

OUR LADY of GILLINGHAM



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Registered Charity 235468

28th November 2010

✕ FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A) ✕

WORD OF GOD

"Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."
(Matthew 24:44)

WORD FOR TODAY

Although we listen and take note of the weather forecast we are still caught out when it snows. Let us not be similarly caught out at the coming of the Son of Man.



THE GOSPEL OF 'FULFILMENT'

With the First Sunday in Advent we begin a new "cycle" (Cycle A) of the Church's Liturgical Year. Sunday by Sunday for the next year we'll be reading the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew's Gospel is a prime example of what St. Augustine was talking about when he said: the New Testament is concealed in the Old and the Old Testament is revealed in the New. You can't read Matthew without having your ear tuned to the Old Testament. He quotes or alludes to the Old Testament an average of four or five times per chapter - or more than 100 times in his Gospel. Matthew writes this way because he wants his fellow Israelites to see that their Old Covenant with God has been "fulfilled" in Jesus. Get used to words like "fulfil" and "fulfilment" - you're going to hear them repeatedly in Matthew's gospel. On the Fourth Sunday of Advent, for instance, Matthew explains how Mary is found with child: "All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'Behold the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel'" (see Matthew 1:22-23). Again, on Palm Sunday, when He is arrested in the garden, Jesus says: "All this has come to pass that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled" (see Matthew 26:54,56).

The numerous "fulfilments" Matthew tells us about are intended to signal one thing - that in Jesus, God is finally delivering on the promises He made throughout salvation history.

DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 28th NOVEMBER 2010

✕ FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT (A) ✕

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| Sun 28 | Saturday | 6.30pm | ✕ Mass: Joseph and Emmanuel Muscat RIP |
| | Sunday | 9.30am | ✕ Mass: Pro Populo |
| | | 11.00am | ✕ Mass: Thomas Coats RIP |
| Mon 29 | Feria | 9.30am | <i>Holy Rosary (daily, 30 mins before Mass)</i> |
| | | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Cyril Firth |
| Tues 30 | St Andrew | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: David Campbell RIP |
| Wed 1 | Feria | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Ben de Souza RIP |
| Thu 2 | Feria | 7.00am | ✕ Mass: Dec'd members of the Bishop Family |
| Fri 3 | St Francis Xavier | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Mary Mahoney RIP <i>Day of Prayer for Migrants</i> |
| Sat 4 | Feria | 10.00am | ✕ Mass: Margaret Clark |
| | | 10.30am | <i>Confessions</i> |

✕ SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT (A) ✕ BIBLE SUNDAY

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|-------|----------|---------|---|
| Sun 5 | Saturday | 6.30pm | ✕ Mass: Verdolini family |
| | Sunday | 9.30am | ✕ Mass: Pro Populo |
| | | 11.00am | ✕ Mass: John and Anne Formosa |
| | | 4.00pm | <i>Advent Devotions and Benediction</i> |

Please pray for the following whose anniversaries occur this week:

Toni Paynter, Wilfred Devine, Norman Williams, Cyril Firth,
 Marie Price, Ann Larkin, Patrick Kearns, Beatrice Jordan,
 Archangel (Ben) de Souza, Annie Archard, Edna Bland,
 Cecilia Maynard and Mary Cunningham.



*May their souls and the souls of all the ✕ faithful departed
 through the mercy of God rest in peace.*

AROUND the PARISH

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS Rotas for January to June 2011 are now ready. Please collect from your pigeon-hole.

CHRISTMAS cards, Advent Calendars, art calendars and Christmas candles are just a few of the items on sale from the repository. Please support the church and buy your Christmas items here. All items will be on sale in the McMahon Hall after both Sunday Masses.

St MARY'S SCHOOL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR is to be held on Saturday 4th December from 1pm until 4pm. Gift and Craft Stalls, Santa's Grotto, Grand Draw, Fun Bus for the children, Hot Chestnuts and lots more including the School Choir singing. Adults 50p, Children free. Come and Enjoy.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS Preparations for next year's First Reconciliation and Eucharist begin in December. A meeting for parents is scheduled for 7pm on Monday 6th December in the McMahon Hall.

BOOT FAIR An indoor Boot Fair will be held in the Hall on Saturday, 11th December at 10.30am. Tables can be booked before the event for £5 and on the day for £6. If you wish to book a table ring the church office on Monday, Thursday or Friday morning. However, if you do not wish to book a table but have good quality items for sale these can be donated to the church for the sale. Donations can be left at the church after any Mass. Money raised will go to the Building Fund.

CONTACT the ELDERLY The Medway Deaf Group are looking for volunteers. Contact the Elderly are planning to open a third Medway group to take out to tea, once a month, elderly local deaf people with their driver/signers. Being elderly and alone is difficult but even more so for people who are also deaf. We need volunteer driver/signers, volunteer hosts

and an Admin Assistant for a few hours a month. If you are interested in helping in any way please contact Suzan Hyland on 020 7420 5811 or email: suzan.hyland@contact-the-elderly.org.uk. There is a postcard on the noticeboard explaining a little more.

AROUND the DIOCESE and BEYOND

The FRIARS' CHRISTMAS CRAFT 'FAYRE' is to take place today (28th November) from 10.00am until 4.30pm. Please see the poster on the noticeboard for further information.

WALK WITH ME 'A Journey of Prayers for Advent and Christmastide 2010' booklets are now available at the back of the church priced £1.00.

CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY There are some new publications relating specifically to Advent, together with a variety of pamphlets (including a prayer book in Polish and English, with translations of the Mass) available on the windowsill in the porch. There you will find traditional aids to our faith such as prayer books and devotions, but in addition you will find challenging and topical subjects. All are reasonably priced so please have a look, and if you wish to purchase any the money can be put in the red box on the back wall marked "Newspapers". If you would like a pamphlet giving guidance on any particular issue, please leave a note in the office and it can be included, if available, in the next order sent to CTS.

CAFOD WORLD GIFTS Christmas Catalogue is available at the back of the church. Capture the true spirit of Christmas and make a lasting difference to someone fighting poverty.

ADOPTIVE FAMILIES NEEDED The Cabrini Children's Society is seeking to recruit adoptive families for the large number of children who desperately need new parents. They need Catholic

families for single children, groups of brothers and sisters, children with disabilities and children from black and other minority groups. All the children have experienced loss and trauma, but all can benefit from family life. If you feel you have something to offer please ring them - a telephone call doesn't commit you to anything but they would like to hear from you. Please contact them at the Cabrini Children's Society, 49 Russell Hill Road, Purley, Surrey CR8 2XB. Telephone 020 8668 2181 or Email adoption@cabrini.org.uk mentioning 'Parish Campaign'.

DIVINE MERCY APOSTOLATE have published their latest issue of the Messenger of Mercy magazine. Copies available at the back of the church.

The CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CENTRE invites parishioners to a cheese and wine reception on 8th December. Details on the noticeboard.

TOURS for CHURCHES organises pilgrimages to Rome. At present they are able to offer guaranteed availability on selected dates in 2012, at an excellent location close to The Vatican. Rooms have been held until end of January 2011 at the Hotel Della Conciliazione, 5minutes' walk from St Peter's Basilica. See the letter on the noticeboard for further information or contact Tours for Churches, telephone 01223 723420 or email: info@toursforchurches.co.uk.

FAITH IN FOCUS Jesus exaggerates in today's Gospel when he claims not to know the day or the hour when he will come again. He occasionally makes such overstatements to drive home a point we might otherwise miss. His point here is that the exact "hour" is not important. What is crucial is that we not postpone our repentance, that we be ready for him - spiritually and morally - when he comes. For he will surely come, he

tells us - like a thief in the night, like the flood in the time of Noah. In today's epistle Paul, too, compares the present age to a time of advancing darkness and night. Though we sit in the darkness, overshadowed by death, we have seen arise the great light of our Lord who has come into our midst. He is the true light, the life of the world. And his light continues to shine in his Church, the new Jerusalem promised by Isaiah in today's first reading. In the Church, all nations stream to the God of Jacob, to worship and seek wisdom in the House of David. From the Church goes forth his word of instruction, the light of the Lord - that all might walk in his paths towards that eternal day when night will be no more. By our baptism we have been made children of the light and day. It is time we start living like it - throwing off the fruitless works of darkness, the desires of the flesh, and walking by the light of his grace. The hour is late as we begin a new Advent. Let us begin again in this Eucharist. As we sing in today's psalm, let us go rejoicing to the House of the Lord. Let us give thanks to his name, keeping watch for his coming, knowing that our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

ATTENDANCE 422 attended Mass last for last week and we received **£474.65** in the collection. The Youth Service collection came to **£224.67**. Thank you. ♦

This Week there will be a retiring collection for the **Cathedral**, the mother church of the Diocese. This collection helps to meet the cost of the upkeep of our Cathedral, St George's in Southwark.

MISSIO have written thanking us for our World Mission Sunday donation of £144.74. Our prayers and donations help missionaries to share their faith and give life, often in difficult and dangerous circumstances.