



# OUR LADY'S, MARNHULL AND ST BENEDICT'S, GILLINGHAM WELCOME

PARISH PRIEST: FATHER JOSEPH NWIBOKO



**THIRD WEEK IN ADVENT**

**17TH DECEMBER 2023**

**Please contact us:**

The Presbytery  
Old Mill Lane  
Marnhull  
Dorset  
DT10 1JX

Tel: 01258 820388  
[marnhull@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:marnhull@prcdtr.org.uk)

**Fr Joseph**  
[Joseph.nwiboko@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:Joseph.nwiboko@prcdtr.org.uk)

**Deacon James Mackain-Bremner :**  
[james.mackain-bremner@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:james.mackain-bremner@prcdtr.org.uk)

**Deacon Michael Turnbull:**  
[michael.turnbull@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:michael.turnbull@prcdtr.org.uk)

Parish Secretary  
Harriet Cornwall  
[marnhull@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:marnhull@prcdtr.org.uk)  
Office hours: Mon/Weds/Fri 9am-1pm

**Parish Website**  
[www.marnhullandgillinghamrc.org.uk](http://www.marnhullandgillinghamrc.org.uk)

**Parish Safeguarding Rep**  
Barbara Turnbull  
01747 822779/07971 338339

The Catholic Safeguarding Resources  
<https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/parish-resources>

Our Lady's Church  
Old Mill Lane,  
Marnhull  
Dorset DT10 1JX

St Benedict's Church  
Cemetery Rd,  
Gillingham SP8 4AZ

**Parish School**  
St Mary's Primary School,  
Old Mill Lane, Marnhull, Dorset  
DT10 1JX

[www.stmarymarnhull.dorset.sch.uk](http://www.stmarymarnhull.dorset.sch.uk)  
[office@stmarymarnhull.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:office@stmarymarnhull.dorset.sch.uk)

If anyone knows anyone who is sick or housebound and would like a visit, please let Fr Joseph or the Deacons know.

Day	Place	Time	Celebrating
Sun 17th Dec	Marnhull	<b>9am</b>	<b>THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>
	Gillingham	11pm	
	Marnhull	6pm	
Mon 18th Dec	Marnhull	9.30am <i>followed by Rosary</i>	
<b>Mon 18th Dec</b>	<b>Gillingham</b>	<b>7pm Reconciliation Service, followed by Confession</b>	
Tues 19th Dec		<b>NO MASS</b>	
Weds 20th Dec	Gillingham	10am, followed by <i>Rosary</i>	
<b>Weds 20th Dec</b>	<b>Marnhull</b>	<b>7pm Reconciliation Service, followed by Confession</b>	
Thurs 21st Dec	Marnhull	9.30am Mass <b>followed by Adoration</b>	
Fri 22nd Dec	Gillingham	<i>Adoration, Evening Prayer &amp; Confession. 5.00 – 5.45 p.m</i> 6pm Mass	
Sat 23rd Dec	Marnhull	10am <i>Followed by Confession</i>	

**Sunday Readers**

Our Lady's 9am: Pam; St Benedict's: Teresa; Our Lady's 6pm: Tony

**MASS INTENTIONS Sunday 17th December:**

**Repose of the Souls of the Mowbray, Coleman & Winner Families**

**Please pray for those who are ill**

David Paris, Coral Harrow, Betty Walford, Joyce West, Barbara Frost, Tony White, Bob Horton, Hilary & Clive Drake, Jeremy Cusden, Jan Carson, Nigel & Sarah Mackay, Pippa Turnbull, Brian Extance, Graham Ross

**Gaudete Sunday** *'He came for testimony, to testify to the light.'* **Is 61:1-2, 10-11 Cant Lk 1:46-54; 1 Thess 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28. Msgr. Robert Draper**

The theme of Spirit-given prophecy appears in all three readings today. Prophecy is not about foretelling the future; it is about speaking out God's word today. That is what is announced by Isaiah, that is what Paul tells the Thessalonians they are to do, and that is precisely what John the Baptist does in the gospel; he speaks out God's word to challenge those who question him. John's gospel is full of the language of a legal trial. Jesus is challenged by his opponents and responds with his defence and the testimony of his works and of those who witness to him. Here John is a witness, one who gives evidence on behalf of the accused. And of course, ultimately – and magnificently – Jesus is vindicated by his Resurrection, and with him all those who bear witness are vindicated. In the passage from Isaiah being anointed with the spirit of the Lord enables the prophet to proclaim Good News. Paul insists that the Thessalonians have been called by God and the spirit is to be embraced not suppressed. John announces that the Lord has come and is present in their midst. Like these, all Christians are called to be witnesses, to speak God's Word, to proclaim Good News, and all this is done in

the power of the spirit. That power has been given through the anointing received, and that power must not be suppressed but be embraced. **'Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus' (I Thess 5: 16-17)**

My dear friends, the third Sunday of Advent is a joyful Sunday, and the second reading is very comforting. It is consoling over the sufferings, the pains of hearts, the unbearable situations and mental distress we are passing through, and I believe God is speaking to you and I in a unique and personal way. Knowing about everything, he is looking directly into our eyes and simply saying through the Apostle Paul: 'be happy at all times' (I Thess 5: 16). He said it twice to demonstrate the importance of what is expected of us.

Being happy is in fact what we need at this difficult time. We cannot allow our burdens to take away our happiness and joy. We must be courageous and not succumb to our problems. And that is what Jesus is addressing when he invites us to be happy. He does not want us to allow our fears, anxieties and struggles to weigh us down. He wants us to accept them with courage and be hopeful that there is a light at the end of the tunnel, because he will always be there to lead us through the dark moments in our lives. He wants us to replace hatred with love; despair with hope; doubt with faith; sadness with joy; and never allow anything to take away the joy we feel because our Saviour, the Son of man is closer to us more than we can ever imagine or thought. His coming at the appointed time will end every suffering and we shall be at peace with him in its fullness. We should therefore not miss this opportunity of enjoying ourselves at this time.

Challenges will come and go but we will remain unconquered because they are for our sanctification, and before we know it the former challenges have passed on. We are healed in the wounds of Christ because he who is in you and I has redeemed us and is greater than the challenges and storms our life. He wants us to offer them in prayer and leave the rest for him. Hence, he says: 'come to me all you who labour and are overburdened, I will give you rest. Shoulder your yoke and learn from me for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls' (Mt 11: 28 -29). Always be assured that He who has called you will not allow you to fail for his love is all over you. Believe you me, he loves and cares for you and wants you to be happy irrespective of challenges. Put on a smiling face, move on and be happy. Enjoy the beautiful Christmas songs and know that Jesus loves you like no other. Take courage and be happy!

### **CHRISTMAS CRIB APPEAL CCS (Plymouth)**

To donate to this year's Crib Appeal, please use your mobile phone to scan the QR code or visit the crib in church. Thank you.

### **Brass Cleaning at Our Lady's Church on Thursday 21st December after 9.30am Mass & General Cleaning of Our Lady's 22nd December from 9.30am**

All are welcome [e.ohare29@btinternet.com](mailto:e.ohare29@btinternet.com)

### **World Gifts Cafod**

For more information please collect a booklet at the back of church or visit:  
<https://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/>



### **Handover of the Methodist Church 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023 Fr Joseph's Message:**

"Thank you, Lin, for this baton representing the passing on of the Christian faith in this church, and I accept it with

great pleasure. Christ says "The harvest is rich but the labourers are few."

150 years ago good citizens of what was then a much smaller Gillingham, had a vision to plant a place of worship at the heart of the town. As it says in Isaiah 40 "Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord".

You will see on the outside of the building numbered bricks and stone plaques representing the donations of those visionaries. They were the giants of their day, and it is now on the shoulders of those giants that we are building.

I cannot let this moment pass without reflecting on the generosity of the members of your congregation as they go through a very difficult and painful change. Selling one's home is never easy, especially one that has been loved as much as this building. The support of Phil Butler, Dick Evans and Gordon Amery show the embodiment of love of God and love of neighbour despite the pain involved. So thank you, Lin, and thank you all for the support you have shown and we will endeavour to continue to make The Church flourish in the midst of our community."

**The church will now be closed for six months whilst we adapt it to our needs. Parishioners are invited to see inside the building on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024 from 10.00 to 12.00**

### **Christmas Offerings**

Our treasurer, Pamela writes "Those of us who give to our parish using a standing order, offertory envelopes and loose plate donations contribute to the upkeep of our Church buildings themselves throughout the year. We make provision for Fr. Joseph in a different way. When we attend church at Christmas and Easter, the offertory money goes directly to the Parish Priest - this is his Christmas or Easter Offering, his gift from us, for his pastoral care, leadership and hard work throughout the year. Should you choose to give to Fr. Joseph's Christmas offering in this way, envelopes will be available in the PORCH of both Churches soon. I have already prepared envelopes complete with GAD Numbers and am distributing to those of the parish who have previously completed a Gift Aid Declaration and regularly send income by standing order. Alternatively, you may like to give to Fr Joseph's Christmas offering by using an **online banking** method and if so, here are the required details:

Our Bank: NatWest Blandford Forum  
Sort code, 55-61-09 : Account Number 07388381  
A/C Name - PRCDTR Marnhull R.C. Parish  
Payment reference, **Christmas Offering**  
Thank you very much

### **Let the Children Live**

We have received a lovely letter from Pauline Allen, thanking Parishioners who donated **£776.08 to this charity which** looks after the most vulnerable children in Columbia; she writes "we are immensely grateful for your generous support at one of the most difficult times we have ever faced Please continue to remember Fr Peter, children and staff in your prayers"