

## PARISH OF THE ENGLISH MARTYRS Goring Way

18.12.2022

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Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No: 25287

### Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday	17 <sup>th</sup>	6.00 pm	Roma & John Morey RIP
Sunday	18 <sup>th</sup>	8.15 am	Cora Gillies RIP
		10.30 am	The Parish
Monday	19 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	Charlie Gillespie RIP
Tuesday	20 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	Bill (Sn) & Nell O'Keeffe RIP
		12 noon	<b>FUNERAL SERVICE FOR HUMPHREY NIVEN RIP</b>
		7.00 pm	<b>Service of Carol &amp; Readings</b>
Wednesday	21 <sup>st</sup>	9.30 am	Anne & Mike Steere RIP
Thursday	22 <sup>nd</sup>	9.30 am	O'Toole Family Past & Present
Friday	23 <sup>rd</sup>	9.30 am	Humphrey Niven RIP
Christmas	24 <sup>th</sup>	6.00 pm	Mary Stone RIP
Eve		9.00 pm	The Parish (8.30 pm Carols & Readings)
Christmas	25 <sup>th</sup>	8.15 am	Roger Davis RIP
Day		10.30 am	Anne O'Connor RIP



**SATURDAY:** Reconciliation: 10.15 -10.45 am and 5.15 - 5:45 pm

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

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:** Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-6, John 1:1-18

**COLLECTIONS:** Church: £422 Thank you for your generosity.

**Contributions to the Christmas Crib will be sent to Friends of the Holy Land**

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:** Joan Wand, Samuel Bezants, Thomas Boylan. John Mayock, Terry Stanley, Glenn, Ken Ellis, Helena & Vittorio Villa, Peggy Gallagher, Lena, Ken Harvey, Sienna Coates, Kathleen Brennan, Chris Judge, Brian Caplin, Valerie Halley, Pat Duggan, Tony Grana, Sister Raymond, John Smith, Ian Threlfall, Lelia Murray, Mary Murphy, Brenda Peazold, Mary Wessel, Joan Cutmore, Gordon Milne, Alfred Deacon, Roni Horstead, Ronnie Tyler, Bill Hogg, Breda Schlimgen, Michaela Finn, Winifred Lyons, Yvette Allen, Kerry McStravick, Lydia Van Melsen

**2. THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY** and those whose anniversaries occur about now: Margaret Wadsworth, Inge Carey, Edna Turberville, Cyril Marshall, Muriel Day, Hetty Smith, Kathleen McDonagh, Margaret Turner, Mamie Devine, Lionel Foster, Eileen Oxendale, Peggy Moutrie, Patrick Taylor, Helena Sparrow, Margaret Goldsworthy  
*May they rest in peace and rise in glory*

**3. FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2023:** Is your son or daughter in Year 3 this term? If so, they are at the age where they can start the preparation course for First Holy Communion. Please collect a letter and application form from the Sacristy and return it to the Parish Office as soon as possible. The first meeting for parents will be on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January at 7.30 pm in the church and the first lesson for the children will be on Tuesday 10th January from 4.30 – 5.30 pm

**4. PARISH CAROL SERVICE:** On Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00pm, we shall be holding our Parish Carol Service. It will be a festive opportunity for everyone to celebrate the coming of Christmas by taking part in our service of traditional carols and readings in the church, followed by refreshments of mulled wine and mince pies in the Barn. All are most welcome to attend so please come and join us!

**5. CRIB DONATIONS:** We will be sending crib donations to Friends of the Holy Land. Every penny will help the poorest Christian families, especially in and around Bethlehem, the West Bank, Gaza and Israel, with education, employment, health or housing costs and initiatives. FHL is non-political and ecumenical.

**6. 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.

**7. THE CHURCH 'CHRISTMAS BIG CLEAN'** will take place *next Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December at 10.00am*. Not only are you welcome but even needed! As is usual Tea/Coffee and Mince Pies will be served.

## **8. CHRISTMAS DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES**

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December - 7.00 pm – Christmas Carols, Mulled Wine & Mince Pies  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December - 10.00 am – The Church 'Christmas BIG Clean'  
Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December - 6.00 pm - First Mass of Christmas especially for children  
- 9.00 pm – Vigil Mass preceded by Carols from 8.30 pm  
Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December - 8.15 am and 10.30 am Mass

**9. HOME START:** Home Start Arun, Worthing and Adur want to make sure every child has a present to open, to provide a Christmas food hamper to each family, and to continue their support through to the end of 2023...thus ensuring some festive joy. As happened last year we will not be able to put gifts for the children under the Christmas Tree in church but they do still need our support – financially. To do this please go on line to <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/21807> to Find a Charity. Enter HomeStart Arun, Worthing and Adur and follow the instructions. In the 'Add instructions for this Donation' box please mention English Martyrs Church and send them a Christmas message. Gift Aid envelopes are available in the church for those who prefer to donate in cash or by cheque.

**10. THE CAFOD AUCTION** will take place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January. Please keep those gifts or unused/good condition items that could be auctioned to raise funds for the work of CAFOD.

**11. KEEPING CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS:** Many thanks to Worthing Knights of St Columba who have provided Christmas posters, available in both porches, and ask that they are displayed as an act of Christian witness.

**12. MARY'S MEALS COLLECTION POINT** is one of the small boxes under the notice board to the right in the Front Porch. It costs just £15.90 to feed one child for a year! Your donations will always be much appreciated.

**13. TURNING TIDES WISH LIST** is appealing for the many items that they need in their Winter Wish List. Lists are available in both porches. with suggestions. Many thanks to anyone who is able to help.

**FATHER LIAM SAYS: Christmas is a magical time of the year.** Children certainly know this – and – not only children!. We now rely quite a lot on technology to provide, or at least, enhance the magic of this season. In past ages people used their imagination and their skills and storytelling to embellish their enjoyment of this special time. So solemn and captivating was this feast of Christmas that they spoke of cattle and horses falling to their knees at midnight and birds singing all night long. Babies born on this night were deemed to be especially blessed – as were those who died at this time.

In Act 1, Scene 1 of Hamlet, Shakespeare echoed some of these wonderful ideas: 'Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated, the birds of dawning singeth all night long, and then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad. The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike, no fairy tales, no witch has power to charm, so hallowed and so gracious is the time.' Certainly, their way of emphasising the sacredness of Christmas is very different from our way of honouring Christ's birth. In fact, the point of Christ's birth doesn't feature in the Christmas celebrations of many.

The truth of the incarnation is that the Son of God became one of us and shared with us the limitations and flaws of human existence. He pitched his tent among us in order to lead us on our journey to his Father's house. The great Russian writer Dostoyevsky expressed the Christmas message well in his story called 'The House of the Dead', where he describes the coming of Christmas Day in a Siberian camp. 'It was a dingy little settlement among frozen wastelands. From our grim prison at one end of a single muddy street the convicts peered through barred windows at the small cathedral on a hill at the other side of town. The bells rang merrily as that Christmas dawn arrived and villagers trooped in happy procession to the early church service. It was Christ's mass, Christmas, 'But not for us, who are cut off from all humanity,' the ragged prisoners wept, huddled together for comfort from the cold. Finally, however, the long cathedral service was ended, a priest came to the prison, set up a crude altar, and began the service of worship. 'Now God has come to us!' the convicts shouted in surprised joy. 'Oh yes,' replied the priest. 'This is where he lives all year long. You see he goes to the cathedral only on special occasions.' God indeed lives all year among us. We are never beyond his concern, his care, his love. 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us' and for us he became one of us.

There is the Russian legend of Babushka. She was a grandmother who was about to retire for the evening when out of the fierce winter night comes a knock on her door. It's the Wise Men and they tell her excitedly about the King born in Bethlehem and they urge her to come and honour him. But the night was so cold and blustery and her bed was so warm she says: 'I will go and see the Christ child tomorrow.' Later there was another knock on her door. This time it was the shepherds urging her to come and if not at least to give them a basket of goodies to bring to the Christ child and his parents. She hesitated and finally says: 'I'll bring them myself tomorrow.' When tomorrow comes Babushka was as good as her word. She packs some food and off she went to Bethlehem. But the stable was empty when she gets there. She is disappointed but determined. She keeps looking. In fact, she continues to look for the Child for the rest of her life. In her endless journey she finds many a manger and many a cradle. She finds many parents caring for their children. She leaves gifts at each place hoping that the Christ child is there. She was now very old and near death. The Christ child appears to her wearing the face of every child she has ever met and offered gifts to. She dies happily, knowing that in spite of her first hesitancy she did indeed find the child not where she expected to find him but in the poor and needy, where she never expected him.

There is a Christmas reflection called Mary's Christmas Dream. 'I have a dream, Joseph. I don't understand it, but it seemed to be a birthday celebration for our Son. The people had been preparing for it for over a month. They had decorated their houses, they went to the shops several times and bought all kinds of presents. It was peculiar because the presents were not for our Son. The whole scene gave me the impression that it had something to do with our Son, but a lot of people celebrating did not seem to even know him. They never mentioned his name but gave the gifts to each other. I'm glad it was only a dream'