

DAWN ON OUR DARKNESS

TS Eliot opens his great poem *The Wasteland* with the assertion: “April is the cruellest month”. After a grey and gloomy November, we may well disagree with him. Here in Cambridge, a hectic term is drawing to its close, energy levels are depleted, nerves are sometimes frayed, and the prospect of completing Christmas preparations may seem like an impossible uphill struggle. Does the Season of Advent help us to cope with any of this? I think it does, but perhaps in a slightly surprising way.

The sense of being imprisoned in our own weakness, of the darkness crowding in on us and threatening to overwhelm us that many of us experience at this time of year, can, if we are patient with ourselves and refuse to panic, actually become the ground of our hope. Like Lent, Advent is a penitential season, when we are called to evaluate our life with Christ, but the focus is a little different. In Lent, we regularly take up new spiritual exercises, work harder, perhaps, at our prayer, or challenge ourselves to be more charitable and generous in our almsgiving and fasting. In Advent, the Church’s liturgy invites us less to do, than to look: above all, to look squarely at the darkness of life without Christ, the poverty of our own strength, and, therefore, to long ever more ardently and confidently for the help he brings us. It can be particularly helpful to reflect on the wonderful Old Testament prophecies given us as the first readings at Mass throughout the season. Here we meet our ancestors in faith, who looked forward eagerly to the coming Messiah. Their voices can become ours as we ask him to come into those areas of our lives that need his healing light. Here are some words translated from an ancient Anglo-Saxon poem that can become a prayer for us this Advent as we wait for that light to dawn:

“Now come to us yourself,
High-King of Heaven.
Bring us the life of salvation,
the weary thralls of torment,
worn out by our weeping,
with bitter tears of burning salt.
The cure for our pressing need
lies with you alone!

Have a happy, but above all, a hopeful Advent!

Sr Ann



FISHER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Sunday 1 December - FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

CALENDAR - MICHAELMAS TERM WEEK VIII

Sunday 1	1 ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT		
	9.00am	Sung Latin Mass	
	11.00 am	Sung English Mass	
Monday 2	1.05pm	Mass	
Tuesday 3	1.05pm	Mass	<i>St Francis Xavier</i>
Wednesday 4	1.05pm	Mass	<i>St John Damascene</i>
	7.00pm	Mass in EF	
Thursday 5	12.30 - 1.00pm	Adoration	
	1.05pm	Mass	
Friday 6	1.05pm	Mass	<i>St Nicholas</i>
	7.30pm	Vespers and Meditation	
Saturday 7	1.05pm	Mass	<i>St Ambrose</i>
	4.30 - 5.30	Confessions	
	6.00pm	Vigil Mass of Sunday	
Sunday 8	2 ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT		
	9.00am	Latin Mass	
	11.00 am	Sung English Mass	

FR MARK LANGHAM - SR ANN SWAILES OP - FR CHASE PEPPER CSC

NEW YEAR'S PARTY

If you're in Cambridge over the new year, then come to our



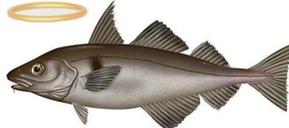
party! See the sign-up board.

FREE STICKERS



A Christmas present from Fisher House - a sticker bearing the coat of arms and motto of St John Fisher. One sticker per student: use for decoration - and evangelisation!!

HADDOCS



On Monday 2nd December Michael Wee will speak to us in the Fisher Room at 6.00pm on euthanasia.

GIVING TREE

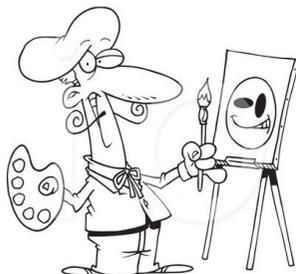
The SVP *Giving Tree* makes its annual appearance this weekend.



Simply take a pair of tags in your price range, buy the gift suggested, place the gift with one tag under the tree and hand the tag on the tree. It's a great way to give to those who are needy this Christmas.

FISHER ART EXHIBITION

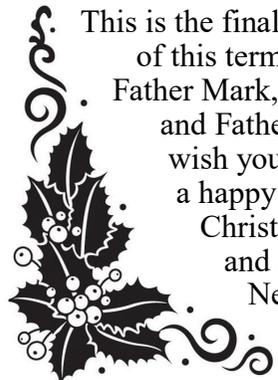
Calling all artists, whether you are a painter, photographer, sketcher, designer - we would like to repeat our very successful art exhibition of a few years ago.



The dates will be 18 - 26 January. You are invited to submit three works each. Please let Fr Mark know if you would like to take part.

This is the final newsletter of this term.

Father Mark, Sister Ann and Father Chase wish you all a happy and holy Christmas, and a blessed New Year.



POST-DOCS LUNCH

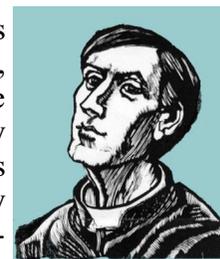
The Post-Docs' are heading for lunch to the University Centre after 11am Mass on next Sunday.

BENSON CLUB

We meet in the Great Chamber at 7.30pm on Thursday 5 December to discuss Brian Moore's *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*.

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The Christmas vacation book, which will be discussed early next term, is Gerard Manley Hopkins's masterly and epic poem *The Wreck of the Deutschland*.



SVP

The Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) meets weekly on Wednesdays (nb new time) at 6.15pm. The SVP also operates the nightly soup runs. We always need more names on the rota. If you'd be willing to sign up, please contact Tara on tc538.

CONTACTLESS GIVING

You can donate £4 after 11.00am Mass via contactless giving. The machine will be available outside the chapel.

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

£481.06

It costs £4,000 per week to run Fisher House.

APOLOGIA

On Tuesday in the Fisher Room. Come at 7.00pm for a meal, a talk at 8.00pm, followed by Compline and the Black Swan Bar. This week, Fr Mark will give a seasonal talk on *The Shepherds and the Wise Men*.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

We will sing carols in the Grand Arcade to raise money for the SVP on Friday 6 December from 3.00pm to 6.00pm. Do come and support us. All are most welcome -- the more the merrier!



THE CHRISTMAS PARTY



Our Christmas Party takes place on Friday from 6.00pm in the Fisher Room. At 8.00pm, we will perform

UP TO SNOW GOOD

Who sleighed Santa???

The Christmas play will take place at the North Pole Great Chamber.