

PARISH OF BLESSED JAMES BELL

*Serving St Benedict's, St Mary's & St Oswald's,
Warrington*



Newsletter

**2nd Sunday of Advent (B)
10 December 2023**

My dear sisters and brothers,

Israel-Hamas War

On Friday night, a United Nations Security Council resolution to demand a ceasefire in Gaza failed because it was vetoed by the United States. Of the 15 representatives on the council, 13 voted to back the call but the US blocked it and the UK abstained.

The US says that Israel has a right to defend itself. I don't think anyone disputes this. However, many think Israel's response has been wholly disproportionate.

Over 17,000 civilians have been killed in Gaza in just eight weeks! More than half of those killed are women and children! There is simply no justification for the untold suffering being inflicted on innocent civilians.

The abhorrent attacks by Hamas on 7 October are rightly to be condemned, but I can think of no country in the world that has ever been able to eliminate a terrorist organisation. In trying to do so, I fear Israel is creating such anger, frustration, and hatred in ordinary Palestinians that the war will simply embolden and supply Hamas and other groups for years to come.

At the age of one hundred, a First World War veteran, said: "In war nobody wins. You might as well talk first. You have to in the end."

Immigration

Immigration has once again made the headlines. I'm beginning to wonder if it is the 'go to' distraction from the very real problems many of us encounter each day: the crisis in the NHS, broken and overwhelmed public and social services, the rising cost of living, and so on.

I'm not saying there isn't a problem, but surely dealing with any problem means starting at the source.

The unacceptable rhetoric used by too many politicians has now become popular opinion which, for the most part, has little foundation in fact. I think it's a tragic betrayal of those who come to our shores in desperate need of help.

SVP Christmas Party

The SVP Christmas Party for senior citizens is next Sunday, 17 December, 1.00 – 3.30 pm, at St Oswald's Parish Centre. Refreshments, ukelele band, prizes, bingo. If you would like to attend, please put your name on the sheet at the back of church by 15 December.

Christingle Service

Our first 'Family of Parishes' event will be a Christingle Service at St Benedict's next Sunday, 17 December, at 4.00 pm. 'Christingle' is an Advent service celebrating the coming of Jesus, the light of the world. This short service (about 35 minutes), which will be followed by refreshments, is especially suitable for children who will lead a procession of light around the church.

Service of Reconciliation

This year's Advent Penance Service will take place at St Oswald's on Tuesday 19 December at 7.30 pm.

LGBTQ+ Catholics

Finally, there is a Mass with LGBTQ+ Catholics and friends at 2.00 pm today (Sunday) at All Saints, Golborne WA3 3BG. All are most welcome.

*With my prayers,
Fr Dave*

General Information

1) **Parish Priest:** Canon Dave Heywood. Tel: 01925 630127. Email: frdave@rcaol.org.uk Address: St Benedict's Priory, Rhodes Street, Warrington WA2 7QE.
Deacons: Revv Tony Kerrigan & David Boyle.

2) **Parish Office:** Miss Celia Rigby. Monday to Friday, 9.00 am – 5.00 pm. Tel: 01925 630127. Email address: blessedjamesbell@rcaol.org.uk

3) **Parish Website** www.blessedjamesbell.co.uk

4) Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)

Wednesdays: 10.15 – 10.45 am at St Benedict's
Saturdays: After the 4.30 pm Mass at St Oswald's
Confession is also available on request.

5) **St Benedict's Church** is open for private prayer: Monday to Friday, 9.30 am – 3.00 pm.

6) **Communion at Home** – If you are not able to come to Mass and would like to receive communion at home, please phone the Parish Office (630127).

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

	St Benedict's	St Oswald's
Sunday 10 December 2nd Sunday of Advent (B)	10.30 am Mass Anthony Potter	(Sat) 4.30 pm Vigil Mass Jo & Barry Thompson 8.30 am Mass The Parishioners
Monday 11 December	12.30 pm Funeral Service Marie Morley	7.00 pm Prayer Group
Tuesday 12 December		No Mass today
Wednesday 13 December St Lucy	10.15 – 11.00 am Exposition 11.00 am Mass Andy McDonagh	2.30 pm Y1 & Y2 Nativity
Thursday 14 December St John of the Cross		11.00 am Mass Theresa Hodgkinson 2.30 pm Y3 & Y4 Nativity 6.00 pm Y5 & Y6 Nativity
Friday 15 December	No Mass today	
Saturday 16 December		4.30 pm Vigil Mass (Signed) Frank Berry
Sunday 17 December 3rd Sunday of Advent (B) <i>Gaudete Sunday</i>	10.30 am Mass The Parishioners 4.00 pm Christingle Service	8.30 am Mass Derrick Roberts

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

03.12.23	£697.18	(£217.35 Gift Aid)
Standing Orders	£129.69	(£89.31 Gift Aid)
Digital Giving	£176.50	(£86.50 Gift Aid)
Total	£1003.37	
Parish Caritas	£250.19	

Thank you so much for your generosity.

COMMUNITY ADVENT SERVICE

You are invited to an Advent Service at Cardinal Newman Catholic High School this Thursday, 14 December, at 6.00 pm, followed by refreshments. To reserve a seat, please phone 635556 or use the following online link: <https://forms.office.com/e/MAnD9cjEmJ>

LADIES GROUP

The Ladies Group will be meeting this Thursday, 14 December, in St Oswald's Parish Centre at 8.00 pm. All welcome.

ADVENT COLLECTIONS

This year, in place of the usual Advent Collections, we are encouraged to reach out to our sisters and brothers in the Holy Land. There's a sheet at the back of church suggesting ways we can do this. You can also download this sheet from the Parish website.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve

6.00 pm Christmas Vigil Mass at St Oswald's

11.30 pm Christmas Midnight Mass at St Benedict's

Christmas Day

8.30 am Christmas Dawn Mass at St Oswald's

10.30 am Christmas Day Mass at St Benedict's

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

(Divine Office – Psalter Week 2)

Today **2nd Sunday of Advent (B)**

Readings Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11

2 Peter 3: 8-14

Mark 1: 1-8

Weekdays Advent – Week 2

MARANATHA
Come, Lord Jesus!

LET US HOLD IN PRAYER

Those who are sick or homebound, especially:

St Benedict's & St Mary's

Luciano Bartolo, Malcolm Hackwell, Jean Hendricks, Anne Hill, Mary Hinchliffe, Ged Hughes, Susan Keating, Sheila Mellor, Peter Milner, Trina Mouldsdale, Sandra Richardson, Kate Rigby, Pembolina Smith, Matilde Valentine, Paul Vernon, Dolores Woodall.

St Oswald's

Keith Bate, Catherine Carne, Dave Ferris, Betty Fiddler, Mary Harcourt, Sam Johnson, Miriam Jones, Peter McKeown, Jean Murphy, Jo Roberts, Cathy Spencer, Claire Taylor, Ray Toft, Margaret Watts.

Other Parishes

Marie Barnes, Catherine Donaldson, June Fallon, Pauline Heywood, James Hutchison, Archbishop Patrick Kelly, Margaret Mobbs, Sr Maire Moms, Elizabeth Nash, Margaret Smith, Pamela Watson.

Those who have died recently, especially:

Marie Morley, Brian Fitzgerald, Ken Armitage, Ian Buist.