



# ST BONAVENTURE'S NEWSLETTER

Advent Week 1  
1st December  
2019

A Community of Missionary  
Disciples With Contemplative Hearts

Writing or speaking about abortion can be very challenging for a priest. I think we are very aware that there will be women around us who have had abortions and we don't want them to feel judged by what we say. We are also aware that many people in society today link abortion to women's rights and if we speak against abortion we are somehow speaking against women, which we are not. This is probably why many priests rarely talk about abortion. My intention is to be neither judgemental or anti-woman but to ask a fundamental question for Christians today: Can you vote for any of our political parties if you are against abortion? My hope is to provoke thought and conversation, I have no interest in influencing who you vote for.

As a Christian I think we have a specific calling to oppose abortion. This is for 3 reasons: 1. God is the author of human life, we are made in His image and likeness, only He has the power to end it. Jesus died for all humanity thus each life has been bought by his precious blood. Jesus instructs us that what we do for the least of his brethren we do to him. (Mt 25)

As a Christian it seems impossible for us to accept the legality of abortion. If you do believe abortion should be legal your argument cannot be based on either biblical or Christian principles. As Christians we live in a culture where abortion is normal and seen as a human right, it is extremely difficult for us to argue against legal abortion because arguments for it are often made aggressively and repeatedly by different groups in our society. To oppose it is to be truly counter cultural, to stand out as different, maybe as odd, or as unpopular. It seems that abortion is a logical consequence for a culture that accepts contraception as a normal part of sexual activity. The use of contraception in its very nature means that a couple are seeking intimacy while trying to nullify the natural God given outcome of that intimate act. They are denying the purpose of that act and therefore if the contraception fails it makes perfect sense to want to erase the life that has been accidentally created as a consequence, it is simply a mistake that needs to be corrected. So for the pragmatic materialist society we live in abortion is normal. For us it is a denial of the plan of God.

With this in mind, is it possible to vote for any of the political parties at the forthcoming election if you hold the Christian view of abortion? Many people say that their vote is never cast with one issue in mind and of course that makes perfect sense but some of the most popular parties are supporting either a relaxing of abortion laws or helping to make it more accessible in African countries. Of course you can take the view that if a particular candidate is either opposed to abortion or not in favour of any relaxation of our current abortion laws then in good conscience you can vote for them. But the inescapable truth is that even if that candidate is opposed to abortion them winning a seat can give their party power to then increase the abortion provision in our country thus endangering more lives of the most voiceless and powerless in our society.

Egerton Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8HP  
Tel: 0117 942 4448  
bristol.stbonaventure@cliftondiocese.com  
<https://stbonsbristol.co.uk/>

 @stbonsbristol  @stbonsbristol  
 [www.facebook.com/stbonsbristol](http://www.facebook.com/stbonsbristol)  
 St Bons Bristol #frtomtalks

Parish Priest: Fr. Tom Smith  
Parish Office Hours: Monday  
& Friday 9:30am-12:30pm.  
Wednesday 11am-1pm.

As Jesus says, what you do for the least of my brethren you do to me, is there any more 'least' in our society than a voiceless, defenceless child in the womb? As a Christian who believes in the inviolability of all human life is it possible to give your vote to any party who wishes to promote easier access to abortion in our society? If you would like to become more informed I can recommend the Right to Life Uk website as a useful source.  
Fr Tom

## OUR PARISH

**Parish Survey – Called to Serve:** Pope Francis said, “The world tells us to seek success, power and money; God tells us to seek humility, service and love.” So is our parish serving you, and are you serving the parish? To help us understand our parish community, we have organised a survey. This will be an opportunity for everyone to share and have a voice, and to help shape the vision and future for St Bons. To complete, click here: <http://bit.do/St-Bons-Survey>

**Please Pray For:** Ray Gunning. Anne James. Bob James. Veronica. Anna McGinn. Nachtter Kaur. Kathleen Ward. Pat Kissane. Reena James. If you would like to be named in the Newsletter, please contact the Parish Office to give your consent so it can be recorded.

**Adoration:** Adoration will not take place on the 23 and 24th December, 30th and 31st December. It will resume on the 6 th January 2020.

## OUR COMMUNITY

**livesimply Thought for the Week:** Advent is a time when the Church stands up in the face of the busyness of life and asks us to slow down, be still, and be quiet. We are to keep awake, looking and listening for the God who is always coming to us. We look for the Christ in unexpected places – in the stuff of everyday life, in the poor, the hungry, and the needy. For daily inspiration try <https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Advent-Calendar> or <http://www.southwarkdsc.org.uk/>

**St Bons School:** The Governing Body of St Bonaventure’s Catholic Primary School are consulting on their admission arrangements for the academic year 2021-22. Draft admissions arrangements are available on the School website [http://www.st-bonaventures.bristol.sch.uk/web/admissions\\_202122/429837](http://www.st-bonaventures.bristol.sch.uk/web/admissions_202122/429837). You are invited to provide comments for consideration on by 9 December 2019. Final arrangements will be determined by 28 February 2020. Comments should be sent to Alexandra Casley [clerk.st.bonaventures@bristol-schools.uk](mailto:clerk.st.bonaventures@bristol-schools.uk) or St Bonaventure’s Catholic Primary School, Egerton Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8HP.

**HCPT 200 Club:** Many thanks to all those who have renewed their membership. Congratulations to the winners of the November draw. £60 Agnes Mc Mahon (65) , £25 Gill and Gordon Nicholas (22) , £10 Des and Val Anglin (3).

ST BONAVENTURE'S CHURCH AND THE  
RENEWAL GOSPEL CHOIR INVITE YOU TO  
CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

*Joyful  
Joyful!*

FRIDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2019 7:00 P.M.  
ST BONS CHURCH, EGERTON ROAD, BS7 8HP

**GOSPEL CONCERT**

WITH DRINKS & REFRESHMENTS, ALL WELCOME!



### TWEET OF THE WEEK



Portsmouth Diocese @PortsmouthRC · 20h

Tomorrow is #RedWednesday! Please consider how you can support @acn\_uk '... did you know that over the last hundred years more men and women have died for their Christian faith than in the whole of Church history?' @BishopEgan

### SAINT OF THE WEEK

#### St. Nicholas

Nicholas was a 4th century bishop of Turkey. He was reputed to have given 3 bags of gold to 3 girls for their marriage dowries in order to save them from prostitution. He is one of the most venerated saints in both East and West.



### WHAT'S ON?

**Art Club:** The Art Club continues on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month 10-11:30am. All welcome to come and do some art or play board games, puzzles etc, have a drink and a chat.

**Friday Soup Lunch:** All are very welcome to come for a chat and to share a simple lunch. Fridays 12pm in the St Bon's Presbytery. A donation is made to charity.

**Mass with the Anointing of the Sick:** You are warmly invited to this Annual Mass on Sunday 8th Dec. at 2.00pm, whether as someone looking forward to receiving this wonderful sacrament, or someone in support of a family member or friend seeking the sacrament.

**Christmas Tea for Senior Citizens:** This Opportunity to get together with each other after the Anointing Mass is a chance to enjoy one another's company and savour a glass of mulled wine and "light bites" and maybe even win a Raffle Prize!

**Christmas Gospel Concert:** Friday 13th December at 7.00pm with the Renewal Gospel Choir, with drinks and refreshments.

**Children's Nativity:** December 21st 2.00pm. Children to come dressed as nativity characters! Followed by children party, mulled wine and mince pies in presbytery. All welcome.

**Alpha:** Our next Alpha will start on 15th January 2020, please contact Oliver on 07879023709 or email at [oliver@oliverr.co.uk](mailto:oliver@oliverr.co.uk) for more information.

## CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

**Christmas Gospel Concert**  
*with the Renewal Gospel Choir*  
Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December, 7.00pm

**Children's Nativity followed by Christmas Party**  
Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2.00pm

**Christmas Eve Mass**  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December, 6.00pm

**Midnight Mass**  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December, 12.00am

**Mass of Christmas Morning**  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December, 9.30am

## YEAR OF PRAYER

### **FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

As we begin this Year of Prayer we are immediately drawn into the Gospel of St Luke. At Christmas we will hear of the birth of Christ but this Sunday we listen to some of the final words of the Gospel when Jesus speaks of the end of the world 'on earth nations in agony.....when the powers of the heaven will be shaken'. It reminds us of the twofold nature of Advent. We are called to prepare for the celebration of Jesus' nativity but also to make way for the second coming of Christ at the end of time. The two comings of Christ go together and if we have accepted the first we have nothing to fear from the second. The word of Jesus is to trust in him. 'When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.'

## LITURGY SCHEDULE

### Advent Week 1 (Year A)

**Sunday 1st December**  
**First Sunday of Advent (Year A)**  
9.30am Mass *Alexander*  
*Roylance-Smith R.I.P.*  
6:00pm Mass *Ray Rigg R.I.P.*

**Monday 2nd December**  
**Weekday of Advent**  
9.00am Morning Prayer  
9.15am Mass *Martin Castle*

**Tuesday 3rd December**  
**Memorial of Saint Francis Xavier, Priest**  
9.00am Morning Prayer  
9.15am Mass *Alan Smith R.I.P.*

**Wednesday 4th December**  
**Memorial of Saint Osmund, Bishop**  
9.00am Morning Prayer  
9.15am Mass *Eileen Hanley R.I.P.*

**Thursday 5th December**  
**Weekday of Advent**  
No Mass

**Friday 6th December**  
**Weekday of Advent**  
7.00pm Mass *Mike Hanley*  
Holy Hour

**Saturday 7th December**  
**Memorial of Saint Ambrose, Bishop,  
Doctor of the Church**  
6.00pm (*Vigil*) Mass *Mary Taylor*  
& *Alan Taylor R.I.P.*  
**Sacrament of Reconciliation:**  
Saturday 5.00pm-5.40pm

**Adoration:** Monday at 10.00am-10.00pm  
and Tuesday 10.00am-8.00pm