

### FEASTS FOR THE WEEK

Wednesday: St Ambrose  
Thursday: The Immaculate Conception

### PARISH DIARY

Monday 3.30pm: First Holy Communion preparation class  
Tuesday 8.00pm: Parish Prayer Group

### OFFERINGS

First collection Gift Aid £603.60 Loose £492.81  
Retiring collection (CAFOD) Gift Aid £21.90 Loose £52.10

This weekend's retiring collection is for CAFOD.

### PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

Grace Gibbs, Simon Leo, Paul & June McMahon, Michael Boyle, Maureen Allen, Eileen Hurley, Elizabeth O'Daley, Ellen Basci, Joan Gallagher, Kay Kennedy, Stephane Patten, John Sewter, Ryan Morison, Keith Fraser, Ronnie Xavier, Marie Elsey, Christopher Browne, Mary Wallace, Rosa Vitolo, Elsie Malone & Colette Patten.

### ANNIVERSARIES

John Whelan, Isabel White, George Terence Dove, Mary Vivian, Lenord McIlbalton, Hugh McFaul, Joseph O'Connell, Barbara Croucher, Thomas Conway, Elizabeth Watson, Lugrece Chianta, Dino Rega, Michael Little, Margaret Patrick, Olive Burrett, Paddy Coughlin, Elizabeth Ann Moon, Mary Cockerell, Fedrick Seymour, Hermine Gollob, Michael Murphy, Pauline Dubri, Darren Hickey, Ernest Joseph Mead, Frank Sewell-Knight, Nora Duffield, Hilda Duckett, John Smith, Vivien Braby, John Boyden, Arthur McLeod, James Wilson, Arthur O'Connor. +++ May they rest in peace +++

### Sacramental Preparation Programme 2016/17

First Holy Communion preparation classes continue on **Monday 5th December** at **3.30pm**.

We hope to announce the dates of the **Confirmation** preparation classes soon.

### The Nativity – Wintershall

The annual Nativity play for all the family will be staged at the Wintershall Estate, Bramley, Surrey GU5 0LR on **14th – 18th December**. For further details see the church notice board or contact [www.wintershall-estate.com](http://www.wintershall-estate.com) or 01793 418299 for tickets.

### Christmas Hamper & Cards

Tickets for the raffle for the **Christmas hamper** will be on sale after all masses this weekend. Cards and gifts are still available in the Cloister.



*Christ Yesterday, Today & Forever*

Parish Priest: Rev. Gerard O'Brien

Deacon: Rev. Robert Beresford

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*Please visit our website regularly to keep abreast of important current issues.*

### MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday 4th December 2016

Second Sunday of Advent (A) Bible Sunday

Saturday	9.30am	Holy Souls
	6.30pm	John Chandler
Sunday	9.00am	John Fabrick
	10.30am	People of the Parish
	6.30pm	Vincenzo Straccialano
Monday	9.30am	Special Intention
Tuesday	9.30am	In Thanksgiving
Wednesday	9.30am	Peace in our World
Thursday	9.30am	William Woom
Friday	9.30am	Marella family
Saturday	9.30am	Holy Souls
	6.30pm	In Thanksgiving
Confessions:	Saturday 10.00-11.00am, 18.00-18.15pm and at call	
Baptisms:	By previous arrangement	
Marriages:	Six months' notice required – Diocesan rule	

### Sale of Christmas Trees

There will be a sale of Christmas trees in the church's car park this Sunday (**Sunday 4th December**). This year the sale will run from 9.00 am until 12.00 pm. Every tree sold includes a 25% contribution to the school PSA fund. Free delivery can be arranged.

### Christmas lunch

Our more mature parishioners are invited to a Christmas lunch in the Cloister on **Tuesday 11th December** at **12.30pm**. Please sign up on the notice at the back of the church.

## PARISH NOTICES

### My Day by Day

This booklet contains a meditation for every day during Advent. Copies of this excellent publication are available at the back of the church. There is one copy for each family. **There is no charge.**

### Parish Prayer Group

The Parish Prayer Group meets every **Tuesday at 8.00pm** in the church for rosary, praise and intercession. All parishioners are most welcome to join us. Please enter via the Presbytery.

### Church Pre-Christmas Spruce up

We have a tremendous team of helpers in St Agatha' parish who work very hard to keep our church and grounds beautiful all year round. We would like to call for 'EXTRAS' – volunteers to come and help with our twice yearly spruce up, both inside and outside in the church grounds, (to boost the efforts of our regular team by tackling jobs like brass cleaning and ironing of altar cloths etc... in time for our special Christmas celebrations). This year our dedicated morning will be on **Saturday 10th December** after the 9.30am Mass. We hope that both male and female parishioners will be willing to turn up to devote a few hours to help us. Please sign up on the noticeboard by the front door so that we can have soup and refreshments ready at 1.30pm according to the numbers expected. Even if you can only spare an hour or two, Fr Gerry will be delighted! All teenagers will be made especially welcome, together with those aged 11 – 13 (accompanied by an adult please) but for safety reasons, sadly, please no smaller children.

### Christingle Service

We are starting to plan the Christmas services in which the children can participate. The main one is the Christingle service on **Christmas Eve at 4.00pm**. It would be lovely if your children could take part. Please sign up at the back of the church between **3rd and 11th December**. Parts will be assigned and emailed before **18th December**.

Actors should be from Years 3 to 6. Readers should be from year 6 and above. We ask that actors are available on the following key dates.

- **Sunday 18th December** after the 10.30 mass , from **11.30 am to 1.00pm** to try on costumes and have a first run through.
- **Friday 23rd December** 10 – 12.30, full dress rehearsal while Christingle making takes place in the cloister.
- **Saturday 24th December** from **3pm** for costumes and make up before the service at **4pm**.

### **The bird of hope**

Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul,  
and sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all.  
And sweetest in the gale is heard; and sore must be the storm  
that could abash the little bird that kept so many warm.  
I've heard it in the chilliest land, and on the strangest sea;  
yet, never, in extremity, it asked a crumb of me.

Emily Dickinson

## SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

### **General**

Isaiah foretells that even though the family tree of Jesse (David's father) has been reduced to a mere stump, nevertheless from that stump a new shoot will spring – a true king filled with the Spirit and endowed with all the virtues of his ancestors. The new king (the Messiah) will be a champion of the poor and will restore paradisaal peace.

Matthew introduces John the Baptist as the herald, foretold by Isaiah, of the long-awaited Messiah, and the one who prepared the people to receive him. Matthew sees Jesus as fulfilling the Old Testament promises.

Paul also sees Jesus as the one through whom God fulfilled his promises, and at the same time the reading from Romans continues the theme of peace and harmony of the First Reading.

### **First Reading: Isaiah 11: 1–10**

The stock of Jesse, the wolf living with the lamb: this magnificent Advent word picture. Dream it. Imagine it. Conjure it in your mind and soul. Let it percolate, reminding us that the Season of Expectation is underway. Something entirely new is happening. Jesus of Nazareth, Son of God, is soon to be born in history. Dream it. Imagine it. Conjure it. Let it percolate our souls, our deepest selves.

### **Second Reading: Romans 15: 14–9**

Treating each other with profound reverence and respect: imagine what this means with people we know. Only then are we truly doing the Lord's work and will.

### **Gospel Reading: Matthew 3: 1–12**

The dramatic, colourful persona of John the Baptist emerging from the wilderness, calling us to join the circus, become acrobats, perform somersaults, turn our lives completely around: this is repentance.