

# FISHER HOUSE



## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER – 2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Masses will reopen to the public on Wednesday.

See our [Facebook Page](#) to follow the livestreams.

Saturday 5	1.05pm	Mass	<i>Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday</i>
	6.00pm	Mass	<i>Vigil for Sunday, English</i>
SUNDAY 6	2 <sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT		
	9.00am	Mass	English
	11.00am	Mass	English
Monday 7	8.20am	Mass	<i>St Ambrose, Bishop &amp; Doctor</i>
	12.15pm	Mass	
Tuesday 8	8.20am	Mass	<i>Immaculate Conception</i>
	12.15pm	Mass	
Wednesday 9	8.20am	Mass	<i>St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin</i>
	12.15pm	Mass	
Thursday 10	8.20am	Mass	
	12.15pm	Mass	
Friday 11	8.20am	Mass	<i>St Damasus I, Pope</i>
	12.15pm	Mass	
	4pm – 5pm	Eucharistic Adoration	
Saturday 12	12.15pm	Mass	

### EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday 6	12.00pm	Fisher Friends Virtual Coffee. Join using <a href="#">this link</a> or the Meeting ID: 937 9497 0693.
Wednesday 9	6.00pm	RENATE Europe's Anti-Human Trafficking Awareness-Raising Webinar. The RENATE group will share awareness-raising tools and tips whilst exploring many issues and challenges related to the theme. Register <a href="#">here</a> .
Every day	9am to 6pm	Chapel open for private prayer. Please leave a kneeler on the floor when you leave, whether or not you have used one.

### NOTICES

#### SVP GIVING TREE

The SVP is running its annual giving tree this term where members of the parish can buy gifts for the homeless. If you visit [the website](#), you will find some ideas for gifts to give. This year we have added an option to order the gift online, so you don't even need to leave your room to donate! If you have any queries, please feel free to contact Nikhil (naa49).

#### FILM COMPETITION – HUMAN TRAFFICKING

As part of BAFTA's festival to mark European anti-Human Trafficking Day, RENATE is inviting 16-24 year-olds to join in their mission by making a short film about human trafficking. First prize £2000! Details [here](#).

## REFLECTION

### **Someone is following me, someone more powerful than I**

One of only two poems I know by heart (don't test me on this; I am quite rusty) is 'At North Farm' by John Ashbery. Its title is deceptively specific, suggesting that it was written at a particular farm at a particular time. On the contrary, the poem is abstract, vague, hard to pin down. It describes the anticipation of some kind of guest, someone described only as, well, 'someone'. They are 'travelling furiously towards you', towards a 'you' which is everyone and no one at the same time.

Somewhere someone is traveling furiously toward you,  
At incredible speed, traveling day and night,  
Through blizzards and desert heat, across torrents, through narrow passes.  
But will he know where to find you,  
Recognize you when he sees you,  
Give you the thing he has for you?

Despite saying almost nothing concrete, the poem has a mysterious power, and when Ashbery died a few years ago it was the work most often quoted by obituaries and tributes. It epitomises his voice, which is both homely and numinous.

It is not a religious poem, but it carries an Advent message all the same. One of its most popular interpretations suggests that the 'someone' is Father Christmas. But this secularised version of the Christmas story cannot fully explain the poem. It makes no sense of the second stanza, which describes an abundance despite surrounding scarcity: granaries bursting with food, though hardly anything grows nearby.

Hardly anything grows here,  
Yet the granaries are bursting with meal,  
The sacks of meal piled to the rafters.  
The streams run with sweetness, fattening fish;  
Birds darken the sky. Is it enough  
That the dish of milk is set out at night,  
That we think of him sometimes,  
Sometimes and always, with mixed feelings?

There is a hint of threat in the word 'bursting', in the suggestion that the large group of birds 'darken the sky'. The hint finds fulfilment in the final line, where we think of the mysterious someone 'always, with mixed feelings'. It

could also be read slightly differently, so that we think of him 'sometimes and always', at particular moments but also in every moment. Still, the feelings are mixed, not unalloyed joy. There is a suggestion that this full granary can only be offered through pain, because it has no natural explanation.

The poem describes a preternatural abundance, an abundance freely given, an abundance to which we inevitably respond inadequately, with meagre ritual offerings and occasional thoughts.

Our readings today do not allow for any half-measures. To 'Make a straight highway for our God | across the desert', the valleys must 'be filled in, | every mountain and hill be laid low'. We must prepare a way, make a straight path, do our best to live lives without spot or stain, because somewhere someone is travelling towards us. Will he know where to find us, awake and ready? Recognise us when he sees us, as friends who have taken the time to know him? Whatever we have prepared, whatever we lay out at night, whatever pious thoughts we cherish, the question still returns: is it enough?

Paul

# MASS TEXTS

SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER YEAR B — 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## THE GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.  
We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.  
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.  
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## FIRST READING

*Isaiah 40:1–5, 9–11*

‘Console my people, console them’  
says your God.  
‘Speak to the heart of Jerusalem  
and call to her  
that her time of service is ended,  
that her sin is atoned for,  
that she has received from the hand of the Lord  
double punishment for all her crimes.’

A voice cries, ‘Prepare in the wilderness  
a way for the Lord.  
Make a straight highway for our God  
across the desert.  
Let every valley be filled in,  
every mountain and hill be laid low.  
Let every cliff become a plain,  
and the ridges a valley;  
then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed  
and all mankind shall see it;

for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.’

Go up on a high mountain,  
joyful messenger to Zion.  
Shout with a loud voice,  
joyful messenger to Jerusalem.  
Shout without fear,  
say to the towns of Judah,  
‘Here is your God.’

Here is the Lord coming with power,  
his arm subduing all things to him.  
The prize of his victory is with him,  
his trophies all go before him.  
He is like a shepherd feeding his flock,  
gathering lambs in his arms,  
holding them against his breast  
and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

The word of the Lord.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*Psalm 84 (85)*

℟: Let us see, O Lord, your mercy, and give us your saving help.

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,  
a voice that speaks of peace,  
peace for his people.  
His help is near for those who fear him  
and his glory will dwell in our land. ℟
2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;  
justice and peace have embraced.  
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth  
and justice look down from heaven. ℟
3. The Lord will make us prosper  
and our earth shall yield its fruit.  
Justice shall march before him  
and peace shall follow his steps. ℟

## **SECOND READING**

*2 Peter 3:8–14*

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, ‘a day’ can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

The word of the Lord.

## **ALLELUIA**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight,  
and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.  
Alleluia!

## **GOSPEL**

*Mark 1:1–8*

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;  
he will prepare your way.  
A voice cries in the wilderness:  
Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight.

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their

sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, ‘Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

## **THE CREED**

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.