



# THE ARCHANGEL

St. Michael's School and Parish • Harts Lane • Burghclere • RG20 9JW

No. 15

January 2019

## To Remain Faithful

Dear parishioners,

A New Year of grace begins, the 2019th since the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Dom Guéranger explains in his booklet "The Christian Sense of History" that God's coming is the pivot point of world history and that there can be no proper understanding of human history before or after Christ, without reference to Christ and to His redemptive mission. Human history is not simply the story of the rise and fall of successive civilisations. Rather, it is the story of divine grace lost and regained, with the fate of civilisations determined accordingly. As the Carthusian motto reads: "Stat Crux dum volvitur orbis": The Cross stands firm while the world turns.

After many centuries of divine grace regained, present times tell the story of grace lost once more. As man moves further and further from the knowledge, love and obedience to God our Creator and Redeemer, moral and material chaos gathers momentum. The world has become spiritually barren, a place of temptation and sin.

Some souls wish they were placed upon this earth in more congenial times, when Christ was known and loved, where routines were moulded according to the liturgical calendar and when it seemed easier to save one's soul.

We must never forget, however, that our heavenly Father, who loved us so much as to give us His only begotten Son, most certainly chose a time in history when we would have the best chance of working out our salvation. His grace is ever sufficient to the task He sets us, and increases in proportion to the spiritual obstacles we must face and overcome.

It is not exaggerated to presume, however, that the present time requires, perhaps, greater supernatural effort and dedication than times past. We live under a regime of covert persecution. Worse still, our world revels in so much concupiscence of the flesh, concupiscence of the eyes and pride of life. St. John the Apostle further states: "We know that we are of God, and the whole world is seated in wickedness." (1 John 5:19).

There is little doubt that in the face of such fierce rebellion against God and against Christ and His redemptive mission, great holiness is required to remain faithful to our baptismal vows. Whereas, in bygone days, routine devotion may have sufficed to save one's soul, in times of persecution the stakes increase. Only those who truly love will persevere unto salvation.

God has elected us, through no merit of our own, to practice not ordinary but extraordinary virtue. He has saved our coming into being for a time when we would not be allowed to content ourselves with mediocre service. The world is such that it takes very much courage, devotion and generosity to remain faithful. We are called to witness our Lord and Saviour in a world that resolutely chooses to eradicate all memory and trace of Him and of His passage among us.

We are very privileged to be called upon to practice not servile but filial love towards our Lord. Nothing else will suffice today. It is this quality of love and service that we must instil in our children if they are to remain faithful. They will need such courage and cheerful tenacity to take on the responsibilities of their baptismal vows and to remain faithful to them in all things, especially when challenged by probable poverty and hardship. It is tough to be a Catholic today.

Children need very holy parents and grandparents today, who, through the penance and sanctity of their lives, earn the store of graces they need to confront the world and its Godless ways. Thus does God grant us a wonderful medley of graces, so rich and abundant that we have, paradoxically, a greater chance of salvation than at better times in history. Let us treasure them and use them generously by practising hidden virtues of resolute piety and love of neighbour. When sacraments are scarce and hard to come by, these ensure a continual flow of divine grace to the soul.

May our loving Saviour grant you all a very blessed New Year.

Fr. John Brucciani, Prior

# The Last Visitor - A Story

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, perhaps this story will deepen our appreciation of what the Incarnation reveals, from the very beginning:

It was Bethlehem, the end of a long night. The star had just disappeared, and the last pilgrim had left the stable. The Virgin arranged the straw: at last the Child could sleep. But who can sleep the night of Christmas?

Gently the door opened, so gently that it seemed more like the wind was pushing it than a hand. A woman appeared on the threshold, covered with rags. She was so old and wrinkled that you would have thought her mouth was yet another deep wrinkle in a face furrowed and worn by timeless sorrow.

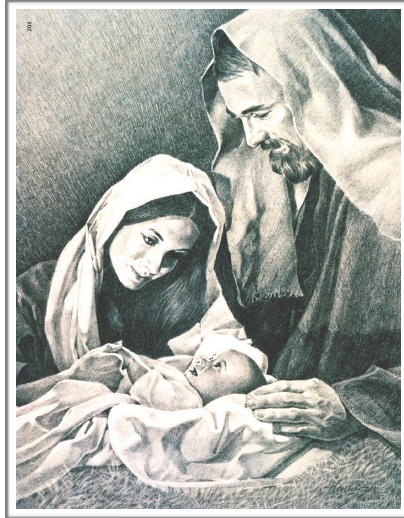
A fearful chill came over Mary when she saw her, as if a malicious fairy had come into the room. Fortunately Jesus was asleep. The ass and ox placidly munched their hay, as if there was nothing unusual, as if they had known this strange woman forever.

The Virgin did not take her eyes off her. The woman walked slowly, each step seeming to take centuries. She approached the manger. Thank God, Jesus was still sleeping. How can one sleep on Christmas night?

Suddenly the Child opened his eyes. His mother was completely astonished to see that the eyes of the old woman and the eyes of the Babe were exactly the same, they both shone with the same hope. The old woman sank down on the straw. One hand disappeared into her rags, looking for something.

Slowly, tiredly, the old woman pulled out of her clothes a little object hidden in her hand, and she gave it to the Child. After the treasures of the Wise Men and the offerings of the Shepherds, what could this new present be?

The stranger remained bent over the manger, seemingly in silent conversation with the unfrightened Child. Then the woman stood up as if relieved of some great burden. Her shoulders were no longer bent. She held her head high and her face seemed to have returned to the miraculous beauty of her youth.



She turned from the crib, smiled at Mary, and went out through the door into the dawning day. Now Mary could see the mysterious present.

The women had given the Child a small apple, the apple of the world's first sin and of every sin that has followed since. The apple shined in the hands of the new-born, like the globe of the new world that dawned, now that the Savior was come into the world. Eve had come to worship the Child born of her blood.

*Sons and daughters of Eve, during this time of Christmas, come to the crib and there lay down that for which Christ came into this world. For He became man in order to take upon Himself our sins. But this He may do only if we freely offer our sins to Him with a contrite and grateful heart.*



## Memorial Poinsettias Christmastide

### Mass of the Circumcision

*On the Feast of the Circumcision, Octave Day of Christmas, Holy Mass was offered for and in memory of the following souls. Many thanks for your kind offering*

|                           |                                  |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Stephan Patrick Keating   | John Williams                    |
| Agnes Mary Keating        | Robert & Josephine Jackson       |
| Bernadine Mary LaChapelle | Ronald Warwick                   |
| John Smallwood            | James Driscoll                   |
| Rudy LaChapelle           | Doreen Driscoll                  |
| Percy Moore               | Irene Warwick                    |
| Sadie Moore               | John Warwick                     |
| Ronnie Blyth              | Parents                          |
| Victor Blyth              | Keith Batten                     |
| Marjorie Morris           | Edward Stratton                  |
| Hyacinth Morris           | Pauline Coward                   |
| Elise Barton-Lister       | Joseph Peter Kamau               |
| Edward Barton Lister      | Hector & Eileen Morley           |
| Robin Morris              | Ron & Margery Delafield          |
| John Williams             | Jack, Mollie, Lillian Wilkinson, |
| William Richards & Arlene | John O'Byrne, Brian Boynes       |
| King                      | Blatchford Grandparents          |
| Janek Brzoza              | Williams Grandparents            |

# Bric-a-brac

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## Plaque in room in Santa Marta, Vatican City

I am the Light – and you do not see Me.  
I am the Way – and you do not follow Me.  
I am the Truth – and you do not believe in Me.  
I am the Life – and you do not seek Me.  
I am the Master – and you do not listen to Me.  
I am the Head – and you do not obey Me.  
I am your God – and you do not pray to Me.  
I am the great Lover – and you do not love Me.  
Should you be unhappy – do not put the blame on Me!

## How Many Wives?

A young altar boy was serving his first wedding. After the service, his dad asked him, "So, my lad, how many wives did the priest say a man can have?"

"Sixteen," the boy responded.

His father was amazed. "How did you work that one out?"

"Easy," the little boy said. "All you have to do is add it up like the priest said: 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer."

## Genuine Announcement Found in a Newsletter

"Even before it started snowing, numbers dropped 25% last Sunday, probably because of the epidemic of 'flu and colds. From the barrage of noise as a result of coughing, nose-blowing, and throat-clearing (one individual about twice every minute, even through two minutes of the Consecration), it sounded as if perhaps another 25% should not have been there, or practised the adage: 'Coughs and sneezes spread diseases - so trap those germs in your handkerchieves', and cut down noise!"

## Acquiring and Exercising Authority

A priest once wrote down a simple recipe on how to acquire and exercise authority, whether parental or professional. Speak little - think much - explain clearly - act with tact - listen and examine comments - expect obedience - stand firm.

## Prayer with the Eyes

My Lord and my God, use my eyes this day to bless all that I see. Whomever my eyes rest upon, may they receive a conversion of heart. For those who already know and love You fully, may they grow ever deeper. Allow each person to be filled with Your joy, mercy, and healing love. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

## St. Theresa of Lisieux on Frequent Communion

"Remember that our Lord is there in the tabernacle just for you, for you alone, and that He is consumed with a great longing to come into your heart. Pay no heed to the devil, despise him, and go without fear to receive Jesus, the God of peace and love.

I can hear you saying, "Therese does not know in what a miserable state I am, that is why she thinks as she does".... But she does know, she guesses all, and she repeats that you can go without fear to receive your only true friend. She has also passed through the martyrdom of scruples but was given the grace to continue going to Holy Communion even when she thought that she had sinned grievously. She saw that it was the only way to drive the devil away; if he sees that he is wasting his time, he leaves us alone.

If, as you tell me, you can only find rest kneeling before the tabernacle, you could not possibly offend our Lord so grievously as not to be able to receive Him. It is lack of confidence that wounds the Sacred Heart. Pray hard that your best years may not be frittered away in empty fears. We have only the brief moments of this life in which to work for the glory of God; the devil is aware of this, and so tries to make us waste them on useless work. If you want to be cured, the only remedy is frequent, very frequent, Communion." (Private Letters)

## Quotes for Parents to Encourage their Children

The early bird catches the worm.

Well begun is half done.

If you've never run aground, you've never been anywhere!

All experience is education for the soul.

A stumble may prevent a fall.

If you would be rich in a year, you may be hanged in six months.

A penny saved is a penny earned.

Avoid a cure that is worse than the disease.

Do good to thy friend to keep him, to thy enemy to gain him.

If you can't bite, better not show your teeth.

Interest on debt grows without rain.

Never spend your money before you have it.

The best cure for a short temper is a long walk.

Marry in haste, repent at leisure.

A stitch in time saves nine.

Change yourself and fortune will change.

Great actions are not always true sons of great and mighty resolutions.

Every tear has a smile behind it.

**WEEKLY CONFESSIONS**

- Saturday: 11:00
- 1st Friday during Holy Hour
- Sunday before Masses

**BENEDICTION & ROSARY**

Sunday 18:00

**CHAPEL CLEANING - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.**

**SATURDAYS - 2:30 PM**

**PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP CLEAN FROM TIME TO TIME. IT IS ALWAYS THE SAME PERSONS WHO DO IT, AND THEY NEED HELP. GOD'S HOUSE IS WORTH OUR BEST EFFORTS.**



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**SATURDAY 12TH JANUARY 2019  
MONTHLY NATIONAL DAYS OF  
PRAYER AND FASTING  
FOR LIFE**



Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December  
The Vigil of The  
Immaculate Conception

**Join us in Prayer and Fasting:**

**Fasting**

**Fast from all food except bread and water for the day**

Or

Fast from a particular food or luxury, e.g. chocolate, alcohol, cigarettes, TV.

Fast from whatever you can given your state of health etc, but make sure it is something that involves a sacrifice to yourself.

**Prayer**

**We are asking people to say a Rosary (or an extra Rosary if you say it daily already).**

You could also offer an extra effort such as going to Mass (or an extra Mass) on the day, or going to Adoration. You can even pray before a closed tabernacle if Adoration is not available near you.

*And He said to them; This kind (of demon) can go out by nothing, but by prayer and fasting. (Gospel of Mark 9:29)*

On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December please pray and fast for the end of abortion and euthanasia. Your prayer and fasting is urgently needed. For information on the days of Prayer and Fasting see;

**[www.GoodCounselNetwork.com](http://www.GoodCounselNetwork.com)**

*And the people of Ninevah believed in God; they proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least...God saw their efforts to renounce their evil ways. And God relented about the disaster which He had threatened to bring on them, and He did not bring it. (Jonah 3:5,10)*

This poster was produced by Sackcloth and Ashes at The Good Counsel Network

|    | Liturgical Calendar January 2019                | SMS                       |
|----|---|---------------------------|
| 1  | Circumcision of Our Lord                        | 8:00 /12:00 (sung)        |
| 2  | Holy Name of Jesus                              | 8:00                      |
| 3  | Feria   | 8:00                      |
| 4  | Feria -1st Fri - Holy Hour 6:00 PM              | 8:00 / 19:00              |
| 5  | Saturday of Our Lady. - 1st Sat.                | 7:30 / 12:00              |
| 6  | <b>The Epiphany of the Lord</b>                 | 7:30 Low                  |
|    |   | 9:00 Sung                 |
|    |   | 18:00 Benediction         |
| 7  | Feria - Mass of 1st Sunday after Epiphany       | 8:00                      |
| 8  | Feria   | 7:15                      |
| 9  | Feria   | 7:15                      |
| 10 | Feria   | 7:15                      |
| 11 | Feria   | 7:15                      |
| 12 | Saturday of Our Lady                            | 7:30 / 12:00              |
| 13 | <b>The Holy Family</b>                          | 7:30 Low                  |
|    | 2nd Collection for SPUC                         | 9:00 Low                  |
|    |   | 17:30 Vespers/Benediction |
| 14 | St. Hilary, Bishop, Confessor & Doctor          | 7:15 am                   |
| 15 | St. Paul, the First Hermit, Confessor           | 7:15 am                   |
| 16 | St. Ubaldus, Bishop & Confessor                 | 7:15 am                   |
| 17 | St. Anthony, Abbot                              | 7:15 am                   |
| 18 | Feria   | 7:15 am                   |
| 19 | Saturday of Our Lady - PTA Meeting 14:30        | 7:30 / 12:00              |
| 20 | <b>Second Sunday after Epiphany</b>             | 7:30 Low                  |
|    |   | 9:00 Sung                 |
|    |   | 17:30 Vespers/Benediction |
| 21 | St. Agnes, Virgin & Martyr                      | 7:15 am                   |
| 22 | Ss. Vincent & Anastasius, Martyrs               | 7:15 am                   |
| 23 | St. Raymond of Peñafort                         | 7:15 am                   |
| 24 | St. Timothy, Bishop & Martyr                    | 7:15 am                   |
| 25 | Conversion of St. Paul                          | 7:15 am                   |
| 26 | St. Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr                   | 7:30 / 12:00              |
| 27 | <b>Third Sunday after Epiphany</b>              | 7:30 Low                  |
|    | Exeat   | 9:00 Low                  |
|    |   | 17:30 Vespers/Benediction |
| 28 | St. Peter Nolasco, Confessor                    | 7:15 am                   |
| 29 | St. Francis de Sales, Bishop, Conf. & Doct.     | 7:15 am                   |
| 30 | St. Martina, Virgin & Martyr                    | 7:15 am                   |
| 31 | St. John Bosco, Confessor                       | 7:15 am                   |
| 1  | St. Ignatius of Antioch - 1st Fri - H. Hour 6PM | 7:15 / 19:00              |
| 2  | <b>Purification of the BVM 1st Sat.</b>         | 7:30 / 12:00 (sung)       |
|    | Procession at 12:00 mass                        |                           |

**Rosary for St. Michael's School**

Thanks to parents' initiative, the holy rosary will be recited between Masses each Sunday for the protection and welfare of St. Michael's School. This extra spiritual help comes at a time when State intervention seeks to erode the fundamental parental right to their children's education.

Evening benediction and rosary will continue as usual.