



**ST CLEMENT'S CHURCH, EWELL**

Parish Priest: Fr. Graham Bamford

Web Site: [www.stclements Sewell.org](http://www.stclements Sewell.org)  
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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

**First Sunday of Advent**

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2023 Psalter Week 1 Cycle B**

Saturday (Vigil)	6.00 pm	Wellbeing of Fergus Powell
<b>Sunday 03 Dec</b>	8.30 am	All Parishioners
	10.30 am	Michael & Pat Bamford RIP
Wednesday	10.00 am	Ruth Henderson RIP
Friday	10.00 am	Bernie Sullivan RIP

**FEAST DAYS: 3<sup>RD</sup> – 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

Thursday: St Ambrose, Bishop, Doctor

Friday: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**ANNIVERSARIES: 4<sup>TH</sup> – 11<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

Catherine Chalupka, Elizabeth Moore, Dina Rega, Bernie Sullivan, Tony Bellino.

**COFFEE AFTER 10.30AM MASS**

Children's Liturgy

**Second Sunday of Advent**

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday 2023 Psalter Week 2 Cycle B**

Saturday (Vigil)	6.00 pm	Mary, Felix & Vincent Edwardson
<b>Sunday 10 Dec</b>	8.30 am	All Parishioners
	10.30 am	John Francis Fulford RIP
Wednesday	10.00 am	David Capaldi RIP
Friday	10.00 am	Michael Hayes RIP
Saturday (Vigil)	6.00 pm	Will & Joanne O'Halloran RIP
<b>Sunday 17 Dec</b>	8.30 am	Patrick Brennan RIP
	10.30 am	All Parishioner

**FEAST DAYS 10<sup>TH</sup> – 16<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

Wednesday: St Lucy, Virgin, Martyr

Thursday: St John of the Cross, Priest, Doctor

**ANNIVERSARIES: 10<sup>TH</sup> – 16<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

Patricia Jones, Colin Massey, Mary Burke, Bobby Kendall, Anne Gibbons.

**COFFEE AFTER 10.30AM MASS**

Parish Funds: Robin & Ann Hannan & Anne and Brian Bromfield

**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, Maritina Savage, Mel Alvarez, John Stratford, Shona Dane, Sheila Hall, Elpedio Tavares, Nicholas Ward, Marcia Bancroft

**NOVEMBER 200 CLUB WINNERS:** Jane Goss-Vera No.148 £30 Marie Green No.66 £20 Congratulations!

**WINTER FAIR:** Many thanks to all who came and enjoyed the wonderful atmosphere. A special thanks to all who helped, to the contributors and organisers. A nett of £3,447 was raised.

**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 13<sup>th</sup> January**

**ST CLEMENT'S SCHOOL CHRISTMAS FAIR - 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 12-3.00 PM:** Please join us for food, drink, stalls, games, raffle, and lots of festive fun! Everybody is welcome and the Friends of St Clement's look forward to seeing you there.

**CONFIRMATION GROUP:** The first session for candidates will be on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December, meeting in the church hall at 4pm. Our session will be followed by their formal enrolment at the 6pm Mass.

**PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS** - You are invited to join with fellow parishioners for a short, gentle reflection during Advent. We will meet in the Tivey Room on Wednesdays 29th November, 6th and 13th December from 11.15am - 12noon.

**ADVENT COURSE: Wednesday November 8th - December 13th at 7.30pm.** A six-part series showing us the wisdom and teaching of the saints which can be of practical help today. Each session will include two 15-minute films with time then for discussion in small groups and reflection at the end. The saints that will be presented are: St Patrick, St Benedict, St Francis, St Catherine of Siena, St Ignatius and St Therese of Lisieux. Father Graham will then present a session on St Clement in the New Year. Please look on the Parish website for further details and to register your interest so that an email link for the zoom session can be sent out to you.

**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](http://cafod.org.uk/ipc) or call 0303 303 3030 to support those affected and get funds to local trusted experts in Gaza and Southern Your donation will help support aid workers providing urgent humanitarian aid. Thank you for your prayers.

**REFLECTION:**

“Advent is a journey towards Bethlehem. May we let ourselves be drawn by the light of God made man”

*Pope Francis*

Around 150 people take part in the Gozo nativity across Bethlehem l'Ghajnsielem, as it's known, a village set on 20,000 square metres of farmland in an area called Ta'Passi fields. Visitors can enjoy a drink at the inn, buy traditional Maltese food from the village store, and talk to the artisans and craftspeople about their work, including local weavers making traditional Gozo lace. Adults and children alike enjoy the animals: donkeys, hens, sheep and goats all amble around the village alongside the people.

The re-enactment there has been an annual event since 2008, and each year (except during the pandemic) visitor numbers have swelled. On average around 120,000 visitors make the trip each year, some even spending a few days there: a local hotel offers a three-night package, with the first night spent in the inn that represents where the Holy Family tried unsuccessfully to find a room.

The animated nativity was the brainchild of Franco Ciangura, who says the fields where it takes place were his childhood playground and always felt very special to him. "I wanted to combine the nativity story with elements from our own history, sharing our traditions and making it a memorable experience for visitors to enjoy spending time in," he says.

The story continues at Ghajnsielem even after 25 December: the first Sunday after New Year sees the arrival of the three wise men who travel across the island with a camel, bearing gifts to celebrate the Epiphany.

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

**To you, I lift up my soul, O my God.  
In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame.  
Nor let my enemies exult over me;  
and let none who hope in you be put to shame.**

FIRST READING **Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1. 3-8**

PSALM **Psalm 79**

RESPONSE **God of hosts, bring us back;  
let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.**

- O shepherd of Israel, hear us, shine forth from your cherubim throne. O Lord, rouse up your might, O Lord, come to our help. **R.**
- God of hosts, turn again, we implore, look down from heaven and see. Visit this vine and protect it, the vine your right hand has planted. **R.**

- May your hand be on the man you have chosen, the man you have given your strength. And we shall never forsake you again: give us life that we may call upon your name. **R.**

SECOND READING **1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION  
**Alleluia, alleluia!  
Let us see, O Lord, your mercy  
and give us your saving help.  
Alleluia!**

GOSPEL **Mark 13:33-37**

COMMUNION ANTIPHON  
**The Lord will bestow his bounty,  
and our earth shall yield its increase.**

**Next Sunday's Readings:**  
Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11  
2 Peter 3:8-14  
Mark 1:1-8



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THE LIVING CRIB OF MALTA



The first-ever crib scene was devised by St Francis of Assisi in the thirteenth century. According to a contemporary account, he decided to make the story of Christ's birth more immediate by setting up a manger on the floor of a cave outside the town of Greccio, Italy. To make the scene more realistic, he decided to enlist the help of real-life animals: an ox and an ass were led in and munched on the straw strewn across the ground as they stood near the makeshift cradle.

Francis' initiative led to the widespread practice of using models of Christ's birth in December, and these take many different forms across the world, often reflecting local scenery and circumstances. But in one place – the island of Gozo, off Malta, in the Mediterranean – they've stayed true to the Francis initiative. Each year villagers enact a real-life nativity scene, complete with animals and a newborn playing the starring role.

The village where this takes place is Ghajnsielem, right by the island's port. However, each December it becomes another village, Bethlehem, and it goes back 2000 years in time. To spend a couple of hours there is to be transported back to the Holy Land at the time of Christ's birth: all the villagers seem to be involved. But other than donning the kind of gear appropriate to first-century Palestine, they more or less carry on with their normal lives. So the baker bakes bread, but now in the ovens of old; the farmer tends his crops, using the implements of yesteryear. When I visited, the carpenter was hard at work with his lathe. And there in the midst of everything, exactly as it must have been all those years ago, is a small stable with a mother holding her tiny baby and a proud father (or, to be precise, foster father) looking on.

There's no particular song and dance about the stable – just as there wouldn't have been when Jesus' birth happened – it's just another day in the village, and (the baby playing) the infant Christ is its newest inhabitant.

Christmas  
Crib  
Traditions



Today we start a six-week series with Joanna Moorhead on Christmas crib traditions in other countries, starting in Malta, where a village becomes first-century Bethlehem each December.

3 DECEMBER 2023

1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

YEAR B

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK 1



that time, and his pupils Salvatore di Franco, Giuseppe Gori and Angelo Viva. The pieces are made of terracotta, wood, wire and hemp, and they range between 6 and 20 inches in height.



The location of the nativity scene is very significant: it is placed directly in front of the Valladolid choir screen, which is considered one of The Met's greatest treasures. It was made for the majestic cathedral in Valladolid, Spain; it stood at the entrance to the choir, dividing the choir from the high altar. The screen is closely based on Renaissance models but was actually commissioned in the eighteenth century and installed in the nave of the cathedral in 1763. When it was removed many years later during renovations at the cathedral, it was sold and later gifted to The Met in the 1950s. It's believed to be the only such choir screen ever to have left Spain.

For many New Yorkers, the Christmas scene at The Met is more meaningful than the famous Rockefeller Christmas tree; its magic is clearly in the fact that, while it's a beautiful, festive display, it also relates to the true meaning of the season. In recent years the lighting has been enhanced, and fibre optics have made the scene even more breathtaking.

The figures have captured the imagination of the nation time and again throughout their history. During the presidency of the Catholic John F. Kennedy, several figures were borrowed from the museum to be part of the Christmas scene at the White House.

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

**O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations, and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart.**

FIRST READING **Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11**

PSALM **Psalms 84**

RESPONSE **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. **R.**

2. Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced. Faithfulness shall spring from the earth and justice look down from heaven. **R.**

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. **R.**

SECOND READING **2 Peter 3:8-14**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**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**

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights, and behold the joy which comes to you from God.**

**Next Sunday's Readings:**  
Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28



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A BABY BORN IN MANHATTAN



Visit New York City and you'll almost certainly make a trip to The Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Met), one of the greatest art galleries in the world. And if you're there in December or early January, then in the centre of the Medieval Art Galleries, you'll find one of the biggest depictions of the nativity scene anywhere in the world.

It's the legacy of a Met benefactor called Loretta Hines Howard, who started collecting Italian nativity figures in the 1920s. She made regular trips to Italy to source the pieces, adding to them year by year. In 1964 she gave her entire collection, by then numbering 233 figures, to The Met. She died in 1982, but the collection is

still a central part of the museum's Christmas celebrations. Each year her descendants are involved in putting it on display in the galleries, where it's seen by many thousands of people.

The scene always takes the same form, and it is arranged around a 20-foot blue spruce, which is adorned by a host of cherubs and angels – hence its nickname the "angel tree". Christ's birth is depicted at the foot of the tree, with more than seventy figures directly connected to the story of what happened that night 2000 years ago in Bethlehem. Loretta's collection centred on nativity figures made in eighteenth-century Naples, which was (and is) the world's centre for Christmas cribs. Traditionally, Neapolitan cribs always had certain elements. Each one is represented in The Met display: as well as the Holy Family, there are always the shepherds, the Magi and a large group of spirited and lively townsfolk, who are usually going about their normal lives. In addition to the human figures, there are more than fifty charming animals.

The scene evolves as the Christmas season progresses: until 25 December the manger is empty, and then the Christ Child appears. Similarly the shepherds, and later the kings, arrive as the story progresses over the days that follow. The figures themselves are the work of various Italian craftspeople from the eighteenth century, including Giuseppe Sammartino, who was a leading sculptor from

Christmas

Crib

Traditions



Each December thousands flock to see a very special nativity in downtown New York City. Joanna Moorhead tells its story as we continue our Christmas crib traditions series.

10 DECEMBER 2023

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

YEAR B

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK II