

# ICHTHUS

SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER 2020

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Year B



Take a few moments to be still, so that you are ready to hear God speaking to you in today's readings.



## 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.

We say these words or sing a hymn as the priest approaches the altar.

## COLLECT

Almighty and merciful God,  
may no earthly undertaking hinder those  
who set out in haste to meet your Son,  
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom  
gain us admittance to his company...

We ask for God's help. Listen now to the priest as he offers this prayer.



## FIRST READING

ISAIAH 40:1-5. 9-11

God loves us very much. This message from God, given by Isaiah to the people of Israel, is meant for us too. God wants to comfort and look after us. God is like a shepherd, feeding his lambs, holding

them close to his heart. This is great news! We can be proud of our God and let everyone know just how much God cares for us. It doesn't matter what we may have done wrong, God will give us a second chance.

LOOK at the reader and LISTEN. Isaiah has a hopeful vision for God's people

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM PSALM 84

Let us see, O Lord, your mercy  
and give us your saving help

The cantor or psalmist sings or says the psalm. Listen to the verses, and then respond by using these words.



## SECOND READING

2 PETER 3:8-14

We might get impatient for God to act in the world. But, as we are reminded in this reading, God's time is not ours: a day can be like a thousand years and a thousand years like a day. We can be sure

that God will come and will make the world new again. In the meantime, we can live as God asks. If we follow Jesus' example and are loving, then we will be peaceful and ready to meet God.

LOOK at the reader and LISTEN. God will come, but in God's own time, not ours.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight,  
and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.  
Alleluia!

We give a shout of praise to God, using these words taken from the Bible.



## DO YOU KNOW?

In England and Wales today is **Bible Sunday**. Christians believe that **God inspired the writers of the Bible** and that the Holy Spirit can help us today to understand **God's message** to us. We can hear God speaking directly to us when we **listen with our hearts** to God's word.



## THINK

On Tuesday we celebrate the feast of **The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**. We remember that Mary was **born without sin**, because of Jesus her son. Mary enjoyed a perfect relationship with God and on her feast day **we ask her to help us** on our journey of faith.



## GOSPEL MARK 1:1-8

### The Good News about Jesus is told to us by St Mark.

Right at the beginning of his Gospel, Mark wants us to know that Jesus is Good News! Jesus is the promised saviour who will bring us all new life. Jesus is the Son of God, spoken of by the prophet Isaiah in our first reading. Jesus will fulfil all the hopes of the prophets.

John the Baptist is God's messenger, preparing everyone for the saviour. Jesus is going to put right our relationship with God. Each of us has the opportunity now to make a new start and turn towards God, just as the people listening to John did.

#### STAND to LISTEN

to the priest or deacon as he prepares to read the Gospel. What does the priest or deacon do to the book when he has finished reading the Gospel?



PRAY

**"Prepare a way for the Lord"**

Ask God to show you how you can prepare a way for Jesus in your life. Listen to God speaking to your heart.



### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Dear Lord, I would like to pray especially for anyone who is anxious or worried at this time. Help them to feel your peace and loving presence. Lord, hear my prayer.

Listen to the reader as he or she encourages us to pray for situations and people in need. This is a prayer you could say privately.



### OFFERTORY PROCESSION

As we take our gifts of bread, wine and money to the altar, think of a time this week when you were impatient and then think of a time when you were understanding.

Watch as the gifts are made ready and the priest washes his hands and prepares for the Eucharistic Prayer.

Say a little prayer offering these thoughts up to God.



### THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Today's special prayer thanks God for fulfilling all God's promises to us.

We listen to the prayer of praise and thanks to God.

What can you give special thanks for today?



### THE LORD'S PRAYER

As the priest extends his hands, we say the prayer that Jesus taught us.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

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

You are invited to sing a Communion song or say this verse, which has been especially chosen for today's celebration.



### MY PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Thank you, Jesus, for feeding me, just as a shepherd feeds his sheep. Help me to nourish others with your love. Amen.



# IXΘΥΣ

is the Greek word for "fish" and was used in the catacombs as a sign for early Christians. It is made up from the first letter of five Greek titles for the Lord:

- I (Jesus)
- X (Christos)
- Θ (Theou/God's)
- Υ (Uios/Son)
- Σ (Soter/Saviour)



We take Jesus with us to carry on the work that he did on earth, until we meet again next Sunday.

**Go in peace.**



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# ICHTHUS

SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER 2020

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Year B



Take a few moments to thank God for all the things that make you happy.



## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

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

We say these words or sing a hymn as the priest approaches the altar.

## COLLECT

O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing...

We ask for God's help. Listen now to the priest as he offers this prayer.



## FIRST READING ISAIAH 61:1-2. 10-11

Imagine what it would be like to be locked away in prison – and then suddenly being given your freedom! This is one of the images Isaiah uses to explain the real joy that knowing God brings. God's love will heal hearts that are broken and

give new life to the most desolate. Isaiah proclaims a "year of favour" when debts will be forgotten, so that no one will be burdened by money troubles. Belonging to God really is good news and worth celebrating!

LOOK at the reader and LISTEN. God is giving really good news to the suffering people of Israel!

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM LUKE 1

My soul rejoices in my God.

The cantor or psalmist sings or says the psalm. Listen to the verses, and then respond by using these words.



## SECOND READING 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24

Paul is giving a hopeful message to all his readers, including us. His advice is very simple. First of all, let's be thankful and count our blessings. We have a lot to be happy about. Then, we need to keep on praying

and always remember that it is God we have to thank for all the good things in our lives. And finally, we need to trust in God who will always be with us and will never let us down.

LOOK at the reader and LISTEN. We can trust in God and be happy.

## 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!

We give a shout of praise to God, using these words taken from the Bible.



## DO YOU KNOW?

John's Gospel is different to the other three. Matthew, Mark and Luke are known as the **synoptic** Gospels because they have a "shared view" of Jesus' life. John's Gospel is more of a **theological reflection** on Jesus' life. It is shaped to explain the **meaning of what Jesus said and did**.



## THINK

A **witness** stands up in court and **tells everyone the truth**. Today we hear that John the Baptist is a witness to the truth about Jesus. Jesus is the light of the world, who brings life to us all. Do we **give witness** to the truth about Jesus? Do we show the **joy of Jesus' love** in the **way we live**?



## GOSPEL JOHN 1:6-8, 19-28

The Good News about Jesus is told to us by St John.

John was sent by God to prepare everyone for Jesus, the Messiah. Although people misunderstood, John's message is very clear. Someone much more important and much more special than him, is coming. Like a witness in court, John is cross examined by people

who want to find the truth. He is not afraid to speak God's message. He is a prophet, making sure we are listening to what God wants to say. Jesus is God's word, the light who will bring hope and joy to us all. Rooted in God's promise, John asks us all to be ready to welcome the light.

STAND to LISTEN to the priest or deacon as he prepares to read the Gospel. What does the priest or deacon do to the book when he has finished reading the Gospel?



**"Be happy at all times"**  
Make a list of all the people and things that make you happy. Thank God for each one. Take your list out again whenever you are feeling worried or sad.

### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Dear Lord, please bless anyone who is broken-hearted and missing those they love. Bring them comfort and help them know the joy your healing love brings. Lord, hear my prayer.

Listen to the reader as he or she encourages us to pray for situations and people in need. This is a prayer you could say privately.

### OFFERTORY PROCESSION

As we take our gifts of bread, wine and money to the altar, think of a time this week when you took something or someone for granted and then think of all the people and things that bring you happiness.

Watch as the gifts are made ready and the priest washes his hands and prepares for the Eucharistic Prayer.

Say a little prayer offering these thoughts up to God.

### THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Today's special prayer thanks God for fulfilling all God's promises to us.

What can you give special thanks for today?

We listen to the prayer of praise and thanks to God.

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

As the priest extends his hands, we say the prayer that Jesus taught us.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

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

You are invited to sing a Communion song or say this verse, which has been especially chosen for today's celebration.

### MY PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Thank you, Jesus, for loving me. I feel so happy knowing that you love me. Help me to share this joy with the people I meet. Amen.



Prepare your bedroom for Christmas by having a tidy out and putting up some paper chains.



## IXΘΥΣ

is the Greek word for "fish" and was used in the catacombs as a sign for early Christians. It is made up from the first letter of five Greek titles for the Lord:

- I (Jesus)
- X (Christos)
- Θ (Theou/God's)
- Υ (Uios/Son)
- Σ (Soter/Saviour)



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We take Jesus with us to carry on the work that he did on earth, until we meet again next Sunday.

Go in peace.





# ICHTHUS

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER 2020

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Year B



How many things can you see in church that tell you Christmas is very nearly here?



## 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.

We say these words  
or sing a hymn as the  
priest approaches the  
altar.

## COLLECT

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord,  
your grace into our hearts,  
that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son  
was made known by the message of an Angel,  
may by his Passion and Cross  
be brought to the glory of his Resurrection...

We ask for God's help.  
Listen now to the  
priest as he offers  
this prayer.



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

God loves his people very much. Since the very beginning, they have had a covenant relationship; God will be with them, and they will live as God asks. Here, through the prophet Nathan, God makes a covenant with David. God chose David

and has always been with him, from shepherd boy to powerful king. Now God promises that all David's descendants will enjoy this special relationship. God does not need a house; God will live in the House, the family, of David.

LOOK at the reader and LISTEN.

God establishes a very special relationship with David and all his family forever.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM PSALM 88

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

The cantor or psalmist sings or says the psalm. Listen to the verses, and then respond by using these words.



## SECOND READING ROMANS 16:25-27

Jesus is here! People have been waiting for thousands for years – and now the best present anyone could ever receive is here with us! God has chosen to become like us, born like every other human being.

Jesus brings us the good news of God's love and will help us live as God asks, following God's law. All of God's promises have pointed to Jesus. Our faith in Jesus is something worth celebrating and we want to praise and worship God!

LOOK at the reader and LISTEN.

Jesus, the Son of God, is finally here!

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

We give a shout of praise to God, using these words taken from the Bible.



## DO YOU KNOW?

Although we will celebrate **Jesus' birth** on **25 December**, in some countries Christmas is celebrated on 6 January. This is because some Eastern Orthodox churches use a different calendar, the Julian calendar, for liturgy, while in the west we use the **Gregorian calendar**. In some non-Christian countries, Christmas is not a holiday at all.



## THINK

This week we celebrate God's **gift of Jesus**, who came to show us how **much we are loved**. What could we give the **people we love**, to show them just how much we care? Can you think of something that does not cost money, but might **cost time and effort**, that you can give this week?



## GOSPEL LUKE 1:26-38

The Good News about Jesus is told to us by St Luke.

So much news in such a short time! The angel Gabriel brings a very special message to Mary: God is with her and she is going to have a baby, called Jesus, who will rule over the people and his kingdom will have no end. Mary's son will fulfil God's promise

to David in our first reading. God's chosen saviour will be born into the House of King David. Mary's cousin Elizabeth is also pregnant – despite thinking she was too old to have a baby. Nothing is impossible for God. In this moment, Mary gives her whole life to God.

◀ **STAND to LISTEN** to the priest or deacon as he prepares to read the Gospel. What does the priest or deacon do to the book when he has finished reading the Gospel?



### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Dear Lord, I am thinking about anyone who might want to have a family but is unable to have children. Help them to know they are loved and to find meaning in life. Lord, hear my prayer.

Listen to the reader as he or she encourages us to pray for situations and people in need. This is a prayer you could say privately.



### OFFERTORY PROCESSION

As we take our gifts of bread, wine and money to the altar, think of a time this week when were ungrateful and then think about something you were happy and thankful about. Say a little prayer offering these thoughts up to God.

Watch as the gifts are made ready and the priest washes his hands and prepares for the Eucharistic Prayer.



### THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Today's special prayer thanks God for fulfilling all God's promises to us.

What can you give special thanks for today?

We listen to the prayer of praise and thanks to God.



### THE LORD'S PRAYER

As the priest extends his hands, we say the prayer that Jesus taught us.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

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

You are invited to sing a Communion song or say this verse, which has been especially chosen for today's celebration.



### MY PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Thank you, Jesus, for coming to be with me. Thank you for choosing to share my life. Help me to share my knowledge of your love with others. Amen.



PRAY

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

Make your prayer a song! Sing your favourite hymn - or practise some carols! Praise God for loving us so much that he was born as a human baby!



DO

Make a special effort and ask what you can do to help - even when you just want to do nothing!



## IXΘΥΣ

is the Greek word for "fish" and was used in the catacombs as a sign for early Christians. It is made up from the first letter of five Greek titles for the Lord:

- I (Jesus)
- X (Christos)
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We take Jesus with us to carry on the work that he did on earth, until we meet again next Sunday.

Go in peace.





# ICHTHUS

SUNDAY 27 DECEMBER 2020

THE HOLY FAMILY OF  
JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

Year B



Are there any statues or pictures of the Holy Family in church? What can you learn from them?



## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The shepherds went in haste,  
and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

## COLLECT

O God, who were pleased to give us  
the shining example of the Holy Family,  
graciously grant that we may imitate them  
in practising the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity,  
and so, in the joy of your house,  
delight one day in eternal rewards...



## FIRST READING GENESIS 15:1-6; 21:1-3

God speaks to Abraham  
in a vision and makes the  
most amazing promise.  
Abraham will have as  
many descendants  
as there are stars in  
the sky. This would be  
an incredible idea for  
anyone, but for Abraham

it is especially amazing,  
as he doesn't have even  
one child. Yet God keeps  
his promise to Abraham.  
Abraham's wife gives birth  
to a baby boy whom they  
name Isaac. Abraham is  
still remembered as the  
"Father of many nations."

We say these words  
or sing a hymn as the  
priest approaches  
the altar.

We ask for God's help.  
Listen now to the  
priest as he offers  
this prayer.

LOOK at the reader  
and LISTEN.  
God promises  
Abraham he will have  
many descendants.

The cantor or psalmist  
sings or says the psalm.  
Listen to the verses,  
and then respond by  
using these words.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM PSALM 104

He, the Lord, is our God.  
He remembers his covenant for ever.



## SECOND READING HEBREWS 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

Abraham had amazing  
faith in God. He left his  
home to go to a new  
country because he  
trusted in God's promise.  
Despite being childless,  
Abraham trusted God  
when he was told that  
he would have as many  
descendants as the stars

in the sky. Abraham's  
wife Sarah trusted in  
God's promise that she  
would have a baby,  
even though she was  
past the age when it  
was possible for her to  
conceive. We look to  
Abraham and Sarah as  
role models in faith.

LOOK at the reader  
and LISTEN.  
Abraham and Sarah's  
faith in God is  
remembered.



We give a shout of  
praise to God, using  
these words taken  
from the Bible.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!  
At various times in the past  
and in various different ways,  
God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets;  
but in our own time, the last days,  
he has spoken to us through his Son.  
Alleluia!



## DO YOU KNOW?

On **Monday 28 December**  
we celebrate the feast  
of **The Holy Innocents,**  
**Martyrs.** We remember  
those killed by **Herod**  
when he felt threatened  
by the new baby king,  
**Jesus.** We pray especially  
for all the children who  
are suffering and who  
may die in conflict **today.**



## THINK

Today we are thinking  
about the **Holy Family:**  
**Joseph, Mary and Jesus.**  
Although he was not  
Jesus' birth father,  
**Joseph made a home for**  
**Jesus.** We do not hear  
about their daily life in  
the Gospels, but it must  
have been very special.  
Our families may not be  
famous, but they are  
**very special too.**



## GOSPEL LUKE 2:22-40

The Good News about Jesus is told to us by St Luke.

Having a new baby is a learning experience for all parents, but Mary and Joseph have such a lot to find out! Their trip to the Temple to dedicate their baby to God should have been straightforward. However, Mary and Joseph are met by the holy man Simeon who recognises that Jesus is

the Messiah, the saviour promised by God. He holds the baby Jesus in his arms, praises God and blesses the young parents. While Mary and Joseph are trying to understand what is happening, the holy woman Anna arrives. Then Anna also praises God for this baby who will save Israel.

STAND to LISTEN to the priest or deacon as he prepares to read the Gospel. What does the priest or deacon do to the book when he has finished reading the Gospel?

Listen to the reader as he or she encourages us to pray for situations and people in need. This is a prayer you could say privately.



### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Dear Lord, on this feast of the Holy Family, please bless my family. Help us to appreciate each other, even when we are finding it hard to get on. Lord, hear my prayer.



### OFFERTORY PROCESSION

As we take our gifts of bread, wine and money to the altar, think of a time this week when you didn't pull your weight at home and then think of a time when you helped someone in your family.

Say a little prayer offering these thoughts up to God.

Watch as the gifts are made ready and the priest washes his hands and prepares for the Eucharistic Prayer.



### THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Today's special prayer thanks God for fulfilling all God's promises to us.

What can you give special thanks for today?

We listen to the prayer of praise and thanks to God.



### THE LORD'S PRAYER

As the priest extends his hands, we say the prayer that Jesus taught us.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Communion Antiphon

Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

You are invited to sing a Communion song or say this verse, which has been especially chosen for today's celebration.



### MY PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Thank you, Jesus, for becoming one of us. Help me to learn from your family how to love my own family better. Amen.



PRAY

Draw a timeline, starting with when you were born. Try and remember some of the times when you felt loved by your family. Mark these times with a heart and thank God for them all.



DO

Make a card, or do a good turn, to show your family just how much you love them.



# IXΘΥΣ

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