

SS LAWRENCE AND PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH NEWSLETTER



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FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

26th - 27th December 2020 (Year B)

Psalter 4 & Proper of Season

DPL: St Peter and Paul, Bath



SAT	26th	StL	5.00pm	FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY	Sarah McGettigan
SUN	27th	StP	11.00am	FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY	Sovis and De Silva Family Intention
Tue	29th	StL	9.30am	Mass [Saint Thomas Becket]	Michael & Mary Magner
Wed	30th	StP	9.30am	Mass	
Thur	31st			No Service	
Fri	1st	StL	9.30am	Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God	Simmons Family Intention
SAT	2nd	StL	5.00pm	SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS	Joseph Sherer Brown
SUN	3rd	StP	11.00am	SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS	Gerard McCarthy
Tue	5th	StL	9.30am	Mass	
Wed	6th	StP	9.30am	SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD	
Thur	7th			No Service	
Fri	8th	StL	9.30am	Mass	
SAT	9th	StL	5.00pm	FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD	Bridie Green (Fmass)
SUN	10th	StP	11.00am	FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD	Una Bradley

Confessions by appointment only. Please phone if in isolation.

To contact a Priest: Fr Jim Williams (01454) 312161 or Canon Frank Bermingham 0117 9833939. Parish Office Our Lady of Lourdes: 0117 9498743. To send items for the Newsletter e-mail Francesca Fudge: frannewsletter7@gmail.com

Gospel according to John 1: 1-18

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος

The first three readings of the Gospel for Christmas are taken from Matthew and Luke, and cover the stories of the birth in the stable at Bethlehem, the angels appearing to the shepherds and their visit to the Holy Family. This Gospel of John starts from a different perspective. The other Gospels set out to prove that Jesus was the Son of God, whilst John's Gospel starts off by declaring that Jesus is the Son of God and then proceeds to tell us why he makes this assumption. Tradition has it that the community fasted and prayed incessantly for the Spirit to inspire John, and this opening magnificent passage is the result of all that prayer. It is so beautiful and clear. Just enjoy the sheer poetry of John's words "In the beginning" the opening of Genesis, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Jesus is the Word. The Word, Jesus, is the light, but the world preferred darkness to light and did not recognise Him. It is an astonishing opening to the Gospel. We are expected to know that the Word is Jesus. John will only tell us that at the end of this prologue. His own did not recognise Him and that is a recurring theme throughout John's Gospel. The hardness of heart of those religious leaders who should have recognised Him, prefer to attack and imply that He is an imposter, and will eventually have him killed by the Roman occupying forces. It is worth reading this opening passage aloud and letting it sink into your whole being.

White Flower Appeal 2021 – There will be a special collection for the Society for the Protection of Unborn children (SPUC)'s annual appeal on 9th/10th January. SPUC is currently campaigning to stop home abortion, which gives women abortion pills to take at home without medical supervision. This is one of the most dangerous threats to unborn babies and their mothers in decades. Please be as generous as you can help us to defeat this latest attack on unborn babies and help protect their mothers from increased risk of coercion and serious health risks. Donations can also be made online at www.spuc.org.uk/donate.

THE HOLY FATHER'S Prayer Intention for December -For a Life of Prayer

We pray that our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

BONUS BALL: POSTPONED until we can gather for Mass again.

Going on Holiday? Pay in advance. Please see P. O'Rourke or K.Chapman for more information.

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If you are posting lottery money through the presbytery door, please include a contact phone number. Thank you.

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What's on?



Reflections for the Feast of the Holy Family (Year B)

1st Reading from the Book of Genesis 15: 1-6, & 21: 1-3.

God's promise to Abram is renewed here whereby he asks him to count the stars, if he can, for his descendants shall be as many as this. Sarah, his wife had been barren up until now but at the instance of the promise Sarah conceived the son who was to be called Isaac. It is Isaac who will be a great test of Abram's trust in God's promise when he is offered for sacrifice, a very Christ like pre-cursor, but the Angel of the Lord is sent to stay Abram's hand, and so Abram's descendants continue till this day, and it is impossible to count how many there have been.

This illustrates that we can rely upon God's promises. He is always faithful, even when we are unfaithful. He knows just what is happening to each of us for he has counted us worthy to be members of his covenant (his family). This is a great joy to all of us who care about and worry about our children, for we want them to carry on the family story, and so preserve our family memory and practise.

Psalm 104: 1-6, 8-9.

This psalm sings about the faithfulness of God to his covenant. St. Paul also resonates with God's faithfulness to this covenant. It is a great theme for all God's chosen people, that they discover his faithfulness especially when they are in deep despair. We need to trust in that faithfulness as we plough our own little furrow, hoping that it will yield a rich harvest.

2nd Reading from St. Paul to the Hebrews 11: 8, 11-12, 17 19.

This selection of the letter to the Hebrews would have resonated with them, and so Paul is able to drive home the fact that these people were distinguished by their faith, and they would have been nodding in agreement, but Paul is pointing to the fact that Christ was in each of these situations and we are in a far better position to exercise our faith due to the power of Christ in the Holy Spirit. He is talking to his own people who know the family history the story of the chosen people, and we by our Baptism are adopted into this family history, only in a much more advantageous position for we have the illustration of God's only Son, Jesus Christ. It is a great day to celebrate our family story of Faith and renew our pledge to stay faithful to our Baptism promises.

The Holy Gospel according to Luke 2: 22-40.

Luke shows great skill in creating an atmosphere for these happenings you will note how he illustrates five times how Mary and Joseph observe the Law, and Simeon and Hanna, figures straight out of the Old Testament model, emphasise this picture. The Holy Spirit is mentioned no less than three times, which is an important point as it will be the Holy Spirit who leads the followers of Christ in the Second Volume of Luke, the Acts, to separate themselves from the Judean customs. In Simeon's song, which the Church has used in its Night Prayer for a thousand years or more, also directs us to the Gentiles (ourselves) as being the light for the pagans as well as the glory of Israel. Once again, we are asked to contemplate the meaning of the child, through the eyes of his parent's wonder at what was being said about the child. He would be a sign that will be rejected; and destined for the rising and fall of many in Israel. There is a warning for Mary in all this "a sword shall pierce your own soul too". All wondered what this child would be; and Mary together with Joseph, would have discussed and pondered all these happenings as the boy grew in favour with God and man. It is a time to ponder also what this child means for us; and what consequences face those of us who try to follow His Gospel life. Let us rejoice that we have been chosen to share in his story and blend ours to his and grow in favour with God and mankind.

God Bless you All. Deacon Vincent

THANK YOU FROM THE SVP

Thank you so much to those who donated goods and money for the SVP Christmas parcels for needy families this year. There was a very generous response this year which was very much appreciated at this difficult time. The Parish SVP Conference would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and a Healthy New year.

Children's Liturgy cafod.org.uk/Education/Children-s-liturgy

www.churchservices.tv

Safeguarding our Vulnerable Adults and Children: All church activities are subject to safeguarding policies and procedures. We encourage everyone to access these policies which can be found in the Diocesan Resource along with important contact numbers on the safeguarding pages. *Parish website:* <http://www.stlawrenceandstpaul.co.uk/cliftdiocese.html>
<http://www.stlawrenceandstpaul.co.uk/safeguarding.html>



Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
TURNING CONCERN INTO ACTION
Meets regularly at St Paul's. To join please phone
01454 312161
Email csandyatesvp@gmail.com

Useful links:
www.stlawrenceandstpaul.co.uk
www.cliftdiocese.com
www.vatican.va

If you are interested in learning about the ethos, aims, and works of the Legion of Mary Tel: 01454 321749