



*Welcome to the Catholic Parish of Southwell and Calverton*

# Our Lady of Victories, Southwell and Saint Anthony, Calverton

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## 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> January 2020 : The Epiphany of the Lord

Of all the Nativity festivals the Epiphany is perhaps the most colourful and yet, at least in Anglo-Saxon cultures, the most neglected : it is really eclipsed by the earlier Christmas feasts and the celebration of the New Year; it seems to be the full stop at the end of the holidays!



Here's our chance to reclaim this feast as a purely religious festival. One idea might be to make it a day of hospitality, when we as Christians, without the 'baggage' of all the Christmas traditions, can welcome people to Mass and accompany them to our celebration. The readings for the feast point out that the 'Magi' represent the world beyond faith confines, beyond our religious securities. In the scriptures we hear that 'Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body and co-partners in the promise of Christ Jesus through the gospel' (Ephesians 3.6). Especially in this Year of the Word, what better time to welcome people back to church? Or even to welcome them to church for the very first time?

Throughout these days of Christmas the clear message is that the Word made flesh, the light that came into the world, revealed in Jesus, somehow was and is so often recognised by those on the margins of faith or estranged from it. Perhaps that is because in their lives and hearts all pretence and subterfuge is removed, they look, they search and they simply see. For those of us involved in faith the baggage we carry sometimes clouds our own search, tires us out so that we don't bother to search a little harder, look a little more closely at what God might be doing in our own world, in our own lives



The Magi, those wise, religious, persons from the East risked everything to follow their star and find the answer that they sought. They found deceit and danger in the establishment world, in Jerusalem, and instead it was in the poor and unnoticed, in Bethlehem, that they found the God they sought and it was to the child Jesus they gave their fabulous gifts and worshipped him! Their lives were changed; they didn't return

back to their familiar ways, that route, as personified by Herod's cruelty, was no longer one that led to life!

So what about us? Next weekend we have chance to celebrate the end of the Christmas season when we come to church for the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. This reminds us, at the end of Christmas and the very start of the year, that baptism is the start of our lives of faith, the doorway into our new life. In the celebration of the sacrament we are told that we 'die to sin' and we are 'reborn to new life'. This new life is available to all, but often people need to be asked, to be reminded, to be invited. Could one of our New Year's resolutions in 2020 be to invite someone to church with us? Bring them to Sunday Mass (and have a cup of tea or coffee afterwards) and let them see and feel what's so special to us?

Maybe we should see in these two feasts the call to recognise ourselves as part of the wider Christian family in which all are welcome, and all are called. Part of our mission is therefore that hospitality of graciousness to others, going that extra mile in love and service, like the Magi following the star and offering their gifts, or even like Jesus in coming to John the Baptist and being washed in the waters of the River Jordan. There are no half-measures in the faith, and nothing but total dedication is worthy of God. We often fail to live up to such high standards, and feel ourselves unworthy. This year, at the start of this Year of the Word, we are reminded that we have been made worthy, through Jesus' birth and death, to hear the Word of God, and called to spread that message far and wide. We are called in our own baptism to be like the Magi, to find Jesus in our lives and then to take that message, that Word, to all whom we met. In this nativity season of light and joy may we share with others the revelation that the true Morning Star that never sets has come into our world.



BAPTISM of the LORD



CHRIST IS BORN TO US  
COME, LET US ADORE

## Christmas Offering for Father Simon

Very many thanks from Father Simon for the very kind and generous Christmas Offering given at the Masses on Christmas Day, and for the gifts given in at the presbytery (mainly of food and drink – how well you know your parish priest!) and for the dozens of Christmas cards. This Christmas has been a beautiful celebration, may each one of you be blessed by God this Epiphany and throughout 2020!

## Prayers before Mass

We prepare ourselves for the worthy celebration of Mass by arriving in church in good time, allowing some period of silence to calm ourselves before we encounter God. This can also be a good time for community prayers, so that at the end of Mass, when the priest gives the dismissal (Go in peace!) we are ready to leave immediately if we wish. In order to remember that we're entering into the Year of the Word from the First Sunday of Advent, and recognising that we're preparing for the rededication of England and Wales as the 'Dowry of Mary', we'll pray the Prayer of the Year of the Word, and the Angelus, before Mass each day; in Saint Anthony's church we'll also pray the prayer to Saint Anthony. At the end of Mass we can then respond to the invitation to 'Go in peace', with just some music (or even silence) as the priest and altar servers leave the sanctuary (and so the final hymn of Mass, as suggested by the Missal, will be the Communion hymn). The prayers are available on green cards at the back of church, please take one as you arrive, and either take it home with you (so that you can pray the prayers during the week) or leave it at the back of church.

## Changes to Mass times this week

Mass on Tuesday will be celebrated at 7.30am; on Friday there will be no public Mass as Father Simon is in Wales for a Requiem; likewise there is no Mass on Saturday morning as Father Simon is involved in an ecumenical meeting.

## Forthcoming Events in our parish, community and diocese

**Coffee for CAFOD on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January** after the 9.30am Mass in Southwell Presbytery. Coffee, cake, convivial company and campaigning for the common good. All are warmly welcome.

**Lead kindly light**, a talk by Deacon Bill Myers, will be held on **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> January** at the Rosmini Centre, LE7 4SJ, at 2.00pm. Visit [www.rosminicentre.co.uk](http://www.rosminicentre.co.uk) or contact 01509 813078 for more information.

The **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** begins on **18<sup>th</sup> January**, with the theme (from the Acts of the Apostles): “they showed unusual kindness.”

**Sharing Scripture in my life**, an afternoon reflection, will be given at the Rosmini Centre, LE7 4SJ, on **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January** at 3.00pm. Visit [www.rosminicentre.co.uk](http://www.rosminicentre.co.uk) or contact 01509 813078 for more information.

## Screening of ‘Unplanned’

Nottingham 40 Days for Life group has collected over 400 signatures from parishes of the diocese, achieving a showing of the film **Unplanned**, to be screened at the Savoy Cinema, Derby Road, Nottingham, NG7 1QN, on **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January**, at 6.15pm. Tickets can be booked online:

[www.savoyonline.co.uk/SavoyNottingham.dll/WhatsOn?Film=29682605](http://www.savoyonline.co.uk/SavoyNottingham.dll/WhatsOn?Film=29682605)

The Savoy Cinema have agreed that if they receive advance bookings of over 60% of the cinema capacity, by the 13<sup>th</sup> January for the Wednesday screening, that they will show the film again on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January. Please consider booking and seeing this film, highlighting the dignity of unborn life.

## The God who Speaks : The Year of the Word 2020

As part of the Year of the Word: the God Who Speaks initiative, Nottingham Diocese is hosting the National Scripture Tour on **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February** in Holy Trinity Parish Centre, Newark, NG24 4AU. The centre stage and keynote speaker will be the artist for the Year, Pete Codling describing the Year’s journey through art. The aim of the Scripture Tour is to bring the Word of God alive. The six themes are:

1. Welcome the Word – welcome tent, resources and other promo resources from the diocese Whoever welcomes you welcomes me... Matthew 10.40
2. Mary and the Word – all things Marian My soul magnifies the Lord... Luke 1: 46
3. Seeing the Word – art, culture He has made everything beautiful for its time... Ecclesiastes 3: 11
4. Exploring the Word – bible studying, going a bit deeper, getting into the Bible Your word is a lamp for my steps... Psalm 118 (119): 105
5. Sharing the Word - evangelisation/music You will be my witnesses to the ends

of the earth... Acts 1:8

6. Living the Word – social justice Let justice roll down like waters... Amos 5: 24  
For more information visit [www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/the-god-who-speaks/](http://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/the-god-who-speaks/)

“Scripture lies at the centre of everything the Church does. This is a great opportunity to attract and encourage more people to read the bible and deepen awareness and understanding. What is your parish doing? Why not organise something yourself? Discuss your ideas and suggestions with your parish priest. ‘The God who speaks’ initiative serves to teach us how important the scriptures are in helping us to encounter God: to hear afresh what he asks of us in our daily lives, and to share with Him our joys, sorrows and anxieties.”

*Bishop Patrick, December 19, Advent Pastoral Letter*

## Year of the Word : Day of Prayer

The Nottingham Diocesan Spirituality Network are holding days of prayer throughout 2020 entitled : Encounter Jesus and be Missionary Disciples through Saint Matthew's Gospel, beginning at 10.00am with arrivals from 9.30am and finishing at 3.00pm with Liturgy. Refreshments are provided, please bring a packed lunch. All are welcome.

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May – Saint Hugh’s church hall, Lincoln LN2 5AQ**

## Pilgrimages by Coach

**Pilgrimage to Lisieux by Coach March 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>** Picking up in Nottingham, Derby and Leicester, the cost is £345 per person. We will begin our pilgrimage with a guided visit to the cathedral in Lisieux and then to the basilica dedicated to Saint Therese, to the house where she grew up and to the Carmel where she lived and died. In addition to this there’ll be an optional excursion to Hon Fleur.

**Pilgrimage to Lourdes and Nevers by Coach June 13<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>** Picking up in Nottingham, Derby and Leicester, the cost is £595 per person. This price includes coach and ferry travel, overnight stay with bed and breakfast at the Welcome Break hotel in Orleans on the way out, full board at the Hotel Irlande in Lourdes, half board at the Kyriad Hotel in Nevers on the way back. In addition to this there’s an optional excursion to Gavarnie, a ski resort in the Pyrenees.

For more information about either pilgrimage, and a booking form, please contact Father John McCay at [jmccay1982@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jmccay1982@yahoo.co.uk) or 0115 981 0320.

## Parish Thursday Lunch Club

As some parishioners might be aware, the Lunch Club has done great work over the years, thanks to the many generous individuals in the parish, cooking meals, transporting guests, and helping with the various preparations so that parishioners and non-parishioners alike can enjoy friendship and good food in our parish hall. Recently some difficulties have occurred, both with reduced numbers of volunteers, and with money not being accounted for appropriately. Father Simon is considering how we might move forward, and the Parish Finance Committee will have this as an item to discuss on their next agenda in January. They will also consider whether there are lessons to be learned and applied to other parish activities, if relevant. In the meantime if anyone has any thoughts, comments or questions, please speak directly with Father Simon so that rumour might be avoided.

## Newsletter via email

If you'd like to receive the parish newsletter by email each Friday, please send an email to the parish secretary, Justine (olv.rcchurch@gmail.com), asking to be added to the circulation list. You can still collect a paper copy at church if you wish, and it will be made available on the parish website also.

## Coffee Rota

Coffee makers are needed! New volunteers to serve coffee after mass on Sundays at Our Lady of Victories parish hall are urgently required. We now have insufficient volunteers to offer coffee every Sunday and need at least four new volunteers. Please contact Lesley McKenzie if you can help: 01636 814721 or les.mck15@gmail.com

## Lent 2020

Churches Together in Southwell's Lent course is the York Course '*Superstar*'. Volunteer hosts and facilitators are needed, and a sign-up sheet is available in each church. If you are able to facilitate or host a group write your details and choice of days on the sheet. Leaflets and booking forms for the course will be available shortly.

## Mass Intentions

There are Masses available if anyone wishes to have one offered for a loved one, or in memory of someone who has died. Fill in an envelopes at the back of church and give it to Father Simon; Mass intentions cards are available in both churches too.

## Parish Pastoral Council

The PPC is a source of advice and counsel for the parish priest and a forum for debate amongst parishioners about the pastoral activities of our parish. Over past years the PPC has been a valuable way in which the views of parishioners has been made known, and the parish owes a debt of gratitude to those who have served the parish by undertaking this role. Since some members of the PPC have stood down at the end of the year there are now vacancies on this body, which should number 12 members (half elected for three years by parishioners, and half nominated by the parish priest). If you have some time and energy to give to our parish please consider whether you could join the PPC. We will meet and look at areas such as the Year of the Word, evangelisation and ecumenical outreach, pilgrimages, prayer and worship, devotions, charitable activity – all those things that bring us personally closer to Christ, and bring Christ closer to other people. **Speak to Father Simon during January if you're interested in being a member of the Parish Pastoral Council.**

## Parish Meetings

Meeting will be held during January with the parishioners who undertake some of the ministries in our parishes, so that Father Simon can better understand who does what. Each meeting will be held in the presbytery meeting room, and please put the dates in your diary now. If you can't make a meeting, let Father Simon know:

- ✘ Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January – 7.00pm – parish readers
- ✘ Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January – 7.00pm – ExtraOrdinary Ministers of Holy Communion
- ✘ Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January – 7.00pm – parish musicians

## Health and Safety Matters

At the start of the new year it's a good time to consider how safe we are when we use the parish buildings:

- ✘ Please take care when lighting votive candles; especially the larger ones; make sure that they sit securely on the candle stand.
- ✘ Lights will be left on in Our Lady of Victories church and porch each day – leave them on so that there's always a little light as the church can be quite gloomy.
- ✘ Please make sure you know where the fire exits are, in both churches and in the parish hall; they are all well-signed, and lead immediately outside.
- ✘ If you see any matters of concern in any of our churches, or in the grounds, please let Father Simon know, and remedy the situation yourself if you can.

## Special Masses and Feastdays in 2020

### January

- **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup>** – Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
  - **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of the Epiphany
  - **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>** – Feast of the Baptism of the Lord
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### February

- **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Feast of the Presentation of the Lord
  - **Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup>** – Ash Wednesday
- 

### March

- **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of Saint Joseph
  - **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord
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### April

- **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>** – Palm Sunday
  - **Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>** – Maundy Thursday
  - **Friday 10<sup>th</sup>** – Good Friday
  - **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>** – EASTER DAY
  - **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Solemnity of Saint George
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### May

- **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>** – Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord – Holyday of Obligation
  - **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>** – Solemnity of Pentecost
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### June

- **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity
  - **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June** – Solemnity of Saint Anthony of Padua
  - **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of Corpus Christi
  - **Friday 19<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
  - **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of the Birth of Saint John the Baptist
  - **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of Saint Peter and Saint Paul
- 

### August

- **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup>** – Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord
  - **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of the Assumption
- 

### September

- **Monday 14<sup>th</sup>** – Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
- 

### October

- **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of Our Lady of Victories
- 

### November

- **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>** – Solemnity of All Saints
- **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day)
- **Monday 9<sup>th</sup>** – Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica



- **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Solemnity of Christ the King

## December

- **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patron of the Diocese
- **Friday 25<sup>th</sup>** – Solemnity of the Nativity of Jesus
- **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>** – Feast of the Holy Family

## Second Collections 2020

There are many calls on our money and I have seen how generously parishioners in Calverton and Southwell respond to those in need. Although some changes might be made, below is a list of those second collections which will be taken in 2020:

- 19<sup>th</sup> January Sick and Retired Priests of our Diocese
- 16<sup>th</sup> February *Review of Parish Finances – talk at each Sunday Mass*
- 8<sup>th</sup> March CAFOD Lent Fast Day (*Fast Day – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March*)
- 29<sup>th</sup> March Church Flowers for Easter
- 10<sup>th</sup> April Holy Places in Palestine (*Good Friday*)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> May Clergy Formation Fund (*Day of Prayer for Vocations*)
- 24<sup>th</sup> May Catholic Communications Network
- 21<sup>st</sup> June Day for Life
- 28<sup>th</sup> June Peter's Pence (*the charitable work of the Holy See*)
- 12<sup>th</sup> July Apostleship of the Sea
- 13<sup>th</sup> September Catholic Education Service (*Day of Prayer for our schools*)
- 20<sup>th</sup> September Evangelisation – Home Mission Sunday
- 4<sup>th</sup> October CAFOD Harvest Fast Day (*Fast Day – Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October*)
- 18<sup>th</sup> October Missio – World Mission Sunday
- 29<sup>th</sup> November Poor and Needy Parishes in our Diocese
- 13<sup>th</sup> December Church Flowers for Christmas

There will also be a missionary appeal from an order of Missionary Sisters, on a date to be confirmed in May.

During the year we will also support the work of the Newark Emmaus Trust, a local charity which works with those who are homeless, especially young people. In this way we are responding to the specific invitation of Bishop Patrick, in his October Pastoral Letter, to assist those in our community and locality who are homeless.

**Thank you for all your financial generosity.**

## Message of Pope Francis for the World Day of Peace : 1<sup>st</sup> January

### Peace as a journey of hope : dialogue, reconciliation and ecological conversion

#### 1. Peace, a journey of hope in the face of obstacles and trial

Peace is a great and precious value, the object of our hope and the aspiration of the entire human family. As a human attitude, our hope for peace is marked by an existential tension that makes it possible for the present, with all its difficulties, to be “lived and accepted if it leads towards a goal, if we can be sure of this goal, and if this goal is great enough to justify the effort of the journey”. Hope is thus the virtue that inspires us and keeps us moving forward, even when obstacles seem insurmountable.

Our human community bears, in its memory and its flesh, the scars of ever more devastating wars and conflicts that affect especially the poor and the vulnerable. Entire nations find it difficult to break free of the chains of exploitation and corruption that fuel hatred and violence. Even today, dignity, physical integrity, freedom, including religious freedom, communal solidarity and hope in the future are denied to great numbers of men and women, young and old. Many are the innocent victims of painful humiliation and exclusion, sorrow and injustice, to say nothing of the trauma born of systematic attacks on their people and their loved ones. The terrible trials of internal and international conflicts, often aggravated by ruthless acts of violence, have an enduring effect on the body and soul of humanity. Every war is a form of fratricide that destroys the human family’s innate vocation to brotherhood.

War, as we know, often begins with the inability to accept the diversity of others, which then fosters attitudes of aggrandizement and domination born of selfishness and pride, hatred and the desire to caricature, exclude and even destroy the other.



War is fueled by a perversion of relationships, by hegemonic ambitions, by abuses of power, by fear of others and by seeing diversity as an obstacle. And these, in turn, are aggravated by the experience of war. As I observed during my recent Apostolic Journey to Japan, our world is paradoxically marked by “a perverse dichotomy that tries to defend and ensure stability and peace through a false sense of security sustained by a mentality of fear and mistrust, one that ends up poisoning relationships between peoples and

obstructing any form of dialogue. Peace and international stability are incompatible with attempts to build upon the fear of mutual destruction or the threat of total annihilation. They can be achieved only on the basis of a global ethic of solidarity and cooperation in the service of a future shaped by interdependence and shared responsibility in the whole human family of today and tomorrow”.

Every threatening situation feeds mistrust and leads people to withdraw into their own safety zone. Mistrust and fear weaken relationships and increase the risk of violence, creating a vicious circle that can never lead to a relationship of peace. Even nuclear deterrence can only produce the illusion of security. We cannot claim to maintain stability in the world through the fear of annihilation, in a volatile situation, suspended on the brink of a nuclear abyss and enclosed behind walls of indifference. As a result, social and economic decisions are being made that lead to tragic situations where human beings and creation itself are discarded rather than protected and preserved. How, then, do we undertake a journey of peace and mutual respect? How do we break the unhealthy mentality of threats and fear? How do we break the current dynamic of distrust? We need to pursue a genuine fraternity based on our common origin from God and exercised in dialogue and mutual trust. The desire for peace lies deep within the human heart, and we should not resign ourselves to seeking anything less than this.

## **2. Peace, a journey of listening based on memory, solidarity and fraternity**

The Hibakusha, the survivors of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are among those who currently keep alive the flame of collective conscience, bearing witness to succeeding generations to the horror of what happened in August 1945 and the unspeakable sufferings that have continued to the present time. Their testimony awakens and preserves the memory of the victims, so that the conscience of humanity may rise up in the face of every desire for dominance and destruction. “We cannot allow present and future generations to lose the memory of what happened here. It is a memory that ensures and encourages the building of a more fair and fraternal future”. Like the Hibakusha, many people in today’s world are working to ensure that future generations will preserve the memory of past events, not only in order to prevent the same errors or illusions from recurring, but also to enable memory, as the fruit of experience, to serve as the basis and inspiration for present and future decisions to promote peace.

What is more, memory is the horizon of hope. Many times, in the darkness of wars and conflicts, the remembrance of even a small gesture of solidarity received can lead to courageous and even heroic decisions. It can unleash new energies and kindle new hope in individuals and communities. Setting out on a journey of peace is a challenge made all the more complex because the interests at stake in relationships between people, communities and nations, are numerous and

conflicting. We must first appeal to people's moral conscience and to personal and political will. Peace emerges from the depths of the human heart and political will must always be renewed, so that new ways can be found to reconcile and unite individuals and communities. The world does not need empty words but convinced witnesses, peacemakers who are open to a dialogue that rejects exclusion or manipulation. In fact, we cannot truly achieve peace without a convinced dialogue between men and women who seek the truth beyond ideologies and differing opinions. Peace "must be built up continually"; it is a journey made together in constant pursuit of the common good, truthfulness and respect for law. Listening to one another can lead to mutual understanding and esteem, and even to seeing in an enemy the face of a brother or sister.

The peace process thus requires enduring commitment. It is a patient effort to seek truth and justice, to honour the memory of victims and to open the way, step by step, to a shared hope stronger than the desire for vengeance. In a state based on law, democracy can be an important paradigm of this process, provided it is grounded in justice and a commitment to protect the rights of every person, especially the weak and marginalized, in a constant search for truth. This is a social undertaking, an ongoing work in which each individual makes his or her contribution responsibly, at every level of the local, national and global community. As Saint Paul VI pointed out, these "two aspirations, to equality and to participation, seek to promote a democratic society... This calls for an education to social life, involving not only the knowledge of each person's rights, but also its necessary correlative: the recognition of his or her duties with regard to others. The sense and practice of duty are themselves conditioned by the capacity for self-mastery and by the acceptance of responsibility and of the limits placed upon the freedom of individuals or the groups".

Divisions within a society, the increase of social inequalities and the refusal to employ the means of ensuring integral human development endanger the pursuit of the common good. Yet patient efforts based on the power of the word and of truth can help foster a greater capacity for compassion and creative solidarity. In our Christian experience, we constantly remember Christ, who gave his life to reconcile us to one another (cf. Romans 5:6-11). The Church shares fully in the search for a just social order; she continues to serve the common good and to nourish the hope for peace by transmitting Christian values and moral teaching, and by her social and educational works.

### **3. Peace, a journey of reconciliation in fraternal communion**

The Bible, especially in the words of the Prophets, reminds individuals and peoples of God's covenant with humanity, which entails renouncing our desire to dominate others and learning to see one another as persons, sons and daughters of God,

brothers and sisters. We should never encapsulate others in what they may have said or done, but value them for the promise that they embody. Only by choosing the path of respect can we break the spiral of vengeance and set out on the journey of hope. We are guided by the Gospel passage that tells of the following conversation between Peter and Jesus: “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:21-22). This path of reconciliation is a summons to discover in the depths of our heart the power of forgiveness and the capacity to acknowledge one another as brothers and sisters. When we learn to live in forgiveness, we grow in our capacity to become men and women of peace. What is true of peace in a social context is also true in the areas of politics and the economy, since peace permeates every dimension of life in common. There can be no true peace unless we show ourselves capable of developing a more just economic system. As Pope Benedict XVI said ten years ago in his Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*, “in order to defeat underdevelopment, action is required not only on improving exchange-based transactions and implanting public welfare structures, but above all on gradually increasing openness, in a world context, to forms of economic activity marked by quotas of gratuitousness and communion” (No. 39).

#### **4. Peace, a journey of ecological conversion**

“If a mistaken understanding of our own principles has at times led us to justify mistreating nature, to exercise tyranny over creation, to engage in war, injustice and acts of violence, we believers should acknowledge that by so doing we were not faithful to the treasures of wisdom which we have been called to protect and preserve”. Faced with the consequences of our hostility towards others, our lack of respect for our common home or our abusive exploitation of natural resources – seen only as a source of immediate profit, regardless of local communities, the common good and nature itself – we are in need of an ecological conversion. The recent Synod on the Pan-Amazon Region moves us to make a pressing renewed call for a peaceful relationship between communities and the land, between present and past, between experience and hope. This journey of reconciliation also calls for listening and contemplation of the world that God has given us as a gift to make our common home. Indeed, natural resources, the many forms of life and the earth itself have been entrusted to us “to till and keep” (Genesis 1:15), also for future generations, through the responsible and active participation of everyone. We need to change the way we think and see things, and to become more open to encountering others and accepting the gift of creation, which reflects the beauty and wisdom of its Creator.

All this gives us deeper motivation and a new way to dwell in our common home, to accept our differences, to respect and celebrate the life that we have

received and share, and to seek living conditions and models of society that favour the continued flourishing of life and the development of the common good of the entire human family. The ecological conversion for which we are appealing will lead us to a new way of looking at life, as we consider the generosity of the Creator who has given us the earth and called us to a share it in joy and moderation. This conversion must be understood in an integral way, as a transformation of how we relate to our sisters and brothers, to other living beings, to creation in all its rich variety and to the Creator who is the origin and source of all life. For Christians, it requires that “the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them”.

##### **5. “We obtain all that we hope for”**

The journey of reconciliation calls for patience and trust. Peace will not be obtained unless it is hoped for. In the first place, this means believing in the possibility of peace, believing that others need peace just as much as we do. Here we can find inspiration in the love that God has for each of us: a love that is liberating, limitless, gratuitous and tireless. Fear is frequently a source of conflict. So it is important to overcome our human fears and acknowledge that we are needy children in the eyes of the One who loves us and awaits us, like the father of the prodigal son (cf. Luke 15:11-24). The culture of fraternal encounter shatters the culture of conflict. It makes of every encounter a possibility and a gift of God’s generous love. It leads us beyond the limits of our narrow horizons and constantly encourages us to a live in a spirit of universal fraternity, as children of the one heavenly Father.

For the followers of Christ, this journey is likewise sustained by the sacrament of Reconciliation, given by the Lord for the remission of sins of the baptized. This sacrament of the Church, which renews individuals and communities, bids us keep our gaze fixed on Jesus, who reconciled “all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross” (Colossians 1:20). It requires us to set aside every act of violence in thought, word and deed, whether against our neighbours or against God’s creation. The grace of God our Father is bestowed as unconditional love. Having received his forgiveness in Christ, we can set out to offer that peace to the men and women of our time. Day by day, the Holy Spirit prompts in us ways of thinking and speaking that can make us artisans of justice and peace. May the God of peace bless us and come to our aid.

May Mary, Mother of the Prince of Peace and Mother of all the peoples of the earth, accompany and sustain us at every step of our journey of reconciliation. And may all men and women who come into this world experience a life of peace and develop fully the promise of life and love dwelling in their heart.

*From the Vatican, 8 December 2019*

**Franciscus**

## Pope's Prayer Intentions for January

### Promotion of World Peace

We pray that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world.

## A reflection from 'Marriage Matters'

### Give every fibre of our being

The gift we can give to Jesus and to one another is ourselves. No matter how long we have been married, let us still enjoy unwrapping the gift of self. Just as, through the grace of God, the 'wise men' went another way, not the world's way, so can we, by giving our whole selves, every fibre of our being.

## Readings at Masses this week

Monday	1 John 3:22-4:6; Psalm 2:7-8.10-11; Matthew 4:12-17.23-25
Tuesday	1 John 4:7-10; Psalm 71(72):1-4.7-8; Mark 6:34-44
Wednesday	1 John 4:11-18; Psalm 71(72):1-2.10-13; Mark 6:45-52
Thursday	1 John 4:19-5:4; Psalm 71(72):1-2.14-15.17; Luke 4:14-22
Friday	1 John 5:5-13; Psalm 147:12-15.19-20; Luke 5:12-16
Saturday	1 John 5:14-21; Psalm 149:1-6.9; John 3:22-30

## Parish Ministries

	<i>This week</i>	<i>Next week</i>
	<b>Epiphany</b>	<b>Baptism of the Lord</b>
<i>Welcomers OLV 6pm</i>	Mary Sills & Bryan Sills	
<i>Welcomers OLV 9am</i>	Anna Davis & Valerie Brock	
<i>Welcomers StA 10.45am</i>	Michael Wilkes	
<i>Readers OLV 6pm</i>	<i>See the narthex list</i>	
<i>Readers OLV 9am</i>	<i>See the narthex list</i>	
<i>Readers StA 10.45am</i>	Moira Hodgkinson	
<i>Communion OLV 6pm</i>	Cathy Smith & Madeleine Birch	
<i>Communion OLV 9am</i>	Theresa Martin & Michael Gemson	
<i>Coffee OLV 9am</i>	Anna Davis & Catherine Cowley	
<i>Cleaners OLV</i>	Eileen and Sue	
<i>Counters</i>	Michael Joyce	

