

# The Parish of St Dunstan and St Jude

First Sunday in Advent

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**Assistant Priest:** Rev. Fr. John Waters  
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**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2020**  
[www.stdunstanandstjude.co.uk](http://www.stdunstanandstjude.co.uk)

Sat 28 <sup>th</sup>		5.30pm – 6.15pm	Adoration	
Sun 29 <sup>th</sup>	<b>FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT</b>	<b>9.15am – 10.00am (St J)</b> <b>10.30-11.15am</b> <b>12noon -12.45pm</b> <b>6.30pm – 7.00pm</b>	<b>Adoration</b> <b>Adoration</b> <b>Adoration</b> <b>Adoration</b>	
Mon 30 <sup>th</sup>	<i>St Andrew</i>	<b>9.30am – 10.00am</b>	<b>Adoration</b>	
Tues 1 <sup>st</sup>	<i>St Edmund Campion</i>	<b>10.00am – 10.30am (St J)</b> <b>7.00pm – 7.30pm</b>	<b>Adoration</b> <b>Adoration</b>	
Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<i>Advent Feria</i>	<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Holy Mass</b>	Michael Collins
Thurs 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>St Francis Xavier</i>	<b>6.45am</b> <b>10.30am</b> <b>7.00pm</b>	<b>Rorate Caeli Mass</b> <b>Requiem Mass</b> <b>Holy Mass</b>	Carolyn Cunningham (RIP) Teresa Creamer (RIP) Mick Miller (RIP)
Fri 4 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Advent Feria</i>	<b>9.30am</b> <b>7.00pm</b>	<b>Holy Mass</b> <b>Holy Mass</b>	M. Woodcock (Ints.) Joan Nash (RIP)
Sat 5 <sup>th</sup>	<i>St Birinus</i>	<b>11.00am</b> <b>11.30am-1pm</b> <b>5.30pm</b>	<b>Holy Mass</b> <b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament</b> <b>Holy Mass</b>	Jo McManus (Ints.)  The Tehan family (Ints.)
Sun 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT</b>	<b>9.15am (St Jude's)</b> <b>10.30am</b> <b>12 noon</b> <b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Holy Mass</b> <b>Holy Mass</b> <b>Holy Mass</b> <b>Holy Mass</b>	Catherine Sugrue Mary Kenny (Anni.) Sean Collins (RIP) Rose Rahill

**Masses will be offered privately** each day by the priests until Wednesday, and all intentions which have been previously booked will be honoured. Private Masses will be offered for: Colleen Ensor (RIP), Maureen Mone, Patrick and Johanna Browne (RIP), Mary Nolan (RIP), John Doyle (RIP), Walsh family, Mary Masterson (Special Intentions), Jim Moy (RIP).

**Today we begin the season of Advent and a new liturgical year.** For the last year it was St Matthew who was our gospel guide, and from today it will be St Mark's turn as his gospel is unfolded for us through much of the year. St Mark's gospel is much the shortest of the four, and many believe it was written during the persecution of the Church by Nero which began in AD64. This would account for its brevity and punch – St Mark seems an evangelist in a hurry!

The gospel would, in those early years, be heard as it is today – as the Church gathered for Mass. When it was written many people couldn't read, and even fewer could afford the cost of a book or manuscript, and so the gospel was communicated orally and committed to memory.

Above all, what St Mark writes his gospel for isn't so much to know about Jesus Christ – but to know him as saviour and friend. After the gospel is proclaimed at every Mass the priest or deacon says 'The Gospel of the Lord' – for St Mark has written his gospel so that, though the medium of his writing, each one of us may hear the voice of Jesus himself.

**Public Mass to Resume!** Thanks to all those who contacted MP's over the closure of churches for public worship. It led to quite a bit of pressure being put on the government to lift the restrictions. It was interesting that both the government's chief medical and scientific advisors (Prof Chris Whitty and Sir Patrick Vallance) both told the parliamentary committee dealing with restrictions (Science and technology committee) that the data supporting the closure of churches was 'very weak'. This, I think, we knew!

**The first Public Mass will be on Wednesday at 9.30am, and following this, Thursday at 6.45am** with the beautiful **Rorate Caeli Mass** celebrated in candlelight as we await the light of dawn. It is a votive Mass of Our Lady in Advent, and is a liturgical meditation inspired by the words of Zechariah in St Luke's gospel: '**the loving kindness of the heart of our God who visits us like the dawn from on high. He will give light to those in darkness, those who dwell in the shadow of death, and guide us into the way of peace.**' Sadly, due to restrictions, there will be no coffee, tea and toast afterwards this time!

**Christmas Mass** will have its challenges this year! Due to restricted seating we will be using a ticket system. Before and after all Masses next Sunday and the following Sunday you will be able to collect tickets for the Mass you would like to attend. On Christmas Eve, there will be an extra Mass at St Dunstan's. The timetable will be:

**Christmas Eve** 5pm (St Dunstan's), 7pm (St Dunstan's), 6pm (St Jude's), Midnight (St Dunstan's).

**Christmas Day** 9am (St Dunstan's), 10am (St Jude's), 11am (St Dunstan's)

**Christmas Mass will obviously be different** this time as carol singing isn't really encouraged – but I'm sure we'll all try make the best out of it. At least there is Mass to come to!

**Walk With Me** booklets are available today that providing us with a simple daily Advent journey to keep us close to the Lord in prayerful expectation.

**Sunday Mass** will be available via the Parish website and from links on our Social media pages from 9am today. **Please access the Mass directly from the parish website.**

**Telephoning the presbytery.** We are still receiving messages on the answerphone asking us for information – but not leaving a contact number. If you leave your name and number and we will endeavour get back to you.

**When you come to church please do not leave newsletters in church after you have read them as they can become a source of infection. Please take them home with you.**

**As Lockdown 2 draws to a close Holy Communion** to the sick and housebound will resume. Please contact the presbytery if you or family members would like this, as a number of parishioners are still isolating and do not wish for outside visits.

**Government restrictions for funerals** still stipulate a maximum of 30 attending.

**We pray for those who have died recently:** Carol Kinehan, Ellen Longe, Margaret Shivrington and Teresa Creamer.

**Baptisms.** The next meeting for parents wishing to arrange a baptism for their child will be on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December at 7.45pm in St Dunstan's Church. Baptisms will resume from next Sunday.

**Could you commit time to be a Steward?** More volunteers are always welcome - and may well prove necessary as winter draws near if the present pattern of services will continue each week. It is important to remember that Masses cannot happen without them at this time, and if there aren't stewards available, they will need to be cancelled. At the moment we are just managing to cover by asking those who are already stewards to do more. If you can help spread the load let us know - just speak with Fr Philip or Fr John or email the presbytery office.

**Confessions** will be available at all times of adoration this weekend. Confessions will resume at the normal times next Saturday. As there will be no penitential services this Advent, and social distancing means using the side chapel at St Dunstan's or the sacristy at St Jude's, today would be a great opportunity to prepare for Christmas with the sacrament of penance. As Christmas approaches and a number of people will wish to make their confession could we emphasise again, as we are still in a time of pandemic, **that the time spent in the confessional is to be kept to a minimum (no more than 5 minutes) to make it as safe as possible, and so that others have opportunity for the celebration of this sacrament.**

**Church Cleaning** will take place on Wednesday after Mass. If you can help you will be very welcome.

**Please note that the toilets are presently closed** due to COVID regulations, and the side chapel will be out of bounds apart from for Confession.

**Weekly offerings** can be placed in the baskets in church or posted through the Presbytery letterbox. Please place offerings in either the usual Gift Aid envelopes or a plain envelope marked 'St Dunstan' or 'St Jude'.

**Christmas Cards** are available to buy from the Parish office on a Wednesday or Friday 9am-5pm.

**Christmas Cards for Other Parishioners.** Due to current restrictions, sadly Christmas cards cannot be left out in either church this year as items other people touch can become a source of infection. Please give any Christmas cards directly to the person they are for.

**Bishop Challoner and St Dunstan's Parish Youth Group** meet via Zoom on Wednesdays 6.30 – 7.10pm. Contact [staff-chaplains@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk](mailto:staff-chaplains@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk) for more information and to register your interest.

**WINDOW.** The December issue of the Parish magazine is now being assembled. The deadline for items is **today**. Please send to [robertwilcher@btinternet.com](mailto:robertwilcher@btinternet.com) or hand in at the presbytery marked WINDOW.

**Christmas Dinner.** This year as a Parish, and with support from the SVP, we will be raising money for families struggling financially this Christmas. Through our faith we are taught to help whenever we can, but as this tough year draws to a close, we should put emphasis on not only helping ourselves, but also to encourage others to do so where they can. Through this, the love of God can be a shining light through the darkness that this year has brought to so many. The money we raise will be used towards Christmas dinners for children and their families in our three schools who find themselves in some need. If you would like to make a donation, please go to [gofund.me/60bed2b3](https://gofund.me/60bed2b3) or put your donation in an enveloped marked 'Christmas Dinner', and post through the presbytery letterbox.

**Christmas Day Lunch 2020** (organised by All Saints with support from St Dunstan's). This year as we can't gather in All Saints Hall for Christmas lunch, we are delivering lunchtime meals to local homes. Do you know of anyone who might benefit from having a Christmas meal delivered to their home? Maybe someone elderly, housebound or living alone. We are now taking bookings for a delicious lunch that will be provided by Jojo's Kitchen in Northfield. To help towards costs, a donation of £5 per person is requested.

We also need volunteer drivers who can collect meals from Northfield and deliver them. Preferably there should be two people in the car from the same household or bubble. Any gifts of satsumas, chocolates, Christmas crackers or individual sized bottles of wine will be gratefully received.

For more information, to book, or to arrange dropping off donations, please phone 07882555146 or email [christmastogetherkh@gmail.com](mailto:christmastogetherkh@gmail.com)

Bookings must be received by Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December.

## HOMILY FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

The thing about staying awake is it's boring. It's really, really boring. As anyone who's ever done any nightshift work, or any sort of guard duty will tell you. Certainly, the times when I was on "stag" or watch in the middle of the night during Army reserve exercises, were some of the most boring hours of my life. You would lie there in the freezing mud, silent so as not to wake the rest of the camp, trying to keep your mind occupied. This stopped you from falling asleep and also helped to pass the time. If you didn't keep your mind busy, the seconds would trickle by like minutes and the minutes like hours. Some guys sang entire albums to themselves in their heads, other did mental arithmetic. I recited the Mass to myself. When I told a friend from America that, she gave me a look that a disapproving mother gives her child(!) and asked, "How quickly afterwards did you discern a vocation to the priesthood, John?"

Of course, we didn't let ourselves fall asleep because we were responsible for each other's safety. And taking responsibility is pretty much discouraged in our society today, because we're worried about being responsible, being blamed if things go wrong. The question "Are you responsible for this?" is now asked with accusation in the voice rather than admiration.

Yet responsibility is precisely what Jesus is challenging us to take up in today's Gospel. It's been a theme running through the Gospels over the previous few Sundays, we, the servants, being given responsibility by the Master and having to live up to that responsibility. Whilst today's society might view responsibility as something to be shied away from and be freed from, our faith takes a different view.

The Catechism reminds us that "The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just." (CCC1733). So, our freedom is rooted in taking responsibility, in this case taking responsibility for living good, faithfully Christian lives, the kind that finds us each at our own task when the Master, Christ, returns. For "true freedom makes man *responsible* for his acts to the extent that they are voluntary."(CCC1734).

This pandemic has re-enforced the need for us all of us to take responsibility for ourselves and each other. We've gone without seeing our families and friends, our businesses have closed down or radically altered their practices, we've limited ourselves to only truly necessary travel, we've even, reluctantly and temporarily, changed our practices of worship. Now, as we emerge from lockdown for a second time, let's not lose the opportunity to also take responsibility for the spiritual health of the society around us. Let's recommit ourselves to sharing spreading and promoting our faith, helping and encouraging those we know and love and admire to cultivate the same relationship with Christ, our Master, as we all have. Let's do what we can to remind the world about us that "As long as freedom has not bound itself to its ultimate good, which is God, there is the possibility of choosing between good and evil and thus of growing in perfection." (CCC 1732).

Let's find our freedom in taking responsibility for our faith and the faith of those around us, that we may all stay awake and be ready for the Master to return.

# READINGS FOR SUNDAY MASS

## FIRST READING

*Isaiah 63: 16-17; 64:1, 3-8*

You, Lord, yourself are our Father, Our Redeemer is your ancient name. Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways and harden our hearts against fearing you? Return, for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your inheritance. Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down – at your Presence the mountains would melt. No ear has heard, no eye has seen any god but you act like this for those who trust him. You guide those who act with integrity and keep your ways in mind. You were angry when we were sinners; we had long been rebels against you. We were all like men unclean, all that integrity of ours like filthy clothing. We have all withered like leaves and our sins blew us away like the wind. No one invoked your name or roused himself to catch hold of you. For you hid your face from us and gave us up to the power of our sins. And yet, Lord, you are our Father; we the clay, you the potter, we are all the work of your hand.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

**R:** God of hosts, bring us back;  
let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,  
shine forth from your cherubim throne.  
O Lord, rouse up your might,  
O Lord come to our help. **R.**

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,  
look down from heaven and see.  
Visit this vine and protect it,  
the vine your right hand has planted. **R.**

May the hand be on the man you have chosen,  
the man you have given your strength.  
And we shall never forsake you again:  
give us life that we may call upon your name. **R.**

## SECOND READING

*Corinthians 1:3-9*

I never stopped thanking God for all the graces you have received through Jesus Christ. I thank him that you have been enriched in so many ways, especially in your teachers and preachers; the witness in Christ has indeed been strong among you so that you will not be without any of the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed; and he will keep you steady and without blame until the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, because God by calling you has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Let us see, O Lord, your mercy  
and give us your saving help.  
Alleluia!

## GOSPEL READING

*Mark 13:33-37*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake'.

**The Parish Office** will now be open from 9.00am until 5.00pm on Wednesday and Friday each week. In order to minimise the number of people in the office and for the safety of those at work, until further notice we ask you to observe the following:

*If you have an enquiry:* please phone or email first to see if it can be sorted in this way.

*For those wishing to book Mass intentions:* please bring a sealed envelope clearly labelled with the intention details (person's name, required date etc) and include the offering inside. This can then be handed in at the office and if requested a Mass card be signed and given.

*If you need to speak to the Parish Administrator or one of the Priests:* we would ask that you phone or email in advance, so that an appointment can be arranged at a convenient time for both.

## COLLECTIONS

St Dunstan's      St Jude's

Gift Aid	£	£
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Non-Gift Aid	£	£
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