

WELCOME NEW PARISHIONERS! We welcome all who wish to join our parish family. You may register by calling or visiting the parish office. You can also pick up a registration form from the welcome table in the Gathering Space. We're glad you are here!

MARRIAGE: Diocesan guidelines require that you contact the office at least six months before the ceremony. Please call the parish office and make an appointment so that your date may be placed on the parish calendar. Please email: saji.mathew@cliftondiocese.com to begin your personal, spiritual and liturgical preparation.

ANOIDING OF THE SICK AND COMMUNION TO THOSE IN THE HOSPITAL OR HOMEBOUND: Please call the parish office to arrange a visit. If you are entering the hospital and wish to have a priest visit you, please call the parish office before your stay. If you wish to receive the Sacrament of Communion during your stay you must inform the hospital that you are Catholic and a member of Christ the King. (Due to privacy laws the hospital can no longer inform us).

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS: Are you or someone you know interested in becoming Catholic? Please contact the parish office or email Father Saji on saji.mathew@cliftondiocese.com

FOOD BANK: In the run up to Christmas, people might like to donate one item each day for twenty four days to help those who are most in need this year. Our Parish has always been particularly generous and if we start collecting on Monday 15th November we would finish on Tuesday 8th December, a very fitting feast day! If you are able to join in there are suggestions as to what you could donate each day and of course the food bank collection point at Christ the King church is open each day of the week. If you have any queries please contact Father Saji.

CHRISTMAS RAFFLES- HAMPERS: We have some luxurious Christmas hampers to raffle off, for a draw hopefully in mid-December. Raffle tickets are available from the church. All ticket sales in support of the church TV Live-streaming Fund. These raffles along with prizes are very kindly donated by Sacha Haywood. Thank you very much for your arduous efforts and magnanimity. God bless you Sacha!

MARY'S MEALS "DOUBLE THE LOVE" CAMPAIGN: All public donations will be doubled by the UK government, up to £2 million, bringing new hope to families in Liberia, where hunger prevents children from going to school, and more than half of children drop out, before they finish primary education. www.marysmeals.org.uk/doublethelove We have some items to go on sale once after the lock down is lifted to raise some fund for this worthy cause including some beautiful Christmas cards printed and provided by Carol Drennan. Thank you very much Carol for your love and concern for the needy. More details to follow. God bless you Carol!

ADVENT GIVING PROJECT: Within our parish community and in our vicinity there are families going through challenging times that could use our help. As a part of the Advent Giving Project, you are invited to contribute towards the purchase of an item or two, or gift cards purchased through the parish, to help parish and school "families in need" during the winter months. Beginning Sunday, November 29th, Advent Giving Project is an initiative to support those families within our parish communities who are struggling because of the pandemic. If you would like to send

an extra check with your regular offertory envelope, please note "Advent Giving Project"

2020 SEASON OF ADVENT CONFESSION SCHEDULE: In order to help you spiritually prepare for the joyous celebration of our Lord's birth, Christ the King will be offering these additional Confession times during the Season of Advent: Monday, December 21, 10:30am-11.30am. Tuesday, December 22: 6:00pm-7:00pm Wednesday, December 23: 6:00pm-7:00pm. Of course, we will still offer our normal Confession schedule of Saturdays from 5.00-5.45pm throughout the Advent season. "Confession heals, confession justifies, confession grants pardon of sin, all hope consists in confession; in confession there is a chance for mercy." St. Isidore of Seville.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: If you or a loved one are ill in any way and would like to have your name included on the Prayer Chain, the Sunday Prayers of the Faithful and/or the bulletin contact the Parish office. Permission from the individual must be given before we can list their name in the Prayers of the Faithful or the bulletin. Prayer, at its heart, is an act of faith, asking God to step in and believing that He is both willing and able to listen to us. There is no prayer intention too large or too small — you can ask for God's help with every need. Almighty God, we lift up all those who are facing illness today. We ask that you would bring healing, comfort and peace to their bodies. Calm their fears and let them experience the healing power of Your love. Amen.

CHRISTMAS APPEAL: We are urgently appealing for treats for Christmas food parcels which this year will be distributed to those families who are most in need in our area. Items such as chocolate selection boxes, boxes of biscuits, tinned ham, tinned salmon, packets of stuffing, cranberry sauce and Christmas puddings etc. would be very welcome. Items may be dropped off at the parish office each day between 8:00am and 1:00noon or here at the presbytery. Thank you for your support.

MASS SCHEDULE COMMENCING FROM 5th DECEMBER, 2020

SATURDAY 5TH DECEMBER MASS AT CTK 6.00PM

SUNDAY 6TH DECEMBER MASS AT CTK 11.00AM

MONDAY 7TH DECEMBER MASS AT CTK 10.00AM ST AMBROSE

TUESDAY 8TH DECEMBER MASS AT CTK 10.00AM SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

WEDNESDAY 8TH DECEMBER MASS 10.00AM

THURSDAY 9TH DECEMBER MASS 10.00AM

FRIDAY 10TH DECEMBER 5.00PM ADORATION

FRIDAY 11TH DECEMBER MASS AT 6.00PM

SATURDAY 12TH DECEMBER 6.00PM MASS (VIGIL) OUR LADY OF GAUDALUPE

SUNDAY 13TH DECEMBER 11.00AM MASS



THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING

THE PRESBYTERY, 4 LORDS CROFT, AMESBURY, WILTS., SP47EP

PARISH PRIEST: Rev Saji Mathew
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Parish Office Telephone: 01980 622177

Website: Amesbury.cliftondiocese.com

WELCOME TO CHRIST THE KING

We welcome visitors, family and friends to our Mass today.
We are glad you are joining us today.
May the Lord continue to bless you all!

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT-YEAR-B-2020

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER SAJI: ADVENT- TRANSFORMING LIFE THROUGH CHANGE, FAITH, AND LOVE: There was once a teacher who spent all his time teaching the great mysteries of life to others whom he considered ignorant and foolish. One day, however, this teacher encountered the wisest man in the world. The wise man was sitting on the bank of a river contemplating nature, but much to the surprise of the teacher, this wise man was also watching a young boy splash about in the water. The teacher wanted to share his knowledge with the wise man and said, "Come with me, sit, and let us speak someplace else where we won't be disturbed by this foolish and ignorant youth." The wise man, however, ignored the teacher's comment. He just sat in silence and watched the boy play in the water until the boy's mother came and called him home. After the boy was gone, the teacher asked the wise man why he wasted his time watching this ignorant and foolish boy play in water when there was so much to learn. "Oh, but I have learned something" said the wise man. "I learned something more profound than any book could ever hope to teach." "What is that?" asked the teacher. "I have learned that the greatest obstacle to wisdom is the assumption that others are more ignorant and foolish than oneself. To the wise, everyone becomes a teacher."

Today the church celebrates the 2nd Sunday of Advent; two candles glow from the Advent wreath which serves a reminder that light is coming into a world of darkness. The scriptures challenge believers to consider their readiness to accept a God who constantly calls forth change. Like the teacher in the story, it is common to ignore opportunities that open up newer and better ways of life through untried ideas as it is effortless to settle into modes of thought that become stale. This Sunday's scriptures point to the preaching of John the Baptist who calls people to "Repent and prepare the way of the Lord" in homes, neighbourhoods at work or even school. This may cause a bit of anxiety as it is common to persuade others to change, but difficult to do it oneself. There is a tendency in some Christians to believe that there is only one way to live out their faith. Unfortunately, this outlook prevents spiritual growth, and often blocks the Holy Spirit from entering into life. It also thrusts forth a spiritual life enhanced with repetition without understanding. Catholic people are not called to be robots; but, thinking, feeling, caring, and deciding servants within a community. Advent is the time to blend courtesy and common sense into worship, which bonds a community into courses of action that "Prepare the way of the Lord." This gives rise to an Advent that recognises the multiplicity of ways to express the teachings of Christ rather than compel others to see one way as the only way or right way. Advent is a season to question the plausibility of particular beliefs in order to articulate the meaning of the "Coming of the Lord" to a culture that is saturated with advertisements that eliminate Christ from Christmas; therefore, if Christ is to be evangelized to society, it must be done in a credible and sensible manner. The book of Isaiah 11:1-10 brings forth the beautiful way that traditional enemies are reconciled, and a return to paradise where perfect justice and peace will reign. In today's world this seems equally impossible as there are so many homes, nations, and even houses of worship living in conflict. The prophet presents a vision of a peaceful kingdom that calls us to work for a radically different society than the one we currently inhabit. Advent reminds believers to place an unanticipated need of another over personal priorities and routines in that charitable acts are easy to perform if an individual sits idle waiting for an opportunity to do good; however, a life oriented to sudden and critical needs throughout busy moments of a day is difficult to endure; therefore Advent invites people to strive to work toward enhancing virtues of kindness, generosity, and care toward those who live in darkness, which is God calling people of faith to make the unthinkable possible.

CHRISTMAS MASSES - Email or PHONE BOOKING: Due to Covid-19 regulations, numbers attending this year's Christmas Masses will be limited at Christ the King Church. You must email or phone to reserve places. Once the restricted capacity of the church has been reached, you will be turned away. Booking is available from this week onwards. Christmas Eve Masses: 4.00pm, 5.30pm 7.00pm and 12.00am. Christmas Day Masses: 9.30am and 10.30am and 11.30. December 26 Mass, 11.00am Sunday December 27 Mass at 6.00pm (Vigil) and 11.00am at CTK Church. There are lists available in the Narthex for Christmas Mass bookings too.

RESERVATIONS WILL BE REQUIRED FOR CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES.

MY DEAR PARISHIONERS, Today we celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent. (Doesn't this season fly by quickly), and we hear from the beginning of the Gospel of Mark (Mk 1: 1-8) about the ministry of John the Baptist, who begins to proclaim the coming of the Messiah. In this passage, the proclamation of the prophet Isaiah is quoted, where we hear that a voice crying out in the desert tells us to "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his path." This message not only leads us to prepare for the season of Christmas but it is also a reminder that as only a few heeded the awakening during this time, we too must not get so involved in the things around us that we forget to prepare ourselves too, to meet the Lord, whenever He comes. As in all Advents, the first several weeks remind us that we should be ready for the Lord's second coming and realize that there were many people who were not ready or watchful when Christ came the first time. Next Sunday we prepare ourselves for the celebration of that First coming. We have been given this year a great opportunity to spend our time to look into our hearts on how we can truly be Christ-centred people, preparing ourselves to walk with the Lord—to be awakened, as John the Baptist, to the presence of God in our life, and to put aside the things that distract us. That is why the Gospel tells us about John's clothing and eating habits, because to him they became unimportant. Take the time this Advent season to ponder how you have appreciated and shared Christ's gift to you!

On Tuesday December 8th, the Church celebrates the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Mass will be celebrated at 10:00 AM. Christmas will be celebrated slightly different this year. Christmas Eve will be celebrated at Masses at 4:00 PM, 5:30 PM, 7:00 PM and 12:00 AM. Masses Christmas day will be at the regular times of 9.30 AM, 10:30 AM, and 11:30 AM. There will be no evening Mass on Christmas. Please consider when you would like to celebrate Christmas with us. I am very proud of how our parish has adjusted and been cautious with regard to the pandemic. I can only stress with you our caution and concern for your safety. If you are elderly or have any symptoms of illness or do not feel comfortable in getting outside your home at this time, please stay home for your own safety and that of others. We continue practicing safe distancing in the Church, which restricts the amount of people we can have in the Church, and requiring attendees to wear masks during the whole service. We also continue to have Exposition of the Eucharist on Fridays from 5pm-6pm for those who would like to take the opportunity for private prayer and prayer for the end of the pandemic. Please know that I am most concerned about you and all of those attending, as well those praying with us. I continually pray that the difficulties in our present world will make us stronger and lead us to a greater love for the God who cares so much for us. May God continue to walk with you on this journey of life.

CHRISTMAS TOY APPEAL: If you would like to donate a gift, please wrap your gift and mark clearly on it whether it is suitable for a girl/boy/either and also what age group it would be appropriate for, e.g. Girl Age 6. Donated gifts may be dropped off at the Presbytery or the parish office. Toy Appeal and deadlines will be 15th December to allow time for collection, quarantine, disinfecting and distributing the toys.

APPEAL FOR HELP FOR CHRISTMAS MASSES – STEWARDING AND CLEANING: Due to the coronavirus restrictions in place for celebrating Mass, our Christmas celebrations will need to be a little different this year. I would like to give you the opportunity to celebrate Christmas at one of the five Masses but in order to do this we need more help to steward and clean the church. Christmas is a time for giving and this is a perfect way to give not just to your family but to the whole parish. If you are not away this Christmas and would be willing to give a little time to help make this happen, please could you contact me as soon as possible at saji.mathew@cliftondiocese.com. Many thanks and God bless you!

SPIRITUALITY: ADVENT THE SEASON OF LIGHT: Advent, by design is the season of light. We begin Advent in the darkness of winter when the hours of the night over-come the hours of the day. The first candle of our Advent wreath shines forth alone amidst the dark, with each successive week the light grows as one by one the candles are blessed and lit. Winter Solstice on December 21, the hours of dark and light are equal and in the days that follow, the hours of light will steadily increase. We celebrate Christmas December 25, the day the Light of Christ enters into our humanity in the birth of Jesus of Nazareth: "What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race" (Jn.1:4). Every Sunday Mass we pray these words during the Penitential Act: ". . . that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts. . ." In the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Ignatius advises us to become aware of our interior movements, those thoughts and feelings that come unbidden into our hearts and minds; in what direction are they leading us, closer to God or away from God? While on a silent retreat, I remember a very poignant question posed to us in a homily given by Fr. Vince Hovley, SJ: "What are the colours of your thoughts?" Fr. Vince went on to say: "The colour of your thoughts colours your soul and the colour of your soul colours our world." In this season of Advent perhaps we should spend some time in prayer pondering the colour of our thoughts? Take some time each day this Advent to become aware of where your thoughts have been taking you. Did they draw you closer to God? Did they help you grow in faith, hope, and love? Did they make you more generous with your time and talent? Did they make you feel more alive, whole and human? Did they lead you to feel more connected to others or challenge you to life-giving growth? Or did your thoughts and feelings lead you away from God, make you less faithful, hopeful, and loving? Did they cause you to become more self-centred or anxious? Did they lure you into doubt and confusion? Did they lead to the breakdown of relationships? In this winter of darkness in our nation and in our world, let us ask for the grace to put on the armour of light: "The night is advanced, the day is at hand. Let us throw off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light" (Rom.13:12). Let us become who we receive at Mass, the Light of the world, let us walk as children of the Light: "For you were once in dark-ness, but now you are the light of the Lord. Live as children of the light" (Eph. 5:8). Let us ask for the grace this Advent for the colour of our thoughts to be light and love, and let light and love colour our souls so that the light and love of our souls may renew the face of the earth.

ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATIONS: Worship in our church is an experience of beauty. The flowers in the sanctuary are an important and beautiful symbol of what we offer to God in our worship. Every member of the parish is invited to contribute to the beauty of our worship by giving the altar flowers on a particular Sunday in memory, thanksgiving or celebration for people or events that are important to that donor. There will be one dedication per Weekend. The cost for the flowers is £25 and a Mass will be offered for their intentions as well. Payments can be made via cheque payable to the Church of Christ the King or in cash. Please note the payment is designated for Altar Flowers. If you would like to make such a gift, please contact Father Saji to designate the weekend you want to dedicate the flowers. Our grateful thanks to all our generous helpers who do arrange flowers for the church week after week.. God bless you always!

GIFT AID: I would like to thank all our parishioners who have signed up to Gift Aid. With your help and generosity we are able to continue our ministry. It is never too late to join. If you are a tax payer and currently make your donations either by Standing Order or weekly donation envelopes please complete a Gift Aid declaration which is available from the parish office. You can also backdate your Gift Aid by completing the relevant section on the form.

FIVE SIMPLE THINGS TO IMPROVE THE HOLIDAY BLUES: **1. APPRECIATE THE SIMPLE THINGS** Take time to appreciate the smaller things! It's easy to get carried away with all the hype and excitement-but sometimes it's the little things which bring us joy; relaxing with family in front of the fire, a walk in the crisp winter air, feeling snugly in a scarf. Take a drive and enjoy the Christmas lights... **2. DO A GOOD DEED.** Christmas is the season of giving so why not do a good deed. There is no better feeling than making a little positive difference to somebody's day. Give someone a compliment, share with others or spending a bit of time with those who have less this festive season such as the homeless or the elderly. **3. DON'T COMPARE.** Try not to compare yourself to others, if it be how big their tree is how many presents or cards they got ... IT IS NOT A COMPETITION. Focus on you and what will help you to have the best Christmas possible under these unusual conditions. **4. MAKE A LIST.** Not a list of all the treats you want from Santa. Rather a list of things that you have to be thankful for this Christmas. It is important to take time out to appreciate people and things that make you happy. **5.SING!** Alone in the shower or getting ready to go or if you are confident enough in front of friends and family. It has been proven that singing is a great way to let off some steam. No better time as there are plenty of carol songs or cheesy 80 classic Christmas songs. The best way to spread Christmas Cheer is singing loud for all to hear. I think it is safe to say why I am not in the choir, but I play Bee Gee's songs and sing with my heart and soul. Laughter has the same healing power. As we go through these trying times we will all have bouts of sadness, unhappiness and perhaps anger. When you do go through a down period be kind to yourself, reach out to those who can lift you up. If it lasts longer than you think it should, don't try and handle it alone. There are people who care. I am wishing you and your loved ones a very peaceful and joyful Christmas.

SECOND COLLECTION FOR SANCTUARY FLOWERS FOR CHRISTMAS: We use flowers in church to draw people closer to God. God's Glory and beauty is reflected in the beautiful things that he made. The Jesuit poet Gerald Manley Hopkins once wrote 'The world is charged with the grandeur of God', and at the beginning of our Altar Missal it says that flowers add to the prayerfulness of the Mass. They help to lift our minds and our hearts to God. So we use flowers to decorate the church and make God's house beautiful, and encourage people to pray and to give thanks to God. In practice we decorate the church with flowers every week for normal use. Then we add flowers for special seasons like Easter, Pentecost and Christmas. We also decorate for special occasions: weddings, baptisms, funerals, Confirmations and First Holy Communions. The colours and the style of our decoration always try to enhance the prayer of the day, the mood of the season, and the special occasion we celebrate. **I would like to ask you to bring along some Poinsettia for church decorations in the coming weeks before Christmas. Thanking you in anticipation. God Bless you! THERE WILL BE A SECOND COLLECTION NEXT WEEKEND FOR CHRISTMAS FLOWERS.**

ASSIGN MEANING TO YOUR PRESENT CHALLENGES: Even when you're being positive, you still have challenges to deal with – there's no escaping this reality. But how you feel about your life has little to do with the challenges in it or what has (or hasn't) happened to you. The meaning you assign to these challenges controls the quality of your life. And you may be totally unaware just how often your subconscious mind is assigning negative meaning to every little inconvenience. So check-in with yourself. When something happens that disrupts your life (an illness, an injury, a loss, etc.), do you tend to think that this is the end or the beginning? If someone confronts you, is that person insulting you, coaching you or trying to care for you? Does a problem mean that God is punishing you or challenging you?

Does a problem mean that God is punishing you or challenging you? Or is it possible that this problem isn't really a problem at all, but an opportunity? When we shift the meaning we assign to our challenges, there's no limit on what life can become. A change of focus and a shift in meaning can literally alter our bio-chemistry and the trajectory of our lives in a couple seconds flat. So take a deep breath and remember: Meaning equals emotion, and emotion equals power. Choose wisely. Learn to reframe your challenges. Find a positive, empowering meaning in every event, and the best path forward will always be yours to travel.

What do you NOT want others to know about you today? This question cuts right to the heart of your insecurities. Let it remind you that problems, flaws, and challenges are a part of everyone's life. Don't be ashamed. Don't worry about being judged or rejected. What other people think of you doesn't define you. Set yourself free from their judgment. What they see in you is their opinion and a reflection of what they see in the world. Some people might perceive you as smart, funny and talented, while others might think you're average at best, or even undesirable. To some, you might look beautiful, and to others you might look too fat or skinny. No matter what other people's thoughts about you are, it's about their standards of beauty or intelligence or awareness, and it really has very little to do with YOU. Yet, all too often we let the rejections we experience dictate every move we make. We literally do not know ourselves to be any better than what some opinionated, uninformed person told us was true. The truth is, a rejection doesn't mean we aren't good enough – it just means that some person, under some circumstance, failed to align with what we have to offer. Rejections do NOT matter. Let them go and refocus your attention on what DOES matter. What does matter is how you see yourself. Always make a habit of staying 100% true to your values and convictions, regardless of what others think. Never be ashamed of doing what feels right. **BE BLESSED AND BE A BLESSING**

SOCIAL OUTREACH CHRISTMAS GIFT CARD DONATIONS: As we approach the Christmas season, several of the special projects that we have supported over time have needed to be reformatted given the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Among the activities on pause for this year are the December Christmas raffles, hampers and initiatives for homeless shelters including Christmas gifts for children. The "Adopt A Family" program will continue as will the "Gift Cards for Catholic Charities" drive. For safety reasons, homeless shelters and less fortunate people request ONLY gift cards so that residents can shop for their families. The amount given will depend upon the family member size. We have been told that £25 gift cards are the most requested. Starting in November, the Social Outreach Committee will collect gift cards to support BOTH the homeless shelter residents and other needy people around. The options for contributing to our Social Outreach Gift Card Project are: Donate £25 gift cards. Send a check so gift cards can be purchased by the Social Outreach Committee, on your behalf. Please place a card or check in an envelope marked Social Outreach Gift Card Project. Please bring envelope and hand it over to Father Saji or deliver to the parish office or Presbytery. Thank you for sponsoring a family, child, or senior citizen this Christmas season. Sponsorship entails providing the gifts of Christmas which include food and presents (ie: gifts and/or gift cards) for our brothers and sisters in need. The need is greater than ever and your help is deeply appreciated. Thank you for your generosity in bringing joy to families during this difficult Pandemic period. Our grateful thanks to all those who have already contributed generously towards our parish mission projects. God bless you all!

MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS, HEAL AND STRENGTHEN YOUR FAMILIES!