



ST BONAVENTURE'S NEWSLETTER

Advent Week 4
22nd December
2019

A Community of Missionary
Disciples With Contemplative Hearts

I would like to wish you a peaceful and prayerful Christmas. Prayerful, because without prayer we struggle to fully discern the meaning of Christmas, which can be obscured by the glitz and glam of our celebrations. Prayer enables us to connect with our God who lies hidden, under the tinsel and lights. The birth of Jesus is a call to move beyond those things that excite us to a quieter place where we can encounter the baby who lies in the feeding trough in the small cave that was a stable in Bethlehem. This Christmas why not take some time to pray before the crib scene in our church or spend a little time reading the scriptures (Matthew and Luke's gospels) which recount the birth of Jesus. If we do this we can be drawn deeper into the mystery of God who became man for us - who became a baby for us. If we do this we will know his joy and peace this Christmas.

A parish is a community gathered together by God to grow in faith in him. A parish is made up of members who by their example want to help others know God and also want to learn from others in the community. It is my prayer that our faith may help us sense the presence of Christ in our midst this Christmas and help us to share his love with those we meet. The growing challenge of our time is that we respond to the call of faith by sacrificing ourselves for the sake of the kingdom of God. In this secular age it is easy to forget that God is the almighty, the creator to whom we owe all things. It can be easy to put him after our families or our work, fitting him in around the demands those bring. If we put him first those parts of our life will thrive, but it is a challenge to put him first. I hope the new year ahead will be an opportunity for all of us in our community of faith at St. Bon's to deepen our relationship with God, personally and as a community. That might mean rearranging some of our priorities, becoming more alive to faith and to what God has in store for our lives. I believe that God wants our community of faith, our parish, to be a beacon of his light and grace, touching the countless lives of those who come seeking him in our midst.

I would like to say a massive thank you, firstly, to those of you who work so hard in the parish to make it so wonderful and to get all the many jobs done. Then I would like to say a thank you to those who come here regularly, each week or when you can, you are my family and it is a privilege to serve you! I would also like to say welcome to you if you are visiting us this Christmas, it is wonderful to have you with us. I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and I pray that it may be for you a time to encounter the baby in the manger, and to know his peace and love in your heart!

Fr Tom



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 St Bons Bristol #frtomtalks

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

OUR PARISH

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

Donations by Standing Order: 40% of donors have now updated their arrangements as requested by the Diocese. Thankyou, this is good news. But there is fantastic news too! On average, those donors have increased their donations by 15%. So many extra thanks to all!

Meeting: There will be a meeting of all our current Extra-Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion on Saturday, January 11th at 2pm. This will be to discuss the Ministry in the parish moving forward.

Our Parish: A huge thank you to all those people who helped to make the Anointing of the Sick Mass such a beautiful occasion where many people came to receive this precious sacrament. Also to those parishioners who worked so hard to ensure that the Senior Citizens Christmas Tea that followed was a welcome chance to get together and socialise in a great festive atmosphere.

Gospel Concert Flyers: What a fantastic response from those of you who risked broken nails and trapped fingers delivering thousands of Flyers through Bishopston's letterboxes! We certainly appreciated your willingness to take on this task and thank you so much in anticipation of more deliveries to come.

OUR COMMUNITY

livesimply Thought for the Week: 'When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and the princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flocks, the work of Christmas begins: To find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among people, to make music in the heart.' SONG OF THE ANGELS by Howard Thurman, Fellowship of Reconciliation, USA.

Catechists' Formation Course: The next round of catechists' formation starts in January 2020 and is designed for the formation of the catechists of our diocese. The course is aimed at forming new catechists as well as supporting and refreshing existing and "well-seasoned" catechists. This next series is to be hosted at St Osmund's, Salisbury. The course will run on a Wednesday evening, once a month through the year. Starting Wednesday 29 January, the course includes the diocesan day gathering on Saturday 27 June 2020. Further information: <https://cliftondiocese.com/departments/adult-education/evangelisation-and-formation/catechists-formation/>

ALPHA

Our next Alpha will start on 15th January 2020, please contact Oliver on 07879023709 or email at oliver@oliverrrs.co.uk for more information. To register, click here: <http://tiny.cc/AlphaStBons>



SAINT OF THE WEEK

St Stephen



St Stephen was one of the seven Deacons appointed by the apostles. He was also the first Christian martyr. He is the patron saint of Altar Servers, bricklayers, casket makers and deacons and his feast day is celebrated on December 26.

TWEET OF THE WEEK



Cardinal Dolan
@CardinalDolan

Next week, Christmas Day, we'll recall with joy that God did show up, born in a crib at Bethlehem, announced by the angels as our Lord, Savior, and Messiah.

6:00 pm · 19 Dec 2019 · Buffer

40 Retweets 343 Likes

YEAR OF PRAYER

The Diocese's Department for Adult Education share these reflections.

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

When families are expecting the birth of a child there is great anticipation and the nearer the time comes, the greater the excitement. The birth of a child is always a sign and message of hope, a new life is coming, a new future. As we approach Christmas day, we remember that Christ came into our world as a vulnerable baby, bringing new life and new hope, God with us, Emmanuel. Christmas reminds us that God did not stay at a distance from us but entered into the depths of our world and our lives, coming to us in the human form of a tiny, vulnerable baby. In Jesus we have a God who so loves us so much that he wants to walk with us, sharing our very humanity in all its messiness. This Christmas as we remember the birth, let us also remember that Jesus comes to us again, each and every day, not as a baby but the one who loves us with an infinite love and a deep desire for our genuine and complete happiness, which lasts much longer than one day.

WHAT'S ON?

Art Club: The Art Club continues on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month 10-11:30am. All welcome to anyone who enjoys drawing or painting and to 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.

Praying the Rosary: The monthly Parish Rosary Revival Prayer Group meet on the first Tuesday of every month and our next meeting will be on Tuesday 7th January.

Alpha: Our next Alpha will start on 15th January 2020, please contact Oliver on 07879023709 or email at oliver@oliverrrs.co.uk for more information.

St Bons Quiz Night: New date coming soon in the new year!

PICTURE OF THE WEEK



Well done to St Bons Brownies who have been out and about singing carols and spreading the message of Jesus' birth. Thank you to everyone in Birchall Rd, Kings Ave and Cornwall Rd who opened their front door to listen and contributed to HCPT.

Photo: Angela Parry

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Advent Week 4 (Year A)

Sunday 22nd December
Fourth Sunday of Advent

9.30am Mass *Pro Pop*
6.00pm Mass

Monday 23rd December
Weekday of Advent II (O Emmanuel)

9.00am Morning Prayer
9.15am Mass
9.45am Confessions

Tuesday 24th December
Christmas

6.00pm Mass (Vigil)

Wednesday 25th December
SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Holy Day of Obligation
12.00am Midnight Mass
9.30am Mass of Christmas Day

Thursday 26th December
Feast of St Stephen
10.00am Mass

Friday 27th December
Feast of St John
No Mass

Saturday 28th November
Feast of the Holy Innocents
5.00pm Confessions
6.00pm Mass *Bill Tully R.I.P.*