

## Fourth Sunday of Advent/ Christmas Eve/ Day - 24/25th December 2023

### Christmas Message

With great joy, at this Christmastide, we celebrate the coming of God among us – “robed in flesh the Godhead see! Hail the Incarnate Deity!” He Who made the Universe now sleeps as a helpless Baby in the arms of His Mother, Mary. With the astonished shepherds and the worship of the Wise Men we draw near to the Crib of our Infant King. May the blessings of the Christ Child rain down upon us, our families and friends, over this Christmas Season and may God bless us every one.

**Mass Intentions this Christmas Weekend** The Fourth Sunday of Advent: Saturday 4-00 p.m. ( St.John Kemble) Parish & People; 6-00p.m. June & David Vaudin ( Sp.Int.) ( Parish Guild ); Sunday 10-30 a.m. Kathryn Woolley (RIP) ( Sheila & David ). **Sunday Christmas Eve:** St. John Kemble 3-30 p.m. Christmas Carols – 4-00 p.m. Parish & People; St. Joseph’s 6-00 p.m. Vigil Mass: Joan, Harry & Bryan (RIP) ( Babs); 10-00 p.m. “Midnight Mass”: Annie Halloran & Kevin Halloran (RIP). **Monday Christmas Day** St. Joseph’s 10-30 a.m. Deceased Members of the Grant Family (RIP) ( Robert).

**Weekday Mass Intentions** Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> ( St. Stephen ) St. Joseph’s 9-30 a.m. Bernard Allen (RIP) ( Elias Family ); Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> ( Holy Innocents )St. John Kemble 11-00 a.m. Jonathan Bown ( Sp. Int. ).

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“ Renew Your wonders in this our day, as by a New Pentecost. Grant to Your Church that, being of one mind and steadfast in prayer with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and following the lead of blessed Peter, it may advance the reign of our Divine Saviour, the reign of truth and justice, the reign of love and peace. Come Holy Spirit, in Your power and might to renew the face of the earth”. ( Pope St.John XXIII )

**Prayer for Ukraine** ( from the Bishops ‘Conference ) *“Mary, Our Lady of Kiev, Mother of God, We ask you to intercede for the people of Ukraine, For their government and all who suffer as a result of war. Be with them as you stood beside your Son, Suffering on the Cross at Calvary. Give them strength and courage, Through faith, hope and justice. May we, in our turn, Support them through prayer and generosity, That lives may be saved, the injured healed, that the dead may rest in peace, And that war will end in peace”.*

**Mass Intentions next Sunday** ( 31st December – The Holy Family ) Saturday 4-00 p.m. ( St. John Kemble) Parish & People; 6-00 p.m. (St. Joseph’s ) Fr. William Cownley (RIP) ( SPCD ); Sunday 10-30 a.m. Bernard Allen ( RIP) ( Elias Family).

**Readers: This Sunday** (24<sup>th</sup>) 6-00 p.m. Gerald Smith; 10-30 a.m. Sheila Williams. **Christmas Eve** 6-00 p.m. Sheila Williams; 10-00 p.m. Volunteer please **Christmas Day** 10-30 a.m. Volunteer please. **Next Sunday** (31<sup>st</sup>) 6-00 p.m. Patrick McAteer; 10-30 a.m. Peter Buckingham. **Please take the opportunity to arrive early and look at (and prepare) the readings beforehand. Thank you.**

**Candles:** Sacred Heart – Peter Healey (RIP); Our Lady – Yolanda Jones ( Sp. Int. ); St. Joseph – The Holy Land.

**Anniversaries:** Of your charity, remember in prayer those whose anniversaries occur at this time; Paddy O’Reilly (2005); Rose Hopstroff (2007); Bernard Allen (2003); Lilian Lowry (2015); Maureen Pitt (2021). Patricia Winter (2003); Arthur Wheatley ( 2007); Lucy Wiltshire (2009); *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, And let light perpetual shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*

**Cancer Challenge Singers** Many thanks to the Cancer Challenge Singers for a lovely Concert of Readings and Carols which also raised funds of £265 for church funds. Thank you to Geraint and Angela for arranging this.

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**A gentle reminder (!)** – please observe and respect a prayerful silence before Mass to prepare yourself for the celebration of Mass. Loud conversations are disturbing ( and upsetting ) for those who may come early to church precisely to have a time of quiet reflection (including the parish priest! ) who do not want to overhear personal conversations about family, friends, future plans etc! Plenty of time to exchange news and information after the end of Mass. Thank you.

**Mass Intentions** Please note that weekend and weekday Mass intentions are now reserved into **February 2024**. Please be thinking ahead by several months if you would like a Mass intention for a loved one on a particular day/date – even so, some dates are reserved a year ahead and if so Mass will be said on the nearest date available to the request. Thank you.

**Christmas Crib** Donations to the Christmas Crib this year will be divided between the work of Caritas ( Cardiff and Menevia ) and Christians living in the Holy Land ( Friends of the Holy Land and Knights and Dames of the Holy Sepulchre ).

**Patricia Cumow (RIP)** Please remember Patricia in your prayers and the family at this time. Patricia’s Funeral Service will take place at Margam Crematorium on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January at 12-45 p.m. *Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, And let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen.*

**School Caretaker** The School is looking to appoint a new caretaker from the beginning of January for 15 hours per week. If you are interested or know of someone please contact the school on 635099.

**The Parish S.V.P. Group** would like to thank fellow parishioners for their very generous response to their Christmas Appeal.

**Last Sunday’s Collection:** St. Joseph’s £369-61 ( plus Direct Debits ) – a donation of £70. Many thanks. St John Kemble – £57-00. Many thanks.

**Legion of Mary** Every Tuesday evening at 4-45 p.m. in the Hall. New members very welcome. Please come along.

**Parish Coffee Morning** Every Thursday from 10-00a.m. to 11-00 a.m.

**WARNING** Please note, cars parked in front of the garages, opposite the church gates, have been smeared in a sticky oily substance over the door handles and windscreens. Obviously this is a criminal offence and I have suggested to those affected that they report the matter to the police.

**ST.JOSEPH’S PRIMARY SCHOOL** If you have a child over 2 years of age or are new to the area and are looking for a school – look no further! St Joseph’s has a loving, caring ethos to bring out the full potential of your child. Please contact the school on 01639 635099 for further details

**The Sick and Housebound** Please continue to remember in your prayers all those who are sick and housebound, those in hospital and in our local care homes. Especially at this time, George Johnson, Cheryl Ford, Julie, Stephen & Jason Saunders, Yolanda Jones, Elizabeth Fluck, Lorna and Joe O’Brien, Betty Hopkins, Rose Williams, Margaret Jeffrey, Marion Brocksopp., Marlene John, Pat Day, Daniel John, George McIntyre, David Reynolds, Adrian Macpherson-Jones, Roger Horton, Kath Davies. If you would like others to be remembered in this prayer list (with their permission) please supply their names.

**PRAYER AFTER MASS** *St.Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our defence against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all other evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen*

**TO CONTACT THE PARISH/FATHER NEIL** - The Presbytery, Hillside Lane, Neath, SA11 1TG. 01639 643323  
Parish Website – [www.catholicchurchneath.org.uk](http://www.catholicchurchneath.org.uk)

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