

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

Last Sunday the readings echoed with expectation for the coming of Christ at the end of time. Today they speak of beginnings. The Old Testament reading “Console my people, console them,” inaugurates the Book of Consolation (Isaiah 40-56). The voice of God cries out in the wilderness to the exiles in Babylon that their time of service is ended and their sin is atoned for.

The open verses of Mark’s Gospel reach back to Isaiah to hear again a voice in the wilderness calling the people to make way for the coming of God. By “beginning” Mark means not simply the initial verses of a book but the origin of the Church’s proclamation of the Good News in the deepest aspirations of the Jewish people for liberation and intimacy with God and in the life, death and raising up of Jesus. These verses also provide an overture to Mark’s story of Jesus by sounding those themes that resonate throughout the gospel: “the way” as a metaphor for the path of discipleship; Jesus, Messiah and Son of God; proclaiming the Good News, forgiveness of sins; the coming of the stronger man.

Mark introduces the second of the three Advent figures of expectation (Isaiah, John the Baptist and Mary). John’s location in the desert, the barren wilderness southeast of Jerusalem near the Dead Sea has broad resonance for Jews, recalling the years of wilderness wandering between the Exodus and entry into the Land, and the place of the covenant at Sinai. The wilderness has a dual connotation: positively as the place of God’s saving acts and negatively as the site of testing and rebellion. Jesus is tested there, retreats there to pray and to avoid crowds, feeds the people there. His final test comes when he is “deserted” by his followers and accepts the chalice of suffering.

Today John, the wild, ascetic prophet, summons the people to a baptism of repentance, a symbolic washing that signifies a new way of thinking. “Repentance,” with its overtones of sorrow, contrition and a firm purpose of amendment, disguises the rich meaning of the Greek *metanoia*, which rather suggest a “second look,” “taking stock,” “recollection and renewal.” Such repentance leads to forgiveness (literally: “sending away”) of sin with overtones of pardon, release from captivity and cancellation of punishment. Jesus himself will leave the desert to begin his ministry by joining a call for *metanoia* to the joyful proclamation of the Good News and the closeness of God’s reign. Let us stand in the desert among the crowds and listen to John’s words to think again, take stock and prepare the way of the Lord.



**Christmas Mass Times 2017****Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December**9:30am 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent - **Holy Family**11:15am 4<sup>th</sup> 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 25<sup>th</sup> December**9:30am The Nativity of the Lord - **Holy Family**11:15am The Nativity of the Lord - **Our Lady & St. John****Last Week Collection Amounts**

Holy Family	£575.06
Assam	£215.61
OLSJ	£584.97



**Wirral Food Bank:** Thank you to both parishes for all your donations last week. The contributions are as follows, Holy Family 26.12 kgs and OLSJ 13.11 kgs.

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

**This Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> December,** is the last date for posting your cards in the box at the back of church. The Justice and Peace Group thank you for your support.

Please pray that the USA's recognition, this week, of Jerusalem as capital of Israel – about which Pope Francis has said he was “profoundly concerned” - will not lead to further unrest in the region.

*The Justice and Peace Group*



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

**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. Note that the last posting day for Scout Post is **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December.**

**Churches Together in Heswall**

invite you to come **Carol Singing** on **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December** at **10:30am** outside Lingham, Telegraph Road, Heswall with the Port Sunlight Lyceum Band.



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

**Saturday after 12 noon Mass at Holy Family**  
*The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic Worship. Jesus awaits us in this Sacrament of Love. Let us not refuse the time to go to meet Him in Adoration, in contemplation full of faith and open to making amends for the serious offences and crimes of the world.*  
*(Saint Pope John Paul II)*

**CARITAS at Christmas 2017:** There will be a collection after all weekend Masses at both Parishes on **this weekend, 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> 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.

**Holy Family 200 Club****Week 9**

1 <sup>st</sup> Prize	£25	No. 79	K. Metcalf
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	£10	No. 186	C. Doolan
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	£5	No. 30	J. Brent

**Week 10**

1 <sup>st</sup> Prize	£25	No. 130	C. Moore
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	£10	No. 158	K. Webster
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	£5	No. 138	P. Marley

### Lately Dead of the Parish

Please pray for the repose of the souls of **Susan Topping (OLSJ)**, **Michael Pover (Holy Family)** and **Helen Loxham (Holy Family)** who have died recently.

- **Susan's** Funeral Service takes place at OLSJ on **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 11 am.**
- **Michael's** Funeral Service takes place at Landican Centre Chapel on **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 10am.**
- **Helen's** Funeral Service takes place at Landican Centre Chapel on **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December at 12 noon.**

May their souls Rest in Peace. Please remember to pray for their families at this difficult time.



### **Carols by Candlelight**

**at 6pm on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> 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 'Carols by Candlelight' service at OLSJ on **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> 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.



**Sale of Christmas Handicrafts** after 11.15am Mass this Sunday (10<sup>th</sup> December) in the Meeting Room at Our Lady and St John. All proceeds to go to the Cenacolo Community in Kendal.

**Christmas Flower Collection at Holy Family:** Our team of flower arrangers keep the church beautifully decorated throughout the year and to make it even more special for Christmas, there will be 2 collection Sundays on the 10th and 17th December. Please help to make the Church festive.



**Christmas Fayre:** Thanks to all who supported the fayre last week. We raised £1000. A special thanks to all those who helped especially our social committee. The raffle will continue for the next few weeks and will be drawn on Christmas Eve.

**The LPA Reconciliation Service** will be held at Our Lady and St John on **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm.**



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**

**PENSIONERS LUNCH:** there will be **no** lunch this month (December). Thank you to all who have prepared and served the lunches during 2017.

**Parishioners of Our Lady and St John:** Please don't forget to check the porch at the back of Church on your way out, for Christmas cards that may have been left for you.

**Tea Towels** - if you have taken any tea towels home to wash from the meeting room at OLSJ, please can you return them? Thank you.

**Ladymount Catholic Primary School** are seeking to appoint a part time Cleaner and Assistant Caretaker:

- **Assistant Caretaker** - Monday to Friday (4pm–6pm)
  - **Cleaner** - Monday to Friday (4.30pm to 6pm)
- Please see the poster at the back of Church for further information.

Sat 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ferial	6:00 pm	<b>Mass</b> – Fred Overton R.I.P.	<b>OUR LADY &amp; ST. JOHN</b>
<b>Sun</b> 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Second Sunday in Advent</b>	11:15 am	<b>Mass</b> – Helen Teahan	
Mon 11 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ferial	9:00 am	<b>Mass</b> – Camilla Hosford	
Tues 12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ferial		<b>No Mass</b>	
Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> Dec	St. Lucy	9:00 am	<b>Celebration of Word and Communion</b>	
		9:30 am to 8:30 pm	<b>Adoration</b> - Come and spend some quiet time with Our Lord	
		<b>7:00 pm</b>	<b>Reconciliation Service</b>	
Thurs 14 <sup>th</sup> Dec	St. John of the Cross	7:00 pm	<b>Mass</b> – Pauline Griffiths R.I.P.	
Fri 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ferial	<b>11:00 am</b>	<b>Susan Topping Funeral Service</b>	
Sat 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ferial	6:00 pm	<b>Mass</b> – Luigi Gramegna R.I.P.	
<b>Sun</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Third Sunday in Advent</b> <b>Gaudete Sunday</b>	11:15 am	<b>Mass</b> – Peter Hartley R.I.P.	
		<b>6:00 pm</b>	<b>Carols by Candlelight</b>	

<b>HOLY FAMILY</b>	Sat 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ferial	12 noon	<b>Mass</b> – Judith Roberts R.I.P (Anniversary)
	<b>Sun</b> 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Second Sunday in Advent</b>	9:30 am	<b>Mass</b> – Jean Casson (Speedy Recovery)
			5:00 pm	<b>Mass</b> – Jack Heery R.I.P (Anniversary)
	Mon 11 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ferial		<b>(Mass at OLSJ at 9am)</b>
	Tues 12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ferial		<b>No Mass</b>
	Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> Dec	St. Lucy	9:00 am	<b>Mass</b> - Cathleen & Martin Cogley R.I.P (Anniversaries)
	Thurs 14 <sup>th</sup> Dec	St. John of the Cross	9:00 am	<b>Service of Word and Sacrament</b>
	Fri 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ferial	9:00 am	<b>Mass</b> – Eithne Keogh R.I.P.
	Sat 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Ferial	12 noon	<b>Mass</b> – June Thomas R.I.P.
	<b>Sun</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Third Sunday in Advent</b> <b>Gaudete Sunday</b>	9:30 am	<b>Mass</b> – Sister Maureen Quinn Intentions
5:00 pm			<b>Mass</b> – Helen Ryan 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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, Father Peter Kelly and Michael Murphy. *Please get in touch if there are any alterations.*