

Parish OF THE ENGLISH MARTYRS Goring Way

19.12.2020

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Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No: 25287

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday	19 th	6.00 pm	George & Neta Roe RIP
Sunday	20 th	8.15am	The Parish
		10.30 am	Amelia MacDonald RIP
Monday	21 st	9.30 am	Toni Judd RIP
Tuesday	22 nd	9.30 am	Kathleen, James & William O'Toole RIP
		7.30 pm	Choir Practice
Wednesday	23 rd	9.30 am	Charlie Gillespie RIP
Christmas	24th	6.00 pm	The Parish
Eve		8.30 pm	Mike Steere RIP
Christmas	25th	8.15 am	Roger Davis RIP
Day		10.30 am	In Thanksgiving
Saturday	26 th	6.00 pm	Intention of Nora & Thomas O'Toole and Family
Sunday	27 th	8.15 am	The Parish
		10.30 am	Mary & Jack Haugh RIP



SATURDAY: Reconciliation: 10.15–10.45 am and 5.15 – 5.45 pm

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16, St Paul to Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3; Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 14-19; Luke 2:22-40

COLLECTIONS: Church: £435 Thank you for your generosity.

Contributions to the Christmas Crib will be sent to Christian Schools in the Holy Land

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: Peter Williams, Sister Raymond, Liz Harvey, Mick Brouder, John Smith, Father Chris Ingle, Eileen Beech, Ian Threlfall, Thomas Duggan, Len Argent, Sister Catherine Lai, Maithé Bennett, Justin Gould, Rose Little, Lelia Murray, Mary Murphy, Anne Steere, Anthony Canneaux, Lawrence Brownlee, Margaret Birch, Lita Yong, Patrick Ryan, Brenda Peazold, Mary Wessel, Gina Palermo, Elizabeth Hoskins, Joan Cutmore, Christine Watson, Gordon Milne, Alfred Deacon, Roni Horstead, Ronnie Tyler, Jenny Begley, Bill Hogg, Breda Schlimgen, Michaela Finn, Winifred Lyons, Yvette Allen, Kerry McStravick, Lydia Van Melsen

2. THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY and those whose anniversaries occur about now. Hetty Smith, Kathleen McDonagh, Margaret Turner, Mamie Devine, Lionel Foster, Eileen Oxendale, Peggy Moutrie, Patrick Taylor, Helena Sparrow, Margaret Goldsworthy, Jim Flynn, Joan Foley, Doris Cronan, *May they rest in peace and rise in glory*

3. YOUR OFFERINGS AT THE CHRISTMAS MASSES are your personal gift to Father Liam (Gift Aid applies). If you are not Gift Aiding, special envelopes are available in both porches that you might like to use to make your gift either beforehand or afterwards as we are unable to take up collections.

4. CRIB DONATIONS: We will be sending crib donations to Friends of the Holy Land. Every penny will help the poorest Christian families, especially in and around Bethlehem, the West Bank, Gaza and Israel, with education, employment, health or housing costs and initiatives. FHL is non-political and ecumenical. As we are unable to have our crib this year there is a basket in the West Porch for your donations.

5. ALL VIGIL MASS TICKETS HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED. TO OBTAIN A TICKET FOR THE 10.30 am MASS ON CHRISTMAS DAY: please complete a small slip with your name, telephone number and hand the slip to the Steward who will write the ticket number (s) on the slip and issue you with your ticket(s) – everyone requires a ticket including children. The slips will be used to compile lists to be used at the appropriate Christmas Mass. The tickets must be handed in at the Vigil Mass and the 10.30 Mass and are not inter-changeable..

6. THE REPOSITORY will be open following each Mass this weekend for the sale of Christmas Cards and small Christmas gifts

7. USED POSTAGE STAMPS FOR THE MISSIONS: As the Christmas Cards start arriving please remember to rescue all those beautiful stamps, leaving about half an inch of envelope around the edges, (no more than this please as it makes them expensive to forward to the Missionary Society) and put them in the box in the Porch

8. HOME START: This Christmas is certainly going to be different and so Home Start Arun, Worthing and Adur are having to adapt. As in previous years, they still want to make sure every child has a present to open, to provide a Christmas food hamper to each family, and to continue their support through to the end of 2020...thus ensuring some festive joy. To reduce the number of 'hands' touching children's gifts and Christmas food hampers they plan to give the task of buying and wrapping to one member of staff and a small team of volunteers. This means that we will not be able to put gifts for the children under the Christmas Tree in church but they do still need our support – financially. To do this please go on line to www.cafonline.org to Find a Charity. Enter HomeStart Arun, Worthing and Adur and follow the instructions. In the 'Add instructions for this Donation' box please mention English Martyrs Church and send them a Christmas message. We have Gift Aid envelopes available in the church for those who prefer to donate in cash or by cheque.

9. MARY'S MEALS: There will be a special collection in the New Year.

10. TURNING TIDES: Your donations are always very gratefully received. Many thanks for your continuing support

FATHER LIAM SAYS: What will Christmas be like this year? This is the question everyone has been asking for many weeks now. There is much disappointment at the prospect of curtailed family gatherings – or none at all – this year. So many people won't be able – or feel able – to come to Mass on Christmas Day, perhaps for the first time that they can remember.

We know that while the way we celebrate Christmas may be different this year, the reason we celebrate remains the same. God sent his Son to live among us, to breathe the air we breathe and to know intimately the pain of human suffering. We pray our very different circumstances this Christmas may enable us to listen to God in new and surprising ways so that the light of Christ may shine through the kindness we show to others and that we receive from them.

God has given us the precious gift of his Son. He has also given us the wonderful world in which we live. We are charged with passing on this beautiful, vibrant and fruitful planet to future generations. There is a great danger that this tremendous treasure that has been entrusted to us will become irredeemably damaged. It is a vast, ancient and delightful garden that countless millions of people have enjoyed before us – some more responsibly than others. This paradise is God's gift to his family – a family that he cherishes equally, and he wants his family to cherish one another and the family home that he provided for them. The planet is enormous and so is God's family, who generation after generation have made their home there and left their footprints behind. Some have embellished his garden which is the common home not just for humanity but for all God's creatures. Many have knowingly or unknowingly ravaged and damaged it. The extent of the damage has become more and more evident but the exploitation continues and the health of our environment is now becoming critical. We are the people who currently inhabit this wondrous world. We will, like all who have been here before us, eventually leave the stage and be followed by another generation of our family. When we made our appearance on this arena we carried nothing with us. When we leave we will bring nothing with us. What we do while we are here is vitally important – not only for us and for all our loved ones but also for future generations. We must respect the precious space we occupy and seek to repair and restore it rather than further degrade it. We have been gifted not only by the Creator but by those now departed the scene who have devised all manner of means to make our life comfortable and profitable! We can now see the unintended consequences of some of their actions. We understand our universe a bit better now due to the accumulated wisdom of our forebears. We know the steps that are necessary not to repeat past mistakes but to make better provision for those following in our steps. This is a gigantic but essential task.

There are other huge challenges facing us as we try to cope with the consequences of the pandemic and the uncertain economic scenario before us. But we cannot relax our efforts to look after the environment. We have seen on our television screens some of the devastation suffered by our planet especially in the recent past. In Australia the bush fires of 2019 and early 2020, exacerbated by climate change, burned over 1,900,000 hectares. About 3 billion Koala bears, kangaroo's and other animals were killed or displaced. Scientists estimate that 2.4 billion reptiles, 180 million birds and 51 million frogs were killed or displaced. The devastation in Australia was not all due to irresponsible behaviour by the Australians. What we do here affects climate change around the world. Some of the least industrialised countries suffer enormously as a result of the industrial policies of rich countries.

Prior to the election of Pope Francis there was in the Catholic church very little discussion about caring for creation and the importance of bio-diversity. His talk, on the occasion of his installation as Pope, was to a large extent devoted to the importance of protecting the environment. And there was his great call to action in 'Laudato Si'. He reminded us that 'each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know and which our children will never see because they have been lost forever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity. Because of us thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence nor convey their message to us. We have no such right!' He says that 'the universe as a whole, in all its manifold relationships, shows forth the inexhaustible riches of God.'

At this time of year especially we notice the amount of plastic containers and non-biodegradable objects of all kinds as we go about our Christmas shopping. Children are among the keenest of people to do something to make a difference in our way of doing things. Parents, I hope, engage with their children in discussing these matters and discovering ways to clear up the mess. The future of all living things depends on it. Devise a plan in readiness for the New Year! Speak to your friends about it!

