

newsletter



5th & 6th December 2009

The Second Sunday of Advent Year C



Catholic Parish of The Sacred Heart *Our Mission*

Through the power of the Holy Spirit we will be a parish renewed in our knowledge and understanding of the love of Jesus Christ, to enable each of us to fulfil our Christian mission.

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Times of Mass



Saturday 5 th December	6.00 pm	St Andrew's Amphill	Private Intentions
Sunday 6 th December	9.00 am	Sacred Heart Church	Kathleen and Phillip Watson, RIP
	11.00 am	Sacred Heart Church	Jo Keefe, RIP
	5.00 pm	Sacred Heart Church	Private Intentions – Latin Mass
Monday 7 th December	9.30 am	Sacred Heart Church	Manna Family, RIP
Tuesday 8 th December	9.30 am	Sacred Heart Church	Deceased Gallen Family
Wednesday 9 th December	9.30 am	Sacred Heart Church	Private Intentions
Thursday 10 th December	9.30 am	Sacred Heart Church	Private Intentions
Friday 11 th December	9.30 am	Sacred Heart Church	Private Intentions
Saturday 12 th December	9.30 am	Sacred Heart Church	Private Intentions

A Reflection by Fr. Denis

Two months ago, I was invited to give a talk to the University of The Third Age. It was a group, of people, many of them retired, who meet on a regular basis, to listen and learn, to ask questions, and give their opinion on the chosen subject. The youngest person present was fifty-five years old. The subject I was given was 'Change and growth – from a spiritual perspective'. I spoke at first about the changes we experience through life, school, work, college, age, health, illness, learning and reading. Then I lead into the notion of spiritual change, through conversation and prayer, and so on. Then I

tried to link all these points. It was a good exercise for me, and it lead to a good discussion. Later, in this newsletter, in *Thoughts from the homily*, I will speak about the notion of change, in mind and heart.

Advent is always calling us to this growth and change, in order to prepare the inner house for the Lord. Sometimes we know just how we should change or convert, but we need to act on it, we need the grace of God. The second reading today gives us the answer, prayer.

Fr. Denis writes

Fahrenheit 451 is the title of a famous novel by Ray Bradbury, telling the story of a fictionalised future, where books and reading are outlawed as dangerous elements threatening the good order of society. In the place of books there is a four-walled television screen, which beams programmes to the masses to keep them happy. In this future a fireman is a person employed to go around burning books, and so prevent anyone from developing free and independent thought. Such thought control and book burning have occurred in every age and in many societies, including the Church.



In Matthew ch. 4:12 we read of an attempt at thought control. It is the arrest of John the Baptist. Herod had John arrested, and placed in prison. His voice would be silent. With that voice silenced, people would settle down again and forget about causing trouble.

As one voice is suppressed, another is only beginning. Jesus goes to Galilee and begins His work of preaching. And His message: The kingdom of God is near. First proclaimed in Galilee, that voice has never been silent. In this time of Advent, we will hear many voices, all pointing ahead to the Word made flesh, and calling on us to prepare to welcome Him. Once that light shines in the darkness, it will never be put out. Such is the hope and the promise of Advent.



Tea and Talk



On 14th December we will be having our Tea and Talk Christmas Lunch at The Prince of Wales in Ampthill.

Offertory collections for 28th and 29th November, the collection was £542.84, the healing weekend £69.21, and donations for the building fund totalled £225.00 this week. Thank you, Fr Denis.

Information

CONFESSIONS

Saturday mornings from 11.00 am – please see newsletter for changes.

PRAYER LINE

Please ring for intercessory prayer on 01525 634 186. We have some wonderful answers to prayers. Be assured of full confidentiality.

HOSPITAL, SICK OR HOUSE-BOUND?

Please let us know of anyone who needs a visit or requires Holy Communion at home.

THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL GROUP

meets every Monday at 7.45 pm. If you would like to join us or would like more details, contact John Flannigan on 01525 406 810.

LITTLE 'UNS

Meet every Friday 10.15 am–11.45 am in term time, in the Church Hall. For further information please contact Debbie Lewis on 01525 406 815 or Kerry Skidmore on 01525 635 095.

CARDS, GIFTS, etc.

Are available for sale in Sacred Heart Church Hall after 9.00 am and 11.00 am Masses. All are priced. Please put money in the repository box in the porch or see Margaret.

CHURCH NEWSLETTER ONLINE

The church newsletter is available online from the website
<http://www.sacredheartflitwick.co.uk>

SUNDAY LATIN MASS

Fr. Armand de Malleray, of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter, celebrates the Latin Mass here each Sunday at 5.00 pm. The Mass, from the Missal of 1962, fulfils the Sunday Obligation.

Newsletter copy deadline – Tuesday 12.00 midday. Newsletter contact: Suzanne Yates, email suz_yates@btinternet.com; telephone 01525 840 661

The Return of the Giving Tree

It's the First Sunday of Advent and the Giving Tree is back. Once again the SVP is looking for support for the Bedford Concern Homeless and Rootless Day Centre. You may have read in the local press that the Centre has been under threat of closure but has secured financial backing and is safe for the time being.



However it still requires your help and support and this year we are asking you once again to take as many of the stickers as you can afford and then donate the named articles. There is no need to wrap them, simply put them in the box in the church porch. Ampthill will again have its own tree.

We require men's pants, socks, toothpaste and toothbrushes, deodorant, disposable razors, small bars of chocolate, tins of tuna and corned beef, biscuits and teabags and coffee. Baked beans are always needed.

It would be helpful if all donations could be handed in by Monday 14th December.

Over the past two years your support for this venture has been wonderful – so many thanks in advance.

Choir

Practice will be held at 7.30 pm on



Tuesday 8th and 15th December. New members always welcome. We will be rehearsing for the Christmas Carol Service to be held on 20th December.

Parish Management Group 10th December at 7.30 pm. Several of our members have left due to other commitments so we have some free places and would welcome anyone. Only 4 meetings a year. Anyone interested, please contact Hugh Davies on 01525 403 102 or Fr. Denis.



Star in the South



A Christmas concert with Flitwick Singers in aid of Prebend Day Centre, Bedford and Christian Family Care, Bedford

18th December Sacred Heart Church
19th December Flitwick Methodist Church

Both start 7.30 pm - the same programme.

Tickets £7, concessions £6

For tickets see Anne Gadsden or ring 01525 714 847 or they may be purchased on the night.

Church cleaning will be on 22nd December at 7.30 pm – all welcome. Training and equipment provided!



Planned Giving Officer
Many thanks to all those who came forward so promptly. The role is now being taken by John Fletcher. Thank you John.

MOTHERS' PRAYERS

Our next meeting will be in the New Year. Please watch this space.

Reminder

Readers and drivers for next week, 5th December and 6th December.

Mass	6.00 pm - Ampthill	9.00 am - Flitwick	11.00 am - Flitwick
1 st Reader	Adrian Hamilton	Dee Brady	Judith Latham
2 nd Reader	Mary Brown	Marion McClurg	Margaret Gummery
Eucharistic		M. Stynes	Grace McKenna
Driver			T. or B. Basterfield
Readers and drivers for next week, 12 th and 13 th December.			
Mass	6.00 pm - Ampthill	9.00 am - Flitwick	11.00 am - Flitwick
1 st Reader	Joel Ita	Pat Crowe	Anne Gadsden
2 nd Reader	Michael Ita	Mary Bray	Martin Brennan
Eucharistic		Jane Crow	Hilary Brennan
Driver		Louis Chadwick	

Thoughts from the homily

Fr. Denis

All the readings share a marvellous insight: people begin to change when they are encouraged to see the best in themselves, not when they are asked to dwell with the worst in themselves. Simply to tell people what is wrong with them and leave it at that can be to leave them a wreck. It's like leaving the scene of an accident. And people rarely change when they are left to themselves, enclosed in their own weakness, staring at their own mistakes. That's a lonely project because there is no one to care whether change takes place or not.

We all need help and encouragement to leave behind familiar ways which have become destructive. We need help in imagining ourselves differently, and imagining the good effect that will have on others. We have to take time to reflect what kind of person God wants us to be, what His plan is for us. We need faith in the future, to see the power of God working in the change. To have Paul's certainty that God will not abandon us in

our halting efforts, but 'that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished'.

In all this we need each other's help and encouragement. To change we need others prodding us on: 'Go! You can do it!' we need to call out the best in each other like Paul does with the converts, and rejoice with people in the changes they have made for the better. After all, Paul himself had to make big changes in his life, and it was the Philippians who gave him encouragement in his big change by accepting him as an apostle of the Lord.

If our community is to be constantly converted to the Lord we all have to breathe in encouragement and breathe it out. Perhaps this Advent we could exercise that encouragement in a simple, practical way. That will be a change for the better. In the words of Cardinal Newman: 'To be human is to change. To be perfect is to have changed often'.

The Gift.

Many thanks to Barton Angels who treated us to excerpts from Graham Kendrick's The Gift last Friday. It was an enthusiastic and uplifting performance sung by a group of ladies with great voices. The icing on the cake was that they also raised £155 for our building fund. Thanks to Astrid who made the whole evening possible.

Our Parish experience of the Healing Weekend 26th to 29th November

Jesus said, 'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'. (Jn 10:10 NIV)

Thank you to all who helped organise the Healing Weekend, those who contributed financially, gave of their time, gifts and resources, and those who supported us all with their prayers. Many people from our parish and beyond have shared really positive experiences.

Fr. Laurence and Pauline Edwards as well as those who organised the event would be really interested to hear more of your positive experiences, to encourage us, and other parishes who want to host such a weekend. Please contact Helen Burgess on 01525 405 823.



Carols by Candlelight

7.00 pm on 20th December. This is a traditional carol service where you get to sing all your favourite carols.

