

THE PARISHES OF S MARY THE VIRGIN, SUNDON & S SAVIOUR, LUTON

Fr Yenda Smejkal, SSC. S Mary's Vicarage. 1 Selina Close, Sundon Park. Luton LU3 3AW

Tel: 01582 583076 / email: yenda.smejkal@virgin.net

895/426 – 29<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020 – 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

My dear people of S Mary's and S Saviour's.

I hope that you are keeping well and continuing to take care.

On the reverse side of this sheet are the readings for this week; please use them as an aid to making a spiritual communion at least on Sundays, and use the Collect in your daily prayers along with the Mass Intentions.

As I write, the Prime Minister has indicated that we can return to church from December 2<sup>nd</sup>. The first Solemn Masses will be a week on Sunday at the usual times, and we very much look forward to seeing each other again then after our second lockdown. Please continue to observe social distancing and hand cleansing.

**Mass livestreamed each day at 10:00am from S Mary's – facebook: st mary the virgin sundon.**

<u>Day</u>	<u>Observance</u>	<u>Mass</u>	<u>Intention for Mass &amp; Prayer</u>
Sun – Advent i		Solemn Mass	– Pro Populo
Mon – S Andrew		Low Mass	- People of Scotland
Tue – Feria		Low Mass	- Advent joy
Wed – Feria		Low Mass	- Local schools
Thu – S Francis Xavier		Low Mass	- People of Spain
Fri – S John Damascene		Low Mass	- Pharmacists
Sat – Of Our Lady		Low Mass	- Those facing economic hardship

**WELCOME BACK TO CHURCH – AGAIN!** Please sanitise hands on entry and exit and observe social distance.

**SUN – ADVENT II**

**9:15am – SOLEMN MASS – S MARY'S**

**PRO**

**11:15am – SOLEMN MASS – S SAVIOUR'S**

**POPULO**

Thoughts on the Gospel for this week:

This week we begin a new church year with Advent Sunday. I often say that Advent is my favourite time in the church year. Ordinarily we come into church on Advent Sunday and see the purple on the altar, and there is that immediate sense of hopefulness and looking forward.

The other time in the church year when we use purple is of course Lent. However the two seasons couldn't be more different. Lent is a rather sombre time of year, and leads us to the time of Our Lord's suffering before we celebrate Easter. Advent is very different; there is no great period of suffering, simply a time of looking forward with joy to a season of greater joy: Christmass.

Everything about Advent is positive, happy, optimistic. The hymns at Advent (which sadly the congregation will not be able to sing this year) are the loveliest in the hymnal, and throughout the season we concentrate our minds on hope. Hope is something we need more now than ever. At the present time, a lot of people will be struggling to see it, as day by day we hear on our radios of job losses and so forth; growing up in the 1980s, the effects of mass unemployment are etched on my memory, and they are uncomfortable. Seeing this coming again is deeply worrying, and as a Church we will find ourselves needing to respond in practical ways which we haven't needed to possibly for decades. It will be a challenge for all Churches and all churches.

Yet advent gives us hope...in church we are preparing for Our Lord's birth, and this season has that optimism of a family which is about to welcome a new member; a new baby. I happily remember as a child the occasions on which I heard those immortal words, "your mother's gone into hospital to have the baby – you're going round your nans!" I heard those words more than once, and every time there was excitement.

Christmass gives us that joy, but what of Advent? Advent is the time of preparation, the time of looking forward, the time of hopeful anticipation. Part of anticipation is looking forward with hope but perhaps with an amount of trepidation; and for many this year Advent will not only bring great anticipated joy, but also tremendous pressure: we know all too well the financial stresses of Christmass.

The gospel this week reminds us to stand ready – to be alert, to be diligent – because those in the house don't know when the master will return from his travels. We are told that he could come at any time, and they must be ready; 'stay awake' we are told.

Of course, we know when Christmass will come, just as we know when Advent begins. The two are in fact separate – it is too early to decorate our living rooms, let alone our streets! Advent speaks for itself; it has its own joy. It is a time of anticipation, but not a time of actual arrival. We are told to stay awake, because the time has not yet come. We are told to stand ready, so that *when* He comes we shall be ready. Not just to eat the lovely food, not just to open the lovely presents, but to celebrate the birth of Him who gave himself up for us.



**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

*To you, I lift up my soul, O my God.  
In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame.  
Nor let my enemies exult over me;  
and let none who hope in you be put to shame.*

**COLLECT**

Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God,  
the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ  
with righteous deeds at his coming,  
so that, gathered at his right hand,  
they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

**FIRST READING** Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1. 3-8

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

You, Lord, yourself are our Father,  
Our Redeemer is your ancient name.  
Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways  
and harden our hearts against fearing you?  
Return, for the sake of your servants,  
the tribes of your inheritance.  
Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down  
– at your Presence the mountains would melt.  
No ear has heard,  
no eye has seen  
any god but you act like this  
for those who trust him.  
You guide those who act with integrity  
and keep your ways in mind.  
You were angry when we were sinners;  
we had long been rebels against you.  
We were all like men unclean,  
all that integrity of ours like filthy clothing.  
We have all withered like leaves  
and our sins blew us away like the wind.  
No one invoked your name  
or roused himself to catch hold of you.  
For you hid your face from us  
and gave us up to the power of our sins.  
And yet, Lord, you are our Father;  
we the clay, you the potter,  
we are all the work of your hand.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM** Psalm 79

**RESPONSE:** *God of hosts, bring us back;  
let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.*

1. O shepherd of Israel, hear us,  
shine forth from your cherubim throne.  
O Lord, rouse up your might,  
O Lord, come to our help. **R.**
2. God of hosts, turn again, we implore,  
look down from heaven and see.  
Visit this vine and protect it,  
the vine your right hand has planted. **R.**

3. May your hand be on the man you have chosen,  
the man you have given your strength.  
And we shall never forsake you again:  
give us life that we may call upon your name. **R.**

**SECOND READING** 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace.

I never stop thanking God for all the graces you have received through Jesus Christ. I thank him that you have been enriched in so many ways, especially in your teachers and preachers; the witness to Christ has indeed been strong among you so that you will not be without any of the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed; and he will keep you steady and without blame until the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, because God by calling you has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Let us see, O Lord, your mercy  
and give us your saving help.**

**Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL** Mark 13:33-37

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

Jesus said to his disciples: "Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!"

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Accept, we pray, O Lord, these offerings we make,  
gathered from among your gifts to us,  
and may what you grant us to celebrate devoutly here below,  
gain for us the prize of eternal redemption.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

*The Lord will bestow his bounty,  
and our earth shall yield its increase.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

May these mysteries, O Lord,  
in which we have participated,  
profit us, we pray,  
for even now, as we walk amid passing things,  
you teach us by them to love the things of heaven  
and hold fast to what endures.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**