

*Thank you for supporting the people of this church, parish and wider community through prayer. Please use the prayers and ideas as you find most helpful. There are extra copies for sharing at the back of church and on St Mary's Church website. If you would like to receive the diary electronically, please email Kirsteen Robson (see below). The digital edition also has **links** to related material of interest. Thank you to all who contributed ideas and prayers. Everyone is invited to share suggestions for January's diary (by 11<sup>th</sup> December) with Kirsteen ([prayerdiary@stmaryswarwick.org.uk](mailto:prayerdiary@stmaryswarwick.org.uk) or 07799 682872).*

### Sun 1

#### First Sunday of Advent

Heavenly Father, during this season of waiting, help us prepare our hearts to receive your son. We pray especially today for all making Christingles, sharing in Carol services, starting Archbishop Justin's **#FollowTheStar** reflections or other Advent readings, and for all who will host our Posada figures. Bless Christian and Elliott on their baptism day. As they grow may they meet you in Jesus and know you to be their God.

### Mon 2

At the start of its fourth year, we give thanks for the Prayer Diary and the community of all who use and share it. Strengthen and grow the network of those who pray in and for this town.

### Tue 3

We pray for all schools and organisations gathering in local churches for Carol services and concerts. May they hear afresh the story of your love for all people, and take away the good news that Jesus is not just for Christmas. At St Mary's we ask you to bless King's High Landor Association (3<sup>rd</sup>), Warwick Prep (11<sup>th</sup>), Warwick Juniors (16<sup>th</sup>), Warwick Seniors (17<sup>th</sup>), King's High (19<sup>th</sup>), Warwick Lower School (19<sup>th</sup>), Myton School (20<sup>th</sup>).

### Wed 4

As children in nurseries, schools and churches across the land prepare for nativity plays, may the Christmas story find a home in their hearts. Bless **Radford Road Church's** exhibition of 120 nativity sets from around the world this week, and may the 500 knitted angels they have sent out into the community (bearing a Christmas blessing and service details) draw people in.

### Thu 5

Creator God, we thank you for making people in your image, complete with the capacity and instinct to create and communicate. Bless those who will share something of themselves in concerts and recitals this month; enrich and inspire all who will come to listen. At St Mary's we pray for The Contemporary Choir (5<sup>th</sup>), Jacob Lee (6<sup>th</sup>), Sam Young (7<sup>th</sup>), Pauline Quirke Academy (12<sup>th</sup>), Stile Antico (12<sup>th</sup>), Armonico Consort (18<sup>th</sup>), Da Capo (19<sup>th</sup>), Mark Swinton (20<sup>th</sup>), St James's Singers (20<sup>th</sup>) and The Snowman (23<sup>rd</sup>).

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**Fri 6**

Nicholas

Today we give thanks for **St Nicholas' Church** and pray for its members, ministry and mission. Bless Sunday's Patronal Festival celebrations, and clients of the **Leamington Night Shelter**, who will receive the congregation's gift of festive shoeboxes.

**Sat 7**

We give thanks for all who support those affected by ongoing conflict in the Holy Land. We pray especially for the charities to be visited by Bishop John and parishioners from our Diocese on their 2020 Pilgrimage, including **The Parents Circle**, **The Vincent de Paul orphanage in Bethlehem**, Christ Church Nazareth, the Anglican archdiocese of Jerusalem, and the Rosary Sisters Gaza. May tomorrow's Outward Giving Collection help them bring your hope and healing. We pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

**Sun 8**

**Second Sunday  
of Advent**

We pray for all who mourn, especially those who are facing their first Christmas of bereavement. We lift up all who have dedicated lights or hearts in memory of a loved one on the Christmas trees at Myton Hospice, in Market Square and in St Mary's. May these be symbols of memorial, love, celebration and hope. Comfort and bless all attending services of remembrance today: **Light up a Life** (Myton Hospice) and **Warwick Lights of Love** (the Square).

**Mon 9**

Lord, we pray that the earth may be filled with the knowledge of your glory, thanking you for all who share your story through music. Bless and sustain them as they serve you in church and as heralds in the town. As we pray for St Mary's musicians, we lift up all who will hear them this month: at the Lord Leycester, in Kenilworth, at the Castle, Welcombe Hotel, Warwick Hospital, Mallory Court Hotel, and at the many services in church.

**Tue 10**

We give thanks for **Warwick Methodist Church's** collection of gifts for the Way Ahead Group and residents of Homewood, and food for the Warwick Foodbank. Bless their Community Carol Service on Thursday, that through the singing, readings and gift-giving, your name may be praised and your love shown.

**Wed 11**

As our new nave chairs are set out, we thank you for the gifts that funded them. Bless the chairs for your service, with the work in your name that their manoeuvrability will help us do.

**Thu 12**

God of all wisdom, ruler above all, we place this election into your hands. Protect the victors from pride and the rest from resentment. Give politicians and people a deep desire to set aside differences to work together for the common good.

**Fri 13**

We pray for all who are finding life difficult, that they may be given strength, hope and comfort. Help us to treat others with compassion, mindful that we may not perceive their burdens.

**Sat 14**

Sustain and inspire all who are leading worship this month. At St Mary's we remember especially Vaughan, Alycia, Doreen, the Crib Service organisers, Bible readers and intercession leaders.

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**Sun 15**

**Third Sunday  
of Advent**

As the **Prison Fellowship** celebrates 25 years of its **Angel Tree** programme in England and Wales, we thank you for all this does to help repair and maintain the relationship between prisoners and their children. May they bring joy to those who are missing a parent or child because of a custodial sentence.

**Mon 16**

We thank you for all who bring the light of your love to others in practical ways through **Helping Hands** in Warwick and Leam. With them we ask for your blessing on each person sharing today's Soup Kitchen Christmas Meal, and all attending the group for vulnerable women as they emerge from the darkness of struggles with drugs, alcohol, domestic violence and other tragedies. We pray for all receiving toys and shoeboxes, who would otherwise go without, and ask you to comfort, heal and strengthen clients who will spend Christmas in rehab.

**Tue 17**

Bless all who live and work in Harris Road, Haywood Road, Broxell Close, Wedgnock Lane, Banner Hill and Rouncil Lane. May the Christ-light shine in their lives and in their hearts.

**Wed 18**

*Where there is love and cherishing, there God is.* Five years on from the closure of The Rock on the Woodloes, we ask you to uphold and encourage those who 'miss the church presence' on the estate. Thank you that they still meet as a group at the Woodloes Tavern, enjoying regular coffee mornings, and a time of worship at T4U on Wednesday afternoons. Bless and grow their ministry in that place: through the prayer request book under the bar, their monthly outward giving, and through whatever you are calling them to next.

**Thu 19**

As we pray the Lord's Prayer, show us where we fall short of the example Jesus gave us; when our prayers are shallow, our worship half-hearted, our thoughts unworthy or our service grudging. As we examine the expectations we have of others, help us forgive with the generosity we would hope to receive.

**Fri 20**

On the **UN International Day for Human Solidarity**, we pray that all will play their part, of whatever size, to end poverty.

**Sat 21**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, we remember all whose lives or loved ones were lost, and pause to reflect on the light of love that shone out into the darkness of terror as the people of Lockerbie, still reeling from their share in the disaster, opened their doors and hearts to the devastated relations of the passengers. We pray for peace among the nations, and give thanks for and ask you to bless all who work tirelessly to keep our airways safe.

**Sun 22**

**Fourth Sunday  
of Advent**

As we remember Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, we ask that all who travel this Christmas time may go safely. We pray too for the work of the **Donkey Sanctuary** and all they do to care for rescued and retired animals. We give thanks for the recent donation made to the charity in Mary Barnes' memory.

**Mon 23**

We pray for everyone with loved ones living overseas, that they may find ways to celebrate together in spirit across the miles.

**Tue 24**

**Christmas Eve**

Hear our prayer for all attending Christmas services: may every heart be open to receive your love and to respond. We pray for those coming for the first time and any who feel neutral, nervous or sceptical: may word and worship bear witness to your glory.

**Wed 25**

**Christmas Day**

Lord, amid the joyful bustle of Christmas celebrations, draw us aside for a time today to sit with Mary, and allow all else to recede as we gaze on the Child in her arms. May we see your miraculous gift of life – heaven touching earth... the tears of love on those soft cheeks... the weight of the world on those swaddled shoulders... the light of salvation and peace in those trusting eyes... O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

**Thu 26**

**Stephen, Deacon,  
First Martyr**

Today we pray for the 40,000 men and women who have been discharged from the armed forces in the last 20 years on medical grounds, in many cases losing both a job and a life they loved. Strengthen them as they adapt to civilian life. Bless the **Help for Heroes'** mission to support wounded veterans and their families.

**Fri 27**

**John, Apostle**

Lord Jesus, may your gospel message penned by John inspire and guide us on our journey of faith. Show us when to soar above for the big picture and when to swoop down to focus on the detail.

**Sat 28**

**The Holy  
Innocents**

We thank you for the gift of children and childhood, and ask you to comfort all who live in fear, poverty or pain. We hold in prayer today those spending much of their childhood in hospital. Thank you for acts of kindness great and small that give hope and help, from 30 years of customers donating their change to Ronald McDonald Houses to offer parents free accommodation and support near their children's wards, to JM Barrie, who gifted future rights of *Peter Pan* to Great Ormond Street Hospital.

**Sun 29**

**First Sunday  
of Christmas**

Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise him at church, home, school or work! Praise him at rest and on the move! Praise him in the sunshine and on dismal days; in sickness and in health! While we have life and breath, let us praise the Lord!

**Mon 30**

With the **CMM Sisters** in Tanzania we pray for the protection of the planet. Help all people find ways to live more lightly, for the sake of those whose lives and livelihoods are most sensitive to the effects of climate change. Sustain the people of East Africa, as they endure hardship and poorer harvests caused by rains that fall less, late, or out of season. We give thanks that the Sisters have had some success with new crops such as avocado, and cocoa at their House at Lake Nyassa.

**Tues 31**

Lord, as we stand astride the years, nurture in us an appreciation of the present and your presence with us here. As we journey on, whether we turn to the right or to the left, may our ears hear your voice behind us, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'