

Father Liam O'Connor, 37 Compton Avenue, Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex. BN12 4UE

Presbytery 01903 242624 / Church repository 01903 506890

Email: emgoring@english-martyrs.co.uk Website: www.english-martyrs.co.uk

Deacon Gary Bevans 01903 503514

Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No: 252878

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday	17 th	6.00 pm	Joan & Victor Norton RIP
Sunday	18 th	8.15 am	The Parish
		10.30 am	Carmelina Carvalho RIP
		3.00 pm	Annual Family Carol Service
		6.00 pm	Polish Mass
Monday	19 th	9.30 am	Brian Hurst RIP
		2.30 pm	Mother's Prayers
Tuesday	20 th	9.30 am	Father Sean McWeeney RIP
Wednesday	21 st	9.30 am	Dr John Clarke RIP
Thursday	22 nd	9.30 am	Intention of Kathleen Kehoe
Friday	23 rd	9.30 am	L T Fung RIP
Christmas Eve	24 th	6.00 pm	Charlie Gillespie RIP
		9.00 pm	Holy Souls
Christmas Day	25 th	8.15 am	Roger Davis RIP
		10.30 am	The Parish



TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 7:10-14; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: I Ecclesiasticus 3:2-6, 12-14; Colossians 3:12-21; Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

COLLECTIONS: Church: £662 Thank you for your generosity.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: Marie Davidson, Yvonne Carter, Monica Nichols, Valerie Halley, Lottie-Mae, Gearoid McNamara, Gordon & Ann Milne, Finlay, Alfred Deacon, Ester Park, Marie Garselis, Roni Horstead, Krissie White, Eileen Godfrey, Ronnie Tyler, Jenny Begley, Paula de Mello, Bill Hogg, Andrew Kennedy, Ted O'Brien, Breda Schlimgen, Michaela Finn, Ann Wesley, Winifred Lyons, Yvette Allen, Leslie Lee, Joan Jacobs, Kerry McStravick, Gerry Potter, Lydia Van Melsen, Donald MacDonald, Edna Catley

2. THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY: **VERONICA WOOD** and those whose anniversaries occur about now: Cyril Marshall, Hetty Smith, Kathleen McDonagh, Mamie Devine, Lionel Foster, Eileen Oxendale, Peggy Moutrie, Patrick Taylor, Helena Sparrow, Margaret Goldsworthy

3. DO YOU ENJOY SINGING? The final choir practice before Christmas is **next** Thursday 22nd December from 7.00 – 8.30 pm. For further information please contact Margaret – 01903 504316

4. CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH will be in The Barn on Christmas Day from 12 noon until 4.00 pm. Tickets are by donation to support sending our youth to Lourdes. Invitations are in both porches. If you are able to help on the day, drive people to and from the Barn, contribute a desert Dermot and Jane-Anne would be most grateful. Please contact Dermot and Jane-Anne 01903-502070 for further details

5. THE ANNUAL FAMILY CHRISTMAS CAROLS & READINGS SERVICE followed by Mulled Wine and Mince Pies will take place **THIS** Sunday at 3.00 pm. If you are a creator of Mince Pies they would be gratefully received!

6. TRAIDCRAFT will be on sale in the Barn after all Masses **THIS** weekend. A box will be available if you would like to purchase TRAIDCRAFT goods for Worthing Churches Homeless Projects.

7. CALLING ALL WHO LIKE TO SEE A CLEAN CHURCH AT CHRISTMAS! It's all hands to the dusters and vacuum cleaners at 10.00am **on** Friday 23rd December. Coffee and Mince Pies will be served to all workers

8. TURKEY & TINSEL EVENING IN AID OF THE PARISH PROJECT. Many thanks to all those who prepared and cooked such a delicious meal and to those who supported the evening in any way. £815 was raised for Kalingalinga

9. A REMINDER TO ALL PREPARING FOR THEIR FIRST HOLY COMMUNION: There will be a rehearsal at 10.30 am on Christmas Eve in the Church for the 'Innkeepers Story'. This will be performed at the end of the 6.00pm Children's Candlelight Mass

10 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 the Porch. If you will be away for Christmas you might like to use these envelopes to make your gift either beforehand or afterwards.

11. CLEANER REQUIRED: The Franciscan Sisters are looking for a cleaner to clean their house in East Preston for 2 hours every week. Interested applicant please ring Shirley or Heather: Tel. No 01483 425775

12. CHRISTMAS POSTERS: The Knights of St. Columba have kindly provided the parish with a supply of Christmas Posters for use by our parishioners. Please collect one from the porch as you leave Mass and display it when you reach home

13. MARY'S MEALS: We are now in particular need of Pencil Cases, Toothpaste, Flannels and serviceable Towels. Many thanks to all who so generously contribute to these backpacks

14. WORTHING CHURCHES HOMELESS PROJECTS CHRISTMAS WISH LIST: Pocket sized Torches, Batteries, Boxer shorts/Underwear, Men's Gloves, Postage stamps, Sweets/Chocolate, Long Johns (Med), Diaries (small), Rucksacks, Tinned Biscuits, Thermal socks, Shaving gel, Razors, 7"x9" Gift Bags, Crackers, New Men's Jumpers. And to eat..Turkey, Beef or Gammon Joints, Potatoes and Vegetables, Bread Sauce Mix, Christmas Puds (no alcohol please) Cream, Chocolates, Nibbles and Fresh Fruit. Lists also available in both porches. Many thanks to all who help this local cause.

FATHER LIAM SAYS: The word 'gospel' literally means 'the good news'. For the Christian the good news is that Jesus Christ who was put to death for us is Risen and shares his Risen life with us. This has always been the fundamental belief of the Church and has been the kernel of its teaching. The Church exists to proclaim the gospel. It has no other purpose. We are the Church and the gospel is the treasure handed down to us through two thousand years. We have the privilege and responsibility to live it and to pass it on to future generations.

The first followers of Christ were prepared to die as they witnessed to that good news by their fidelity to the gospel. One of their great achievements – by the power of the Holy Spirit – was the creation of the New Testament. Up to that point the Scriptures were the sacred writings that helped prepare the world for the coming of its Saviour. Now mankind was also gifted with Scriptures that proclaimed the Good News of Jesus Christ – the Gospel.

In the New Testament writings, four were recognised as different from all the others. These were called 'Gospels' and present to us the ministry, suffering and death of Jesus written in the light of his Resurrection. Only Matthew and Luke tell us of anything concerning his infancy which is why we hear from them more than from Mark and John over Christmas and into the New Year.

Today we hear from Matthew beginning with verse 18 of the first chapter. But we don't hear the first 17 verses of his gospel. These verses are an extraordinary way to begin his account of Jesus, which is why we don't find them read in any Sunday Mass. He begins with the words: 'The story of the origins of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham.' It continues: 'Abraham was the father of Isaac; Isaac was the father of Jacob; Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers.' It lists fourteen generations before he comes to David. Then he lists another fourteen generations till he comes to the Babylonian Exile and finally another fourteen generations till he comes to the birth of Jesus. Some people on the list are some of the most revered and important names mentioned in the Bible. Most of them are unknown. Included are some men and women of very doubtful character. When it comes to 'the bottom line' of the list we find a very interesting development. We hear that Matthan was the father of Jacob; Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary; of her was begotten Jesus, called the Christ.' So Matthew goes on, in today's Gospel reading, to explain why he spoke of the parentage of Jesus in the way he did. 'Now, as for Jesus Christ, his birth took place in this way.' Matthew in his gospel is very keen to emphasise that Jesus is the Messiah, the son of David. He is writing to a community of Christians who came to baptism from Judaism. In verses 1 and 18 of Chapter 1 he refers to Jesus as Jesus the Messiah.

I think many people don't realise the significance of the word 'Christ'. They seem to think that Christ is part of the name of Jesus. Rather like having a fore name and a surname. Christ is not a name. It is a title, a very significant title. Christ is the Greek form of the Hebrew word Messiah. The English form of this word is 'the anointed one'. Three kinds of people were said to be anointed: priests, prophets and Kings. Jesus is the supreme high priest and universal King. He is the ultimate prophet as he fully reveals the Father to us. Matthew places great emphasis on this aspect of Jesus' identity as it was of such significance to the Jewish people. The Messiah was to come from the lineage of King David, the shepherd=King of Israel so Matthew is keen to show that Jesus is descended from David.

In today's Gospel we have Matthew's version of the annunciation. We usually think of the Annunciation as the message given to Mary that she had been chosen by God to be Mother of the Saviour. This is how Luke introduces us to the Incarnation of the Lord. Matthew chooses to put before us the revelation made to Joseph. The angel of the Lord who appeared to Joseph in a dream addresses him as 'Joseph, son of David.' If Jesus was to be the Messiah, he would have to be the Son of David – and he would have to be Son of Joseph. That is why Matthew emphasises that Joseph was given the task of naming the child. The husband in Jewish law, by naming the child, is acknowledging that the child is his. Joseph is the legal father of Jesus. This, Scripture scholars tell us, is a more correct description than to call him adoptive father or foster father. Matthew goes on to tell his hearers and readers that not only would Jesus be the Son of David but he would be Emmanuel, God with us. The Risen Jesus' last words in Matthew's gospel (28:20) are 'I am with you always to the end of the world.'

Matthew wrote his gospel to encourage the Jewish born members of his community to renew their faith in Jesus the Messiah. Some of them weary of persecution had begun to fall away. He reminds them that Jesus is the Messiah that the Jewish Scriptures spoke of. The One whose first coming we are preparing to celebrate is the One who has never left us and who continues to shower his blessings on us because he cherishes each and every one as his brothers and sisters.