

Hymns

Processional (Sunday only)

201: Hark! A herald voice is calling
(Mayhew)[181]

(Advent wreath)

384: O come, O come, Emmanuel
(Mayhew)[348]

Offertory

SHEET Ye watchers and ye holy ones
(Irwin)[sheet]

Post Communion

300: Let all mortal flesh keep silence
(Keys)[269]

Recessional

SHEET: Come, thou long-expected Jesus
(McLennan)[sheet]

PARISH BULLETIN St Kieran's, the Catholic Church in

*Campbeltown and
Islay*

Ceann Loch Chille

Chiarain

3rd December 2023



*Advent is the season of
the presence and
expectation of the eternal
word*

The First Sunday of Advent

St. Kieran's, Campbeltown, Kintyre

Sunday, 3rd December, 1st Sunday of Advent, Holy Mass, 10.00am.

Tuesday and Wednesday, Friday: Holy Mass, 10.00am

Devotions: Wednesday: Mid-morning Prayer, 9.50am.

Friday: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Mid-morning Prayer, 9.30am.

Discussion on the Infancy Narratives: Friday 10.30am

Saturday, 9th December, Vigil Mass, 6.00pm

Sunday, 10th December, 2nd Sunday of Advent, Holy Mass, 10.00am.

St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Bridgend, Islay

Sunday 3rd December, Holy Mass, 4pm

Sunday 17th December, Holy Mass, 4pm



Psalm response

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

Gospel acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

*Let us see, O Lord, your mercy
and give us your saving help.*

Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon

*The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its
increase.*

Take Five

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time.

Monday, Dec 04, 2023

OPTIONAL MEMORIAL OF SAINT JOHN DAMASCENE, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Iconic inspiration

Think of how much sacred images of Jesus, Mary, angels, and the saints — in painting, stained glass, and sculpture — have filled your life and invigorated your spirit. You might have many sacred images throughout your home. Our Catholic churches are certainly full of them. Think of how much they inspire and prompt you to momentary prayer, a fleeting lifting of your heart and mind to God as you pass by them, or to long stretches on your knees, deep in conversation. You can partly thank John Damascene, who defended holy images against iconoclasm, a movement in the eighth century that was opposed to the veneration of icons. Treasure the rich imagery of our tradition.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 2:1-5; Matthew 8:5-11. "Many will come from the east and the west, and will recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the banquet in the Kingdom of heaven."*

Tuesday, Dec 05, 2023

ADVENT WEEKDAY

Be a light in the darkness

As Advent days grow ever darker, Isaiah offers hope: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isa. 9:1). We Christians seek the Son's light, but we also take the Saviour at His word when He describes us as the "light of the world" (Matt. 5:14). 'Tis the season, to celebrate those who shared their light. To quote Saint Isidore of Seville (who opened the Fourth Council of Toledo on this day in 633): "Just as we must love God in contemplation, so we must love our neighbour with action."

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 10:21-24. "He shall judge the poor with justice, and decide aright for the land's afflicted. He shall strike the ruthless with the rod of his mouth."*

Wednesday, Dec 06, 2023

ADVENT WEEKDAY

Peace on Earth requires living on the edge

Should we be surprised to see Jesus making what seemed to be impossible demands upon his disciples? When the disciples were confronted by

Jesus with the task of feeding four thousand people many miles away from any source of food, they exclaimed: Where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them? The Israelites were confronted with the same dilemma when they fled Egypt and found themselves in a barren wilderness. Like the miraculous provision of manna in the wilderness, Jesus, himself provides bread in abundance for the hungry crowd who came out into the desert to seek him. The gospel records that all were satisfied, and they took up what was left over. Are you satisfied with God's provision for you?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 25:6-10a; Matthew 15:29-37. "On this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, The web that is woven over all nations; he will destroy death forever."*

Thursday, Dec 07, 2023

MEMORIAL OF SAINT JEROME, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Honesty, the best policy

Fine words can never replace good deeds. Our character is revealed in the choices we make, especially when we must choose between what is true or false, and good or evil. Do you cheat on an exam or on your income taxes, especially when it will cost you? Do you lie, or cover-up, when disclosing the truth will cause you pain or embarrassment? A true person is honest and reliable before God, neighbour, and oneself. Such a person's word can be taken as trustworthy. What can keep us from falsehood and disaster? If we make the Lord and his word the rock and foundation of our lives, then nothing can shake us or keep us from God's presence and help.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 26:1-6; Matthew 7:21,24-27. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the Kingdom of heaven."*

Friday, Dec 08, 2023

SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

A day of grace

Today is all about grace. It was God's grace that provided Mary with the privilege of being born without original sin; it was Mary's grace that said yes to God's plan; and it is our grace to honour Mary's witness and protection. As Pope John Paul II explains, "Grace means love

and the gift of God himself, the completely free gift in which God entrusts to [us] his Mystery." In honour of this day, pray the mysteries of the Rosary.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Genesis 3:9-15, 20; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12; Luke 1:26-38. "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you."*

Saturday, Dec 09, 2023

OPTIONAL MEMORIAL OF JUAN DIEGO CUAUHTLATOATZIN, VISIONARY

Mary mirrors her people

Can you imagine what today's saint, Juan Diego, was going through when he encountered Our Lady of Guadalupe? First of all, she looked nothing like

the pictures of the Blessed Virgin he was used to. She wasn't a blue-eyed, white European. She was brown-skinned with dark hair and dark eyes. She wasn't wearing a blue veil either. And she didn't even speak to him in Spanish, but in Nahuatl, the ancient language of his ancestral Aztec. Was she for real? When the image of the Virgin appeared on his cloak, he knew she was. Celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe, who acts as a reflection for all the faithful.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26; Matthew 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6-8. "As you go, make this proclamation: 'The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.' "*

Second Sunday of Advent: Cycle B

Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7

May God return for our sake, though we are undeserving of the encounter.

Psalms 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19

God will care for the vine planted with the right hand of salvation.

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

We lack for nothing as we wait for the day of the Lord's coming.

Mark 13:33-37

We do not know the time of the Lord's arrival.

Words on the Word

He did not, as one might have imagined, send to men any servant, or angel, or ruler, or any one of those who bear sway over earthly things, or one of those to whom the government of things in the heavens has been entrusted, but the very Creator and Fashioner of all things — by whom He made the heavens — by whom he enclosed the sea within its proper bounds — whose ordinances all the stars faithfully observe — from whom the sun has received the measure of his daily course to be observed — whom the moon obeys, being commanded to shine in the night, and whom the stars also obey, following the moon in her course; by whom all things have been arranged, and placed within their proper limits, and to whom all are subject — the heavens and the things that are therein, the earth and the things that are therein, the sea and the things that are therein — fire, air, and the abyss — the things which are in the heights, the things which are in the depths, and the things which lie between. This [messenger] He sent to them (The Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus, ch. 7).

* * *

We are starting Advent in the new liturgical year rich in the good and bad experiences of previous years. Yet once more - but every time a little different – we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, who will say to us after the resurrection: "Peace be with you".

These words: "Do not be afraid" or "peace to you" often repeat themselves on the pages of the Gospel. They define the mission of Jesus Christ. He is the one who wants to restore peace with man and God. He wants to regain the lost man and reconcile him with his Father, overcome the effects of sin, that is, death. He wants to restore lost harmony - the unity between God and

people, between God and me personally. Advent is a period of remembering that salvation is already present. You just have to turn your heart to God, you have to remind yourself of the history of salvation, understand what God did for us, which is why the Holy Church constantly proclaims this truth.

- We can regain peace of mind when we realise that this is the most important thing has already happened, we are God's children.
- We can recover peace of mind, for example by freeing ourselves from intrusive external pressure. Often, we are guided by expectations: "We expect it from you", "we know that you can afford it", "others can do it", "you can't let us down", etc. You should approach them with distance, don't take them uncritically to the heart.
- We can regain peace of mind, for example by freeing ourselves from our own excessive ambitions which overwhelm our possibilities.
- We can regain peace of mind, for example by freeing ourselves from pride, greed, desire, and jealousy.
- The peace of mind is also free from "disordered attachments", both to things and to people.

In Advent, we discover that God comes to us not for a visit, but to go with us through life. He already is. Going with Him means straightening the winding paths of our lives.

Today we are also starting the new liturgical year. Each liturgical year is a reminder and update of the entire history of salvation already achieved, but constantly present, allowing us to re-experience a specific moment of this history. The liturgical year contains periods that resemble the seasons of the year. Among these period-seasons of the year, Advent which we begin, brings to mind spring.

The word "today" is often repeated in the Gospel: *today (...) the Saviour has been born* (Lk 2:11); *Today, salvation has come to this man's house* (Lk 19:9).

Today, God himself runs to man, runs to His own, but they don't accept Him, they throw Him out of their courts and parliaments. At one time they didn't want Him - He had to be born outside the city.

I want to go with Him through life. My path with Christ, like the path of every child of God, is often a difficult path - full of suffering and the cross. Such a path is constantly maturing. A measure of the maturity of God's child is readiness for apostolate and even apostolic enthusiasm. Servant of God, Father Posadzy (founder of the Society of Christ), quoting the words of Father Matea, a well-known and heroic missionary from Indo-China:

(...) I moved a whole mountain with a weak straw, in this there is a supernatural mystery. Whoever wants to win hearts for Christ must, above all, have a heart full of love. You have to talk about love with love, then they light up from the burning heart of an apostle the heart of the listener as a candle lights a candle. Then you have to speak very simply, giving the truth deeply experienced - with your simple words you need to illuminate the truth and bring them closer to life, using examples, those from life. An example works stronger and more appealing and deeply remembered. Finally, what is most important, you need to base all apostolic work on suffering. Where it's not present - apostleship is not fertile there, which is why I try hard to find at least one truly victim soul on which I could base the whole matter (Servant of God, Ignatius Posadzy, Acts).

I offer Him my suffering, I will learn this from the beginning of Advent. Maybe God will give the

grace, and in the coming Advent it will stand beside me and also those who I helped to find the way to God.

* * *

*The Advent silence gently rocks the world
reverie wraps the time of waiting
humanity awakened by longing awaits the news
this Night the Lord's promise is fulfilled. (...)*

*That this Little love that is born to us
would be a spark of faith, which changes into a flame
so that it supports us in the turns of the road
so it was the soul's light for the destined destination.*

How to pray



Saint Teresa of the Child Jesus says concisely: "Prayer is a lifting of the heart, a simple look towards Heaven, a cry of gratitude and love, both in suffering and in joy." To put it even more simply: someone who turns to the Lord with faith and love prays.

Who can we learn to pray from?

The Lord Jesus is our teacher. When the disciples asked Him: "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1), then in response to this request, Christ the Lord uttered the words of the most important and most beautiful prayer - the Lord's Prayer - Our Father.

We are to pray this prayer every day and shape our lives according to it. Blessed and happy is the person in whose life all seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer are fulfilled!

In the Gospel, the Lord Jesus teaches us to pray always; prayers submitted to the will of the Father; prayers for enemies. Prayer is not difficult. Even a small child can pray.

And yet Saint Paul the Apostle tells us that without the help of the Holy Spirit we cannot pray - truly pray. One of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit is piety - the ability to pray. You have to ask for this gift and open yourself to it.

The books of Scripture, especially the Book of Psalms, teach us how to pray. Written centuries

ago, they remain a living and contemporary prayer for each of us.

We can learn prayer from Our Lady, from the saints, and from people who received the gift of prayer from God. Parents have a duty to teach their children to pray. The grace of the sacrament of marriage helps them.

When is our prayer good?

When assessing prayer, we can't be guided by our feelings. Sometimes it seems to us that our prayer is unsuccessful, sometimes we're satisfied with it. However, remember that these feelings may be very unreliable.

Our changing feelings are not important, what is important is God's judgment: whether our prayer can please God. A good prayer is faithful - that is, I pray it every day; continually - that is, not to get discouraged; humbly - that is, I remember that here I am, a sinful and limited person, standing before a holy and incomprehensible God.

The Lord Jesus asks us to pray with faith and be open to the will of God, our Father.

What mistakes do we most often make in prayer?

We make a mistake if we do not do what is written above about good prayer. The Lord Jesus warns us not to approach prayer with a heart in which there is no forgiveness for our neighbour (cf. Mk 11:25) and no will for reconciliation (cf. Mt 5:24-25).

It is a great mistake in prayer not to seek God, but yourself, your own satisfaction, your purely earthly benefits. We are to pray for the sake of God, trying to submit as much as possible to His will and unite with it.

What are the types of prayer?

There is a prayer of request, conciliation, thanksgiving and praise. These last two are more difficult and less frequently practiced on earth, but they will be our only and constant prayer in heaven.

We're talking about the prayer of the Church, that is, liturgical prayer, and personal, "private" prayer, but it also has its important place in the Church. When praying individually, we can pray in our own words, but we can also - and should - use prayers practiced and written by saints or pious people endowed with the gift of prayer.

However, it must be remembered that these prayers can't be said only with the mouth. They must flow from our hearts. When praying, let's not use big words without any interior basis.

What does the liturgical prayer of the Church mean?

It is primarily the Mass and the Eucharist, but also the celebration of other holy sacraments, as well as the Liturgy of the Hours, consisting mainly of psalms. The most important parts of this liturgical prayer during the day are matins and vespers and the prayer before retiring - called compline.

The shape of these prayers is determined by the shepherds of the Church - the Pope and bishops. This is the official prayer of the Church and cannot be changed at will.

What can we pray for?

About everything that is good. Jesus says: "If you ask anything of the Father, he will give it to you in my name" (Jn 16:23).

However, we cannot limit our prayers to what is worldly. Of the seven requests of the *Our Father* prayer, only one - for daily bread - concerns material matters. Christ encourages us to ask

for the gifts of the Holy Spirit: " And I tell you, Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you... if you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:9, 13).

Why do we think some of our prayers remain unanswered?

There is no unanswered prayer, although there are prayers that do not fulfil our wishes.

God is Wisdom itself and Good itself. He looks not only at our life on this earth, but at the whole of our existence, which is eternal. The human soul does not die! Being only good, God does not give us while here on earth what could harm us, especially the life of grace in us, our soul, salvation.

God has eternity to accomplish the good that He intended for us and to satisfy our greatest and deepest desires.

We must also remember that God gave us free will. We are free beings. Therefore, God does not change the consequences of human actions just because we sometimes would like it to be that way.

If, for example, a student does not study but only prays that he will have a successful exam, this is not a prayer at all, but taking God's name in vain, which is prohibited by the second commandment.

When speaking about the fulfilment of our requests (cf. Jn 15:7), the Lord Jesus mentions two conditions.

The first: "if you abide in me" - the one who receives His Body, Holy Communion, abides in Christ - and the second condition: "if My words abide in you" - the word of God abides in us when we listen to and read the Holy Scripture, when we retain the knowledge we have learned and put it into practice.

Lord Jesus prayed only to God the Father. Why do we pray to Mary and the saints?

The Lord Jesus prayed to God the Father, who is both His and our Father. Coming to earth, He fulfilled the will of His Father. He did it out of love for Him and out of love for us.

Being in a relationship of love with the Father, He talked to Him, and the disciples, and other people observing this, could learn to pray in this way. The Gospels record the requests of various people addressed to Jesus - the Son of God. These requests were prayers.

Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between us humans and God the Father. When Jesus, our only Saviour, was dying on the cross, he gave us his Mother as our Mother.

It was Mary who asked for Christ's first miracle at Cana of Galilee. Being our Mother, she takes maternal care of everyone she knows, prays for us to God, reigning in heaven.

The saints, also, especially our patrons, standing before God in heaven, intercede for us. Face-to-face with God, with our worries in mind and hearing our requests, and seeing them in "God's way", and praying constantly, they unite themselves to our requests, somehow "straightening them out" so that they are consistent with God's will and bring us the greatest good. When we pray "to" the saints, we are actually praying for their intercession before God.

Why do we need to pray and take time to pray?

Prayer is one of the most important – if not the most important – matters in our lives. Without

prayer, no consciously living person will be saved. We cannot be saved by our own strength - we need God's grace to be saved.

Without turning to God every day, without meeting Him in prayer, none of us will be able to live in faith, hope and love - to be and remain a Christian.

An advent of the Spirit

I need someone else, someone different. Who?

Revelation, that is, watching and listening (i.e., vision and hearing) - this is the joy and happiness of Jesus' disciples, whom He himself reminds. Is this my happiness, my joy? And yet Jesus doesn't say that we will see, and hear in the future; it's for now. He also speaks to me as to His disciples - "happy the eyes that see what you see" (Lk 10:23) now they see, now they hear – in the present time. But what do I see and what do I hear?

Advent is a period of waiting – I can't really argue about this. However, does it have to last four Sundays and end with the Shepherd's Mass? Can it end earlier or last longer? Can't I celebrate Advent at a different time of the year? Of course – I can!

Advent is waiting for this - until I finally and really see and hear my God coming specifically and personally to me. How is this possible, how can it happen? Certainly not by my own power, perseverance or diligence. I need someone else, someone different. Who? The Holy Spirit! He reveals Jesus, allows Him to be known, and to experience who He really is and why He came, why He wants to be present in my life.

The advent of Israel and of Mary did not take place without the help and presence of the Holy Spirit. He came down to Mary (Lk 1:5), after all, He rested on the root of Jesse's stump. Without the Holy Spirit, my advent cannot be. So, I invite You, the Holy Spirit, into my advent. You lead me during this time, let me experience it. Let me accept Jesus. To hear and see ...

Prayer



Please pray for those who are sick, in need or have asked for our prayers:

Connie Graham, Lilian Cox, Sarah Carmichael, Ailsa Stewart, Meg Douglas (Mull), Doleen Durnin, and Russell Carroll.

Please remember in your prayers Fr. James Cattenach (1836), Ken McCoy (2020), May Dumigan (Islay, 2018) **and all whose anniversaries occur at this time.**

News and Events

Tea and coffee in the hall after Sunday Mass. Our visitors are most welcome to join us. Please do come.

Call for greenery: holly or evergreens please this week. Drop them off in the church porch, thanks.

Advent and Christmas liturgies: Vigil Mass: Every Saturday, 6.00pm
Sunday Mass: 10.00am

Rorate Mass (Vigil Mass) – Saturday 23rd December, 6.00pm

The "Shepherd's Mass", Christmas Eve, Sunday 24th, 9.00pm

The Mass of Christmas Day, Monday 25th, 10.00am

The second day of Christmas, Feast of St. Stephen, Tuesday 26th, 10.00am



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