



The Catholic Parishes of St Augustine of Canterbury, Meir St Filumena, Caverswall & St Mary, Cresswell

17th December 2017

3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT – Year B

49/2017/ks

St Augustine's (for Parish Office): 146 Sandon Road, Meir, Stoke-on-Trent. ST3 7DF

St Filumena's: Blythe Bridge Road, Caverswall. ST11 9EA

St Mary's: Cresswell Old Lane, Cresswell. ST11 9RF

Parish email: augustineandmary@hotmail.com:

website: www.augustineandmary.org.uk or www.stfilumena.org.uk

Parish Priest: Fr Kazimierz Stefek *OSPPE* - tel. (office): 01782 313734

Assistant Priest: Fr Paweł Przybyszewski *OSPPE*

Parish Deacon (Meir/Cresswell): Rev Trevor Borthwick (retired) tel.: (home) 01782 388416

Parish Deacon (Caverswall): Rev Peter Bowyer - tel.: (home) 01782 393892

Administration and Social Events: Gabrielle Halliday - mobile: 07764 245344

Safeguarding representatives: (for Meir & Cresswell) Barbara Kitson - mobile: 07796 337075

(for Caverswall) Fiona Richardson - mobile: 07580 551894

SUNDAY REFLECTION

We are in the Holy Season of Advent and today is its 3rd Sunday. While the first two Sundays of the Advent Season draw our attention to the eschatological coming of the Lord, the third Sunday focuses our attention much more on the Lord already present among us. In the old Latin Liturgy, today was known as 'Gaudete (Rejoice!) Sunday', and rose vestments were worn to signal an alleviation in the penitential character of the season. The Mass formularies today still retain the call to 'rejoice', and the source and cause of that rejoicing is clearly the presence of God in our midst. Having passed the midpoint of Advent, our joy gets more and more intense as we advance in our journey of faith. And so, we kind of take a slight break from the purple of Advent, and we light the rose coloured candle, the 3rd in the series in the Advent wreath, and use rose vestments symbolizing our hope and our joy as we await the coming of our Saviour at Christmas. We rejoice because the day of salvation is near.

The Scripture Readings of today are a hymn to joy of salvation and are the closest we have to the joy of Christmas itself. They all give the message of hope that fills us with joy. The traditional antiphon or entrance hymn sets the theme: "Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice! The Lord is near". The Prophet Isaiah in the 1st Reading tells us that he is sent by God to announce the joyful message of salvation to the people of Israel, to a people in bondage and he says: "I rejoice heartily in the Lord, in my God is the joy of my soul". Our Responsorial Psalm, taking a different turn this Sunday, is taken from St. Luke's Gospel rather than from the body of Psalms in the Old Testament. And this is 'The Magnificat'. Mary proclaims this moving Canticle out of the joy she has in visiting her cousin Elizabeth who gave homage to our Lord in the womb of the Blessed Virgin: "My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour". We use these beautiful words of Mary to express our joy as we, like Mary wait for the birth of our Saviour. St. Paul, in the 2nd Reading from his 1st Letter to the Thessalonians exhorts us to "Rejoice always. Pray unceasingly. In all circumstances give thanks". But, what about our Gospel Reading from St. John? There are no words in it like 'glad tidings', 'rejoice heartily', 'spirit rejoices', or 'rejoice always'. What does it have to do with joy? It's just about the unbelieving Levites and Pharisees interrogating John the Baptist to find out who he is? But, therein lies the answer: Belief. Faith. Listen again to the beginning of our Gospel passage: "A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him". So, the thread of joy continues right through to our Gospel after all. It is faith in Jesus Christ, the faith for which John paved the way, that will end in unimaginable Joy.

Advent is a time of joyful anticipation and a time of preparation. It is a time to joyfully look forward to the coming of Christmas, to the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ into our lives and to prepare ourselves to receive the great gift that he offers us - the gift of the 'robe of salvation' that heals our poverty of spirit, our broken hearts, and our bondage to sinfulness. And this is the Good News of today.

NEWS FROM THE PARISHES

Bible Study meets on Thursdays at 19:30 in the St Augustine's Presbytery. We spend time looking at the Mass Readings for the following Sunday – why not join us?

Journey in Faith – This course is for those who are interested in learning more about the Catholic Faith. Sessions are on Thursdays in term time at 19:30 in St. Augustine's Sacristy. Next session, Thursday 4th January

Children in non-Catholic Schools requiring preparation for the Sacraments and **non-Catholic children in Catholic Schools** wishing to become Catholics. Next session, Saturday 6th January, after 9:30 Mass in St. Augustine's Presbytery. For more information please contact Gabrielle Halliday on 07764 245344.

Preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism will take place at St. Augustine's on January 10th & 24th at 19:00. Parents and Godparents are invited. Please inform a member of clergy after Mass on Sunday if you wish to attend.

Padre Pio Prayer Group meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 14:30 in the St Augustine's sacristy.

50/50 Club Draw: winners in December: 1st Prize – K. Oakley; 2nd Prize – D. Gillen; 3rd Prize P. Murray. Well done! Congratulations! Collecting money now for 2018 – only £12 per number for 12 monthly draws – see Albert Griffin.

St Augustine's Christmas Pre-Cracker - Many thanks to all those who contributed towards the success of the Pre-Christmas Cracker Evening last Friday, which raised the grand total of £1,300. Thanks the team who worked so hard to plan and prepare, those who came along despite the bad weather, and those who donated cash, prizes and food and the school staff and P.T.A who organised fund raising activities for the children. Everyone agreed that it was a most enjoyable social evening as well as a successful fund raiser.

St Filumena - Tote winners for November: 1st Prize – June Jarville, 2nd Prize – Louise Eagle, 3rd Prize – Pat Bowen. Congratulations!

CAFOD - There will be a second collection on Sunday, 17th December at our churches for CAFOD gifts. CAFOD supports some of the poorest people in the world. By joining together we could send a gift such as water for a family for £33, a healthy Mum and Baby pack for £30 or immunisations. For children. You can find more information about CAFOD, the work it is undertaking at the moment or order your own individual CAFOD gifts, on their website, www.cafod.org.uk. Thank you for your very generous support for CAFOD throughout the year.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS - there is a collecting plate at all churches for donations, please.

St Mary's Carol Service on Sunday 17th December at 17:00 with mince pies and mulled wine.

St. Augustine's Penitential Service with several priests on Monday 18th December at 19:00.

PLEASE PRAY

For those who are ill, especially: Hollie Tomkinson, Susan Brady, Ursula Grocott, Kathleen Smith, Sarah Stevenson, Dorothy Swift, Josie Coates, Arthur Rushton, Mrs. Burton, Cekeera Grocott, Olivia Killeen, Frederick Blaize, Jean Dawson, Michele Yon, Dorothy Vasey, Molly Blurton, Margaret Smith, Betty Walton, Margaret Stones, Marjorie Birks, Vincent Coleman, Dorothy Tantrum, Val Emery, Rosa Coronato, Edigio Coronato, Doris Kelly, Dorothy Sawyer, Christopher and Elizabeth Browne, Jane Preston, Molly Crowther, Chris Kelsall, Joyce Brown, Lynn Kent, Christopher & Clifford Browne, Deacon Trevor, Janice Austin, Fr Joseph Tynan, Albert Dawson, Joan Brindley, and Pat Shufflebotham.

For those who have died recently Rona Brandrick and those whose anniversary occurs around this time.

Parish Offertory for last weekend:

		Poor Parishes
<u>Meir:</u>	£171.60 of which £45.00 was gift aided	£15.00
<u>Caverswall:</u>	£ of which £ was gift aided	£
<u>Cresswell:</u>	£130.49 of which £91.00 was gift aided	£ 5.00

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

please gift aid, if possible

CHRISTMAS TIMETABLE - 2017

	St Augustine's Meir	St Filumena's Caverswall	St Mary's Cresswell
23 rd December Saturday Vigil of the 4 th Sunday of Advent	18:00	-	18:00
24 th December 4th Sunday of Advent	11:00	9:00	-
24 th December Christmas Vigil	18:00	-	18:00
Christmas Midnight Masses	21:00	00:00 (midnight)	-
25 th December Christmas Day	9:30	9:00	-
26 th December St Stephen's Day	9:30	11:00	-
31 st December Holy Family Sunday	11:00	9:00	30 th December: 18:00 - Vigil Mass

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BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS IN DECEMBER:


Andrew Clark, Angela Hartley, Ernst Häferer, Monica Lumia, Fr Paweł Przybyszewski, Veronica Swinnerton

**Holy Mass for the birthday intentions of those listed above
will be offered at St. Augustine's Church on Sunday,
31st December at 11:00.**

**On your birthday, we pray that God continue
to pour out his blessings into your life
and to the people you love.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY !**

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

	St. Augustine's MEIR	St. Filumena's CAVERSWALL	St. Mary's CRESSWELL
16th December Saturday			18:00 (<i>Sunday Vigil</i>) – John Jewell RIP
17th December SUNDAY 3 rd Sunday of Advent - Year B	11:00 – Gerald Clayton RIP	9:00 – Gemma Foot Ints	
18th December Monday <i>Advent Feria</i>	9:30 – People of Parish	9:15 – Fairbanks Family RIP	
19th December Tuesday <i>Advent Feria</i>	9:30 – Kevin Maleedy RIP <i>Followed by Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour</i>		
20th December Wednesday <i>Advent Feria</i>	9:30 – Private Int (A&M)	9:15 –	
21st December Thursday <i>Advent Feria</i>	9:30 – Holy Souls		
22nd December Friday <i>Advent Feria</i>	9:30 – Private Int (GH) 18:00 – Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction 19:00 –		
23rd December Saturday <i>Advent Feria</i>	9:30 – 18:00 (<i>Sunday Vigil</i>) -		18:00 (<i>Sunday Vigil</i>) – Patrick McVey RIP
24th December SUNDAY 4 th Sunday of Advent - Year B	11:00 – People of the Parish	9:00 –	

 <p style="color: purple; font-size: 1.2em;">Confessions</p>	<i>Friday:</i> 18:00 – 18:45 <i>Saturday:</i> 10:00 – 10:30	<i>Sunday before Mass</i> 8:15 – 8:45	<i>Saturday before Mass</i> 17:15 – 17:45
	<p><i>Penitential Service Monday 18th December 19:00 at St. Augustine's and BY REQUEST</i></p>		

MASS INTENTIONS – PLEASE HAND IN ENVELOPE TO A MEMBER OF THE CLERGY

When in the church
talk only to God before the service;
let God talk to you during the service;
and talk to one another after the service but only outside the church!

Please send items for the Parish Newsletter by Thursday evening (e-mail: augustineandmary@hotmail.com)