

## ST AUGUSTINE'S DATCHET

St Augustine's  
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Parish Priest: Fr. Frank McAuliffe  
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## OUR LADY OF SORROWS ETON



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## NEWSLETTER

**Sunday 29th November 2020**

**First Sunday of Advent (Year B)**

### MASS TIMES

**ONLINE WEBINAR MASS:** 11am on Sundays - for further details email [office@staugustines.org.uk](mailto:office@staugustines.org.uk)

**ST. AUGUSTINE'S HALL:** During the *lockdown* it has not been permitted to hold public Masses. Masses will resume in the Hall as of **Saturday 5th December**.

Mass times will be: Saturdays at 6pm, Sundays at 9.30am and Tuesdays at 9.30am.

**ST. AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH PRIVATE PRAYER:** Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 12noon and 12.30pm. Tuesday and Thursday between 5.30pm and 6.30pm

### MASS INTENTIONS

Sun. 29th Nov. 11am	People of the Parish	Wed. 2nd Dec	Carolyn Ansell RIP
Mon. 30th Nov.	Holy Souls RIP	Thu. 3rd Dec.	Private Intention
Tue. 1st Dec.	Mass for Deceased	Fri. 4th Dec.	Private Intention

**SICK OF THE PARISH:** Please pray for the sick in the Parish, especially James Ansell, Dorrie Keating, David Mendes, Walter Stanley and Michael Torpey. Please pray also for those who are caring for them.

**CORONAVIRUS:** As lockdown continues, we remember those in our parish who may be suffering acutely from the effects of Covid. We think especially for those who are ill, those living alone - far from relatives, those whose jobs are at risk, those in Care Homes, those in difficult home environments.

And let's not forget to thank God for the progress being made towards the discovery of a vaccine for COVID. We pray for the scientists and the medical personnel who have worked so hard towards its discovery, and we pray that it will be very soon available to all.

St. Augustine's Church is open every day for private prayer. (See days and times above). As the days and evenings are distinctly chilly now, rest assured that the Church is being heated.

**REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES DURING NOVEMBER.** Each Tuesday during this month, Mass has been offered for the Intentions of those whose names are in the Intention Box. The Mass Intention on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December will also be for this purpose. The Intention Box is in front of the Altar in the Church. (See above, for times when the Church will be open).

**ADVENT.** This weekend, we begin the Advent Season in preparation for Christmas and from next weekend (Saturday 5th / Sunday 6th) we can again hold Masses in our Church Hall. We are making preparations for the Season. Our hope is that we will be able to have our annual communal celebration of Penance shortly before Christmas. When the situation becomes clearer, we will inform you about that. All Stewards have been emailed asking about their availability to Steward at a Christmas Mass. Thank you to those Stewards who have already replied. Please can the Stewards who have not yet replied please do so, as we wish to firm up the times for Christmas Masses.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION FOR THE COMING YEAR: MESSAGE FOR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS**

Do you have a child in Year 3 or above? Has your child made First Holy Communion?

If they haven't, and you would like them to join St. Augustine's programme in January, please give your details to Fr. Frank, or contact Anne Cannon via [office@staugustines.org.uk](mailto:office@staugustines.org.uk) as soon as possible.

With the situation as it stands at the moment, classes will be held via Zoom, starting at 10.am on a Sunday morning, and finishing to allow the group to then join Mass at 11.00am. When we can, the classes will move to face to face in St. Augustine's Church Hall.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS FROM THE ST. PATRICK'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY:** Most Parishioners will be aware that Fr. Frank was ordained for the St. Patrick's Missionary Society.

The Society has produced a set of **Christmas Cards** and pocket **2021 diaries**, which are available to buy now. This is an important source of fundraising for the Society. They suggest a minimum donation of £5 per pack of 10 differently designed Christmas Cards and a minimum donation of £5 per 2021 pocket diary, which is available with covers in either red, black or navy blue.

Please order by telephoning 0208 979 1890, or alternatively by sending a cheque with your order to St. Patrick's Missionary Society, 20 Beauchamp Road, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 0PA.

Bishop David has issued a Pastoral Letter for this weekend, which is attached to this Newsletter.





**Pastoral Letter  
First Sunday of Advent  
29 November 2020  
On Mission**

Dear friends in Christ,

'Christmas is cancelled!' This abrupt headline appeared during September, causing consternation throughout the land. It became clearer, journalists were referring to the cultural trappings of a festive season. But there was also the lingering prospect that we may not be able to meet up with all our loved ones because of the virus. In truth of course Christmas cannot be cancelled. It is a historical event, one which has a wonderful implication for ourselves as we journey through these difficult days with hope. In the words of St Paul, 'when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.'<sup>1</sup> Three centuries after the apostle wrote those words, St Athanasius reflected upon what it means that God sent his Son, born of a woman. This great theologian of Christmas lived in a time when some denied the truth of the Incarnation, that Jesus is consubstantial with the Father. And so he tells us why Jesus, 'the incorporeal and incorruptible Word of God entered our world.'<sup>2</sup> Our human minds 'had fallen finally to the level of sensible things'.<sup>3</sup>

On this First Sunday of Advent, Jesus invites us to raise our minds beyond the senses in order to ponder the mysteries of faith. God's unfolding plan of salvation will reach a climax at the end of history. We should await this day with active faith, and not in some distracted and indifferent manner. Rather, Jesus tells us in today's Gospel, 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come.' Maybe these words sound threatening to us? It does not have to be so. Like excited children waiting for Christmas to come, our Advent faith encourages us to await Jesus' second coming with longing and persevering hope.

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<sup>1</sup> Gal 4.4-5

<sup>2</sup> St Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, 2.8

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid* 3.16



And there is more. Jesus tells us today that he has 'left his servants in charge, each with his own task'. Pope Francis explains this task clearly, 'In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptised, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelisation... The new evangelisation calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptised.'<sup>4</sup> There may be many reasons why we feel inadequate for this missionary task. We may have become indifferent and have fallen asleep. Perhaps our confidence has been robbed by scandal and institutional failure on the part of the Church. We feel ashamed by our weakness and lack of gifts. Despite all these things, Pope Francis makes it clear we are all in this together. We may have the idea this is for others. And even if we want to be missionary disciples, perhaps we are unclear about what this looks like in our lives.

St Therese of Lisieux, Patroness of the Missions, said, 'I will desire in heaven the same thing as on earth: to love Jesus and to make him loved.'<sup>5</sup> Does this not encapsulate the essence of mission? First of all, a real *desire* that others find Jesus to be the Way, the Truth and the Life in their own lives.<sup>6</sup> And secondly, a recognition that mission is about bringing others into a personal and loving relationship with the Lord. We might develop business plans, pastoral plans, have all sorts of strategies and projects, but if we do not know that Jesus loves us unconditionally and we are invited to love Him in return, then we are missing the mark by a long way!

We learn from our experience. After some initial disorientation at the beginning of the pandemic, it is as though we Catholics have found our feet again during the lockdowns. We are reaching out to those in need in so many largely unobserved ways. Parish communities are using virtual platforms and social media to share a rich feast of liturgical, spiritual and catechetical experiences. There is social outreach to the elderly and to families, food banks and errand services. A number have risen to the challenge of church stewardship, enabling our churches to be open for prayer. I sense in all this, we seek to encounter the face of Christ ourselves, and living out our inheritance as adopted children of God in baptism. We are using our imagination to reach out to others. We are being missionaries.

And as we begin a new year in the Church, there will be even more need for creative ways to become more effective missionaries. Please do not be disturbed by the challenges we face at this time. Jesus is Emmanuel, God amongst us. And Jesus chose to be God amongst us in the form of a helpless babe in Bethlehem. We too may feel helpless at times, especially in these days we live through, but these feelings should not overwhelm us. The

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<sup>4</sup> *Evangelli Gaudium* 120

<sup>5</sup> Letter to her missionary brothers

<sup>6</sup> Cf Jn 14.6

mystery of Christmas invites us to be enfolded in the love made present to us, especially when we become poor in spirit.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

+ *David*

Bishop of Northampton

Given at Northampton on the Feast of Christ the King  
and appointed to be read or distributed in all churches and chapels of the  
Diocese on the First Sunday of Advent, 28th and 29th November, 2020