

News from the Parishes of Holy Family, Pensby and Our Lady & St. John, Heswall



Expectation of the various “comings” of Christ dominate the Advent readings: Christ’s coming in history which culminates the four weeks of preparation; his coming at the end of history, which is highlighted by the readings that conclude the Church’s year and provide a transition to the First Sunday of Advent and his continual coming by faith into the hearts of believers. The readings range from the elegant poetry of Isaiah to the strident calls to repentance of John the Baptist. It is a time of eager expectation and of absence and longing when, after today’s gospel, even the voice of Jesus is silent. The readings for this first Sunday summon us to wait in faithful hope and to be vigilant and alert, for God may touch our lives in surprising ways.

Today’s gospel is from the end of Mark’s apocalyptic discourse in Chapter 13. In this Jesus predicts the destruction of the Temple, the persecutions that await the community, the arrival of false messiahs and false prophets and the final cosmic catastrophes that herald the return of the Son of Man to gather the elect. This conclusion presents a short parable that is bracketed by commands to Jesus’ followers, “Be on your guard, stay awake, stay awake!” because they do not know the proper time for God to intervene. It is a virtual allegory of the community life of Mark’s small house churches, which compares Jesus’ absence to a journey by the master of the house, who has delegated authority to servants. Each has a different task, with a special commission to the door-keeper to stay awake for the master may return at one of the four watches of the night (evening, midnight, cockcrow or dawn) It is a community yearning for the return of Jesus and for visible signs of God’s presence.

This parable also anticipates the passion of Jesus. Jesus’ final hours are punctuated by the same four watches, and ironically the disciples fail to stay awake in Gethsemane, Peter denies him at cockcrow and Pilate condemns him at dawn. Rather paradoxically while waiting for Jesus to return in power and glory as the exalted Son of Man, the disciples fail to see his coming as the suffering Son of Man who gives his life that others may be free.

Advent is about staying awake, watching and waiting. Biblical watching is not staring at Christmas specials or sports events on the television, but vigilance. Biblical waiting is not queuing in traffic or at the bus stop or at the tills in shops but faithful waiting for and attentiveness to God’s entry into our lives. It is enduring hope and faithfulness to the tasks with which we have been entrusted in the face of God’s absence and a yearning for Christ’s presence in our lives.

Christmas Mass Times 2017**Sunday 24th December**9:30am 4th Sunday of Advent - **Holy Family**11:15am 4th Sunday of Advent - **Our Lady & St. John****No** 5pm Mass at **Holy Family**6pm Christmas Vigil Mass - **Our Lady & St. John**11:30pm Carols - **Our Lady & St. John**Midnight Mass - **Our Lady & St. John****Monday 25th December**9:30am The Nativity of the Lord - **Holy Family**11:15am The Nativity of the Lord - **Our Lady & St. John****Collection Figures for November**

	OLSJ	Holy Family
05.11.2017	£700.50	£642.14
12.11.2017	£879.95	£520.90
19.11.2017	£623.01	£489.77
26.11.2017	£581.88	£571.21
CAFOD	£707.20	£417.66
Priests' Training Fund	£532.95	£141.98
Assam November		£199.95
Poppy Appeal	£185.02	

Wirral Food Bank: Thank you to both parishes for all your donations last week. The contributions are as follows, Holy Family 14.77 kgs and OLSJ 14.36 kgs.

MISSIO at Our Lady and St John. Many thanks to all who contributed towards the recent collections which finally realised £250.00.

Churches Together in Heswall invite you to come **Carol Singing** on **Saturday 16th December** at **10:30am** outside Lingham's, Telegraph Road, Heswall with the Port Sunlight Lyceum Band.

ASSAM Collection Reminder: The next Monthly Assam Collection will be after all masses **THIS Sunday, 3rd December.**

Christmas Cards to Palestine***Message of Hope***

The Justice and Peace Group invite you to join them again in sending Christmas Cards with our messages of support to the beleaguered Christians in the **Holy Family parishes of Gaza and Ramallah**. This year we've been told that the children in the two parish schools would also very much appreciate cards to brighten their lives and it would be lovely if some of our children would like to send their own to them.

So, if you could bring one or two cards to church – signed and with a short greeting – we will post the cards for you. Just write either *Gaza* or *Ramallah* on the envelope. Stamps are not needed. There will be a collection box for them at the back of both our churches. **THE LAST COLLECTION WILL BE NEXT SUNDAY 10TH DECEMBER**

Your response last year was magnificent and we thank you again in anticipation.

The Justice and Peace Group

Scout Stamps will continue to be on sale in both parishes this weekend. Stamps cost **30p** which is considerably lower than Royal Mail. There will also be a Scout-Post Post Box at the back of Our Lady and St John this year. Please support this as monies go both to charity and your local scout group.



There will be a memorial Mass for the late **Tim Dwyer R.I.P.** at St. Werburgh's Church in Chester on **Sunday 3rd December at 10:45am.**



Wednesday 9:30am-8:30pm at OLSJ

&

Saturday after 12 noon Mass at Holy Family

CARITAS at Christmas 2017: There will be a collection after all weekend Masses at both Parishes on the **weekend of the 9th/10th December**. Thank you for your support. Your donations will go to families in need within the Diocese, ensuring they have a Christmas and gifts to celebrate Christ's Birth and create happy family memories.

New Ministry Rotas at Holy Family: The New Ministry Rotas for the next 6 months are now available. They have been emailed to those who have requested, copies are on the notice boards around Church, they are on the website and a few copies have been printed off for those who can't access them in other ways. As always, please remember that if you can't fulfil a particular Ministry, it's YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to make arrangements for cover (in some instances, this is not being done!).

**** Service Change at Holy Family ****

From this week we will no longer be having a Service of Word & Communion at Holy Family on Tuesdays. We are finding it difficult to get cover on occasion and we're increasingly finding that it falls upon one or two people. Mass is of course available at Our Lady & St John on Tuesday at 9am and we would encourage you to attend there. There is no change to the Thursday Service for the time being. Thank you.



The last **Stitch Craft meeting** before Christmas will be on **Tuesday 12th December** the group will recommence on **Tuesday 9th January 2018**.

Mary's Meals: Thank you everyone who contributed to the back packs, these have now been dispatched, your support will be greatly appreciated by the children who receive the back packs so for now we do not need further donations. Once again, thank you all very much.



The next **Monthly Prayer Breakfast** will take place on **Saturday 8th December at 8:30 am** in the Meeting Room at OLSJ.

Please do join us for an hour of prayers, discussion and a tasty breakfast! No need to book, just turn up. Everyone welcome.

This month's breakfast will be provided and hosted by us, so please do come along.



Advent Service at 6pm on Sunday 17th December at Our Lady & St John. A traditional service of readings, poems and carols followed by seasonal refreshments. All welcome.

Children's Nativity: Note that there will be NO Children's Nativity at Mass this Christmas, however, all children are welcome to come to the Advent Service at OLSJ on **Sunday 17th December**, to take part in a nativity scene with a reading and a children's carol. Please let the children's liturgy team at OLSJ know, if your child would like to take part.



DIOCESE OF
SHREWSBURY

An Important Message from the Bishop of Shrewsbury

Do you support Catholic Schools and the right of Catholics to send their children to them?

Then we need you to make your voice heard. The Government is making a critical decision on whether to overturn the admissions cap which prevents Catholic schools from allowing all Catholic pupils to attend. They have acknowledged that this policy discriminates against Catholics and promised to abandon it, now we need you to tell them not to turn on their promise to Catholics.

Visit <http://catholicnews.org.uk/education-cap> or search for 'Catholic Education' in your search engine to write to the Government and urge them to drop their policy which bans new Catholic schools. With thanks for your help and co-operation in this matter and with every good wish,

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ Mark Davies
Bishop of Shrewsbury



Liverpool
Seafarers Centre
A Lifeline for Seafarers

THANK YOU to everyone that donated items for the Liverpool Seafarers and those that came last week to help wrap them all up. They have now been delivered to the Liverpool Seafarers Centre.

Sat 2 nd Dec	Ferial	6:00 pm	Mass – Andrew Walker	OUR LADY & ST. JOHN
Sun 3 rd Dec	First Sunday in Advent	11:15 am	Mass – Agnes Murphy, Charlie, Owen & Family	
Mon 4 th Dec	Ferial	9:00 am	Mass – Susan Topping R.I.P.	
Tues 5 th Dec	Ferial	9:00 am	Mass – John Campbell	
Wed 6 th Dec	St. Nicolas	9:00 am	Celebration of Word and Communion	
		9:30 am to 8:30 pm	Adoration - Come and spend some quiet time with Our Lord	
Thurs 7 th Dec	St. Ambrose	7:00 pm	Mass – Francis Brady R.I.P.	
Fri 8 th Dec	The Feast of The Immaculate Conception		(Mass at Holy Family at 9am)	
Sat 9 th Dec	Ferial	6:00 pm	Mass – Fred Overton R.I.P.	
Sun 10 th Dec	Second Sunday in Advent	11:15 am	Mass – Helen Teahan	

HOLY FAMILY	Sat 2 nd Dec	Ferial	12 noon	Mass – Fr Pat O’Brien R.I.P (Anniversary)
	Sun 3 rd Dec	First Sunday in Advent	9:30 am	Mass – John Pritchard R.I.P (Anniversary)
			5:00 pm	Mass – Joan Garvey (Speedy Recovery)
	Mon 4 th Dec	Ferial		(Mass at OLSJ at 9am)
	Tues 5 th Dec	Ferial		(Mass at OLSJ at 9am)
	Wed 6 th Dec	St. Nicolas	9:00 am	Mass - Cecilia Redman
	Thurs 7 th Dec	St. Ambrose	9:00 am	Service of Word and Sacrament
	Fri 8 th Dec	The Feast of The Immaculate Conception	9:00 am	Mass – Holy Souls
	Sat 9 th Dec	Ferial	12 noon	Mass – Judith Roberts R.I.P (Anniversary)
	Sun 10 th Dec	Second Sunday in Advent	9:30 am	Mass – Jean Casson (Speedy Recovery)
5:00 pm			Mass – Jack Heery R.I.P (Anniversary)	

Confessions – Saturdays 5:15 pm – 5:45 pm at OLSJ Saturdays 11:30 am -11:50 am at Holy Family.

Legion of Mary Meetings: Every Monday morning at 10:45 am in the meeting room at OLSJ.

Mother’s Prayers: Every Monday morning at 9:30 am in the meeting room at OLSJ.

Adoration: Holy Family: Every Saturday after 12 noon Mass. On 1st Saturday of the Month, Divine Mercy devotions, prayers are included. All are welcome. **Our Lady and St John:** Every Wednesday 9:30am until 8pm after morning Mass. All are welcome.

Sick: Please remember in your prayers all those in both parishes who are sick at home or in hospital, including Catherine Maschke, Peter Curtis, Carol Saunders, Gerry Smith, Joe Lucas, Leonora Reilly, John Marmion, Iris Christian, John Moroney, Mary Latimer, and Father Peter Kelly. *Please get in touch if there are any alterations.*