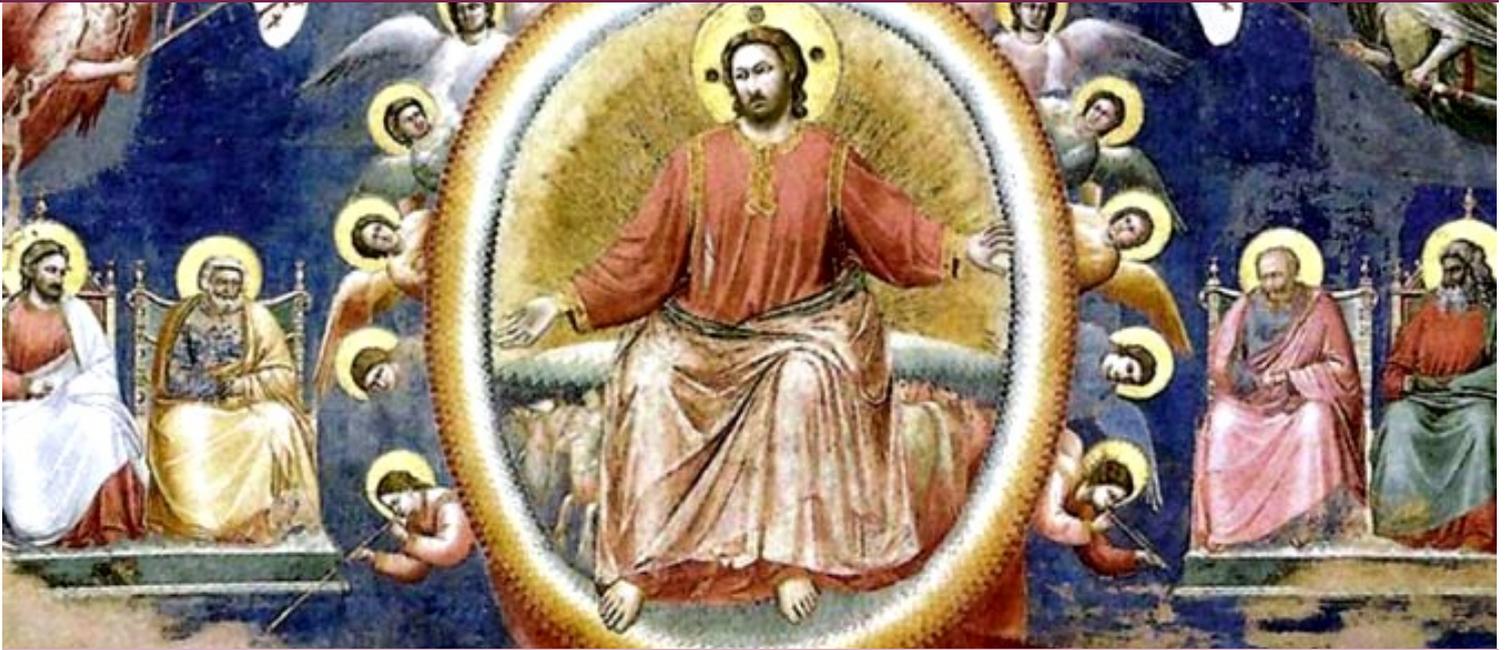


# Advent 2019

## at St Michaels



**This year's seasonal theme is 'Advent Saints'.** Those men and women who, by their life and witness, express something of what it means to know that God's kingdom is real and near. People such as St Francis Xavier who earnestly desired to share the Good News with people around the world; St Nicholas of Myra, the original Santa Claus, who reveals the generosity of God; St John of the Cross, and his beautiful love poems of longing for Christ; St Thomas Becket who stood up for the kingship of Christ and the rights of the Church over the claims of worldly power. Their feast days all fall during December, not forgetting Lucy, John of Damascus and Ambrose. Each of them lived distinctive lives shot through with the love of God. It is by reflecting on their lives, wisdom and inspiration that our keeping of this season may also become more distinctly holy. As Christians, it is important that our keeping of this time is different from our secular culture, which rushes headlong towards Christmas without preparation or prayer. I hope that our Advent programme with its worship, preaching, reading and reflecting will assist you in sharing the light that comes from the dawn of Christ's birth.

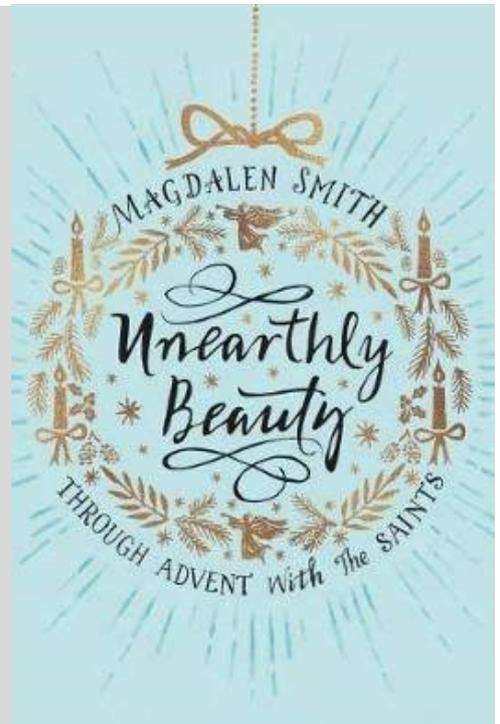
*Father Stephen, Vicar*

# Advent Reading

## Advent Reading

This year's Advent book by Magdalene Smith is called **'Unearthly Beauty: Through Advent with the Saints'**. Each short chapter takes a saint or faithful Christian whose feast day falls during December and reflects on what their life and witness says to us about this season so that we might glimpse holiness in a new way. Each section ends with ideas for prayer.

You are welcome to purchase the book online or through the Parish Office - *photocopies of short sections relevant to the saints chosen by our preachers (see below) will be available each Sunday.*



## Advent Sermons and Preachers

On each Sunday our preachers will focus on one of the Saints whose feast day falls during December and their relevance to the season of Advent.

### **Advent 1 (1st December): St. Francis Xavier**

Father Duncan Dormor, CEO of USPG and former Dean of Saint John's College, Cambridge.

### **Advent 2 (8th December): St. Nicholas of Myra**

Father Mark Birch, Minor Canon, Westminster Abbey.

### **Advent 3 (15th December): St. John of the Cross**

Father Robert Stanier, Vicar of St. Andrew and St Mark, Surbiton, and former worshipper and ordinand of St Michael's.

### **Advent 4 (22nd December): St. Thomas Becket**

Father Joshua Rey, Chaplain to the Bishop of Southwark.

# Advent Worship and Prayer

During Advent, as well as our Sunday services, there are some special services and events that pick up on the spirituality of the season.

## **Advent Carols      Sunday 1st December, 4.00pm**

This beautiful service of poetry, choral anthems, hymns and scripture readings starts off the Advent season. It is attended and organised by members of all the churches in Barnes, and followed by refreshments in the Community Centre.

## **Daily Prayer**

Advent is a time of watching and waiting as we pray and prepare for the coming of Christ. You are invited to join in with the regular prayer that takes place every day in church - see below:

## **Morning Prayer**

Every day at 9am (except Friday). A short service (lasting c.20 mins) and a wonderful way to begin the day in peace and contemplation.

## **Mass during the Week**

Wednesday 12 Noon (followed by lunch) and Saturday at 9.30am (followed by coffee).

## **Open Church**

Quiet and waiting are important aspects of the spirituality of Advent. You might find it helpful to spend time in the peace and quiet of the church, which is normally open every day (except Friday) from 8.45am until about 6pm.

## **Confession (Sacrament of Reconciliation)**

During Advent, you are encouraged to consider making your Confession so that your heart and mind may be prepared to celebrate Christ's birth. Just contact one of the clergy and we are always happy to talk about how to make your confession if it is your first time.



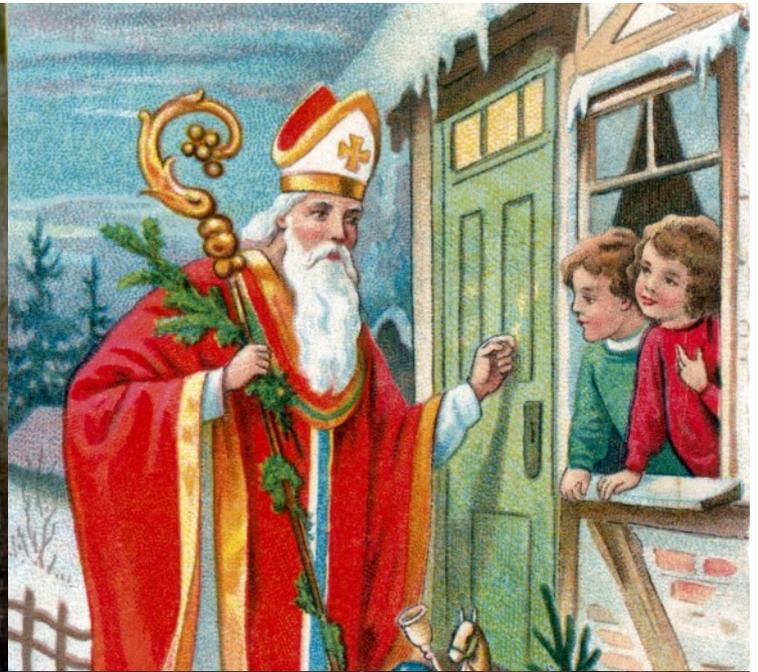
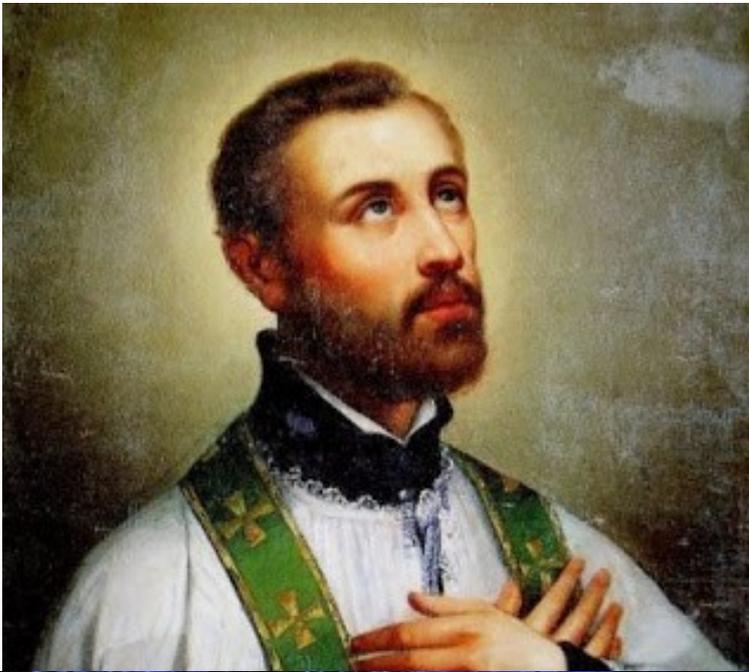
## Advent Prayer

### **An Advent Collect to pray every day:**

O God, the Father of all mercies, who didst so love the world that thou didst give thine only begotten Son to take our nature upon him for us and for our salvation; grant that we, who by his first coming have been called into the life of grace, may always abide in him, and be found watching and ready when he shall come again to call us to thy kingdom of glory; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **As you open each window on your Advent calendar at home:**

Amen! Come Lord Jesus.



*Clockwise from top left:*

St Francis Xavier, St Nicholas of Myra, St Thomas Becket and St John of the Cross.

**Come Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.**

*Revelation 22.20-21*

**The Parish Office**

(In the Vestry at church)

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