

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**  
**Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.**

Phil 4:4-5

**COLLECT**  
O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.  
**Amen.**

**FIRST READING**  
A reading from the Prophet Isaiah. Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who have an anxious heart, 'Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Sion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM** Psalm 146(145):6c-7. 8-9a. 9b-10. R. cf. Isaiah 35:4

**R. Come, Lord, and save us.**

*or:*

**Alleluia.**

It is the LORD who preserves fidelity for ever, who does justice to those who are oppressed. It is he who gives bread to the hungry, the LORD who sets prisoners free.

It is the LORD who opens the eyes of the blind, the LORD who raises up those who are bowed down. It is the LORD who loves the just, the LORD who protects the stranger.

The LORD upholds the orphan and the widow, but thwarts the path of the wicked. The LORD will reign for ever, your God, O Sion, from age to age.

**SECOND READING**  
A reading from the Letter of Saint James. James 5:7-10

Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one

another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL**  
**Alleluia, alleluia.** Isaiah 61:1 (Luke 4:18)  
**The Spirit of the LORD is upon me; he has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor. Alleluia.**

**GOSPEL** Matthew 11:2-11  
The Lord be with you.  
**And with your spirit.**  
A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

At that time: When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'

And Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. 'What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you." 'Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.'

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**  
R. May the sacrifice of our worship, Lord, we pray, be offered to you unceasingly, to complete what was begun in sacred mystery and powerfully accomplish for us your saving work.  
R. Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON** Cf. Is 35:4  
**Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**  
We implore your mercy, Lord, that this divine sustenance may cleanse us of our faults and prepare us for the coming feasts.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

# Our Faith on Sunday

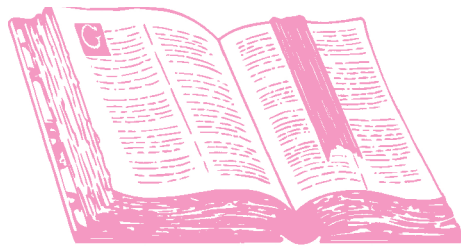
## GOSPEL REFLECTION



When John the Baptist wanted to know whether Jesus was the Messiah who had been promised, Jesus pointed to the blind who could now see, the lame who could walk, the lepers who were cleansed, the deaf who could hear, the dead who had been brought

back to life. Yes, Jesus promised eternal life, but he also responded to the suffering of those living in this world. The Christian message about salvation is not the "opium of the masses" claimed by Marx. It is not about putting up with suffering in this life for a promised reward in the next life. Taking Jesus as

Paul said: "We cannot better assure our eternal happiness than by living and dying in the service of the poor". What else could the commandment to love our neighbour mean if not feeling the hunger, thirsty, poverty of the other as if it were mine? Perhaps in the midst all the tinsel and lights it is time to re-focus on the real meaning of Christmas. Christ brings true joy into the world, the joy which blossoms in our hearts each time that we reach out to a neighbour in need.



POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL  
FRATELLI TUTTI  
BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL

### THE INJUSTICE OF WAR

262. Rules by themselves will not suffice if we continue to think that the solution to current problems is deterrence through fear or the threat of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. Indeed, "if we take into consideration the principal threats to peace and security with their many dimensions in this multipolar world of the twenty-first century as, for example, terrorism, asymmetrical conflicts, cybersecurity, environmental problems, poverty, not a few doubts arise regarding the inadequacy of nuclear deterrence as an effective response to such challenges. These concerns are even greater when we consider the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences that would follow from any use of nuclear weapons, with devastating, indiscriminate and uncontrollable effects, over time and space... We need also to ask ourselves how sustainable is a stability based on fear, when it actually increases fear and undermines relationships of trust between peoples. International peace and stability cannot be based on a false sense of security, on the threat of mutual destruction or total annihilation, or on simply maintaining a balance of power... In this context, the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons becomes both a challenge and a moral and humanitarian imperative... Growing interdependence and globalization mean that any response to the threat of nuclear weapons should be collective and concerted, based on mutual trust. This trust can be built only through dialogue that is truly directed to the common good and not to the protection of veiled or particular interests".<sup>244</sup> With the money spent on weapons and other military expenditures, let us establish a global fund<sup>245</sup> that can finally put an end to hunger and favour development in the most impoverished countries, so that their citizens will not resort to violent or illusory solutions, or have to leave their countries in order to seek a more dignified life.

244. Message to the United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons (23 March 2017): AAS 109 (2017), 394-396. 245. Cf. SAINT PAUL VI, Encyclical Letter Populorum Progressio (26 March 1967): AAS 59 (1967), 282.

### Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter DILEXIT NOS

Although the Scriptures preserve Jesus' words, ever alive and timely, there are moments when he speaks to us inwardly, calls us and leads us to a better place. That better place is his heart. There he invites us to find fresh strength and peace: "Come to me, all who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28). In this sense, he could say to his disciples, "Abide in me" (Jn 15:4).

Jesus' words show that his holiness did not exclude deep emotions. On various occasions, he demonstrated a love that was both passionate and compassionate. He could be deeply moved and grieved, even to the point of shedding tears. It is clear that Jesus was not indifferent to the daily cares and concerns of people, such as their weariness or hunger: "I have compassion for this crowd... they have nothing to eat... they will faint on the way, and some of them have come from a great distance" (Mk 8:2-3)

# PARISH COMMUNITIES OF



## ST GEORGE

Eastbourne Road  
Polegate



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(Answerphone service available)

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The Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No. 252878

## ST WILFRID

South Road  
Hailsham



### WEEKLY SERVICES

#### Third 'Gaudete' Sunday of Advent

#### Collection for Christmas Flowers Today

Sat 13th	10am	St Wilfrid's —	Open for Adoration and Confessions
	5.30pm	St Wilfrid's -	Advent Reconciliation Service
Sun 14th	9am	St George's —	Parish Communities' Intention
	10.30am	St Wilfrid's —	Edmund Ginn RIP
	3pm	St Wilfrid's -	Carol Service
Mon 15th	2.30pm	St George's —	Rosary Group - All Welcome
Tues 16th	10am	St George's -	Mervyn Lissenburg RIP
Wed 17th	10am	St Wilfrid's —	Jim Ayres RIP
Thurs 18th	10am	St George's —	Christina Gerrard RIP
Fri 19th	10am	St Wilfrid's —	Margaret Madams RIP

#### Fourth Sunday of Advent, 'O Oriens'

Sat 20th	10am	St Wilfrid's—	Open for Adoration and Confessions
Sun 21st	9am	St George's —	Tina Scanlon Anniversary RIP
	10.30am	St Wilfrid's —	James Leslie Westcar RIP

Confession on request before and after Mass or at other times by arrangement with Father Rory.

Unable to attend mass? The 10.30am St Wilfrid's mass is livestreamed when possible and can be accessed via the Parish Website or via the following: <https://saintsgeorgeandwilfrid.co.uk/online-masses-and-recordings/>

Facebook: [https://m.facebook.com/gary.westcar#\\_=\\_](https://m.facebook.com/gary.westcar#_=_)

**Newsletter items:** Please send to Jackie at [hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk), tel.841504  
or by hand marked NEWSLETTER, to Fr. Rory's House by 9am Wednesday.

Local Catholic Education Contacts: St Thomas a Becket Nursery School: Tel 01323 725977

St Thomas a Becket Primary School: Tel 01323 737221 St Richard's Catholic College, Bexhill: Tel 01424 731070

### USEFUL PARISH INFORMATION

St Wilfrid's Planned Giving Contact (01323) 832577

St George's Planned Giving Contact (01323) 487212

St George's & St. Wilfrid's

Finance Committee Treasurer Monika Beaver

Chairperson of the Finance Committee Gerry Palmer

**ALL CORRESPONDENCE VIA THE PRIEST'S HOUSE PLEASE**

Polegate Hall Hire (01323) 504753

Hailsham Hall Hire: (01323) 841504/Email at above address

**Make your offertory donations go further!** By simply signing up to the Gift Aid scheme, we can claim back an extra **25p** on every £1 you donate – **at no extra cost to you.** To join, contact Gerry today: [pfc.hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:pfc.hailsham@abdiocese.org.uk)

#### Parish Safeguarding Reps:

St George's: Maria - 07873759962

St Wilfrid's: Maria - 07873759962

**CROSSLINK CHURCHES TOGETHER, HAILSHAM:** Volunteer needed contact Father Rory

**Churches Together in Polegate/Willingdon/Hampden Park/Hydneye Contact:** Anne Bowe Tel: 07808 175455

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS those who are unwell & those named in the books in our churches**

Amy Jenkins, Lily May, Joshua Hardy, Peter & Teresa Zurenkas, Anne Holt, Margaret, Rosie Tuson, Lilian Summers, Sue Nye, Tom Woodrow-Spencer, Laurey Stimpson, Nicole McCutchan, Nellie Oakshott, Jean Molloy, Alan Smith, Julie Martin, Holly Leone, Deborah Osbourne Walker, Gill Standen, Letty Booth, Thomas Pailey, Thomas Guy, Michael O'Regan, Richard Streeter, Patricia Delaney, Graham, Pamela Swanston, Jean & Chris Littlewood, Jean Skelton, Jennifer, Peter Mitchell, Cecilia Hyland, Madeleine Waters, Andrew, Gerry Page and Steph Simons.

**Warm Welcome!** We're glad to have you at Mass, especially visitors.

New to the parish or looking to reconnect? Fill out a welcome form in the porch or speak to Fr. Rory - we'd love to meet you and help in any way!



**Deacon John Writes:**

The colour of the Advent candle we light this Sunday is rose - not pink. Rose signifies rejoicing, and signals a spirit of joyful hope during Lent and Advent. It breaks the more sombre tone of these penitential times of the year. This comes from Brother Hyacinth Cordell, a Dominican, who wrote about all this online several years ago. Br. Cordell noted that nature's cycle is comprised of two things: life and light. The seasons revolve around that—the rejuvenation of spring and summer, the desolation of fall and winter. Our liturgical seasons follow a similar pattern. "The dark colour of violet in Advent," he wrote, "harmonises well with the diminishing sunlight late in the year." It also points to royalty, and Christ as our King. "Rose," he wrote, "is a softening of violet. It is violet *approaching* white. In this sense, it *anticipates* the pure white of the Birth and Resurrection of Christ."

*Deacon John*

**Christmas Collection:** As I am sure many of you are aware, Catholic Priests do not receive a salary and rely on your generosity at Christmas and Easter as a thank you for all they do for us. It is also possible to claim gift aid on your donation if you are a UK taxpayer and that extra 25% will go directly to Father Rory. If you aren't part of a planned giving scheme then please use the "one off" gift aid envelopes located in the porch. You can also contribute via the digital collection plate at St Wilfrid's or via the QR code or donations website link

(<https://donate.mydona.com/st-wilfrids-churchhailsham>) using the "Christmas Collections" tab.



**Parishioners at St Wilfrid's** have decided not to send each other Christmas cards this year, but instead will donate the money to Bethlehem University (a Catholic co-educational institution whose mission is to provide quality higher education to the people of Palestine). There will be a collection of these donations on Sunday 14th December by cash or via the digital plate.

**James Leslie Westcar** 18th Anniversary RIP on 13th Dec 2025.

**Christmas Flowers:** We will be having a collection at both churches this weekend to help with the cost of the flowers in the church over the Christmas period, any donations are gratefully received. Thank you.

**Christmas Trees:** The trees are now beautifully decorated thanks to our usual volunteers. We really do need willing volunteers to come forward to help for any future events. Please do ask if you would like to help in the future.

**Appeal for Mince Pies:** Donations of mince pies would be greatly appreciated for the Carol Service on 14th December at St Wilfrid's. Thank you very much for your continued support.

**St Wilfrid's Christmas Lunch:** This Wed 17th Dec, 1pm at the Kings Head - Horsebridge. £25 pp, which will include everything. Last chance to join us. Please see Sally or Judy for menu choice.

**Advent Reconciliation Service:** We welcome Joseph, Maya, Noah, Oliwia, and Paulina to our First Holy Communion Programme. They will be leading us in an **Advent Reconciliation Service** at 5:30 p.m. on 13th December at St Wilfrid's, during which they will receive this sacrament for the first time. We invite everyone in our community to join us in supporting them as they help us prepare our hearts for the Christmas season.

**Mill Hill Red Boxes** to be brought to church and handed in to be counted. Make sure your name is on the box label or we will be unable to give you a receipt, which is important. The next counting will be June 2026.

**Dates for your Diary:**

Sat 13th Dec, 5.30pm - Advent Reconciliation Service, St W's Church.  
Sat 13th Dec, 3.30pm - Christmas Melodies Concert, St G' Church.  
Sun 14th Dec, 3pm - St W's Christmas Carol Service, St W's Church.  
Wed 17th Dec, 1pm - St W's Christmas Lunch, Kings Head.  
Thurs 29th Jan, 2-4pm - Over 50's Club, St W's Hall.  
Fri 30th Jan, 11-12pm - Parish Bereavement Group, St W's Hall.  
Sun 25th Jan, 10am - Community Charity Breakfast, St G's Hall.

**ST WILFRID'S CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE**

This afternoon at 3pm. Please do come and join us to help start Christmas with this happy service. Refreshments are available after in our hall, and don't forget the very popular 'BAGS', prize every time, £2 Adults, £1 Children.

**Bambinelli Sunday - Today - 14<sup>th</sup> Dec, St G's 9am & St W's 10.30am:** Everyone invited, especially children, to bring their baby Jesus crib figure to either of our parish masses on the Third Sunday of Advent. A traditional blessing of the Bambinelli (baby Jesus) will be given. Then they go home to be wrapped up and placed under the tree. The blessed Bambinelli are then unwrapped by you as the first present on Christmas morning.

**Rorate Caeli Mass**, celebrated by only candlelight every Friday in Advent at 6.30am at Our Lady of Ransom. This peaceful, beautiful tradition in honour of Our Lady is followed by breakfast in the hall. All are welcome. Families and schoolchildren are warmly encouraged to come - many attend in school uniform before heading on to school or work, with local journeys and trains still perfectly manageable. More details can be found here: [Rorate Caeli Mass Information](#)

**Jubilee of Prisoners** takes place from December 12th to 14th as part of the Jubilee of Hope. You are asked to pray for Prisoners and the Justice System so that through our prayers we may bring them Peace and Hope.

**The December edition of the Eastbourne St Leonards Parish Monthly Newsletter** is now available. Please pick up a copy from the porch if you haven't already done so. It can also be accessed online through the new parish website; [West Hub Newsletter – December 2025](#)  
[Catholic Parish of Eastbourne & St Leonards Website](#)

**St George's quarterly community meeting:** We will not have this in Dec, as there is a lot going on already. Also, to help align the meetings to allow feedback from the monthly Parish Hub Meetings we have decided to hold them on the second Sunday of the month instead of the first. 2026 meetings will therefore be after mass on Sunday: January 11th; April 12th; July 12th; and October 11th.

**Sunday 7th December - Mass Attendance:**  
St Wilfrid's 93      St George's 82