

OUR LADY IMMACULATE & ST MICHAEL, BATTLE

with

ST TERESA OF LISIEUX, HORNS CROSS

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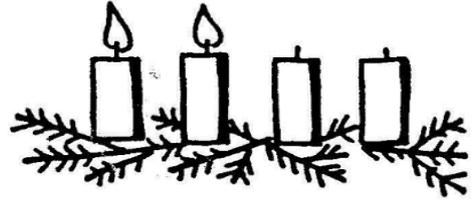
Parish Priest: Fr Anthony White

Cycle C for Sundays and Solemnities

Year 1 for Weekdays

Arundel and Brighton Trust is a

Registered Charity No. 252878



Weekend Mass Times

6pm Saturday 4th December -
Battle (David Reynders, RIP)

9am Sunday 5th December -
Northiam (Gerard Scothern, RIP)

10.45am Sunday 5th December -
Battle (Margaret Chepintany
Loikwanga RIP)

10am Wednesday 8th December -
Battle (Celebrant's Intention)

**Sacrament of Reconciliation after
6pm Mass Saturdays**

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Weekend 4th / 5th December 2021

Introduction to the Scripture Readings:

- **First Reading: Baruch 5:1-9**

The prophet Baruch echoes the message of Isaiah that God will enable us to walk safely on level ground.

- **Second Reading: Philippians 1:4-6. 8-11**

Paul wants us to prepare for the Day of Christ. His prayer for us is that we will always recognise what is best.

- **Gospel: Luke 3:1-6**

John the Baptist is the one who fulfils the prophecy about preparing a way for the Lord and shows us what needs to be done.

We pray for the Sick and Housebound Members of our Community:

From Our Lady Immaculate & St Michael: Margaret Thunder, Jo Cooper, Stephen Bould, Pauline Fraser, Michael Conroy, Sheila Lilley, Madeleine Salter, Gretta Johnson, Jim & Ruth Ayres, Richard & Brenda Widenka, Helen Powell, Tom Dodd, Dilys Fraser, Anthony Gibbons, Rosemary Parkes, Suzanne McAdie.

From St Teresa's: Keith Bourne, Gerard Scothern & his family, Christine Mooney, June Nottage, Maureen & Cyril Webster, Dominic Leahy.

Prayer Intentions - please remember the following people in your prayers this week:

Una Wade, Frances Cresswell, Jack Morgan, Guy Hooper, Di Bean RIP, Judith Bridge, Maureen Ashing, Henry Cheung, Sam Baker, Trish Archutowski RIP, Gillian Mitchell RIP. David Amies and family, Rob Boswell RIP.

- If you feel you need to contact Fr Paul for any reason, his phone number is: 01323 670156.
- If you used to receive a visit from one of our Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist (Special Ministers), please contact the office if you would like these visits to recommence, 01424 773125 or battle@abdiocese.org.uk with a Minister or with Fr Paul, who is happy to make home visits.
- Fr Paul is happy to receive Mass Intentions, please either give them directly to Fr Paul after Mass or let Maggie know of any future Intentions on 773125, e-mail battle@abdiocese.org.uk, or drop a note through the Presbytery door, thank you.

Children's Liturgy: Children's Liturgy has now restarted during the 10.45am Mass at Battle. If you have any children that have missed this during the restrictions and would like to join into these sessions again, please bring them along.

- **Sunday Obligation:** The obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days will not be restored in time for Christmas because of the continuing threat from COVID-19. The bishops of England and Wales wanted to bring back the obligation by the First Sunday of Advent but have conceded that the pandemic meant it was still too dangerous to expect vulnerable people to go to church. In the meantime, all Catholics are asked to do their best to participate in the celebration of the weekly Sunday Mass and to reflect deeply on the centrality of Sunday worship in the life of the Church.
- If you wish to follow a live Mass please follow this link from our Diocesan website <https://abdiocese.org.uk/livestream> or via <https://www.churchservices.tv/>
- **Gerard Scothern RIP** Please pray for the repose of the soul of Gerard Scothern who sadly died last week after a long illness. Gerard and his late wife, Joy, were longstanding and faithful attenders at St Teresa's until Gerard's illness prevented their getting to Mass there. Our thoughts and prayers are with his daughter Janine, and the rest of his family and friends.
- **Ecumenical Advent Prayer** These services will be held in the Lady Chapel at St Mary's, Battle at 8am on Tuesdays and Fridays from 30th November until 21st December inclusive and last about half an hour. Our Church is leading the service on Friday, December 10th. Please join us if you can.

Our Parish Advent Taizé Service is this Tuesday 7th December 2021 at 7pm

This service has become a much-welcomed ecumenical Advent event, drawing Christians of the town together in our candle-lit church as Christmas approaches - the beautiful, prayerful chants and hymns this year will focus on the underlying theme of 'Hope' and invoke the light and wisdom and healing of the Holy Spirit. The storm of the pandemic invited all of us, whether we like it or not, to rethink how we live in our world. So, we should look to Our Blessed Lord, not only to give us strength, but also to give us patience and the ability to endure - better things are yet to come! *Battle Music Group*

- **Music Group in Battle:** We meet for practice for an hour each week beginning at 7pm on Tuesday evenings in Church. Now that we are back singing at Mass, it would be wonderful if

more parishioners were able to join the group - especially as we are now planning for our Advent Taizé-type service, and beginning to get ready for Christmas! Singers and instrumentalists alike will be made very welcome - no auditions, all you need is a smile, so everyone is invited! *Battle Music Group*

- **Battle Food Bank Christmas Food Hampers for families in need:**

This year it is going to be organised by the Foodbank, operating from St Mary's upper church hall. Christmas treats include: **Cakes, Puddings, Mince Pies, Yule Logs, Savoury and Sweet Biscuits, Shortbread, Chocolate Treats, Pringles and Christmas Crackers**, as well as the usual items. All donations by **7th December** please, so that packing can begin and Hampers can be given out to families the following week. If anyone thinks they would be able to help either with packing or with deliveries, please email Shelagh: shelaghfranks@btinternet.com. Donations can be taken to the Foodbank on Tuesday mornings 10-12 and Wednesday afternoons 12.30pm-3pm, or placed into the Foodbank collection basket in the church as usual. We shall be preparing hampers for all the clients / families who come to Foodbank. In addition to these, if any of the churches are aware of any families or individuals who would benefit from a hamper, please could you let Shelagh know. It is not necessary to give names, but simply the size of the family and, if applicable, the ages of the children. These hampers will be individually prepared for them and given to you to deliver to the people you know. **Please could you give any requests to Shelagh by 7th December.**

- **Parishioner Christmas Cards:** The concertina file is in position at the back of the Church. If you wish to send any Christmas cards to fellow Parishioners, please place them in the correct sections in the file. Thank you.

News from our Diocese

- **PACT: Operation Elf:** Bishop Richard writes: *'In the last part of this difficult year, we can begin to look forward to the celebration of the birth of Christ at Christmas. For those families where a parent is in prison, Christmas can be a particularly painful time. Through PACT's Operation Elf, parishes and individuals can support prisoners to give a gift to their child, sharing a little love and joy and strengthening the family bond. This simple act can nurture the hope that redemption and a fresh start is possible.'* Register at parishaction@prisonersadvice.org.uk, buy a Gift card with the value of £10, and post to PACT. Full guidance and details at www.prisonadvice.org.uk Thank you.

'Sunday is not only the day of faith, but is also the day of hope.' *Dies Domini §38*

Advent is a season of peace and reconciliation in which we prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas. The Bishops have spoken recently about the importance of our Sunday encounter with Christ through the Eucharist at Mass. The Eucharist is the source and summit of our spiritual and pastoral life. We recognise that the causes and effects of the pandemic are still present to such a degree that the absolute duty for *all* to attend the Sunday Eucharistic Celebration cannot



yet be fulfilled. However, the Bishops have asked that all Catholics now reflect on the centrality of the Eucharist to our life of faith and take into consideration their personal circumstances and the reasons as to whether they can now attend the Sunday Eucharistic Celebration. To encourage this process of reflection and to promote the vital, indispensable and irreplaceable place of the Eucharist in our lives, we have produced a series of conversations for Advent called 'Dies Domini - the Day of the Lord'. Our inspiration comes from Pope Saint John Paul II's Apostolic Letter of the same name from 1998.

Bishop Mark O'Toole, Lead Bishop for Evangelisation and Discipleship, is looking forward to Catholics encountering the Lord fully in His glorious and Risen Body:

"The Bishops' Conference is offering a series of podcasts in these days which invite us to reflect carefully on our own situation. Let us look sensitively at what is possible for us in the circumstances of our lives. And if it is possible, let us return to being present physically at Sunday Mass. We can do so safely. The Lord wants us to do so, so that we can encounter Him fully in His glorious and Risen Body. Let us return to Him."

Saints of the Week

Memorial of St Nicholas, Bishop - 6th December

St Nicholas (fourth century) was born perhaps at Patara (now in Turkey) and became bishop of Myra. He may have been imprisoned under the Emperor Diocletian and have attended the Council of Nicaea which opposed the Arian heresy. He is venerated in both the East and West, especially as a patron of sailors and of children, as can be seen in the Christmas tradition of 'Santa Claus'. The saint's relics were later brought to Bari (Italy).



Memorial of St Ambrose, Bishop, Doctor - 7th December

St Ambrose (c.340-397) was born in Trier (now in Germany, but then capital of the Roman prefecture of Gaul) and worked as a lawyer. In 370 he was appointed Governor of Liguria and Aemilia, with a residence in Milan. In 374 he was chosen to be the city's bishop, much to his surprise - not only was he a layman, but he was also not yet baptised: he was a catechumen preparing for baptism. He proved to be an outstanding bishop, not afraid to challenge the actions of the emperor and uncompromising in his struggle against Arianism. His converts included St Augustine and his teachings have led him to be numbered as one of the Latin Doctors of the Church.



The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary - 8th December

Today we celebrate the Blessed Virgin's unique privilege of being preserved from the stain of sin at the very moment of her conception. This was fitting for she would one day carry the second person of the Trinity in her womb. Blessed John Henry Newman wrote that 'there is no difference in kind between her and us, though an inconceivable difference of degree. She and we are both simply saved by the grace of Christ.' But with Mary, the manner in which she was saved was exceptional: from the first moment of her existence, she was freed from the stain of Original Sin. This dogma was solemnly defined by Blessed Pius IX on 8th December 1854 but had long been believed by Christians.



Memorial of St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin - 9th December

St Juan Diego (1474-1548) was born near what is now Mexico City and converted to Christianity in middle age. He showed a great piety and walked many miles to attend Mass. While doing so on 9th December 1531, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him on Mount Tepeyac, asking that a shrine be built on the spot. The local bishop asked for a sign and Our Lady left a miraculous portrait of herself on St Juan Diego's tilma or mantle.



Memorial of St Damasus I, Pope - 11th December

St Damasus (c.304-384) was probably born in Rome, although his father, a priest, may have been originally from Spain, leading to stories that Damasus too was born there. He was ordained a deacon and eventually became Pope in 366. He proved to be a strong leader, promoting devotion to the martyrs and their relics, strengthening the administration of the Church and summoning synods and councils to counter heresy.



- The office remains open on Mondays and Thursdays from 9.30am - 12.30pm.
- The Parish Pastoral Team send all parishioners their prayers and good wishes.

Vatican News

Pope prays for all migrants, from the Mediterranean to Belarus

Following the recitation of the Angelus prayer on Sunday, Pope Francis turned his thoughts to the many migrants risking, and often losing, their lives as they embark on their journeys in search of a better life. Addressing the pilgrims gathered in St Peter's Square, the Pope noted how many migrants are exposed to "very serious dangers", and how many lose their lives at our borders. "I feel sorrow at the news of the situation in which so many of them find themselves", said the Pope. He referred, in particular, to the tragedy that occurred last week in the English Channel; to the migrants on the borders of Belarus, many of whom are children; and to those who drown in the Mediterranean. He also referred to the many migrants who in attempting to cross the Mediterranean are repatriated to North Africa, "captured by traffickers, who turn them into slaves: they sell the women, torture the men", said the Pope. The Pope prayed for all those who, also this week, "have tried to cross the Mediterranean seeking a land of well-being and finding there, instead, a grave". To all those, and to all the others, Pope Francis assured his prayers, and also his heart. "Let us think of the migrants, of their suffering, and let us pray in silence", he concluded.



After captivity in Mali, Sr. Gloria Narváez finally arrives in Colombia

The Colombian nun of the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary Immaculate was abducted in Mali from a village of Karangasso, near the town of Koutiala, in the southern region of Sikasso. Following her release in Mali, on 9 October this year, Sister Gloria travelled to Rome, Italy. She met the Holy Father, Pope Francis, who blessed her.

Meeting the Pope was like being with a father:

On Sunday this week, Fr Humberto González Franco, a Colombian priest working in the Rome office of the Episcopal Conference of Latin America, better known as CELAM, visited Sr Gloria on the outskirts of Rome.

This was a day before she was due to travel to Colombia. Since her release, she had been living with members of her religious community on the outskirts of Rome. Sr Gloria told Fr Humberto of her joy of being released from nearly five years of captivity. She said meeting the Holy Father was like meeting one's father. She spoke also of her joy in going home to family in Colombia. Sr Gloria recalled her mother, who died while she was in captivity. "My mother died a year ago, but she was a woman of faith, who prayed a lot for me, for everyone. I am very happy that I will see my family again," she said.



Frequently moved from place to place: Looking back on her experience, Sr Gloria spoke of frequently being moved from one location to another during her captivity. It was not safe for her captors to stay in one place, and a lot depended on what the armed groups thought would be safe, so they were constantly on the move. There was a lot of walking. She thanks God that she never had any serious illness in all her period of captivity, not even the common flu, she said. She attributed this to God's grace. "On the days when we were stable, I would get up very early in the morning, watch the sunrise, write some reflections with charcoal in a notebook, expressing my trust in God," said Sr Gloria.

Allowed short walks: She was allowed short walks within a certain radius established by her captors. She spoke of seeing Camels from afar as villagers went fetch water.

"I would walk a little because I couldn't get away from the camp. They would tell me you can go from here to here, don't stray so far, don't go farther than this point. This is your space," she recalled.

The beautiful night sky of moon and stars: Sr Gloria also spoke of her nights in captivity. "At night, I would go to bed very early, around 6.30 p.m. Sometimes I would sit and contemplate the sky." Sr Gloria said she found much consolation in the beauty of the moon and the brilliant stars in the sky. The empty desert and the wonders of nature helped her remain serene and calm in a difficult situation.

Footprints in the sand: "Often, as I walked through the sand, I always saw in the footprints that God was showing me his love. He had chosen me, and I was sure that he was sustaining me throughout," said Sister Gloria. Though she said she developed a respectful relationship with her kidnappers, it was clear that they resented her Christian faith.

Life before captivity: Before being kidnapped, Sr Gloria had lived in Mali for 12 years. Her religious community runs a health centre, literacy programme and an orphanage in Mali. She had also previously served as a teacher in Colombia, Mexico and Benin.

Asked by Fr Humberto what advice she would give to those who are in prison or find themselves in bondage, such as those suffering at the hands of human traffickers, Sr Gloria replied:

"They need to hold on to their faith and pray. Pray a lot," she said.