



ST CLEMENT'S CHURCH, EWELL

Parish Priest: Fr. Graham Bamford

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Roman Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton

Charity No. 252878

All Masses are now live streamed. Access via the Parish Website



Third Sunday of Advent – Laudate Sunday

Sunday 17th December 2023 Psalter Week 3 Cycle B

Saturday (Vigil)	6.00 pm	Will & Joanne O'Halloran RIP
Sunday 17 Dec	8.30 am	Patrick Brennan RIP
	10.30 am	Evan Lawrence RIP
Wednesday	10.00 am	All Parishioners
Friday	10.00 am	Decd of Noone & Byrne Fmlys

ANNIVERSARIES: 17TH – 23RD DECEMBER 2023

Leslie Prince Wright, Michael O'Connell, James Murchan, Benny Fitzpatrick, Joyce Hooper, David Coletta, David Robinson

COFFEE AFTER 10.30AM MASS

Parish Funds – Lesley, Wyn and Lil

Fourth Sunday of Advent – Christmas Eve

Sunday 24th December 2023 Psalter Week 1 Cycle B

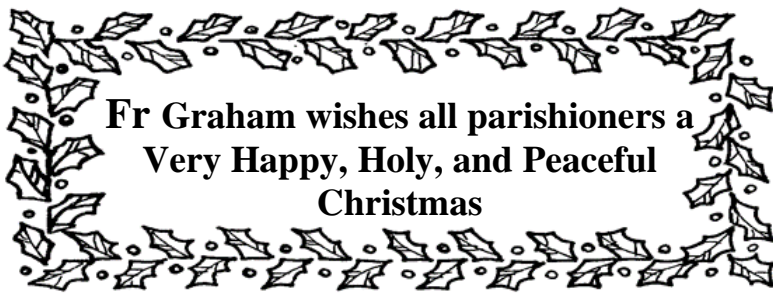
Saturday (Vigil)	6.00 pm	Wellbeing Camilla & Bob Harrison
Sun 24 Dec – Christmas Eve Fourth Sunday of Advent		
	9.30 am	All Parishioners
	5.30 pm	Decd of Guray Family
	10.00 pm	Mary Schneider RIP
Monday 25 Dec Nativity of the Lord		
	10.30 am	Joy Olivier RIP
Wednesday	10.00 am	Christopher Keogh RIP
Friday	10.00 am	In Thanksgiving Bea O'Reilly
Saturday (Vigil)	6.00 pm	Wellbeing – Ros & Lello Ciriaco
Sunday 31 Dec	8.30 am	All Parishioners
	10.30 am	Phillip Lehart RIP

FEAST DAYS 24TH – 30TH DECEMBER

- Monday: Nativity of the Lord
- Tuesday: St Stephen, First Martyr
- Wednesday: St John, Apostle and Evangelist
- Thursday: The Holy Innocents, Martyrs
- Friday: St Thomas Becket, Bishop, Martyr
Patron Saint of the English Secular Clergy

ANNIVERSARIES: 24TH – 30TH DECEMBER

Bridget Travers, Elizabeth Jaye, Joy Olivier, Arthur Hunt, Pat Weeks, Alan Rowles, Henry Foulds.



Fr Graham wishes all parishioners a
**Very Happy, Holy, and Peaceful
Christmas**

MULLED WINE AND MINCE PIES AFTER MIDNIGHT MASS IN TIVEY ROOM

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

Saturday, 10.30 am – 11.00 am or by appointment

RECOVERY AND WELL-BEING: Please pray for: Steve Kamm, Chris Williamson, Jocelyn Bowen, Joseph Ewing, Martina Savage, Mel Alvarez, John Stratford, Shona Dane, Sheila Hall, Elpedio Tavares, Nicholas Ward, Marcia Bancroft

DONATIONS VIA ST. ANTHONYS GROUP (PASTORAL TEAM)

Epsom & Ewell Food Bank - £200, Aid to the Church in Need - £100, Medicine without Frontiers (MSF) £100.

DECEMBER 200 CLUB WINNERS: David Farrar No.196 £200 Nathaniel Samuel No.119 £50 Congratulations!

BAPTISMS: We welcome into our church community Joshua Frank David Felstead who was recently baptised. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

WINTER FAIR: Crib Raffle. The winner is **Rosa Pereira**. Please make yourself known to Father Graham

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: Next Parish Quiz will be on **Saturday 13th January**

ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED URGENTLY: Two or three bed property with a garden, to rent in local area in the short term: Ewell, Epsom, Worcester Park or Stoneleigh areas with affordable rent. Needs to be fairly close due to child attending school locally.

CAFOD ISRAELI -PALESTINIAN CRISIS APPEAL: Donations can be made at cafod.org.uk/ipc or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and Southern Israel. Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid. Thank you for your prayers.

HOLY BOOKSTALL: Christmas and some other books will be available for 'self-serve' in the narthex for the next couple of weeks. Please have a browse

CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS: are your personal gift to Fr Graham.

Weekend 16/17th December there will be a retiring collection for flower and decorations at Christmas time in the church.

REFLECTION

Let us draw from the crib the joy and deep peace that Jesus comes to bring to the world. *Pope Francis*



Probošt worked on the nativity from 1886 until 1926, when he died aged 76. During the last few decades of his life, his wife had taken over the running of their farm so that he could dedicate himself to the nativity full time. After his death it remained in a barn at his home until 1934, when the family sold it. At this point it was fitted with an electric motor, put on a horse wagon and covered by a canopy. For the next few years, Probošt's nativity travelled all over Czechoslovakia (as the area was known then), with people in towns and villages across the country turning out to marvel at it.

The Second World War brought its travels to an end, and for a while its very future was in jeopardy (for a time it was even hidden inside an icebox in a brewery). After the war the crib was kept in a garden shed, where it might have remained. But from the 1950s it began to be exhibited again, culminating in 1967 with a hugely successful showing at the Expo 67 exhibition in Montreal. Other exhibitions took it to Holland, Prague and London. After being shown in London – with Queen Elizabeth II among those who flocked to see it – it was decided it should be returned to Třebechovice to prevent it from being damaged while transported around.

Its new home was Třebechovice's Museum of Nativity Scenes, where it is today the most prized exhibit, seen by many thousands of people each year. What's particularly striking for many visitors is how something this complex and detailed could have been created using very simple implements more than a century ago. The museum collection has expanded to more than 550 cribs made of different materials and originating in various parts of the Czech Republic, some mechanical and some fixed, and each Christmas sees a brand new mechanical nativity.

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

FIRST READING **Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11**

PSALM **Luke 1:46-50. 53-54**

RESPONSE **My soul rejoices in my God.**

1. My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour. He looks on his servant in her nothingness; henceforth all ages will call me blessed. **R.**
2. The Almighty works marvels for me. Holy his name! His mercy is from age to age, on those who fear him. **R.**
3. He fills the starving with good things, sends the rich away empty. He protects Israel, his servant, remembering his mercy. **R.**

SECOND READING **1 Thessalonians 5:16-24**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! The spirit of the Lord has been given to me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor. Alleluia!

GOSPEL **John 1:6-8. 19-28**

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

Next Sunday's Readings:
2 Samuel 7:1-5. 8-12. 14. 16
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38



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SUNDAY BULLETIN

THINKING FAITH

A VAST MECHANICAL NATIVITY



It's an extraordinarily intricate mechanical wooden nativity scene, spanning 7 metres by 2 metres and boasting more than 400 figures. It has travelled around the world, and many thousands of people have visited it in the museum where it's now on show. And yet the famous nativity in Třebechovice has its origins in a tragedy.

Its architect was a nineteenth-century farmer called Josef Probošt. In 1885 he and his wife suffered the loss of their seven-month-old baby son, another Josef. That Christmas, in memory of his son, Probošt created a wooden nativity scene. His wife loved it so much that he decided to start work on another, much more ambitious project. His new crib would be mechanical, with a vast display of moving figures: stars floating across the sky, a rocking manger for the Christ Child, sheep grazing in fields, soldiers marching and farmers tending their crops.

The crib became a huge focus in Probošt's life, and he recruited two friends to help: Josef Kapucián, a skilled carpenter, and Josef Friel, who designed the mechanism. Initially, the three created a corner-shaped nativity scene. However, they soon realised that if it were a linear display, it would be easier to transport and for visitors to enjoy it.

One of the most extraordinary elements of their creation is that nothing was ever written down or drawn: the Josefs built their vast wooden artwork having designed it entirely in their heads. And though they started with the nativity scene, they certainly didn't end there. The display shows pivotal moments across Christ's life, death and resurrection. The artwork features many real-life neighbours and friends of the three Josefs, people they knew in Třebechovice, and indeed the three makers of the crib are themselves depicted in the piece.

Christmas

Crib

Traditions



Joanna Moorhead continues our Christmas crib series with a look at the Czech Republic, which boasts one of the world's most unusual nativity scenes, created more than 100 years ago.

17 DECEMBER 2023

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
YEAR B

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK III



In 2019 a piece of wood believed by many to be a fragment of the original manger in which Jesus was laid was returned to Bethlehem from the Vatican; since the seventh century it had been kept, with other holy relics, in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. Pope Francis gave the relic to the Franciscans, the traditional custodians of the Holy Land. They oversee the main churches and shrines there.

Bethlehem teems with religious sites. The gold star on the floor of the Church of the Nativity that marks the spot where Christ was born is, of course, the most famous. But there's also Rachel's Tomb, where the wife of Jacob and mother of Joseph is believed to be buried.

And two kilometres or so outside the town is the field where, the Bible records, a group of shepherds heard the song of angels summoning them to the stable down the road where a baby had just been born, whose story would change the history of the world. Not far away is the Milk Grotto Church, where, according to legend, Mary breastfed the infant Jesus, spilling some of her milk onto the floor, which left it permanently whitened.

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

FIRST READING 2 Samuel 7:1-5. 8-12. 14. 16

PSALM Psalm 88

RESPONSE **I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.**

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord; through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth. Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever, that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. **R.**
2. "I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant: I will establish your dynasty for ever and set up your throne through all ages." **R.**

3. He will say to me: "You are my father, my God, the rock who saves me." I will keep my love for him always; for him my covenant shall endure. **R.**

SECOND READING **Romans 16:25-27**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the handmaid of the Lord; let what you have said be done to me. Alleluia!

GOSPEL **Luke 1:26-38**

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.

Next Sunday's Readings:
Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3
Hebrews 11:8; 11:12; 17:19
Luke 2:22-40



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SUNDAY BULLETIN



A MANGER MADE OF OLIVE WOOD



It's the most sacred place on earth when it comes to the birth of Christ. However, due to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that continues to afflict this area, many Christians have never had the chance to visit the little town of Bethlehem that they sing about every December.

These days it's not so little, and it's certainly not so still. But it was certainly a privilege to go there a few years ago, as well as being an, at times, daunting and often sad experience. War has defined this area of the West Bank for nearly

two decades; both Palestinians and Israelis have died there. But at the centre of it all is the 1,500-year-old Church of the Nativity, which has survived many attempts to destroy it – no wonder that, from the outside, it resembles a fortress more than a place of worship. Today it's the focus of the Christmas celebrations in the town, and they go on for some time because different traditions celebrate at different times: between the Catholics, Armenians and Orthodox Christians in Bethlehem, the locals reckon the season lasts at least two months.

The last few years have been tough for Bethlehem, whose minority Christian population relies heavily on tourism for income. COVID put paid to a busy Christmas for two years, but in 2022 the crowds started to come back – and for 2023, even more tourists are expected. And if you can't travel to the Holy Land, the next best thing might be to recall Christ's birth at a nativity scene made from the local olive wood from Bethlehem. Many families in the town specialise in carving the scene using materials from the area.

On my visit I met Adi, a 38-year-old carpenter with three young children, eking out a life for them from the sales of his nativity scenes. "The only work in Bethlehem is the hotels, although many pilgrims stay in Jerusalem and only visit for the day", he told me. "So for many of us, the olive wood workshops are the only way of earning a living." Olive wood is used for the cribs firstly because it's native to the area where Christ was born, but also because Jesus prayed under an olive tree en route to Jerusalem. The Bible has many references to olives and olive oil. In the Book of Genesis the dove sent out returns with an olive branch; it later became a symbol of peace.

Christmas

Crib

Traditions



In Bethlehem many Christian families run crib-making businesses and rely on them to feed their families. Joanna Moorhead explains their significance as we continue our series on Christmas cribs.

24 DECEMBER 2023

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

YEAR B

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK IV