of female deacons needs to be studied. Female deacons are mentioned in the New Testament, as well as by several Church fathers and in the documents of the Council of Nicea (AD 325). But it is open to debate whether this role was similar to that of present-day permanent deacons who officiate at baptisms and weddings, and sometimes preach at Mass.

Francis told the International Union of Superiors-General that, on his understanding, the women described as deacons in the New Testament were not ordained in the manner of today's permanent deacons; rather, they helped when women received full-immersion baptism, or with anointing. But he added that the question is 'obscure', and needs more study.

The word 'deacon' comes from Greek *diakonos*, a servant.

Rwandan bishops apologise for Church's role in genocide

THE CATHOLIC Church in Rwanda has apologised for the Church's role in the 1994 genocide, saying it regretted the actions of those who participated in the massacres.

'We apologise for all the wrongs the Church committed. We apologise on behalf of all Christians for all forms of wrongs we committed. We regret that Church members violated their oath of allegiance to God's commandments,' said the statement by the Conference of Catholic Bishops, which was read out in parishes across the country.

The statement acknowledged that Church members planned, aided and executed the genocide, in which more than 800,000 ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed by Hutu extremists.

In the years since the genocide - which was sparked by a contentious plane crash that killed the then-president, a Hutu - the local Church had resisted efforts by the government and groups of survivors to acknowledge the Church's complicity in mass murder, saying those Church officials who committed crimes acted individually.

Many of the victims died at the hands of priests, clergymen and nuns, according to some accounts by survivors, and the Rwandan government says many died in the churches where they had sought refuge.

The bishops' statement is seen as a positive development in Rwanda's efforts at reconciliation.

'Forgive us for the crime of hate in the country to the extent of also hating our colleagues because of their ethnicity. We didn't show that we are one family but instead killed each other,' the statement said.

The statement was timed to coincide with the formal end on Sunday 20th November of the Holy Year of Mercy declared by Pope Francis to encourage greater reconciliation and forgiveness in his Church and in the world, said Bishop Phillipe Rukamba, spokesman for the Catholic Church in Rwanda.

Tom Ndahiro, a Rwandan genocide researcher, said he hoped the Church's statement will encourage unity among Rwandans.

'I am also happy to learn that in their statement, bishops apologise for not having been able to avert the genocide,' he said.

The Rwandan government has responded to the bishops' apology by saying that it does not go far enough.



Our diocese approaches its 60th anniversary



In June 2017, the Diocese of Banjul will become 60 years old.

On 24th June 1957 Pope Pius XII raised the Prefecture Apostolic to the status of a diocese, with the title 'The Diocese of Bathurst in Gambia'.

It wasn't until 5th January 1958 that Monsignor Michael Moloney,

who had been Prefect Apostolic, was named as the first Bishop.

In those days it missionary bishops were ordained in their country of origin. Mgr Moloney was episcopally ordained on Sunday 4th May 1958 in the seminary chapel of the Holy Ghost (Spiritan) Fathers in Kimmage, Dublin.



The consecrating prelate was the Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland, Dr Levane. Present were the President of Ireland and the Taoiseach (Prime Minister).

The Gambia Echo of 21st July 1958 reported: 'It was indeed a most memorable and impressive ceremony, printed indelibly on the mind of all who were fortunate to be present at it.'

Present from The Gambia was Fr Michael Cleary (later, Bishop Cleary), who represented the clergy of the diocese. Representatives of the laity included Martha Gomez, Vicky Blain, S.F. Njie, P.L. Halden, A.L. Blain, J.G. Wadda and J.J. NDow.

At the reception, the Taoiseach, Eiman de Valera, remarked that the Irish people could feel proud that they had contributed to the missionary work of the Holy Ghost Fathers by giving their sons as missionaries.

A telegram to the new bishop from Banjul was read out; 'Greetings on the occasion of your consecration as Bishop of Bathurst. Our prayerful thoughts are with you and we send our heartiest congratulations and grateful thanks to the Holy Ghost Fathers of the Irish Province to whom your elevation to this high office is a fitting tribute.'

Bishop Moloney concluded his address by saying, 'The Gambia is considered a very difficult mission. The Church has to work in a strong Islamic setting... but though we may be small in number, we are encouraged by the staunch loyalty of our Catholic community.'

Enthronement in 1958

Bishop Moloney was enthroned in his cathedral on 26th October 1958, the feast of Christ the King. The large congregation included the Governor, Sir Percy Wyn-Harris.

Bishop Moloney was to preside over the diocese for almost 22 years. In those days, all the priests were fellow-Irishmen, Holy Ghost Fathers. February 1962 saw the completion of the Cathedral tower. The work of the diocese expanded, notably in Bakau, the Kombos and the Kartong area. Bishop Moloney attended the various sessions of the historic Second Vatican Council in Rome from 1962 to 1965.

On 19th February 1965 a High Mass of Thanksgiving for Gambian Independence was celebrated at the Cathedral by Archbishop Hyacinth Thiandoum of Dakar.

Bishop Moloney returned from Vatican II on 13th January 1966, thereafter implementing reforms instituted by the council in the Order of Mass.

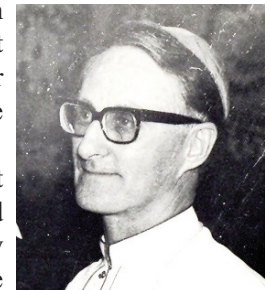
The first junior seminary was opened at Fajara in November 1972, with Fr Anthony Gabisi and Fr Peter Gomez among the first seminarians.

Archbishop Johannes Dyba presented his credentials to President Jawara on 29th February 1980, as the first Papal Nuncio to The Gambia.

On 4th April 1980 Bishop Moloney announced his resignation on grounds of ill health, and its acceptance by the Holy See.

Our second Bishop

On 15th February 1981 it was announced that the next Bishop would be Fr Michael Cleary CSSp, who was episcopally ordained at St Augustine's School on 25th March, the Feast of the Annunciation. From the start, Bishop Cleary stressed that the laity 'should take their proper rightful place in the apostolate, in the parish councils'.



On 13th April 1985, the first Gambian ordinations to the priesthood in modern times - those of Anthony Gabisi and Peter Gomez - took place at the Independence Stadium, Bakau.

At the same Mass David Jimoh and Edward Gomez were made deacons.

On 5th December 1987 the first National Pilgrimage to Kunkujang Mariama was held.

In February 1992 Pope St John Paul II visited The Gambia.

In October 2004 President Yahya Jammeh made Bishop Cleary an Honorary Commander of the Order of the Republic of The Gambia.

Bishop Cleary retired in 2006, having served for five years beyond the usual retirement age. His successor was Bishop Robert Ellison.

Third man at the helm



The third Bishop of Banjul is the Rt Revd Robert Ellison CSSp.

He first arrived in The Gambia in October 1970. He was Administrator of the Cathedral from May 1971 to June 1972, when he left for a year to pursue Islamic Studies in Rome. On his return he served at St Michael's Njongon, North Bank Region, until he was recalled to Ireland with Fr Hugh Fagan in June 1974. Soon after he came back in 1981, Fr Ellison was appointed Vicar-General of the Diocese, taking charge of the Junior Seminary at Lamin. He later became Parish Priest of Star of the Sea Bakau, and District Superior of the Holy Ghost

Fathers in The Gambia. In 1994 he succeeded Fr Donal Murray as Director of the Gambia Pastoral Institute.

In 1999 Fr Ellison was called to Rome to become General Secretary of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit - the post he held until his appointment in 2006 as Bishop of Banjul.

Bishop Ellison convened the Diocesan Assembly of 2008, which had as a central theme the diocese as a dynamic, self-supporting local church.

In October 2009 he attended the Second African Synod of Bishops, held in Rome.

GPI and *The Newsletter* celebrate their 40th year

ON 21st January the Gambia Pastoral Institute (GPI) will celebrate its fortieth anniversary – having been set up on 21st January 1977 by its first Director, Fr Edward Grimes CSSp. GPI's publication, *The Diocese of Banjul Newsletter*, was first issued on Palm Sunday that same year.

Fr Grimes has related how, the year before, Bishop Michael Moloney invited him to his house, showed him a letter with a Vatican postmark, and declared: 'I want you to start a pastoral institute.'

'I asked the Bishop for guidelines, to which he reposted: "Read the letter and get going!"

'When I asked about finance, the Bishop replied: "There is no money in this poor diocese. Obtaining financial support is part of your task - so get going!"'

GPI's first home was in the fathers' quarters at St Augustine's High School. It was subsequently housed elsewhere before moving in 1990 to its present premises at 33 Kairaba Avenue.

Since it was established, GPI has had eight directors: Fr Edward Grimes, Fr Peter Conaty, Fr Donal Murray, Fr Robert Ellison (now Bishop Ellison), Sr Sarian Gomez,

Sr Philomena Barry SJC, Fr Joseph Karbo and Fr Peter S. Lopez.

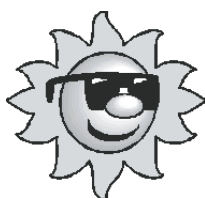
Over past forty years, faithful to its original vision and purposes, GPI has developed and expanded. The present Director and his staff are dedicated to the service

of the Diocese of Banjul in the human, pastoral and spiritual growth of the Catholic Church in The Gambia, reaching out also to inter-religious dialogue.

The Diocese of Banjul Newsletter was originally published, in cyclostyled A4 format, on Palm Sunday, 14th April 1977. Fr Grimes was the editor from 1980.

The *Newsletter* was originally published ten times a year, and cost 50 bututs. It had a circulation of around 600.

In 2005 the *Newsletter* was re-launched in its present format as a magazine published every two months.



Fee moi Gambia

Look out!

I REMEMBER, some time ago, witnessing a tragic accident, in which a man who was crossing the road regardless of the traffic was knocked down.

He was injured in the head and elsewhere, and may or may not have survived. A few seconds of inattention, and his life was drastically altered - or ended.

A regular driver tells me how every day he sees pedestrians - men, women and children - stepping into the roadway without looking.

Sometimes, of course, drivers themselves are at fault, or must share the blame with pedestrians. Either way, a momentary lapse in driver's or pedestrian's attention can produce tragic results.

I remember, as a child, being taught: 'At the roadside, stop. Look left. Look right. Look left again. Then, if the road is clear, cross. Don't rush, walk straight ahead.'

A good lesson for us all.

Changing faces

MANY advertisements in newspapers and on street hoardings display happy, smiling faces. Have you noticed that most of them are distinctly fair-skinned?

I don't know what advertisers intend, but the unspoken suggestion seems to be that the best kind of complexion is the least black. Yet among our most attractive Gambians are many who are truly dark-skinned, Why aren't they, the majority, featured by advertisers?

Mr Squeaky

A FRIEND of mine recently bought a mobile at a reasonable price. But when he telephoned his family and friends, most - including his wife - said it wasn't he who was speaking to them. Only recently has he learnt that his mobile offers a 'magic voice' facility, which means he can disguise his voice and sound like someone else: man, woman or child. He's now happy and relieved that he can speak to people in a voice they recognise and appreciate.

It all adds up

AN old friend recently celebrated his birthday. I suppose 'old' is entirely appropriate, for he is now 91. His wife looked everywhere for a card wishing him 'Happy 91st Birthday'.

She couldn't find one, so instead she sent him two cards.

The first was for a 70th birthday – and the second for a 21st birthday.

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Some weekday celebrations

Saturday 3rd December: St Francis Xavier priest

FRANCIS was born in Spain in 1506. In Paris he met Ignatius Loyola and became one of the first Jesuits. He was ordained in 1537 and in 1542 embarked on a three-year mission to India, and also established missions in Malaysia. In 1549 he went to Japan, and in 1551 returned to India. He died while trying to secure entry to China. Francis is believed to have baptised about 30,000 converts. His success was partly due to his adaptation of Christianity to local cultures. In 1927 he was named patron of all missions.

Wednesday 7th December: St Ambrose doctor of the Church

AMBROSE is one of the four great Latin Doctors of the Church (the others being Augustine, Jerome and Gregory). He was born in Trier (in modern-day Italy) in 339 and became a celebrated lawyer. When the bishopric of Milan fell vacant around 374 he was acclaimed bishop - though still a catechumen, and not yet baptised. Ambrose's statesmanship and theological skills enabled him to convert many pagans. He combated Arianism (the heresy which denies the Holy Trinity). He imposed a public penance on the Emperor Theodosius I for condoning a massacre. He converted and baptised St Augustine. Ambrose died in 397. His bishop's throne may still be seen in Milan.

Thursday 8th December: The Immaculate Conception

THE DOCTRINE of the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed as infallible by Pope Pius IX in 1854. It teaches that Mary, Mother of Christ, was conceived without sin: she was 'full of grace'. She received God's grace from the first moment of her existence, and spent her earthly life in a perfect relationship with him. He filled her with grace so that she would be worthy to become Mother of God. Mary is perceived as the perfect example of the redeeming action of God's grace; she was only able to receive this grace because Christ would later redeem all humanity through his death on the cross.



Monday 2nd January: St Basil & St Gregory Nazianzen doctors of the Church

BASIL and Gregory were close friends and great figures of the Eastern Church in the 4th century. Basil had a brilliant academic career, but longed for a life of solitude. After extensive travels he gave away most of his possessions and devoted himself to founding religious communities, writing an austere 'rule' which is still observed today.

Gregory was Bishop of Constantinople (now Istanbul). Because of his great learning he was known as 'Gregory the Theologian'. Gregory eventually retired and returned to his monastery. He summed up his life and Basil's thus: 'Our great concern, our great name, was to be Christians, and to be called Christians.'

Tuesday 24th January: St Francis de Sales bishop and doctor

FRANCIS, born at Annecy in Savoy (present-day France) in 1567, was a spell-binding preacher, and famed for his skill in spiritual direction. He was an accomplished writer: for example, in his 'Introduction to the Devout Life'. Francis became Bishop of Geneva in 1602 and did much to counteract the Protestantism that had taken root the previous century. He died in 1622 and was canonised in 1664. Francis is revered as the patron saint of the blind and of journalists and writers.

Saturday 28th January: St Thomas Aquinas doctor of the Church

BORN in Aquino, Sicily, in 1224-5, Thomas studied in Naples and taught in Paris. He integrated the teaching of the Greek philosopher Aristotle into Christian thought, asserting that the theologian starts with faith and proceeds through reason. He died in 1274. In 1567 he was named a Doctor of the Church, and in 1879 was proclaimed by Pope Leo XIII as a champion of orthodoxy. Thomas wrote more than 80 works. He is pre-eminent as a writer of liturgical texts which combine clarity with beauty. Gambian Catholics are familiar with Thomas' Benediction hymns, *O salutaris Hostia* ('O saving Victim') and *Tantum ergo sacramentum* (Therefore, we before him bending').



Tuesday 31st January: St John Bosco priest

JOHN BOSCO, who is well-known in The Gambia, was born to a poor farm-labouring family in Piedmont, northern Italy, in 1815. It was a time of shortages and famine. His education didn't really start until he was 15, supported by an old priest. After his ordination, John Bosco dedicated his life to the betterment and education of disadvantaged young people. He advocated the use of love and encouragement in the classroom, rather than punishment. John Bosco founded the Society of St Francis de Sales - the Salesians. During his lifetime he accumulated great influence, not least in his writings. He died in 1888 and was canonised by Pope Pius XI in 1934.

Omnes sancti et sanctae Dei, intercedete pro nobis - All holy men and women of God, intercede for us



The Pope's Prayer Intentions

December

- That the scandal of child-soldiers may be eliminated the world over.
- That the peoples of Europe may rediscover the beauty, goodness, and truth of the Gospel which gives joy and hope to life.

January

- Christian Unity. That all Christians may be faithful to the Lord's teaching by striving with prayer and fraternal charity to restore ecclesial communion and by collaborating to meet the challenges facing humanity.

Reminder: AT CHRISTMAS, many Catholics who have been careless about regular attendance at Sunday Mass may wish to make a fresh start. *For them, and for others, here's a reminder.*

To remain in good standing in the Church, all Catholics should take part in the Mass every Sunday and on all Holydays of Obligation.

Everyone - Catholic or otherwise - is welcome to attend Mass. But Holy Communion may be received only by Catholics, and they must be in a state of grace - that is, free of serious sin.

If you are aware of any grave sin you must make confession before a priest and receive absolution. Then you may receive Holy Communion in good faith and with joy.

Answers to Christmas Quiz (page 11)

- 1 Joseph was obliged to go to Nazareth, his home town, to take part in the census ordered by the Roman Emperor, Augustus (Luke 2:1-5)
- 2 Noël
- 3 Germany
- 4 John the Baptist (the herald of the Lord): see, for example, John 1:19-28.
- 5 A spelling of Emmanuel, Hebrew for 'God is with us', the name prophesied to be that of the Messiah (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23)
- 6 In 1223 St Francis of Assisi placed a model of the crib in the church at Greccio, Italy, for the Feast of the Nativity. The word 'crib' means a basket, and is equated with the manger for holding cattle food in which the Infant Jesus was lain (Luke 2:7). In Middle English 'crib' was also used for a child's cradle, so that the Christ Child was depicted in a wicker cradle. In the US, the crib is also known as a crèche.
- 7 Father Christmas is a fictional figure said to bring presents to children on the night before Christmas. He derives from St Nicholas, 4th-century Bishop of Myra, in Asia Minor. Father Christmas ('Santa Claus') is a 19th-century invention popularised in the USA.
- 8 The Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55: *Magnificat anima mea Dominum* (My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord). This is said or sung every evening at Vespers, also at Anglican Evensong and Orthodox Lauds.
- 9 St Stephen, the first martyr. (Acts chapters 6,7 and 8: 1)
- 10 A model of the Infant Christ, placed in the manger in a crib. (*Bambino* is Italian for a small child.)
- 11 The Gospel-writer Matthew does not say how many wise men ('maji') visited the Infant Christ, nor does he call them 'kings'. The account of the wise men's visit is given in Matthew 2:1-12. They offered Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, which is probably why they are commonly thought of as being three in number.
- 12 Christmas festivities traditionally lasted 12 days, from 25th December to 'Twelfth Night', the Feast of the Epiphany (6th January). The Epiphany is now celebrated in some places, including The Gambia, on the nearest Sunday to 6th January. The Christmas season ends with the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord (in January this year, Monday 9th).
- 13 Candlemas (2nd February, the Presentation of the Lord); Michaelmas (29th September, St Michael, St Gabriel and St Raphael); Martinmas (11th November, St Martin of Tours). In mediæval times, people spoke also of 'Crouchmas' (14th September, the Exaltation of the Holy Cross), and 'Hallowmas' (1st November, All Saints).
- 14 A Jewish boy is given his name at the time of circumcision. Luke 2:21 says that Mary's Child was to be named 'Jesus', which is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name, 'Joshua', meaning 'the Lord is salvation'.
- 15 Matthew and Luke.

Answers to Do You Know? page 6

- 1 Ezekiel 37:1-14
- 2 In the New Testament, anyone who is not a Jew. It is sometimes used to refer to pagans. (*Gentile* derives from Latin, meaning 'people' or 'clan'.)
- 3 Luke, who also wrote the Acts of the Apostles.
- 4 Papal Nuncio. Archbishop Adamczyk presented his credentials to President Jammeh on 4th November 2013.
- 5 The insignia of the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits. Pope Francis is a Jesuit.



Ruins in ancient Corinth where Paul preached

*From 15th January to 26th February
(2nd to 8th Sundays) the second reading at Mass
comes from the first four chapters of the First Letter
of Paul to the Corinthians.*

PAUL'S first letter to the Church of Corinth provides us with a fuller insight into the life of an early Christian community than any other book of the New Testament. Through it we glimpse the strengths and weaknesses of a small group of Christians in a great city of the ancient world: men and women who had accepted the good news of Christ and were trying to realise the implications of their baptism.

Dealing with questions

In this letter, Paul, who had founded the community and continued to look after it as a father, responds to questions put to him and to situations of which he has been informed. In so doing, he reveals much about himself, his teaching, and the way he conducts his apostleship.

Paul established a Christian community in Corinth about the year 51, on his second missionary journey. The city, a commercial crossroads, was a melting pot of devotees of various pagan cults, and marked by moral depravity not unusual in a great seaport.

The Acts of the Apostles suggests that at first some success attended Paul's efforts among the Jews in Corinth, but that they soon turned against him (Acts 18:1-8). More fruitful was Paul's 18 months among the Gentiles (Acts 18:11), which won to the faith many of the city's underprivileged (1 Corinthians 1:26).

After Paul's departure, Apollos, an Alexandrian Jewish Christian, rendered great service to the community, expounding 'from the scriptures that the Messiah is Jesus' (Acts 18:24-28).

Disquieting news

While Paul was in Ephesus on his third journey (1 Corinthians 16:8; Acts 19:1-20), he received disquieting news about Corinth. The community there was in danger of breaking up. Certain members were identifying themselves with individual Christian leaders and interpreting Christian teaching as a superior wisdom for the initiated few (1 Corinthians 1:10-4:21). Other members were engaged in conflicts in pagan courts of law (1 Corinthians 6:1-11). Still others may have participated in religious prostitution (1 Corinthians 6:12-20) or Temple sacrifices (1 Corinthians 10:14-22).

In the celebration of the Eucharist, certain members discriminated against others, drank too freely at the agape, or fellowship meal, and denied Christian help to the poor among them (1 Corinthians 11:17-22).

Ecstatic prayer, attributed to the impulse of the Holy Spirit,

Tribulations in the early Church

An insight into the beginnings of the Church: St Paul's infant community in Corinth

was more highly prized than works of charity (1 Corinthians 13:1-2,8) and was sometimes used in a disorderly way (1 Corinthians 14:1-40).

Some women came to the assembly without the customary head-covering (1 Corinthians 11:3-16), and were perhaps quarrelling over their right to address the assembly (1 Corinthians 14:34-35).

Matters of conscience

Paul had to deal with matters of conscience among the faithful: eating meat that had been sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 8:1-13), the role of sex in marriage (1 Corinthians 7:1-7), and the attitude to marriage in view of the possible proximity of Christ's second coming (1 Corinthians 7:25-40). Some members of the community, despite their belief in Christ's resurrection, were denying the general bodily resurrection.

Guarding the faithful

To treat this wide spectrum of questions, Paul wrote this letter from Ephesus about the year 56.

The majority of the Corinthian Christians may well have been quite faithful. Paul writes to guard them against the threats posed by the views and conduct of various minorities.

Paul writes with the authority of his apostolic mission, which he presumes the Corinthians will recognise and accept. On the other hand, he promises a direct confrontation with recalcitrants, should abuses remain uncorrected (1 Corinthians 4:18-21).

The letter illustrates Paul's mind and character. Although he insists on his office as founder of the community, he clearly recognises that he is only one servant of God among many, and acknowledges the labours of Apollos (1 Corinthians 3:5-8).

The letter provides many examples of Paul's method of theology and exposition. He treats questions on the level of the purity of Christian teaching and conduct.

Understanding early Christian teaching

Certain passages in Paul's letter are of great importance for the understanding of early Christian teaching on the Eucharist (1 Corinthians 10:14-22; 11:17-34) and on the resurrection of the body (1 Corinthians 15:1-58).

Most commentators find 1 Corinthians understandable as a single work. Paul's authorship of 1 Corinthians, apart from a few verses that some regard as later interpolations, has never been seriously questioned.

We know that Paul wrote at least two other letters to Corinth (1 Corinthians 5:9; 2 Corinthians 2:3-4) in addition to the two that we now have, though these additional letters may actually be contained within the two canonical ones.

Further readings from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians are provided for the first Sundays of Year B and Year C.

Daily Mass Readings



Advent, Christmas Time & January

Sunday readings Year A Weekday readings Year 2

Celebrations in brackets () are optional

Sun 27th Nov.	Isaiah 2:1-5. Psalm 121:1-2,4-9. Romans 13:11-14. Matthew 24:17-44	1st SUNDAY of ADVENT
Mon 28th	Isaiah 4:2-6 (or 2:1-5). Psalm 121:1-9. Matthew 8:5-11	
Tue 29th	Isaiah 11:1-10. Psalm 71:1-2,7-8,12,13,17. Luke 10:21-24.	
Wed 30th	Romans 10:9-18. Psalm 18:2-5. Matthew 4:18-22.	St ANDREW
Thu 1st Dec.	Isaiah 26:1-6. Psalm 117:1,8-9,19-21,25-27. Matthew 7:21,24-27	<i>abstinence</i>
Fri 2nd	Isaiah 29:17-24. Psalm 26:1,4,13-14. Matthew 9:27-31	St Francis Xavier
Sat 3rd	Isaiah 30:19-21,23-26. Psalm 146:1-6. Matthew 9:35 – 10:1,5-8	
Sun 4th	Isaiah 11:1-10. Psalm 71:1-2,7-8,12-13,17. Romans 15:4-9. Matthew 3:1-12	2nd SUNDAY of ADVENT
Mon 5th	Isaiah 35:1-10. Psalm 84:9-14. Luke 5:17-26	
Tue 6th	Isaiah 40:1-11. Psalm 95:1-3,10-13. Matthew 18:12-14	(St Nicholas)
Wed 7th	Isaiah 40:25-31. Psalm 102:1-4,8,10. Matthew 11:28-30 St Ambrose	
Thu 8th	Genesis 3:9-15,20. Psalm 97:1-4. Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12. Luke 1:26-38	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
Fri 9th	Isaiah 48:17-19. Psalm 1:1-4,6. Matthew 11:16-19	(St John Diego Cuauhtlatotzian) <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 10th	Sirach 48:1-4,9-11. Psalm 79:2-3,15-16,18-19. Matthew 17:10-13	
Sun 11th	Isaiah 35:1-6,10. Psalm 145:6-10. James 5:7-10. Matthew 11:2-11	3rd SUNDAY of ADVENT
Mon 12th	Numbers 24:2-7,15-17. Psalm 24:4-9. Matthew 21:23-27	(Our Lady of Guadalupe)
Tue 13th	Zephaniah 3:1-2,9-13. Psalm 33:2-3,6-7,17-19,23. Matthew 21:28-32.	St Lucy
Wed 14th	Isaiah 45:6-8,18,21-25. Psalm 84:9-14. Luke 7:19-23	St John of the Cross
Thu 15th	Isaiah 54:1-10. Psalm 29:2,4-6,11-13. Luke 7:24-30	
Fri 16th	Isaiah 56:1-3,6-8. Psalm 66:2-3,5,7-8. John 5:33-36	<i>abstinence</i>
Sat 17th	Genesis 49:1-2,8-10. Psalm 71:1-4,7-8,17. Matthew 1:1-17	<i>O Sapientia</i>
Sun 18th	Isaiah 7:10-14. Psalm 23:1-6. Romans 1:1-7. Matthew 1:18-24	4th SUNDAY of ADVENT <i>O Adonia</i>
Mon 19th	Judges 13:2-7,24-25. Psalm 70:3-6,16-17. Luke 1:5-25	<i>O Radix</i>
Tue 20th	Isaiah 7:10-14. Psalm 23:1-6. Luke 1:26-38	<i>O Clavis</i>
Wed 21st	Song of Songs 2:8-14 or Zephaniah 3:14-18. Psalm 32:2-3,11-12,20-21. Luke 1:39-45	<i>O Oriens</i>
Thu 22nd	1 Samuel 1:24-28. 1 Samuel 2:1,4-7. Luke 1:46-56	<i>O Rex</i>
Fri 23rd	Malachi 3:1-4,23-24. Psalm 24:4-5,8-10,14. Luke 1:57-66	[St John of Kanty] <i>O Emmanuel; abstinence</i>
Sat 24th (morning)	2 Samuel 7:1-5,6-12,14,16. Psalm 88:2-5,27,29. Luke 1:67-79	
	Christmas Mass: full details on pages	
Mon 26th:	Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59. Psalm 30:3-4,6,16-17. Matthew 10:17-32	St STEPHEN
Tue 27th:	1 John 1:1-4. Psalm 96:1-2,5-6,11-12. John 20:2-8.	St JOHN
Wed 28th	1 John 1:5 – 2:2. Psalm 123:2-5,7-8. Matthew 2:13-18	HOLY INNOCENTS
Thu 29th	1 John 2:3-11. Psalm 95:1-3,5-6. Luke 2:22-35	(St Thomas Becket)
Fri 30th	Sirach 3:3-7,14-17 or Colossians 3:12-21. Psalm 127:1-5. Matthew 2:13-15,19-23	HOLY FAMILY
Sat 31st	1 John 2:18-21. Psalm 95:1-2,11-13. John 1:1-18	(St Sylvester)
Sun 1st January	Numbers 6:22-27. Psalm 66:2-3,5-6,8. Galatians 4:4-7. Luke 2:16-21	MARY MOTHER of GOD
Mon 2nd	1 John 2:22-28. Psalm 97:1-4. John 1:19-28	St Basil the Great & St Gregory Nazianzen
Tue 3rd	1 John 2:29 - 3:6. Psalm 97:1,3-6. John 1:29-34	(The Most Holy Name of Jesus)
	<i>or for Holy Name:</i> Philippians 2:1-11. Psalm 8:4-9. Luke 2:21-24	
Wed 4th	1 John 3:7-10. Psalm 97:1,7-9. John 1:35-42	
Thu 5th	1 John 3:11-21. Psalm 99:2-5. John 1:43-51	
Fri 6th	1 John 5:5-13. Psalm 147:12-15,19-20. Mark 1:7-11 or Luke 3:23-38)	<i>abstinence</i>
Sat 7th	1 John 5:14-21. Psalm 149:1-6,9. John 2:1-11	(St Raymond of Penyafort)
Sun 8th	Isaiah 60:1-6. Psalm 71:1-2,7-8,10-13. Ephesians 3:2-3,5-6. Matthew 2:1-12	EPIPHANY of THE LORD
Mon 9th	Isaiah 12:1-4,6-7 or Acts 10:34-38. Psalm 28:1-4,9-10. Matthew 3:13-17	BAPTISM of THE LORD
	Christmas Time ends; Ordinary Time begins	
Tue 10th	Hebrews 2:5-12. Psalm 8:2,5-9. Mark 1:21-38	
Wed 11th	Hebrews 2:14-18. Psalm 104:1-4,6-9. Mark 1:29-39	
Thu 12th	Hebrews 3:7-14. Psalm 94:6-11. Mark 1:40-45	
Fri 13th	Hebrews 4:1-5,11. Psalm 77:3-4,6-8. Mark 2:1-12	(St Hilary) <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 14th	Hebrews 4:12-16. Psalm 18:8-10,15 (of the BVM)	
Sun 15th	Isaiah 49:3,5-6. Psalm 39:2,4,7-10. 1 Corinthians 1:1-3. John 1:29-34	2nd SUNDAY of YEAR
Mon 16th	Hebrews 5:1-10. Psalm 109:1-4. Mark 2:18-22	
Tue 17th	Hebrews 6:10-20. Psalm 110:1-2,4-5,9-10. Mark 2:23-28	St Anthony of Egypt
Wed 18th	Hebrews 7:1-3,15-17. Psalm 109:1-4. Mark 3:1-6	<i>Christian Unity Week begins</i>
Thu 19th	Hebrews 7:25 – 8:6. Psalm 39:7-10,17. Mark 3:7-12	
Fri 20th	Hebrews 8:6-13. Psalm 84: 8,10-14. Mark 3:13-19	(St Fabian or St Sebastian) <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 21st	Hebrews 9:2-3,11-14. Psalm 46:2-3,6-9. Mark 3:20-21	St Agnes
Sun 22nd	Isaiah 8:23 - 9:3. Psalm 26:1,4,13-14. 1 Corinthians 1:10-13,17. Matthew 4:12-23	3rd SUNDAY of YEAR
Mon 23rd	Hebrews 9:15,24-28. Psalm 97:1-6. Mark 3:22-30	
Tue 24th	Hebrews 10:1-10. Psalm 39:2,4,7-8,10-11. Mark 3:31-35	St Francis de Sales
Wed 25th	Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22. Psalm 116:1,2. Mark 16:15-18.	CONVERSION of St PAUL
Thu 26th	2 Timothy 1:1-8 or Titus 1:1-5. Psalm 95:1-3,7-8,10. Luke 10:1-9	St Timothy & St Titus
Fri 27th	Hebrews 10:32-39. Psalm 36:3-6,23-24,39-40. Mark 4: 26-34	(St Angela Merici) <i>abstinence</i>
Sat 28th	Hebrews 11:1-2,18-19. Luke 1:69-75. Mark 4:35-41	St Thomas Aquinas
Sun 29th	Zephaniah 2:3 & 3:12-13. Psalm 145:7-10. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31. Matthew 3:1-12.	4th SUNDAY of YEAR
Mon 30th	Hebrews 11:32-40. Psalm 30:20-24. Mark 5:1-20	
Tue 31st	Hebrews 12:1-4. Psalm 21:26-28,30-32. Mark 5:21-43	St John Bosco



St Teresa of Kolkata by people who met her

From St John Paul II to Queen Elizabeth II, Mother Teresa left a lasting impression on those she met



TRAVELLING tirelessly the streets of the entire world, Mother Teresa marked history of our century. This morning, I celebrated, with intimate emotion, Holy Mass for her, unforgettable witness to a love made up of concrete and ceaseless service to the poorest of our brothers. *Pope John Paul II, 1997*

MOTHER'S death represents an immense loss to the millions touched by her charity. Such a one as she has rarely walked the earth. *K.R. Narayanan, President of India, 1997*

A BEACON of light and hope for millions of poor has gone out of our lives.' *I.K. Gujral, Prime Minister of India, 1997*

MOTHER Teresa is gone, but as the gospels teach us, these things endure: faith, hope and love. She had them in abundance. *Bill Clinton, US President, 1997*



SHE will continue to live on in the hearts of all those who have been touched by her selfless love. *Queen Elizabeth II, 1997*

SHE was very human – she loved chocolate, she loved ice-cream. *Fr Brian Kolodiejchuk, Director of the Mother Teresa Centre, 2016*

SHE would say to me in difficult times, 'Don't give in to your feelings. God is permitting this.' This really taught me that the best and the worst in life would pass and if I learn myself to accept the cross, to be quiet, humble and hopeful, that all will pass. *Sr Nirmala, Superior-General, Missionaries of Charity, Calcutta, 2007*

MOTHER had a very different and special light and a magnetic, personable charisma. She was truly a mother to all of us, filled with unconditional, selfless love. *Michael Collopy, photographer, 2016*

SHE knew what she wanted, and she was single-minded in getting things done. *Jim Towey, President of Ave Maria University USA, 2016*

HER witness was testimony that things can change. She did not *speak* of justice so much as *do* justice. – *Ken Hackett, US Ambassador to the Holy See, 2016*



Humble and selfless service

WHEN Pope Francis canonised Mother Teresa of Kolkata, he also emphasised the countless numbers of volunteers who for decades have shared in her mission to the poorest. Her unique witness to the mercy of God has touched so many lives.

The Pope described this as follows: 'How many hearts have been comforted by these volunteers; how many hands have they held; and how much love has been poured out in hidden, humble and selfless service among the poorest of the poor.'

We are blessed in this diocese to have the presence of a community of Missionaries of Charity among us.

Bishop Robert Ellison, homily for Mission Sunday, 16th October 2016

O GOD, who called your handmaid, blessed Teresa of Kolkata, to seek you before all else, grant that, serving you through her example and intercession, we may come at last to your eternal glory.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



BORN Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu in 1910 to an Albanian family in Skopje, in what is now part of Macedonia, Mother Teresa went to India as a Sister of Loreto in 1929.

Receiving what she described as a 'call within a call', Teresa began her missionary work with the poor and laid the foundation for what would become the Missionaries of Charity.

Following her death in 1997, St John Paul II waived the usual five-year waiting period and allowed the opening of the process to declare her sainthood. She was beatified (declared 'Blessed') in 2003, and canonised this year on 4th September.

Her memorial day each year is 5th September.

Mother Teresa on love, peace and poverty

IT is not for us to destroy what God has given us. Please, please let your mind and your will become the mind and the will of God. You have the power to bring war into the world or to build peace. Please choose the way of peace. *Letter to George Bush Sr and Saddam Hussein, 2nd January 1991*

I HAVE never been in a war before, but I have seen famine and death. I was asking myself, what do they feel when they do this? I don't understand it.

They are all the children of God. Why do they do it, I don't understand. *After helping to evacuate 37 handicapped children from a mental hospital in the Sabra refugee camp, Lebanon 14th August 1982*

I CHOOSE the poverty of our people. But I am grateful to receive the [Nobel] prize in the name of the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, of all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society, people who have become a burden to society and are shunned by everyone. *Accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, 1979*

I WAS expecting to be free, but God has his own plans. *When she was persuaded to withdraw her resignation by the sisters of the Missionaries of Charity, Calcutta, 1990*



'YESTERDAY is gone, and tomorrow has not yet come; we must live each day as if it were our last, so that when God calls us we already, and prepared, to die with a clean heart.' *A Simple Path, 1995*

WHEN you know how much God is in love with you, then you can only live your life radiating that love. *'A Simple Path', 1995*

THE OTHER day I dreamt that I was at the gates of heaven. And St Peter said, 'Go back to Earth, there are no slums up here.' *Conversation with Prince Michael of Greece, 1996*

I ALONE cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.

OFTEN just for one word, one look, one quick action, and darkness fills the heart of the one we love. *Love, a Fruit Always in Season, 1987*

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Jesus calls his first disciples

Jesus left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the lake, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali...

From that time, Jesus began to proclaim, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the lake - for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fish for men.'

Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them.

Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Jesus went through Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

Matthew 4:12-13,17-23

Part of the Gospel reading for 29th January, 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time