

1st Charles de Foucauld, hermit, 1916 Pray for the church in its keeping of Advent. For the Anglican Communion and in particular for Rowan Archbishop of Canterbury, and John Archbishop of York

2nd Cathedral. Give thanks for the life and ministry of our Cathedral Church. For the Dean - The Very Reverend John Irvine; Sub Dean and Canon pastor - The Rev Canon Tim Pullen; Canon Precentor - The Rev Canon Dr. David Stone; Canon Director of Reconciliation - Canon David Porter. Pray for the Community of the Cross of Nails which is today an international network of over 150 organisations in 60 countries committed to a shared ministry of reconciliation

3rd City of Coventry. As we pray for this city remember the needs of those who are in the refugee centre. For all who seek asylum in our country and for the groups and individuals across our Diocese who serve them in the name of Christ.

4th 2nd Sunday of Advent. Give thanks for the ministry of your own parish priest and pray for those churches who are in an interregnum. Remember those who are blind and pray for the 'Guide Dogs for the Blind Association' celebrating 80 years in existence. Pray for Bishop John as he gives the address at their service of thanksgiving at St. Mark's Leamington.

5th Ecumenical Relationships. Pray for the meeting of the West Midlands Anglican and Roman Catholic Bishops to be held tomorrow. Pray and prepare for the Week of Prayer for Church Unity 18th-25th January

6th Nicholas Bishop c.326. Pray for all churches whose dedication is St. Nicholas. Pray for the clergy and people of the parishes of St. Nicholas in Coventry Diocese. St. Nicholas Church at Alcester, Beadesert, Birmingham, Frankton, Kenilworth, Loxley, Nuneaton, Radford Semele, Radford, Warwick and Willoughby.

7th Ambrose, bishop, teacher of the faith. Diocesan Training Partnership: Pray for Richard Cooke, Paul Wignall, Martin Kirkbride and Sarah Palmer in their encouragement of those in Ministry. We also ask for God's wisdom on the Vocations Advisers led by Susan Mileham as they discern in the first stage of the process those who are being called to a wider public ministry.

8th Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Offa House: Pray for the Rev Ruth Tuschling, warden; and Julie Howell house manager. Pray for all who use the house for Retreats

and Quiet Days and for those who lead them. Pray also for the staff who enrich the hospitality as they meet the physical needs of those who enter the house.

9th Spiritual Directors: Give thanks for those "who stand on 'holy ground' of another person's experience of God, and help that individual to understand its significance". Pray for those who accompany individuals and for those in training as Spiritual Directors as they come to the end of their first year.

10th . For clergy licensed to parishes in October, November and December. Pray for Christopher Knight, St. Mary Leamington Priors; Frank Seldon, Chilvers Coton with Astley, Jeremy Hyde, St. Martin Finham, Clive Hogger, St. Anne and All Saints, Coventry East Team and David Silvester, Studley and the Arden Marches group. Give thanks for all who have ministered in the parishes throughout the interregnum

11th 3rd Sunday of Advent. Bishop Christopher and Bishop John . Give thanks for Bishop Christopher and Bishop John in their ministry across the Diocese Pray for Diocesan bishops as they prepare for the House of Bishops meeting in York 12th-13th December.

12th Archdeacons Ian Watson and Morris Rodham . Sustain them with your love and give them the energy to continue to proclaim with joy the good news of your kingdom. Pray for those who support them in the fulfilling of their duties.

13th Lucy, martyr, 304 Ministry Dept. We give thanks for Ministers in Secular Employment who witness to the challenge to integrate the whole of life, work as well as worship, in Christ.

14th John of the Cross, poet, teacher of the faith. 1591. Diocesan Board of Education: The DBE is at a very exciting stage in its life. A Service Agreement with Church of England Schools has recently been launched providing additional resources to continue their work towards providing the best possible service of care, support and training for schools and parishes. Pray for the team which include Dr. Rex Pogson, Linda Wainscot, Angela Driscoll, Chris Edmonds, Lizzie McWhirter, Carly Tewkesbury-Witham, Joanne Evans, Graham Robinson, Ryan Finnegan and DBE consultants.

15th Hospices. Living Lord, we pray for the work of The Myton Hospices in Warwick, Rugby and Coventry and for the Mary Anne Hospice in Nuneaton; Shakespeare Hospice, Stratford, for staff, volunteers, patients and relatives. We give thanks for this provision and pray that they may be

havens where the troubled and fearful may find your peace, where the questioners may find your truth, where the weary may find your rest, and the dying may find you are the life, Amen

16th Head teachers. As the school year comes to an end, please pray for all the head teachers. There are 74 Church of England Schools in Coventry Diocese which are covered by three Local Authorities - Coventry LA, Warwickshire LA and Solihull LA. May they be refreshed and renewed in the coming holiday.

17th Eglantyne Jebb, social reformer, founder of 'Save the Children' Those Facing Financial Hardship. Pray for those who are carrying a heavy burden of debt and for whom there seems no hope. Pray for those who have taken on debts to pay for Christmas. May they receive help. May they receive good advice. Pray for the churches and advice centres who are handling many additional requests for help at this time.

18th Fourth Sunday of Advent. Between the 16th-20th December the 50th anniversary celebrations of the new Emperor William Memorial Church in Berlin are being held. *The church is one of the 150 members of the International Community of the Cross of Nails. The Coventry Litany of Reconciliation is used every Friday midday at the church)* Pray the Litany of Reconciliation and be one in heart.

19th Hospital Chaplains: We pray for all who minister in hospitals and for those who will spend Christmas in a hospital ward. Pray for Bishop John who will be preaching at the Carol Service for the UHCW NHS Trust, the Coventry & Warwickshire PCTs and Coventry City Council at Holy Trinity, Broadgate, Coventry .

20th We pray for those whose work enables our Bishops diaries to run smoothly. Give thanks for the gifts and service of Christine Camfield, Kerry Vanston- Rumney, Maureen Prett and Ben Kirby and Charlie Annis.

21st Those Responsible For Managing Businesses. Pray for those coping with the difficult task of managing business in this time of economic uncertainty. Pray that they might make good, just and compassionate decisions, that they may cope with the demands upon them at this time.

22nd Prison Chaplains : Chaplaincy is about holistic care for the prisoners. Pray for all who work in prisons to enhance the lives of those who are held there and their families. Pray also for the Angel Tree Project which enables

the children of prisoners to receive a gift from the parent in prison.

23rd Children's Society. Pray for those who hold Christingle services. The Children's society holds holds its special Christingle appeal to raise vital funds for work with children facing life's hardest challenges.

24th Christmas Eve. Pray for all attending Carol Services and Midnight Communion Services over this season that the Good News of Christmas may be both heard and received.

25th Christmas Day. We give thanks that with dawn on Christmas Day, the waiting is over, our expectations are fulfilled, and our joy is complete. The light of God's purpose amongst us is rekindled in the birth of a child.

26th Stephen, deacon, first martyr. Pray for families for who this Christmas will be a painful time. For parents who have lost sons or daughters, couples who are no longer together, children who are unhappy, confused or in trouble, and those who will be alone.

27th John, Apostle and Evangelist. Pray for all churches dedicated to St. John.

28th The Holy Innocents: Pray for all children who are abused, who are trafficked. Pray for social workers who have to make difficult decisions.

29th Thomas Beckett, Archbishop, martyr 1170. We offer thanks to all those healthcare staff who work in our local communities, our GP and dental surgeries and clinics, our community hospitals and those who work in the field of mental healthcare. Help us to support one another and show your compassion that we may encourage fullness of life and acceptance for all. Amen

30th Give thanks for the past year. Reflect on the generosity of God and seek his forgiveness for our failures.

31st John Wyclif, reformer, 1384 ,
Prayer for 2012: Lord God, Thank you for another year and for the new chances each day brings. We pray for peace, for light, and for hope, that we might spread them to others. We leave the past in your hands, and step out into the unknown knowing you will go with us. In Jesus name.
This Diocesan Calendar of Intercession has been produced by the Coventry and Warwickshire Spirituality Group,
A new format will appear in January 2012

What a wonderful surprise

What a wonderful surprise'. It's easy to get grumpy about Christmas: overspending, overeating, the secular world ignoring the Christ child (well, what else would you expect?). But giving in to grumpiness is colluding with the mindset that says what you see is what you get, there's no such thing as a free lunch, of course everything's going to go pear-shaped if it possibly can. This negativity can become a habit if we're not careful. But we Christians are called to work against it, beginning in our own hearts. Not to ignore the fact of evil, waste, tragedy and despair, but to work on faithfully out of confidence that God is stronger and overcomes the forces of negativity and darkness in the world.

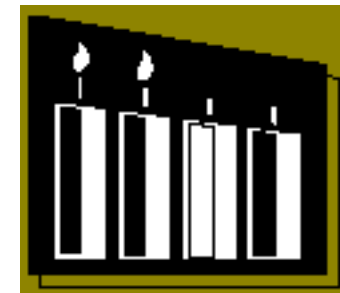
During Advent, we spend time watching and waiting for the coming of the King. We acknowledge that things are not yet as they should be, as they will be one day when he comes. We travel in trust through the darkness, waiting for the morning star. We learn to be attentive to the signs of his coming; we learn to hope and to pass on the whisper of the great promise, the secret in plain sight.

The Incarnation reveals to us God's wonderful surprise: there is such a thing as a free lunch. God's free gift of himself in the Christ child comes with no strings attached, not even the tinsel ribbons of guilt that we like to drape around it. Christmas is for us a time of re-enchantment: a time to relearn the awe and wonder that came naturally when we were children. The stories are true: there *is* a king in the castle and we *will* all live happily ever after. What you see is not what you get: what you see is only the symbol of a great mystery that can't be put into words, and our mundane lives trail clouds of glory if only we could see them, because God is bursting out wherever we look with our re-enchanted eyes. Christ is born and we are restored to Paradise. What a wonderful surprise.

CYCLE OF PRAYER

December 2011

ADVENT



Focus for Prayer this month:

How lovely on the mountains are the feet of the herald who comes to proclaim peace and bring good news, the news of deliverance.

Isaiah 52:7