

PARISH OF THE ENGLISH MARTYRS Goring Way

17.12.2023

Father Liam O'Connor, 37 Compton Avenue,

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

Third Sunday of Advent

Saturday	16 th	6.00 pm	George & Nita Roe RIP
Sunday	17 th	8.15 am	The Parish
		10.30 am	John Davidson
		3.00 pm	Holy Hour and Benediction
Monday	18 th	9.30 am	Kathleen O'Connor RIP
Tuesday	19 th	9.30 am	Intention of Jane Fitzgibbon
		10.00 am	An Advent Journey
		2.00 pm	Funeral Service for Patrick Heffernan RIP
		7.00 pm	Parish Carol Service
Wednesday	20 th	9.30 am	Intention of Merielle & George
Thursday	21 st	9.30 am	Anne & Mike Steere RIP
Friday	22 nd	9.30 am	Humphrey Niven RIP
		10.00 am	The church 'Christmas Big Clean'
Saturday	23 rd	6.00 pm	Martin Evans RIP
Sunday	24 th	9.00 am	Intention of Jeff Chater
Christmas		6.00 pm	John Mayock RIP
Eve		9.00 pm	Anne O'Connor RIP
Christmas	25 th	8.15 am	Roger Davis RIP
Day		10.30 am	Jeannette Murphy RIP



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

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11, St Paul to Thessalonians 5:16-24, John 1:6-8, 19-28

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16, St Paul to Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38

COLLECTIONS: Church: £456 Digital Collection: £59 Curry & Carols £745 Thank you for your generosity
2nd Collection today for Friends of the Holy Land

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: Breda O'Connor, Camilla Jane, Sophie Abbott, Michelle Dielt, Helen Gillespie, Harold Forrest, Maria Brooks, Sarah Johnstone, Tony Kearney, Ella Doll, Paul Curd, Lola Samengo-Meehan, Maureen House, Joan Wand, Samuel Bezants, Thomas Boylan, Terry Stanley, Glenn, Helena & Vittorio Villa, Lena, Ken Harvey, Sienna Coates, Brian Caplin, Valerie Halley, Pat Duggan, Tony Grana, Sister Raymond, John Smith, Ian Threlfall, Lelia Murray, Mary Murphy, Brenda Peazold, Mary Wessel, Gordon Milne, Alfred Deacon, Roni Horstead, Ronnie Tyler, Michaela Finn, Winifred Lyons, Yvette Allen, Kerry McStravick, Lydia Van Melsen

2. THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY and those whose anniversaries occur about now: Noel Melling, Nora Murphy, Margaret Wadsworth, Inge Carey, Edna Turberville, Cyril Marshall, Muriel Day, Hetty Smith, Kathleen McDonagh, Margaret Turner, Mamie Devine, Lionel Foster, Eileen Oxendale, Peggy Moutrie, Antonio Maccarrone,
May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

3. FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2024: 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 forms from the Sacristy and return it to the Parish Office as soon as possible. The first meeting for parents will be on Thursday 4th January at 7.30pm in The Good Shepherd Chapel and the first lesson for the children will be on Tuesday 9th January from 4.30 – 5.30 pm.

4. THE PARISH CAROL SERVICE is this Tuesday 19th December at 7pm. There will be a retiring collection for Home Start. All are most welcome so please come and join us!

5. THE CHURCH 'CHRISTMAS BIG CLEAN' will take place next **Friday 22nd December at 10.00am**. Not only are you welcome but even needed! As is usual Tea/Coffee and Mince Pies will be served.

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. CURRY & CAROLS 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. £745 was raised for the hospice in Kalingalinga where it will be much appreciated.

THE PARISH PRAYER GROUP continues to meet in the Good Shepherd Chapel on the first and third Thursday of the month at 7.30 pm. All are welcome to attend. For further information, please contact Andy Curd 01903 241236 and if you receive a recorded message, please leave your name and contact details.

8. 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.

9. CHRISTMAS DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

Tuesday 19 th December	- 7.00 pm - Christmas Carols and Mulled Wine
Friday 22 nd December	- 10.00 am Christmas Church Clean + Tea/Coffee & Mince Pies
Saturday 23 rd December	- 6.00 pm – 4 th Sunday of Advent
Sunday 24 th December	- 9.00 am – 4 th Sunday of Advent
Sunday 24 th December	- 6.00 pm - First Mass of Christmas especially for children
	- 9.00 pm - Mass preceded by Carols from 8.30 pm
Monday 25 th December	- 8.15 am and 10.30 am Mass

10. THE CAFOD AUCTION will take place on Saturday 13th January. Please keep those gifts or unused/good condition items that could be auctioned to raise funds for the work of CAFOD.

11. MARY'S MEALS COLLECTION POINT is one of the small boxes under the notice board to the right in the Front Porch. It now costs £19.15 to feed one child for a year! Your donations will always be much appreciated.

12. TURNING TIDES: Copies of the 'Christmas Hampers4Homelssss Shopping List' are available in both porches. Everyday items are also needed: Coffee, Sugar, Long-life Milk, Carton juice - large and small, Ketchup, Brown sauce, Marmalade, Jam, Cooking Oil, Hot Chocolate, Tinned Ham, Corned Beef, Tinned Fish, Tinned Meat and Vegetarian Meals. Many thanks to all who are able to help.

FATHER LIAM SAYS: "Of Christ cometh Christmas, the name with the feast, a time full of joy to the greatest and least: at Christmas was Christ our Saviour born. The world through sin altogether forlorn. At Christmas we banquet, the rich with the poor, who then but the miser but openeth his door. At Christmas, of Christ many carols we sing, and give many gifts in the joy of that King." This was how Thomas Tusser, a Chorister and poet evoked the spirit of the Christmas Season in Tudor England. He emphasises not only how the peoples celebrated, but why. In our times many people have lost sight of the why of their celebrations and consequently they wander off, wide of the mark.

For at least 5,000 years the depth of winter has been a time for merrymaking and conviviality - "to drive the cold winter away" as an old song had it. Many of the major world religions have festivals of light to counteract the darkest season of the year - and Christmas is the greatest and most loved of them all. Pagan peoples celebrated the winter Solstice – the shortest day of the year. The winter Solstice was immensely important at a time when communities often could not be certain of surviving the winter. When the hours of darkness were at the longest, the solstice brought with it the promise that soon the days would get longer and the sun would return, bringing new life and hope.

Northern Europeans called the solstice 'Jul' - now remembered in the English word Yule - which now means Christmas. Yule marked the death of one year and the birth of the next. The actual date of Christ's birth is unknown but the birth of the popular Roman God Mithras was celebrated on December 25th. In 354 A.D. the Emperor Aurelian decreed that the day be named the birth of the pagan sun god Sol - the birth of the Invincible Sun. When the Emperor Constantine became Christian and the Church was given immunity from persecution, they adopted that date to mark the birth of Jesus, the truly invincible Son of God.

Christmas of course was not the first of the Christian feasts to be celebrated. Easter of course was the first and every Sunday was celebrated as a feast. Because Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday, every Sunday was observed as a 'Little Easter'. Soon other feasts were established - firstly those closely linked to Easter, such as the feast of the Ascension and Pentecost Sunday. Only later and gradually did Christmas come to be celebrated throughout the entire Church.

The prominence of Christmas increased after Charlemagne was crowned Roman Emperor on Christmas Day 800. The Saxon King Edmund the Martyr was anointed on Christmas Day 855 and William the Conqueror was crowned King of England on Christmas Day 1066. The feast of the birth of Christ the King was deemed an appropriate time for earthly kings to begin their reign. It became traditional for medieval kings and queens to wear their crowns at the solemn feast of Christmas. The Tudor monarchs did so also at New Year. Their Court was at its most splendid at Christmas, New Year and the feast of the Epiphany.

The twelve days of Christmas known as Christmastide were all celebrated, but not equally. For agricultural workers, Christmas extended to plough Monday, the first Monday after Epiphany when they went back to work. For many, Christmas offered a welcome respite from the daily toil and grinding poverty of the rest of the year. England was overwhelmingly a farming society where people worked extremely hard six days a week just to survive. Mortality rates were high as many children died young. Winters were more severe than they are today. A mini ice-age started in the 16th century and lasted 200 years. The climate changes today are largely due to human causes.