



ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH HEREFORD

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Dear All, When we think of prophets, we can often think of dishevelled figures on the outside of polite society making something of a nuisance of themselves. They seem to be awkward characters that don't fit into an acceptable mould yet have a remarkable ability of speaking to society in a new way. In the TV series 'The Chosen,' John the Baptist is even called "creepy John" due to his unconventional approach to life. Yet, for all his depictions, John remains immensely important. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI: "The 'voice' of the great prophet asks us to prepare the way for the coming Lord in the deserts of today, internal and external deserts, thirsting for the water of life which is Christ."

The Gospel today situates the call of John the Baptist against a secular background by naming various secular and religious leaders. The reference of these figures contrasts the worldly powers with the divine calling of John. We can also experience such a conflict as today's worldly powers increasingly wish to push Christ out of the picture altogether. The Collect, however, combats this persuasion when it says: "may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son." Not a bad slogan for us to remember during this Advent!

On this Second Sunday of Advent, the Church turns our attention to John the Baptist, the last of the prophets; he is but a prelude, for it is Jesus who will fulfil the promise of the Father. Most of us, of course, prefer to follow social convention, but, perhaps, as Christians in Britain today we might find that if we dare to be a little different, we might just grab the attention of those who want to hear our good news. So, how can we be a little bit more like John the Baptist in this second week of Advent? **Fr John**

Liturgical Calendar December 2024 Yr C Psalter Wk 2

Sat 7th	10.30am	St Ambrose	Vocations
Sat 7th	11.00am	Confessions and Adoration	
Sat 7th	6.00pm	2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Holy Souls
Sun 8th	8.00am	2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	E.B.C.
Sun 8th	10.00am	2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	The Parish
Mon 9th	9.30am <i>Rosary 9am</i>	THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (SOLEMNITY)	Susan Young RIP
Tue 10th	No public mass here. Mass at Our Lady's at 9.30am St John Roberts, Priest, Martyr		
Wed 11th	1.00pm <i>Adoration 12 noon</i>	2nd Week of Advent	Joan Sparrow RIP
Thu 12th	09.30am	2nd Week of Advent	Noel Ramage
Fri 13th	1.00pm	St Lucy	Holy Souls
Sat 14th	10.30am	St John of the Cross Doctor of the Church.	The Pope's Intention
Sat 14th	11.00am	Confessions and Adoration	
Sat 14th	6.00pm	3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (GAUDETE SUNDAY)	N K Kuriakose RIP
Sun 15th	8.00am	3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	The Parish
Sun 15th	10.00am	3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	Socrate Bisconte RIP

The Immaculate Conception: Pope Pius IX proclaimed the doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception in 1854. *O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.* Come along and celebrate this great feast on Monday at Mass at 09.30am.



Advent Parish Bazaar Update

Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to the Advent Bazaar; by organising the event, donating items, buying raffle tickets and being there to support the parish. Your work is greatly valued. All proceeds go to parish funds to help maintain our beautiful church. We are currently just **over £1,800 in total profit** which is a great gift for the parish. Well done all! **Note-** there are some tins and tupperware containers to be collected from the Parish Hall, as well some raffle prizes in the sacristy.

We remember all who have died:
Lately Dead- Joan Sparrow
And those whose anniversaries occur about this time: Josephine MacDonell, Mary Grisewood, Danny West, Peter Nelson Maria Meschi, Leslie Prosser, Patrick King.



Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen

Pray for the Sick: Fr Keith, Ania Kuzba, Jan Beavan, Robbie Bell, Brian Symonds, Meg Furber, Ann Currie, Midad Jasari, David Madgen, Lynne Howells, Sarah, Katherine Melia, Christina James, Ana Rudnicki, Nicola Merrick, Martin O'Connor, Patricia Moroney, Margaret Skelding, James Spradbery, Teresa Bord Kathleen Spradbery, Ann Marie Hughson, John Moroney

ASSISTED DYING BILL

The Catholic bishops of England and Wales have expressed dismay after the historic vote on Friday 29th November: 330 MPs voted in favour of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, while 275 voted against it. Following the vote, Bishop John Sherrington, lead bishop for life issues, said: "We are disappointed that MPs have voted in favour of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill



progressing through Parliament. We believe that this bill is flawed in principle and also contains clauses that are of concern.

We ask the Catholic community to pray that members of Parliament will have the wisdom to reject this bill at a later stage in its progress." Bishop Sherrington said bishops were particularly concerned about a lack of protection for conscientious objection.

"In addition to being opposed to the principle of assisted suicide, we are concerned with clauses in the bill that prevent doctors from properly exercising conscientious objection, provide inadequate protection to hospices and care homes that do not wish to participate in assisted suicide, and allow doctors to initiate conversations about assisted suicide," he said. "We ask that these voices be heard in the next stages of the bill to strengthen the deep concerns about this proposed legislation."

The bill would allow assisted suicide for people aged 18 and over who are terminally ill and have a prognosis of six months or less. Bishop Sherrington went on to say that real compassion involves supporting people at the end of their lives. This is done by walking with those who need care, especially during sickness, disability and old age.

Bishop Sherrington continued: "It remains the case that improving the quality and availability of palliative care offers the best pathway to educing suffering at the end of life. We will continue to advocate for this and support those who work tirelessly to care for the dying in our hospices, hospitals, and care homes." **Fr James**

Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist	Ministers of the Word
6pm Wendy Winterburn Sarah Slankauskas Vigeetha Joseph	6pm Helen Booth
8am Vera McHale Frances Hetterley	8am Dorothy Kennedy
10am Lorena de Lima Auer Gerald Okafor Noel Elegado	10am Iola Gillick

Celebrating Christmas at St Francis Xavier's

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS
AT ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S CHURCH, HEREFORD

Advent Talks: Tuesdays 7pm
3rd Dec: Faith and Joy
17th Dec: He has visited his people and set them free

Approaching Christmas
Sun 15th Dec 11.15am: Parish Christmas Party
Fri 20th Dec 7.00pm: Reconciliation Service
Mon 23rd Dec 12.30pm: Carols on the Steps

Christmas Eve: Tuesday 24th December
5.00pm: First Mass of Christmas
9.30pm: Christmas Carols
10.00pm: Mass of the Night (Midnight)

Christmas Day: Wednesday 25th December
8.00am: Quiet Dawn Mass
10.00am: Mass of Christmas Day

Join us to celebrate the nativity of Christ!

Here is this year's Christmas timetable for the season. You should find a Christmas card from Frs. James and John tucked in your bulletin or on the desk in the Narthex.

Do take it home and give one to a family member or friend and invite them along especially if they have not been to church for a while.



The Narthex storage and display units are nearly finished and are starting to look very neat and tidy. We are very grateful to a

generous benefactor whose legacy gift enabled us to go ahead with this little project. **Hymn books** and a few chairs are now stored on the left hand side tucked away in the cupboard. Just use the handles to pull open the double doors. **Outside Building Work** - we are still hoping for a complete finish and tidy up by next Saturday 14th December God willing!

Come and say hello to Fr. James and Fr. John at an informal parish party after 10am Mass next Sunday, 15th December. It has been so busy with their arrival, Advent and the Fayre that their feet have hardly touched the ground! Tea and Coffee and festive fayre will be on hand!

Welcome to any new or visiting parishioners. Do come and introduce yourselves to the welcomers and **come along to the hall after the 10.00am Mass for coffee and cake.**



Collections 23rd/24th Nov
1st £530.45 The Parish
2nd £326.00 Renovation
Many Thanks



Parish Calendar- December 2024

Wed 11th	6.30pm	ABC Bible study group— all welcome
Sun 15th	11.15am	Parish Christmas Party
Mon 16th	7.00pm	SVP in Parish Hall
Tues 17th	7.00pm	Advent Talk: He has visited his people and set them free