

# ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, TIMBERHILL with ST JULIAN, NORWICH

January 2022



# PARISH PEOPLE

## **Parish Priest**

Fr Richard Stanton  
The Rectory, 8 Kilderkin Way, Norwich NR1 1RD  
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Fr Richard's rest day is Monday.

## **Churchwardens**

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32 Mansel Drive, Old Catton, Norwich NR6 7NB  
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38 Lark Drive, Attleborough NR17 1NZ  
01953 455146 • gudrun.warren@gmail.com

## **PCC Secretary**

Liz Kilshaw

## **PCC Treasurer**

Chris Bushnell

## **Gift Aid Secretary**

Michael Watson

## **Organist**

Keith Buxton

## **Head Server**

John Foottit

## **Electoral Roll Secretary**

Elizabeth Sutherland

## **Safeguarding Officer**

Sue Bisley

**Deanery Synod representatives** Liz Kilshaw, Rhys Lewis

## **Parochial Church Council**

Fr Peter Barnes-Clay,  
Mary Barnes-Clay, Sue Bisley,  
Harry Emerson, Judy Hall,  
Andrew Knights, Susan  
Snasdell, Elizabeth Sutherland,  
Melissa Symes, Jeremy Warren

## **Sidespeople**

Linda Baldwin, David Baldwin,  
Mary Barnes-Clay, Barbara Donnelly,  
Judy Hall, June Halls, Michael Halls,  
Patrick Hawes, Andrew Knights,  
Pauline McKinnell, Susan Snasdell,  
Elizabeth Sutherland, Dorothy Tinkler,  
Stuart Tinkler, John Woodrow

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## **The Julian Campus**

The Julian Centre, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1QT (*closed for refurbishment*)  
01603 767380 • [www.julianofnorwich.org](http://www.julianofnorwich.org)

## **Curate** (*Wed – Sat*)

The Revd Edwin Wilton-Morgan  
01603 218300 • [curate@cathedral.org.uk](mailto:curate@cathedral.org.uk)

# Redeem the time

Dear friends,

Thank you for your many kind greetings and gifts at Christmas. A new calendar year has begun, just as four weeks earlier we began a new church year on the First Sunday of Advent. One of the unusual features of the High Mass on the Feast of the Epiphany (Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January) is known as the Proclamation of the Date of Easter. After the singing of the Holy Gospel and before the sermon, the celebrant, deacon or a cantor climbs into the pulpit and sings a text which begins:



*Know, dear brothers and sisters,  
that, as we have rejoiced at the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
so by leave of God's mercy  
we announce to you also the joy of his Resurrection, who is our Saviour.*

The dates of the moveable feasts of the year, which are all related to the date of East, are then announced – Ash Wednesday (the beginning of Lent), Easter Day, Ascension Day, the Feast of Pentecost, and Corpus Christi – and finally, looking beyond the conclusion of the current church year, Advent Sunday and the beginning of another new year. The tone (one might say 'tune') to which the Proclamation is sung will be familiar to those who have participated in the Vigil Ceremonies on Easter Night, because it's essentially the same tone as is used for the singing of the Exsultet, the great hymn of praise in the presence of the newly-lit Paschal Candle in which all the powers of creation are summoned to unite in Resurrection joy.

Is there any point to this curious bit of antiquarianism in the days of Apple watches and smartphones? Of course, it dates from a time when

calendars were not readily available and the basic shape of the coming year had to be mapped out for people – surely it can now go in the dustbin along with mangles and trenchers and all the other superseded paraphernalia of a by-gone age?

By continuing this ancient custom of the Church on the feast when wise men bowed down in worship before the infant Lord, we remind ourselves of the centrality of what we call the ‘Paschal Mystery’ in our lives:



that is, the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The haunting music comes as a foreshadowing of Easter Night and Resurrection victory, even as we recognise that we are creatures of time who hour by hour, day by day and year by year live through a world of time in which we are called to discern the Lord’s purposes for us and live faithfully as people of hope. The singing of the Proclamation of the Date of Easter reminds us that time itself is a means of grace; it is not an incoherent and random set of events on which we try vainly to impose some sort of order by organising it arbitrarily into seconds, minutes, weeks, months and so on, but, for Christians, the

passing time are stepping stones to eternity.

‘ETERNITY.’ The twentieth century Anglican mystic and spiritual writer Evelyn Underhill had that single word carved on a block of wood in her study, to keep before her eyes and her mind the true reality in which we ‘live and move and have our being’.

Because time is important, one of the Church’s most vital tasks is to ‘sanctify time’. ‘Sanctify’ means ‘make holy’: the Church’s job is to make time holy, to take the atmosphere of time in which we all have to be born, live, move and eventually die and to raise it up into the very life of God himself. The Church sanctifies, makes holy, both the line of our lives and the cycle of natural time in which we’re caught up.

First, our own lives: from our birth to our death, the gifts of God in Christ bless our lives and make them holy, and we come to him in faith at particular times and stages seeking his special activity in those lives – our baptisms and confirmations, our weddings, our ordinations, our confessions, our funerals. The sacramental life of the Church undergirds our passage through time to eternity.



Second, the natural time in which we live: through the rhythm of times and seasons the Church seeks to draw us constantly into the ambit of God's own life and love. 'Seven whole days, not one in seven, I will praise thee,' wrote George Herbert, and each day is sanctified through its consecration to God in worship, not least the offering of Morning and Evening Prayer in our churches each day, and the day's highpoint, the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Then, too, the week has a particular shape which reveals character and leads to holiness, focusing especially on Sunday. Every Sunday, the first day of the week, is a 'little Easter' when we give thanks for Christ's rising from the dead and our own sharing in that triumph through our baptism, and in a parish such as our own we know very well that the way to keep Sunday is to gather for Mass and worship. Even in parishes like our own, this needs constant attention to strengthen it. 'You will be missed,' said Jonathan to David, 'because your place will be empty' (1 Samuel 20.18). Let it not be said of us.

And the year is sanctified too, made holy by a cycle of festivals, fasts and seasons which don't simply recall historical events that happened a long time ago, but recapture their force and power and renew the grace given to us through the incarnation, life, passion, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and his sending of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all the truth.

Of course, none of this is at root simply about 'education', imparting religious information to us through a complex set of stage plays for our

edification. Worship is primarily for the sake of God, the giving to him of what is his due from hearts which have recognised his claim and authority and responded to his love. In our living of the sacramental life day by day and our sharing in the Church's life of worship throughout the Christian year, we take that very precious commodity – time itself, which for each of us is limited – and offer it to the God from whom it comes, and he in turn makes it the means of our transformation into the image of his Son.

At the heart of the Christian year and the Christian life, our journey from birth into the reality of God himself, is the mystery of Easter, and it's on Easter night, that night when time and eternity seem to collapse together, that the great Paschal Candle is marked with the date of the current year to proclaim that *this* is the year of salvation, that Christ's Resurrection is Good News here and now in *this* time and *this* place, because 'all time belongs to him and all the ages'.

Writing to the Christians in Corinth (*II Corinthians 6.1-2*), St Paul encouraged them: 'As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, 'At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.' See, *now* is the acceptable time; see, *now* is the day of salvation!'

Your friend and parish priest,

Fr Richard

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## From the Parish Registers

### Communicants and collections

	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Weekday</i>	<i>Collection</i> <i>(envelopes and cash)</i>
<i>Week beginning</i> 5 December	54	68	£150.00
12 December	60	67	£121.50
19 December	53	92	£115.00
26 December	37	64	£97.00

*The collection figure above does not include the amount given by standing order, which averages £3,000 a month.*

# January Carol

Earth today rejoices,  
Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya,  
    Death can hurt no more;  
And celestial voices,  
Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya,  
    Tell that sin is o'er.  
David's sling destroys the foe:  
Samson lays the temple low:  
    *War and strife are done;*  
    *God and man are one.*

Reconciliation,  
Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya,  
    Peace that lasts for ay,  
Gladness and salvation,  
Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya,  
    Came on Christmas Day.  
Gideon's fleece is wet with dew:  
Solomon is crowned anew:  
    *War and strife are done;*  
    *God and man are one.*

Though the cold grows stronger,  
Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya,  
    Though the world loves night;  
Yet the days grow longer,  
Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya,  
    Christ is born our Light.  
Now the dial's type is learnt;  
Burns the bush that is not burnt:  
    *War and strife are done;*  
    *God and man are one.*



The author of this carol, JOHN MASON NEALE (1818-66), was a great Anglican priest and liturgical scholar whose researches and writings greatly influenced nineteenth century Anglo-Catholicism and still greatly impact the Church's life and worship today. He was an expert translator of sacred texts, a pioneer in relations with the Orthodox Churches of the East, and the founder of the Society of St Margaret whose work continues in Hackney, Chiswick, Walsingham, the USA and Sri Lanka.

# What's on in January

## **Saturday 1 January • Mary, the Holy Mother of God**

11am Solemn Mass for New Year's Day (*St John's*)  
*Preacher: Fr John Fellows*  
*followed by New Year drinks*

## **Sunday 2 January • Second Sunday of Christmas**

9am Low Mass (*St Julian's*)  
11am High Mass (*St John's*)  
6pm Evening Prayer (*St John's*)

## **Thursday 6 January • Feast of the Epiphany**

12 noon Low Mass (*St John's*)  
7.30pm Procession, Blessing of the Epiphany Crib  
and High Mass (*St John's*)  
*followed by sparkling wine*

## **Sunday 9 January • The Baptism of Our Lord**

9am Low Mass (*St Julian's*)  
11am High Mass (*St John's*)  
6pm Epiphany Carol Service and Benediction (*St John's*)  
*followed by Epiphany party with hot punch and cake*

## **Friday 14 January**

6.30 for 7pm Church Family New Year Quiz with fish and chip supper  
(£10 per person: book by 11 January)

## **Sunday 16 January**

Preacher at 11am High Mass:  
The Venerable Karen Hutchinson, Archdeacon of Norwich

## **Tuesday 25 January • The Conversion of St Paul**

12 noon Low Mass (*St John's*)  
7pm Low Mass (*St John's*) followed by PCC meeting

## **Thursday 27 January**

10.30am Hospitality and Events Group (*1 Danby Close, Eaton Rise*)

**At the heart  
of Christmas**





Wednesday 2 February

# CANDLEMAS

Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple

10am Low Mass (*St Julian's*)

7.30pm Blessing of Candles,  
Candlemas Procession and High Mass

*Preacher: Fr Stephen Coleman,*

*Vicar of St Peter's Grange Park, Diocese of London, and  
Assistant Chaplain of the Society of Our Lady of Pew, Westminster Abbey*

*followed by drinks*



## Confirm, O Lord, your servant...

**T**he Bishop of Richborough, the Rt Revd Norman Banks, will be our celebrant and preacher for Pontifical High Mass on **the Feast of the Annunciation, Friday 25 March**, at 7.30pm. We would be delighted to present candidates for Confirmation that night. Confirmation is the Sacrament of adult commitment to God in the fellowship of the Church, through the laying on of a Bishop's hands and anointing with the Oil of Chrism. Informal preparation sessions will begin soon. If you haven't been confirmed and would like to be, or if you're not sure and just want to know a bit more, have a word with Fr Richard.

# January 2022

- 1 Sat MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD:  
OCTAVE DAY OF CHRISTMAS** 11am SM
- 2 Sun The Second Sunday of Christmas**  
3 Mon Christmastide Feria  
4 Tue Christmastide Feria  
5 Wed Christmastide Feria  
**6 Thu THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD** 12 noon LM; 7.30pm HM  
7 Fri after the Epiphany  
8 Sat after the Epiphany
- 9 Sun The Baptism of Our Lord (Epiphany I)**  
10 Mon Feria (*Week 1 of Ordinary Time*)  
11 Tue of Requiem  
12 Wed St Aelred of Rievaulx  
13 Thu St Hilary of Poitiers  
14 Fri Feria  
15 Sat Our Lady on Saturday
- 16 Sun The Second Sunday of Ordinary Time (Epiphany II)**  
17 Mon St Anthony of Egypt  
18 Tue for Unity (*Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity begins*)  
19 Wed St Wulfstan  
20 Thu Ss Fabian and Sebastian  
21 Fri St Agnes  
22 Sat St Vincent
- 23 Sun The Third Sunday of Ordinary Time (Epiphany III)**  
24 Mon St Francis de Sales  
**25 Tue The Conversion of St Paul** 12 noon and 7pm LM  
26 Wed Ss Timothy and Titus  
**27 Thu St Julian of Le Mans: St Julian's Patronal Festival**  
28 Fri St Thomas Aquinas  
29 Sat Our Lady on Saturday
- 30 Sun The Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time (Epiphany IV)**  
31 Mon St John Bosco

# We pray for...

God's blessing on 2022	1
<b>Our Parish and People</b>	<b>2</b>
Those struggling with debt	3
Our mission to our parish	4
Josiah English, AHH Steward, and his wife Jo	5
Thanksgiving for Jesus Christ, revealed to all nations	6
The sick and those who care for them	7
The missionary work of the Church	8
<b>Our Parish and People</b>	<b>9</b>
The shops and businesses of our parish	10
Year's Minds for January	11
Vocations to the Religious Life	12
Norman and Graham, our Bishops	13
Friends of Julian of Norwich	14
The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham	15
<b>Our Parish and People</b>	<b>16</b>
Renewal in our spiritual life	17
Christian Unity	18
Our servers and sacristy team	19
Persecuted Christians	20
The children of our parish	21
Deacons	22
<b>Our Parish and People</b>	<b>23</b>
Spiritual directors	24
Christian Unity	25
That we may be zealous workers for the Gospel	26
St Julian's Church on its Patronal Festival	27
Theologians	28
Society of Mary	29
<b>Our Parish and People</b>	<b>30</b>
The schools of our parish	31

# Parish notes

## Warmest thanks...

...to all who've helped with our celebrations for the Christmas feast – with flowers and decorating, serving, sacristy work, music, cleaning, baking, welcoming, publicity and much more. It's been a wonderful family effort. It is an offering of love which we make together to the Lord, so 'thank you' seems presumptuous in some ways, but maybe we can say it to one another as we rejoice in the life we live together in this Church Family. *Right: the*

*magnificent 19 ft Christmas tree in St John's, which was set up by a great team on Saturday 18 December and blessed after the Angelus on Sunday 19 December.*



## New Year's Day in England's Nazareth

Fr Richard was privileged to be the preacher at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham on New Year's Day. Solemn Mass for the Feast of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, was sung at 11am in the Shrine Church, which was comfortably filled with pilgrims and worshippers. This year is a 'year of jubilee' at Walsingham as the Shrine celebrates the centenary of the restoration of the pilgrimage in 1922. It was in July that year that the Vicar of Walsingham set up a small carved image of Our Lady in his parish church, facing out to the ruins of the Priory, and began the nightly recitation of the Rosary. This year is an opportunity to give thanks for the many blessings which have flowed from that great venture of faith.

## Our finances

In the parish we give thanks for further progress in our very necessary journey to financial health. Two or three people have made new arrangements for regular giving over the past few weeks: such regular giving, ideally direct to the bank, is the indispensable bedrock of our finances. Simple pink forms to set up a standing order may be found at the back of the church: the size of the gift isn't the main thing; the important thing is your share in the work, which is part of our Christian discipleship seriously.

The Parish Share – £50,514 – was paid in full before the end of the year. The Parish Share is a contribution by churches towards the cost of the mission and ministry of the Church in the Diocese, which is primarily the cost of clergy. We do not at all underestimate the difficulties of the past two years: thank you for your share in keeping the witness of the Church alive.

### **Gifts to the sanctuary**

A new rose-coloured silk altar frontal, tabernacle veil, pulpit fall and legilium fall made their first appearance at St John's on the Third Sunday of Advent, the kind gifts of two generous communicants. We warmly thank Lucy McKitterick and Bev Standing for their expert sewing.

### **Welcome to Josiah and Jo**

We look forward this month to welcoming Josiah English, the new Resident Steward at All Hallows House, and his wife Jo. They are joining us from Birmingham, and will be moving into All Hallows House on Monday 17 January. We are preparing a hamper to welcome them to their new home in Norwich: Shirley Buxton will gladly receive your contributions. Josiah's role is to run All Hallows as a place of welcome, hospitality and Christian community, building on the great work done there in previous years by the Community of All Hallows and the Community of the Sacred Passion. He will also be managing the volunteers in the Julian Centre. His appointment, as an employee of the Julian of Norwich Partnership, is for three years, and when All Hallows House is open to the public we hope that many people will come to stay here in the place hallowed by the sacred memory of the Lady Julian of Norwich.



### **A new year begins for the 50/50 Draw**

A new year begins for the 50/50 Draw each February, so it's time to join for the coming year. Each entry costs £25: half the money is distributed in three monthly prizes, and the other half makes a valuable contribution to church funds (£615 in 2021). Please consider joining the Draw if you

haven't already, and if you've participated previously we hope you'll do so again for 2022. Forms to join or renew your membership are available in church. Send subscription money (*cheques made payable to 'Parmentergate PCC'*) to Liz Kilshaw or the Rectory as soon as possible.

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*Left:* the altar of St John's lit for the **'Rorate' Mass** on Saturday 18 December. This Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated by candlelight at dawn, was well-attended and this year enriched by a choir singing Charles Wood's Mass in the Phrygian mode

and the motet 'Ave Maria' by Jacques Arcadelt. The congregation all joined in singing the Advent Prose, 'O come O come Emmanuel' at the offertory, and the seasonal Marian anthem at the end of Mass. Coffee and delicious bacon rolls were enjoyed afterwards.

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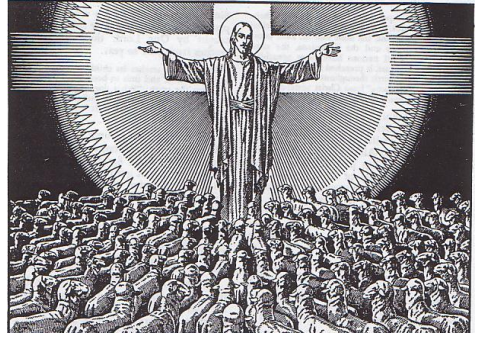
*Right:* Members of our Church Family went **carol singing** on Timberhill and at the top of All Saints Street on the Saturday before Christmas. Singing festive favourites for seasonal shoppers, we reminded them of the Christian message behind the



Christmas celebrations and also raised money from generous passers-by for our three Christmas charities. Thank you to all who took part!

# May they all be one

Each January we keep the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**. This is an annual summons to prayer for the healing of the divisions in the Body of Christ. We join our intercessions with the Lord's own prayer on the night before he died, that those who love him might all be one, so that the world will believe.



The Week of Prayer begins on **Tuesday 18 January** and ends on **Tuesday 25 January**, the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul (Masses at 12 noon and 7pm). Each day at Mass and Evening Prayer we will have the unity of all Christians as a particular focus for our prayer. This prayer, familiar to us from the Mass, reminds us that peace and unity go hand in hand, and we can't pray for one without also seeking the other:

**Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles, 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you': look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will, who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.**

**T**hirty of us had a super afternoon at our **Church Family pre-Christmas lunch** at the Marsh Harrier on Wednesday 15 December. It was a lovely occasion with much laughter and conversation, building up our fellowship and getting to know each other better as we prepared for the coming feast of the Lord's birth. Many thanks to Patricia for her hard work organising the occasion.





The Second Sunday of Advent was the occasion of the **Servers' Lunch**, an opportunity for our servers and clergy to gather for fun and fellowship as we celebrated the great contribution which our servers make to the worship of our Church Family. A good time was

had by all, though we missed the company of those unable to join us. At the end of the High Mass earlier in the day the congregation applauded the servers to express their gratitude for their ministry, which helps us all to worship in spirit and in truth. We always welcome more people to participate in the service of the sanctuary.

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Just after sunset on the Fourth Sunday of Advent we gathered at St Julian's for **open-air community carols** and Christmas readings, fortified by delicious mulled wine and mince pies. The church looked beautiful bedecked outside and in with sparkling candles: it was lovely to share this pre-Christmas celebration together with friends from the neighbourhood.



After the lunchtime Mass on Thursday 23 December, Fr Richard visited some of the shops and businesses on Timberhill and around the parish with Christmas greetings from the Church Family and some **homemade festive treats** as a gift for local shopworkers and other team members. Many thanks to our kind bakers for producing these lovely spiced biscuits, and to the hands which lovingly wrapped them!



# Witness bearing

A Sermon preached by Fr Richard Stanton, Parish Priest,  
at the Procession and High Mass

on the Feast of St Stephen (the Sunday in the Octave of Christmas):  
26 December 2021

**Lections** Acts 7.51-60: *I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man*

Galatians 2.16b-20: *It is no longer I live, but it is Christ who lives in me*

St Matthew 10.17-22: *The man who stands firm to the end will be saved*

**'It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me.'** (*Galatians 2.20*)

**T**he point I am trying to make is that Christian love is so searching, so demanding and so revolutionary in its force that it was no kind of relationship to the thing which is so often called by its name. No more than Christ of the Gospels is like that shadowy, sentimental figure so often invoked by Christians who want to live comfortably with injustice and intolerance. Prophecy is still a function of the Church. It always amuses me to hear discussions on the hoary old problem of religion and politics and to think what such discussions would have meant to men like Jeremiah and Amos and Isaiah and Ezekiel. For in fact half their time was spent in trying to bring home to the men of their day the fact that God was directly concerned in the way society was organised: in the way wealth was distributed: in the way men behaved to one another. In short – politics. It is only in our post-Reformation day when religion has become individualistic that we have created this dichotomy... Prophecy is a function of the Church, and must be so till the end of time, for it will always be the duty of the Church to proclaim that this world is God's world and that infringements of his law will bring their own terrible penalties. Sin is not and never can be a purely personal matter. The problem of evil affects the whole human race.'

Words by Father Trevor Huddleston in his hugely influential book *Naught for your Comfort*, in which he describes his twelve years ministry in Sophiatown, the coloured quarter outside Johannesburg, from 1944 to 1956. The book focussed the attention of the world on the plight of the non-European races in South Africa, whose rights and dignity Father Huddleston had tirelessly championed although it drew him into bitter and constant conflict with the government and the police. The manuscript of the book only escaped seizure by a matter of twenty-four hours. 'Is it the function of a

priest to defy the government?' a magistrate asked him. 'Is it the function of a priest to remain silent in the face of injustice?' replied Father Huddleston.

His extraordinary and energetic ministry in the township was focussed on the Church of Christ the King, established by his brethren in the Community of the Resurrection whose home is at Mirfield in Yorkshire. One of his teenage servers there, Desmond Tutu, died this morning. He had his vocation to the Priesthood fostered by Father Huddleston and went on to become Bishop of Johannesburg and Archbishop of Capetown; later, his biographer suggested that Father Huddleston was 'the greatest single influence' in his life, a life given over to working out what it means for a Christian to say, with St Paul, that it is no longer he who lives, but it is Christ who lives in him. Though Archbishop Tutu's personal courage, moral fury and above all instinctive and emphatic hope will be widely remembered, their source and fountainhead in the death and resurrection of the incarnate Lord whose birthday we are celebrating may, perhaps, evade many commentators.

One BBC correspondent said this morning, 'While other struggle leaders were killed, or forced into exile, or prison, the diminutive, defiant Anglican priest was there at every stage, exposing the hypocrisy of the apartheid state, comforting its victims, holding the liberation movement to account.' But beyond and beneath this was something which another writer has also said of Father Huddleston,



particularly in relation to a sermon he preached in Cambridge in 1969: 'The thing that caught my attention especially was the sense that this famous bishop who strode the world stage as a champion of social justice spoke from a reservoir of spiritual depth. One phrase in particular I remember: "If we lose our capacity for stillness (and I fear we are fast losing it) then we are in danger of losing our identity as the children of God." ... I felt that I had heard a man who lived out of a passion for God and the things of the Spirit and who was at the same time passionately concerned about the way the world was and how it might be changed.'

The work of the Community of the Resurrection in South Africa, founded in the tradition of the Catholic Faith as the Church of England has received it, was derived directly from a thoroughly-applied and consistently-lived theology of the incarnation, the flesh-taking of the eternal Word of the Father in which we rejoice in these days of Christmas. In the case of the parish in Sophiatown, those convictions set the community on what Fr Mongezi Guma called 'the trajectory of a ministry of justice and confrontation with a government bent on the erosion of human rights.'

'Which of the prophets,' asked St Stephen in our first lesson, 'did your ancestors not persecute? ... You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.' 'When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen.' Stephen is the first of that innumerable cloud of witnesses, greatly increased during the twentieth century, whom we call 'martyrs', a word derived from the Greek which does mean 'witness' – one who bears witness to the Incarnation and the Resurrection of Christ even up to and including death, a complete immersion in the same pattern of self-giving which we see when we look at the Christmas Crib or gaze at the Cross of Good Friday. 'He emptied himself, and took the form of a servant,' said St Paul, in a passage which we heard at the Evensong of Christmas Day last night.

It is necessary for our faith that this prophetic and witness-bearing dimension is constantly renewed in the life of the believing community if our religion is not to descend to the level of a pious convention which evades the true demands of the Gospel. Not all of us are called to set off to the troubled, war-torn or injustice-ridden parts of the world to advocate there for the needs of the voiceless, nor will all of us be (as Jesus foretold in the Gospel) 'handed over... and dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them.' But we had better think again if we accidentally slide into believing that *because* that is not the call made on us, we are off the hook of understanding and enacting what it means to pray (as we all do when we sing our Christmas carols), 'Cast out our sin and enter in: be born in us today.' As we ponder and adore the mystery of the Incarnation this Christmas, let us allow ourselves to be stirred and challenged by the recognition that, as another martyr, Robert Southwell, put it, 'this little Babe, so few days old, is come to rifle Satan's fold.'

Amen.

# WORSHIP WITH US

**We warmly welcome you.**

<b>Sundays</b>	9am Low Mass	<i>St Julian's</i>
	11am High Mass and Sermon	<i>St John's</i>
	6pm Evensong (said)	<i>St John's</i>

## **Weekdays**

<i>The Mass</i>	Monday 10am	<i>St Julian's</i>
	Tuesday 12 noon	<i>St John's</i>
	Wednesday 10am	<i>St Julian's</i>
	Thursday 12 noon	<i>St John's</i>
	Friday 5pm	<i>St Julian's</i>
	Saturday 12 noon	<i>St John's</i>

<i>The Rosary</i>	Monday 10.30am	<i>St Julian's</i>
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<i>Morning Prayer</i>	Tuesday to Saturday 8.30am	<i>St Julian's</i>
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<i>Evening Prayer</i>	Tuesday to Saturday 6pm	<i>St Julian's</i>
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*The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)*

Confessions may be heard at any time  
by arrangement with the Parish Priest

St John's and St Julian's are both **open daily** for prayer, quiet and visiting. The Blessed Sacrament is reserved on the High Altar of both churches for the Communion of the Sick and the devotion of the faithful.

We warmly welcome enquiries about **baptisms and weddings**.

We will be pleased to help you in any way we can.



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**On the cover:** 'Rejoice in the Lord always!' The altar is honoured with incense on the Third Sunday of Advent, 'Gaudete'.  
*Photo: Jeremy Warren*