



**Benefice of Newport Pagnell with
Lathbury and Moulsoe
Pews News
Sixteenth January 2022
Second Sunday of Epiphany**

CORONAVIRUS

Pews News will continue to be emailed and online, showing the readings for the Sunday plus any news items.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has launched a free dial-in worship phone line during coronavirus lockdown, if you would like to experience it this is the number to dial. 0800 804 8044

Praying and Caring Church

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Benefice Website www.npparish.org.uk

Registered Charity number 1153668

Parish Contacts

The parish has set up various electronic means of contact and information. All details of which can be obtained from the parish office.

LORD..

Show us, inspire us

Ways in which to build community

Within and beyond our home church.

LORD

Show Your Love, speak Your Word

To all who meet together ...

May Your light shine through all....

AMEN

Collect for second Sunday of Epiphany

Eternal Lord, our beginning and our end:
bring us with the whole creation to your glory,
hidden through past ages and made known
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

9.30am St. Mary's, Moulsoe, Family Communion

10.30am St. Peter & St. Paul,

United Service for Christian Unity,

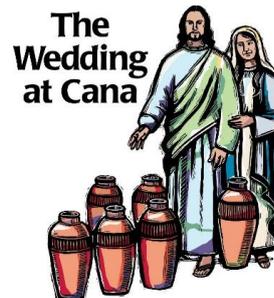
6.00pm St. Luke's, Holy Communion,

Readings : Isaiah 62: 1-5, Acts 8: 14-17,

Gospel : Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22,

Wednesday 19th January

10.00am - Said Communion, St Peter & St Paul
followed by coffee, chat and healing prayer



Next week - January 23rd

10.30am St. Peter & St. Paul,

Family Communion

Readings, Nehemiah 8: 1-3, 5-6, 8-10,

1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a,

Gospel, Luke 4: 14-21,

Anyone is welcome to put an item into Pews News.

If you would like to, please email your item to:-

Bill Watson, Pews News Editor/Compiler.

The email address to use is :-

billw1014@outlook.com

Pews News deadline time:- 2.00pm each Thursday.

Items received after then will be put in next week.

Weekly ZOOM Prayer meeting

The Prayer Meeting is being conducted by Zoom to enable more people to join in. These take place every **Thursday at 4pm**. They last an hour and have a short act of worship (a song or reflection on the Bible reading of the day) with time for silence as well as prayer. Everyone is welcome to join the Prayer Meeting; you can participate in prayer without necessarily having to speak so there is no pressure to say anything. **Watch for the email with the correct link.**

Volunteers needed

We are looking for volunteers to keep St. Peter & St. Paul's kitchen and toilet clean and tidy on a weekly basis e.g., emptying bins, checking toilet rolls and paper towels, and general cleanliness.

If you feel able to volunteer, please contact Jennifer Mazzone on 01908-613088 or jennifermazzone@hotmail.com The more volunteers we have, the less often you will be on duty.

Thank you.

As well as keeping the kitchen and toilet clean. the whole building has to be cleaned as well on a weekly basis. The church is divided into separate sections for cleaning e.g. floors, pews etc.

It is an important job as many people visit the church during the week so we need to have a well looked after building. There are now 9 vacancies on the rota so please think about offering your services.

If you wish to be involved please contact June Creamer, the office or Jennifer Mazzone.

Open Meeting on Deanery Proposals to Reorganise Benefices in the Newport Deanery

7pm on January 17th at St Luke's Church

You may be aware that the Church of England is facing problems in staffing local ministry and the Oxford Diocese is examining ways to manage the situation. The purpose of this meeting is to explain and explore the suggestions that have been made at a deanery level to review and possibly reorganise parish groupings in the light of this. Members from all the congregations in our benefice are invited to share their views.

Before the pandemic the Area Dean, Gary Ecclestone, and Tim Edwards, the lay chair of deanery synod, had started to discuss some possible ways ahead and last October they identified 3 possible options for further discussion. They had planned to hold an open synod meeting attended by the archdeacon, Guy Elsmore, on 1 December at SSPP at which PCC members and other members of the congregations in the deanery were invited to share their thoughts and questions.

This meeting had to be cancelled because the area dean fell seriously ill with covid. In order to inform our own benefice a short open meeting will be held tomorrow Monday 17th January 2022 at 7pm in St. Luke's. Tim Edwards, the lay chair of deanery synod, will attend to explain the situation, outline the options and answer questions.

Copies of the proposals will be available at the back of St. Peter & St. Paul's this week and at St Luke's after the evening communion today. The planned Newport Pagnell PCC meeting will start at 7.45pm to accommodate this extra meeting but it will be extremely helpful if, when you review the proposals, you have questions to raise with Tim, you let either Nick or me have them in writing beforehand so we can organise the time efficiently. Questions can still be raised from the floor and no decisions will be made at the meeting.

Olwen Smith Secretary, Newport Pagnell PCC

Volunteer Required

How is your handwriting, do you have calligraphy skills?

If the answer is good and yes then there is an opportunity for you to put them to the test by volunteering your skills to update the Parish wedding register and the Book of Remembrance.

If you might be interested then please talk to me in the Office.

Malcolm – npparish@gmail.com, 01908 611145.



Newport Pagnell Benefice Services and Events January 2022

- Sun 2nd** 9.15am Family Communion at All Saints, Lathbury
10.30am Family Communion at St Peter & St Paul
- Weds 5th** 10am Said Communion St Peter & St Paul
followed by coffee, chat and healing prayer
- Sun 9th** 10.30am Family Communion at St Peter & St Paul
with guest preacher the Rev Dr Quentin Chandler,
the Diocesan Director of Ordinands
- Weds 12th** 10am Said Communion St Peter & St Paul
followed by coffee, chat and healing prayer
- Sun 16th** 9.30am Family Communion at St Mary's, Moulsoe
10.30am Service for Christian Unity at St Peter & St Paul
6pm Holy Communion at St Luke's
- Weds 19th** 10am Said Communion St Peter & St Paul
followed by coffee, chat and healing prayer
- Sun 23rd** 10.30am Family Communion at St Peter & St Paul
- Weds 26th** 10am Said Communion St Peter & St Paul
followed by coffee, chat and healing prayer
- Sun 30th** 10.30am Family Communion at St Peter & St Paul



The serving of refreshments depends on the virus situation but we hope to be able to offer them after services.

Some prayers for the week

Gracious God, your Son Jesus began his ministry at a wedding celebration and through the miracle of the wine showed us the abundance of your wonderful love for us. May Jesus continue to transform the water of our everyday lives into the new wine of your kingdom on earth, transforming by his love the ordinary into the extra-ordinary

Lord, in your mercy: *hear our prayer*

Holy God, we thank you for the ministry of marriage, for anniversaries and renewals of marriage vows. May those so blessed grow old together in the knowledge that the best wine is saved till last and that Jesus is their companion on their journey through life together.

Lord, in your mercy: *hear our prayer*

Father God, we pray for our world and the problems faced by so many of your children. We pray for all who live under the threat of war and terrorism and the poverty which comes in its wake. Govern the hearts and minds of all world leaders and those in authority that they may act justly, honestly and according to your will.

Lord, in your mercy: *hear our prayer*

Father God, we pray for those we know who will be married during the coming year; be with them as they make their plans and give them patience and understanding when things are difficult. In their growing love for each other may they come to know you as the source of all love and help them to rejoice in their shared memories of joy and laughter, sadness and disappointment.

Lord, in your mercy: *hear our prayer*

Loving God, we pray for those who have rejected you because they are ill and blame you for their afflictions. Help them to see the reality of your desire of wholeness and health for them. Enable all who are sick to pray for help for themselves and to give thanks for those who care for them.

Lord, in your mercy: *hear our prayer*

Mighty God, through your son you have freed us from the grip of the tomb. We pray for those who have departed this life and ask you, through your loving kindness, to have mercy on their souls. We pray too for those bereaved by their passing.

Lord, in your mercy: *hear our prayer*

Faithful God, as we go out into the world we pray that we may reflect your love in our families, our church and our community; so that the world can witness that we are followers of Christ and draw others into his loving care.

Merciful father: ***accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen***



17th January - Antony of Egypt, hermit, abbot

"Wherever you find yourself, do not go forth from that place too quickly.

Try to be patient and learn to stay in one place."

Born into a wealthy family, Antony submitted to his parents and their expectations that he follow in their wealthy footsteps. They died when Antony was only about 20 years old, and he inherited every penny. But about that same time, Antony happened to hear a reading from the Gospel of Matthew, where Jesus tells a rich young man, "If you want to be perfect, go and sell everything you have and give the money to the poor." Antony believed he was that rich young man and immediately did exactly as Jesus instructed.

Fleeing to the desert

Everything we know about Antony comes from a hagiography (a favourable biography of a saintly person) written shortly after his death by the famous theologian Athanasius. According to him, Antony saw the Christian's task as both simple and formidable: become a "lover of God" by resisting the Devil and yielding to Christ. Antony saw the world as a battlefield on which God's servants waged war against the Devil and his demons. His journey into purity began by removing himself from the village. He took up strenuous spiritual exercises: sleepless nights spent in prayer, fasting every other day, and eating only bread and water. He discovered, Athanasius wrote, "the mind of the soul is strong when the pleasures of the body are weak." Soon Antony left the village territories and sought refuge in nearby tombs where, according to Athanasius, devils and wild beasts assaulted him both physically and spiritually. Like an athlete in the arena, Antony endured repeated attacks until the demons were finally scattered by the presence of God. In the peace after the turmoil, Antony asked God why he had been left to do battle alone. God told him that, though he was present, he waited to see the saint fight. From the tombs Antony fled again, this time seeking refuge in an abandoned Roman fort on a solitary desert mountain. There he shut himself up for 20 years, waging a silent, solitary battle. When he emerged, Antony had become a symbol of strength and wisdom for all of Egypt.

Ascetic superstar

Having built a foundation of solitude and ceaseless prayer, Antony was ready to share his secrets with others who sought to follow his way. Many were attracted to his wisdom, and these he encouraged to seek self-denial and the hermetic life. The *Apophthegmata*, a collection of sayings attributed to the desert fathers and mothers, tells this story of Antony's wisdom: A brother renounced the world and gave his goods to the poor, but he kept back a little for his personal expenses. He went to see Abba Antony. When he told him this, the old man said to him, "If you want to be a monk, go into the village, buy some meat, cover your naked body with it and come here like that." The brother did so, and the dogs and birds tore at his flesh. When he came back the old man asked him whether he had followed his advice. He showed him his wounded body, and Saint Antony said, "Those who renounce the world but want to keep something for themselves are torn in this way by the demons who make war on them." Antony also came to the aid of the larger church. When Roman Emperor Diocletian began persecuting Egyptian Christians in 303, word reached the lonesome Antony in his desert cell. He and several other monks travelled to Alexandria and ministered to the persecuted. He was so respected that even the authorities left him alone to evangelize, console, and ease the suffering of the prisoners. In fact, under Maximin he offered himself as a martyr but was refused. Only one other time did Antony leave his desert solitude. Near the end of Antony's life, Arius (a former deacon in Alexandria) began to spread his heresy that Christ was created, and thus not equal with God. Many Egyptian Christians were swayed by Arian teachings. Athanasius, leader of the church in Alexandria and defender of orthodoxy, called Antony to the Egyptian capital to champion the truth. After preaching, the monk fled the world a last time, returning to his quiet cell. When, at the age of 105, he knew he was near the end of his life, he took two companions with him into the desert to wait for his death. They were ordered to bury his body without a marker so no one could make his grave or relics an object of reverence. Though Antony was not the first monk, his passion for purity blazed the way for a monastic spirituality. Athanasius's biography became a "best-seller" and inspired thousands to take up the monastic life, which developed into one of the most important institutions in Western history.

Source of this item is :- (<https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/innertravelers/antony-of-egypt.html>)

22nd January - Vincent of Zaragoza, deacon, martyr.

Saint Vincent of Zaragoza's Story

Most of what we know about this saint comes from the poet Prudentius. His *Acts* have been rather freely coloured by the imagination of their compiler. But Saint Augustine, in one of his sermons on Saint Vincent, speaks of having the *Acts* of his martyrdom before him.

We are at least sure of his name, his being a deacon, the place of his death and burial.

According to the story we have, the unusual devotion he inspired must have had a basis in a very heroic life. Vincent was ordained deacon by his friend Saint Valerius of Zaragoza in Spain.

The Roman emperors had published their edicts against the clergy in 303, and the following year against the laity. Vincent and his bishop were imprisoned in Valencia. Hunger and torture failed to break them. Like the youths in the fiery furnace, they seemed to thrive on suffering.

Valerius was sent into exile, and Dacian, the Roman governor, now turned the full force of his fury on Vincent. Tortures that sound very modern were tried. But their main effect was the progressive disintegration of Dacian himself. He had the torturers beaten because they failed.

Finally he suggested a compromise: Would Vincent at least give up the sacred books to be burned according to the emperor's edict? He would not. Torture on the gridiron continued, the prisoner remaining courageous, the torturer losing control of himself. Vincent was thrown into a filthy prison cell—and converted the jailer. Dacian wept with rage, but strangely enough, ordered the prisoner to be given some rest.

Friends among the faithful came to visit him, but he was to have no earthly rest.

When they finally settled him on a comfortable bed, he went to his eternal rest.

Reflection

The martyrs are heroic examples of what God's power can do. It is humanly impossible, we realize, for someone to go through tortures such as Vincent had and remain faithful.

But it is equally true that by human power alone no one can remain faithful even without torture or suffering.

God does not come to our rescue at isolated, "special" moments.

God is supporting the super-cruisers as well as children's toy boats.

Source of this item is :- (<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-vincent-of-zaragossa>)

Gospel - John 2: 1-11 (The Wedding at Cana)

1 On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there;

2 Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples.

3 When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

4 And Jesus said to her, "O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come."

5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

6 Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.

7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim.

8 He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast." So they took it.

9 When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom

10 and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."

11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.