

## The week ahead...

<b>Saturday 26 November</b> Saturday of Ordinary Time 34	5:00pm	Mass: <b>Teresa &amp; Walter Drane and pro populo</b>
<b>Sunday 27 November</b> First Sunday of Advent		
<b>Monday 28 November</b> Weekday of Advent		
<b>Tuesday 29 November</b> Weekday of Advent	6:30pm	Mass: <b>McGough &amp; Duffy Families</b>
<b>Wednesday 30 November</b> <i>St Andrew, Apostle, Patron of Scotland</i>	9:30am	Mass: <b>Walter Staff</b>
<b>Thursday 01 December</b> Weekday of Advent	9:30am	Mass: <b>Arthur Crooks and Joan Moran</b>
<b>Friday 02 December</b> Weekday of Advent	7:00am	Mass: <b>Private Intention</b>
<b>Saturday 03 December</b> <i>St Francis Xavier, Priest</i>	5:00pm	Mass: <b>Eileen Allison and pro populo</b>



## St Patrick's RC Church, Langley Moor

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## First Sunday of Advent

27 November, 2016

### Advent: An Opportunity to Shift Focus

WANDERING AROUND the shopping centres at present, you could be forgiven for thinking that this season is concerned primarily with conspicuous consumption and little else. For some weeks now we have been assailed by posters and advertisements in shops urging us to purchase more in readiness for the Christmas season. Displays incorporating traditional Christmas images of holly, bells, reindeer and snow greet us unrelentingly at every turn. Even Santa Claus is placed strategically in various shopping locations to lure unsuspecting parents into purchasing more than they intended. A few more photos for the grandparents, perhaps?

Don't get me wrong, I have nothing against purchasing gifts for loved ones or as a show of appreciation to those who have given of their time and talent in some endeavour. My concern is the overwhelming pressure many people feel at this time of year to purchase excessively and the expectation which that may create in the recipients of the gifts. How often have we felt a correlation between the expense of a gift given or received and the love expressed? How often have we felt pressure to purchase something for someone when we didn't really want to? How often have we felt a subtle competitiveness in outdoing the gift-buying of another as a means of boosting our self-worth? All of these pressures may come from within but they are fed unrelentingly by businesses who have only one aim in mind – profit.

Before you start thinking I'm beginning some anti-capitalist rant, let me assure you that I'm not. I merely want to highlight at an opportune time the importance of getting the emphasis right at this time. By all means let us enjoy the purchasing of gifts and the joy we give when we bestow them on another and find equal joy in receiving a gift from a loved one. Let us revel in the festive atmosphere at this time and take pleasure in watching the faces of children as they delight in Christmas celebrations.

But let us not allow the secular side of the season consume us for we do so at our peril.

Advent, if taken seriously, affords us the opportunity to prepare ourselves as individuals and as a community, for the true meaning of Christmas. It is a season that shifts our focus from the secular and all its concomitant distractions to what really matters: Jesus, the source of our being. Advent reminds us of the hope we have as disciples and apostles of Jesus, the one who came into the world as one like us in all things but sin, the one who comes to us each day if we only choose to recognise his presence in the unexpected, and the one who will come again at the end of time so that we may, by God's grace, dwell forever in his eternal light and love.

This hope is highlighted today as we light the first candle on our Advent wreath, the Prophet's Candle, symbolising hope, and thus commence our journey of preparation for the Nativity of Jesus.

*Blessings and prayers in the week ahead,*

*Fr Robert*



#### Ministries for this week

Saturday 26 November

#### Eucharistic Ministers

John and Irene Carey  
Kevin Boyle

#### Readers

Margaret Purdom  
Claire Lavery

#### Children's Liturgy

Jane Smith  
Helen Musham

#### Welcomers

Anne and Paul Kelly

#### Ministries for next week

Saturday 03 December

#### Eucharistic Ministers

Jane Smith, Helen Musham  
Wilf Lavery

#### Readers

Pat Middleton  
Greg Mearman

#### Children's Liturgy

Jane Smith  
Helen Musham

#### Welcomers

Janet Harrigan  
Halina Holman

#### LAST WEEKEND'S COLLECTION

Gift Aid: £231 Loose Plate: £206

**Total: £437**

**Mass Attendance: 144**

DIOCESE OF HEXHAM AND NEWCASTLE  
CHARITY NUMBER 1143450

Have you an item for the parish bulletin? Please contact Judith Bulmer on (0191) 378 3544 or 07980 481 858 or send an email to her at [judithbulmer@rocketmail.com](mailto:judithbulmer@rocketmail.com).

*Please remember in your prayers people who are sick and housebound in the parish....*

*Pat Curran, Tom Taylorson, Sylvia Kelly, Marie Carey, Mary Spears, Rose Crick, Maureen McCrann, Teresa Parkin, Doreen Carroll, Dorothy Dowdle, Jean O'Donoghue, Margaret Pouton, Betty Allison, Michael Kane, Pat Harrison, Ohwyn Morris, Tom Tracey and Bede Anderson.*

**APPEALS:** Thank you for your support of last weekend's **Youth Sunday Appeal**. The total received was **£186**. Parishes throughout the diocese will support **St Cuthbert's Care** via the Advent Alms over the next few weeks. Our 'Churches Together' group have already raised £200 for this worthy cause.

**Emailed Bulletin** – If you would like to have the parish bulletin emailed to you each week please email Judith (details opposite) and you will be added to the mailing list. Parish Council minutes are also available electronically.

## What's going on...?

**Forward Together in Hope:** As you will be aware, this weekend the proposal for our parish partnership is to be submitted this weekend to Bishop Séamus and the Forward Together Hope Team. If you wish to view what is being submitted, please visit the website of St Cuthbert's in Durham ([www.stcuthberts-durham.org.uk](http://www.stcuthberts-durham.org.uk)) and follow the links. I will keep you updated.

**Christmas Sanctuary Flowers:** A plate is at the back of the church for donations towards the flowers for the sanctuary this Christmas. All donations welcome, no matter how small! Thank you.

**Senior Citizens' Christmas Party:** Organised by St Patrick's Social Committee, this will take place on Saturday 03 December at 12:30pm at the Royal British Legion, Meadowfield. Any parishioners wishing to attend should add their name to the list at the rear of the church. Raffle tickets will be on sale after Mass this evening.

**Advent Resources:** Don't forget the Advent Daily Reflection booklets (£1.00) and the Advent Calendars (50p) for sale in the narthex. Feel free to take one and drop the money off next week if you don't have any cash on you. Why not get one or more for some friends?

### Churches Together in DH7 News:

1. Advent Course "Living in the Light" - taking place at St Andrew's Methodist, Brandon on Fridays during Advent. Next meeting will be on 02 December. Lunch provided from 1:00pm and meetings start at 2:00pm.
2. St Andrew's Methodist in Brandon are also running a course on discipleship each Wednesday at 7:30pm.
3. The recently held stall at the rear of our church raised a total of **£205.07**. The amount has been split evenly between the two Catholic Care Homes, St Catherine's in Newcastle and Holy Cross in Sunderland. Several unsold items were taken to Holy Cross Home to be sold at their Christmas Fair. Many thanks to all who made the beautiful items and to those who came to support all our local churches at the Christmas Fair.
4. Sponsors will kindly collect from holders of Mission Red Boxes/Brown Envelopes their contributions during the first two weeks of December. The calendars you will receive will contain Pope Francis' Mission Prayer requests for each month. If you do not have a red box and you wish to make a donation to help missionaries in their work, there is a Red Mission box in the church narthex for your contributions. We are grateful for any small amount you wish to give. Thank you!

## SCHOOL NEWS

### Advent Wreath

This evening, the first candle on the Advent wreath will be lit by Victoria. Lucia will read the introduction and Joseph will read a prayer of reflection on the first candle - The Candle of Hope.

### Lighting of the Local Christmas Tree - Sunday 04 December

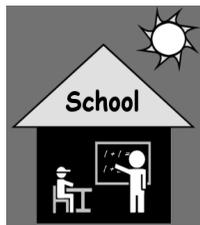
At 4:30pm on Sunday 04 December, the tree opposite Lidl in Langley Moor will be lit. Our School Choir will be supporting the event, along with the choir from Langley Moor Primary School. Everyone is welcome to attend this annual community event.

### First Sacraments - First Reconciliation - Tuesday 06 December

Our pupils preparing for First Sacraments will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time in church at 5:00pm on Tuesday 06 December before the celebration of Mass at 6:30pm.

### Penitential Service - Wednesday 14 December

Class 1 (Years 5 & 6) will attend the 9:30am Mass on Wednesday 14 December before taking part in a Penitential Service.



## Fill in the Blanks: The Lord is Coming!



Use the words in the list at the bottom to fill in the blanks in today's Gospel reading. Use the letters in the boxes to fill in the blanks at the end.

As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. In those days  \_\_\_\_\_ the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day that Noah  \_\_\_\_\_ the ark. They did not know until the flood came and  \_\_\_\_\_ them all away. So will it be also at the coming of the Son of Man. Two  \_\_\_\_\_ will be out in the field; one will be  \_\_\_\_\_, and one will be left. Two women will be  \_\_\_\_\_ at the mill; one will be taken, and one will be left. Therefore,  \_\_\_\_\_ awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come.

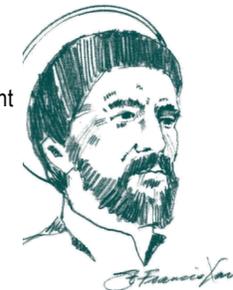
STAY ENTERED MEN BEFORE GRINDING TAKEN CARRIED



## SAINT OF THE WEEK

### Saint Francis Xavier - 03 December

Francis was born in the Basque country of Spain in 1506. He met Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, when he was a student in Paris, and he was ordained priest in 1537. In 1541 the Pope sent him as part of a mission to India, and he spent the rest of his life in the East, preaching the Gospel in Goa and Malacca. He made many converts and fought against the exploitation of the native population by the Europeans. He spent two years on a successful mission to Japan, laying the foundations of many Christian communities; and in 1552, after entering China secretly to preach the Gospel there, he died of fever and exhaustion on the Chinese island of Shangchwan.



Information taken from [Universalis](http://www.universalis.net)

## ~ Christmas Gifts ~

It is one of the truths of Christmas in our affluent society that we find it difficult to choose gifts for others. Why not have a look at the piety stall at the back of the church this weekend to find something faith-based and unique? Our piety stall has some great new stock! Also, don't forget the opportunities provided by organisations like Cafod and Oxfam to purchase certificates for gifts given to assist others in developing nations. Have you considered giving someone a certificate to let them know that they have had a goat given in their name to a family in need? A great idea!



## DID YOU KNOW...?

...that the Advent wreath is full of symbolism which helps us prepare for the Christmas celebrations?

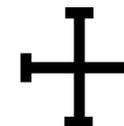
The Advent Wreath is a circle with no beginning or end, showing the beauty of God's creation and God's never-ending love and care for all of us. It is evergreen, recalling that our faith, our hope and our love are always alive when they spring from God and his Son.



## "QUOTE OF THE WEEK"

"For outlandish creatures like us, on our way to a heart, a brain, and courage, Bethlehem is not the end of our journey but only the beginning - not home but the place through which we must pass if ever we are to reach home at last."

Frederick Buechner  
*The Magnificent Defeat*  
(1966)



**PRAY FOR...** the souls of the faithful departed right throughout this month of November. We pray for all those whose names are inscribed in our Book of Remembrance, for others we have known and loved who have left us, for those who otherwise would have no one to pray for them. We remember in a special way too all those who have died in war, especially the innocent victims of tyranny and those who use religion as a justification for violence.