



TIMES OF MASS AND LITURGIES THIS WEEK

2nd Sunday of Advent	8.00am	Mass in Extraordinary Form (Tridentine)
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	10.00am	Mass – Int. Thanksgiving
Monday St Damasus I	9.30am	Mass
Tuesday Advent Feria	9.30am	Mass
Wednesday St Lucy	NO MASS	
Thursday St John of the Cross	6.00pm	Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament
	7.00pm	Mass
Friday Advent Feria	9.00am	Mass
Saturday Advent Feria	9.30am	Mass
	10.15am – 11.00am	Confessions
3rd Sunday of Advent	8.00am	Mass in Extraordinary Form (Tridentine)
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	10.00am	Mass – Int. People of the Parish



LITURGY OF THE WORD WITH OUR CHILDREN

During 10am Mass, we invite our younger children (approx. aged 3 to 7) to attend their own Liturgy of the Word in the Guild Room. **Parents are encouraged to join their children.** We welcome more help from those who seek to be leaders and support in this ministry to the children of our parish.

Thank you to all those who attended the meeting for families preparing for **FIRST RECONCILIATION AND COMMUNION** held last month.

We will enrol the children at Sunday Mass early in 2018.
Please keep these children and their families in your prayers.

Connections to Church Teaching and Tradition

We hear in the Second Reading of the “new heavens and the new earth in where righteousness will be at home” and that we await. *Lumen gentium* notes that the Church awaits that time with her people. The second Vatican Council document states: “However, until there shall be new heavens and a new earth in which justice dwells, the pilgrim Church in her sacraments and institutions, which pertain to the present time, has the appearance of this world which is passing and she herself dwells among creatures who groan and travail in pain until now and await the revelation of the sons of God” (48).

The filling in of valleys and the lowering of mountains and hillsides that Isaiah envisions is in preparation for the Kingdom of God. To ready the earth for the Lord, efforts will be made to bring justice to all. The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (CSDC) explains that such efforts are continual. The CSDC states: “The Church’s social doctrine is presented as a ‘work site’ where the work is always in progress, where perennial truth penetrates and permeates new circumstances, indicating paths of justice and peace” (86).

The Introduction to the *Rite of Penance* (RP) references today’s Gospel in its first paragraph as it tells of the mystery of reconciliation in the history of salvation. RP, 1, states: “This invitation to repentance, which had often been sounded by the prophets, prepared people’s hearts for the coming of the kingdom of God through the voice of John the Baptist, who came ‘preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins,’” (Mark 1:4). The introduction continues to explain that Jesus not only encouraged people to turn away from sin but, in welcoming sinners, reconciled individuals to God.

We are now well into the season of ADVENT. To help nourish us journey this four-week journey, both *Walk with Me* and *My Day by Day* Advent 2017 prayer booklets are available at a cost of £1.00.



Lectionary for Mass

Perhaps you can recall making preparations for a big event, a wedding or anniversary. There were invitations to send, menus to prepare, decorations to make, and party clothes to purchase. Today’s readings are about preparing for an even bigger event, the coming of God’s Chosen One. The Gospel begins with a proclamation of the “good news” of (or about) Jesus Christ. Mark apparently believes that his community already received a “Save the Date” notice for this celebration in the words of the prophet Isaiah, words which are also part of our First Reading.

The historical context for Isaiah’s oracle is the Babylonian Exile, a time of great sadness for the Jewish people. But the prophet’s message is one of tenderness and consolation. A straight path is being prepared for God’s coming, God’s glory (the Hebrew word *kavod*, meaning “splendour” or “honour”) will again be revealed to the people, and Jerusalem can shout from the mountaintop, “Here is our God!”

But Mark goes a step further by identifying John the Baptist as the one called to deliver the invitation for the great event of God’s coming. He even dresses John for the occasion, making him look like the prophet Elijah (2 Kings 1:8). The Baptist, (literally “dunking”) that John proclaims is not Christian Baptism, but rather a commitment to a change of heart that makes it possible for us to receive God’s coming Kingdom.

The Second Reading, from a letter attributed to Peter, continues this theme of preparing for the coming of God’s Kingdom. We are reminded that cultivating a disposition that leads to good action is another important way to prepare for this party.

Liturgy and Life

(1) How can Advent help you to be holier as you prepare for the coming of the Lord? (2) How does your parish provide ways for members to work for peace and justice? (3) Is participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation among your plans for preparing for Christmas?

WEDNESDAY 13th DECEMBER: MEMORIAL OF SAINT LUCY

ST Lucy (c. +304), even from a young age, had a burning desire to serve God and an infinite love for the poor. Living in Syracuse, a city in Sicily, she fell prey to the Diocletian persecutions, which eventually resulted in her martyrdom. She resisted a man, believed to be a Roman soldier, who tried to rape her. He, in turn, denounced her as a Christian and had her tortured and killed. Numerous legends revolve around her death, but one that has gained popularity is that she tore out her eyes in an act to resist her attacker. Her name in Latin, *Lucia*, comes from *lux*, *lucis*, meaning light; therefore, many northern countries honour her at this time of year when darkness is pervasive. Sweden celebrates the virginity and martyrdom of St. Lucy during a festival of light with a sacred procession of young girls clothed in white dresses with red sashes, and crowned with lit candles. She is the patron saint of those with eye troubles and those needing awareness.

Money Matters

Last Week’s Offertory Collection – £253.72

TODAY – SECOND COLLECTION
PROVIDENCE ROW – ADVENT APPEAL

Thank you for your generosity

DECEMBER 2017 edition of The Vine
The Diocese of Northampton newspaper is available. It’s free of charge!

Are you new to the parish?

If so, you are very welcome! Do introduce yourself to Father Andy after Mass, and please complete a parish registration form.



Tea, coffee and cold drinks are served in The Guild Room after both of our Sunday Masses.
All are welcome!

Infant Baptism and Marriage. By appointment with Fr Andy after completing the necessary preparation. **The Church requires** notice of at least six months prior to the Sacrament of Matrimony being celebrated.

MISSIO 2018 CALENDARS

Are available in the porch for anyone who would like a copy. Please help yourself.

TODAY we will hold a **special collection** for the work of **Providence Row**. Founded by Fr Daniel Gilbert, the parish priest of St Mary Moorfields, and the sisters of Mercy, Providence Row has been providing assistance to people who are homeless since 1860. Just £5 will provide a warm welcome of a hot shower, breakfast, a cup of tea and that all important first conversation. You can find out more at www.providencerw.org.uk/advent. Your prayers and generous donations are much appreciated.

WOMEN’S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER – AMERSHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER

Planning is going ahead for your local Women’s Day of Prayer to be held on 2nd March 2018. If anyone would like to join me in presenting Our Lady’s Church please ring Elizabeth Beckwith on 01494 433363. We are particularly looking for younger women.