



St. David's Parish
Monastery Road, Pantasaph,
Holywell. CH8 8PE



DECEMBER 17, 2023,

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“Oh Mary, beautiful gate that remained closed and never opened! Christ passed through this gate without opening it.”

ST AMBROSE

Mass Timings

Saturday Vigil Mass 4.00 Pm
Sunday Mass 10.00am
Weekdays 9.00 am In Denbigh House

READINGS

1st Reading **Is 61:1-2A, 10-11**

Reading 2 **1 Thes 5:16-24**

GOSPEL **Jn 1:6-8, 19-28**

INTRODUCTION: Introduction: The common theme running through today's readings is one of joy and encouragement. The readings stress the need for patience in those awaiting the rebirth of Jesus in their hearts and lives. They give us a message of hope—for people almost three millennia ago, for people at the beginning of the first millennium and for people today. Today is called *Gaudete* Sunday because today's Mass begins with the opening antiphon: "*Gaudete in Domino semper,*" i.e., "Rejoice in the Lord always." Today, our joy in the coming of Jesus as our Savior, is marked by our lighting of our Advent Wreath's third candle which is '*rose-colored,*' and by the '*rose-colored*' vestments, which the priest may wear at this Eucharist, because they represent a

lightening of the dark violet of the rest of the penitential season of Advent. They remind us of the color of the *sky* at the very *brink* of morning, when the sun is just beginning to come up. This is the reason why this Sunday is also called “*Rose Sunday*.”

First reading: Is 35:1-6, 10 explained: Through Isaiah, His prophet, the Lord God tries to stir up in his exiled children the hope of their return to Israel by assuring them of His saving power in their lives. He reminds them that it was through their disloyalty to Him that they had lost their liberty, had been taken as slaves to Babylon and had lived there in servitude for sixty years (598-538 BC). The Jews were finally set free by Cyrus (who had captured Babylon), and were allowed to return to their native land, rebuild the Temple, and serve their God once more as His Chosen People. Through the prophet, Yahweh assures the exiles that He will lead them back to their land in this second exodus (6th century B.C.), as He led their ancestors from Egypt to the Promised Land in the first exodus (13th century BC). The Lord God says He is going to do three things for them. 1) He will transform the wasteland lying between their land of exile and Israel into a new Garden of Eden to facilitate their journey. 2) The weak and the sick will be strengthened for the journey.

Second reading: James 5:7-10 explained: The expectation of Jesus' imminent return did not last very long in the early Church. Even within Saint Paul's lifetime, that expectation had waned. The Apostles advised the Christians to bear witness to Christ through their heroic lives without waiting for the *Parousia* in their lifetime. Hence, in the second reading, James encourages the fearful, frustrated and persecuted early Christians to be patient. Like Isaiah, James tries to show his Christian community that what they have been hoping for is already happening. Though he stresses patience and determination, James also reminds them that "*the Judge stands at the gate*." Just as the prophets believed that what they were proclaiming was already happening, the Christians needed to behave as though the returned risen Jesus were already influencing their lives. James uses the analogy of a farmer who must wait patiently for the ground to yield its fruit.

Gospel exegesis: The context: Today's Gospel describes how Isaiah's vision of Israel's glorious future is fulfilled unexpectedly by the coming of the promised Messiah in Jesus, the poor, humble, itinerant preacher who told the Truth, and who worked wonders of healing in his Messianic mission. But the Jews in general expected a political Messiah who would reestablish the Davidic kingdom after overthrowing the Roman government. Hence, most of them were scandalized by Jesus' peaceful preaching and shameful death.

The disciples of John the Baptist continued to insist that John was indeed the Messiah, and they awaited his return, causing problems to early Christians. Hence, all four Evangelists highlighted John's important role as the Messiah's herald but emphasized that John's was a secondary and subordinate role in salvation history. Matthew, in the second part of today's Gospel, presents Jesus, the true Messiah, as paying the highest compliments to John the Baptist as his herald and the last of the prophets, and to the courage with which John proclaimed his prophetic convictions.

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS- DECEMBER 9-10

Loose cash	137.65
Gift Aid	95.00
<u>Total</u>	<u>232.65</u>

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

**Sacrament of Confession at 11.30 am on Saturday
ON EMERGENCY ANY TIME 0741-749-4277**

ANNIVERSARIES (Dec 16- 22)

Mary Clare Tyson, 2020, Honora Neville: Fr. Richard Payne '84, Sr Dolores, Harold Borse, Br. Andrew McDonald '76: Sr. Philomena Walker '89:, Mary Bury '76: Carol Ravenscroft, Sr Josephine Wareing, Ellen Casson '79: Charles Henry Boulton '92: fr. Simon Denton OFM Cap '08, Joseph Pawson '95:

Let us Remember the Sick in Prayer

Patrick Ngale. Philip McGreavv. Antony Parr

MASS INTENTIONS DECEMBER DEC 16- 22

Date	Offered by	Intention
December 16, Sat	Andrew Tyson	Clare Tyson
December 17, Sun		For the Parishioners
December 18, Mon	Angela Gonzalves	For Desiderius
December 19, Tue	Marie	Antony Parry
December 20, Wed	Hazel Duruega	Perpetua Machado RIP
December 21, Thu	Sosthenes Fernandes	Thanksgiving- Manpreeth marriage
December 22, Frid	Mary Ward	For healing of Diana

CHRISTMAS PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

December 24, Sunday 7.30 pm Carol Hymns

December 24, Sunday 8.00 pm Vigil Mass

December 25, Monday 10.00 am Christmas Mass

Donation for flowers

Those who like to make donations for flowers to decorate the Church for Christmas celebrations can hand it over to the priests or put it in the offering basket in an envelope clearly marked as donation for flowers. **Those who like to donate poinsettia or flowers can leave them in the Church next weekend.**

Volunteers are welcome.

Those who can use your talents and time to prepare the Crib, Christmas Tree, and decorating the church please contact Angela Rhodes or Angela Taylor. **The cleaning and flower preparations will be on December 21, Thursday from 9.30 am. Those who can volunteer to help please contact Angela Taylor.**

Gift to the Christmas Friends

Gifts to the Christmas Friends can be hanged on the Christmas Tree on or before the Christmas Day.

DONATIONS TO THE PARISH

Account Name: Wrexham Diocesan Trust

Account Number: 08190771, Sort Code: 55-81-42

Website: <http://www.pantasaph.org>,

Email: pantasaphstdavids@gmail.com

Phone: 0741-749-4277, 01352 711053,

Registered Charity No. 70042