



The Parish of Christ the King Southport

- PART OF THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH -



Members of: The World Assembly of Old Catholic Bishops | Churches Together in Britain and Ireland |
Confraternity of St Lazarus | Faith in Europe |

PARISH NEWSLETTER ISSUE NO: 209

DECEMBER 2025 | DONATION 80p

Episcopal Rector: Rt Rev Dr Geoffrey S Robinson CJ

Telephone: (01704) 512170

Email: revgeoffreyrobinson@gmail.com

The church today faces significant criticism from various sources, both within and outside its communities. A major challenge is the erosion of biblical authority, as secular ideologies and cultural trends increasingly undermine the role of Scripture in faith and practice, leading to doctrinal confusion and moral compromise. This is compounded by a broader cultural shift toward moral relativism and scepticism toward absolute truth, which weakens the church's prophetic voice and spiritual vitality.

Criticism often arises from internal issues such as poor governance, unclear values, internal politics, and theological inconsistencies, which can create a toxic environment that exhausts leaders and confuses members. Additionally, scandals involving abuse of power and institutional corruption have damaged trust, particularly amongst the younger generations.

The church also grapples with the challenge of moral and changing cultural issues leaving congregations and some liberal minded bishops struggling to hold to biblical truths and the unchangeable faith of our forefathers.

At Christmas though it is important to maintain a balance of the human and the divine, ensuring that secular traditions like decorating trees, watching films, or exchanging gifts—should not overshadow the spiritual focus. Christians then, should celebrate Christmas by focusing on the birth of Jesus Christ and the significance of His Incarnation which are recorded in Matthew 1:18–2:21 or Luke 2:1–40. Keeping the true story of Christmas at the forefront of the season by observing Advent, the four-week period leading up to Christmas, can help us prepare spiritually for Christ's arrival.

So, at this time when so many criticisms are aimed at the church and her servants, I implore you to remember and reflect Christ's love, emphasizing generosity and thoughtfulness over materialism, perhaps by displaying acts of service, such as donating to charity or volunteering, and by doing so will be

aligning ourselves with Christ's teachings to love and serve others.

So may you be filled with the wonder of Our Lady, the obedience of Saint Joseph, the joy of the Angels, the eagerness of the Shepherds the determination of the Magi, and the peace of the Christ Child be with you and throughout the ages of ages. So may Almighty God, +Father, +Son and +Holy Spirit bless you. Amen.

CARTOON CORNER:



PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Sheila Hogarth | Ruth Barr | Lesley Fudge | Thelma Thompson | Clarice Shaw | Sally Hayes | Bishop Gerard & Pam Crane | Brian & Brigitte Duffett | Eileen Duffy | Lilian King | Geoff Lamb | Bev Chester | Shelley Coulter | Thelma Dunkley | Sylvia Holgate | James Hardman | Alex Wiseman | John Illingworth | Harry Seymour | Lawrence & Penny Bell-wright OSR | Randle Cutts | Joyce Kelford | John Beesley | Pauline Bayley | Michael Rogers | Carol (Caz) Arnold | The Park Family (Mary, Matthew, Charlotte & Edward) | Julie Corner | Elaine & Phillip Coope | Ray & Jean Wilde | Deacon Adrien Sulo | David Bainbridge | John & Gwen Simons | Maureen Fitzgerald | Stanley Lewis | Gordon McFarlane | Norma Cropper | Bridget (Bridy) McConnell | Fr Baltasar, priest (Spain) | Lorna Meredith | Stuart & June Price | Pauline Weatherall | Gordon Buchanan | Isobel & Grahame Smith | Dawn Adair | Martin Sparkes | Annis Buchanan | John Jackson | Max & Christine Kitchen | Farrar Campbell | Graham | John & Anya Sharpe | Valerie Hogarth | Chris Emmott | Christine Smith | Hannah Lewis-Salmon | Mary Parkinson | Stanley Wesley | Angela Basak | |



A Holy & Blessed Christmas to all our Readers

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



I heard the bells on Christmas day
their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And though how, as the day had come,
the belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along the unbroken song
Of peace of earth, good will to men.

Till ringing, singing on its way
the world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime
Of peace of earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head
"There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong and mocks the song
Of peace of earth, good will to men."

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
the wrong shall fail, the right prevail
With peace on earth, good will to men."

HOLY MASS WITH ANOINTING OF THE SICK –

Takes place on **Sunday 14th December** at the Oratory of Christ the King, Southport at 11.00am

COOKS CORNER

Broccoli and bacon salad with creamy dressing



Ingredients:

150g streaky bacon rashers |
800g broccoli, cut into small
florets | 125g (1/2 cup) whole-egg
mayonnaise

| 1 tsp fresh lemon juice | 2 tsp

wholegrain mustard | 1 tsp Dijon mustard | 200g red
grapes, halved | 2 green shallots, thinly sliced | 2 tsp
slivered almonds, toasted

Method:

Step 1 Place the bacon in a large frying pan. Heat over medium-high heat. Cook, turning once, for 4-5 minutes or until golden and crisp. Remove from pan. Coarsely chop.

Step 2 Meanwhile, bring a saucepan of water to the boil over high heat. Add the broccoli. Cook for 3 minutes or until bright green and tender-crisp. Drain. Refresh under cold water. Drain.

Step 3 Combine the mayonnaise, lemon juice and mustards in a small bowl.

Step 4 Arrange the broccoli on a serving platter. Season. Scatter with bacon, grapes, shallot and almonds. Drizzle with dressing. Gently toss to coat.



LONELINESS AT CHRISTMAS

To help lonely people at Christmas, we could offer companionship through simple gestures, volunteer our time with a charity, or invite someone to join our festivities. Small acts of kindness can make such a significant difference.

Individual Actions

A simple phone call, a text, or a handwritten card to a lonely person can mean a great deal. A short, genuine conversation asking how they are doing goes a long way in acknowledging their existence and showing you care.

Check on Neighbours: Pop in for a cup of tea, watch some Christmas TV together, or ask if they need help with errands like grocery shopping, posting letters, or picking up prescriptions. This is especially important for elderly individuals or those with mobility issues.

Extend an Invitation: If we have a spare chair at our Christmas dinner or are hosting a get-together, consider inviting a lonely neighbour, friend, or acquaintance to join.

The most important thing we can do is to not pass people by; simply acknowledging them and making time for human connection can have a profound impact.

Help in a Crisis:

For those who are severely struggling, provide information for support services such as the Samaritans (116 123) or The Silver Line (0800 4 70 80 90 for older people), which operate 24/7 during the holidays.

'While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks', and what's the story?

The Christmas carol describing the Annunciation to the Shepherds is a favourite for many. But how well do you know it?

The nativity hymn, 'While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks', was first published in *A Supplement to the New Version of Psalms* in 1700, the lyrics a collaborative effort from Irish poets Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady. It claims to be the first Christmas hymn authorised to be sung by the Anglican Church and today, it's one of only 16 works in the 1700 supplement to still be sung. As for the melody, the popular carol is sung to a variety of tunes, but two seem to have stuck. For festive singers in the UK, the hymn is generally sung to the tune of 'Winchester Old'. But across the pond, carollers opt for a variation on an aria by Handel, taken from his opera *Siroe*, arranged by Lowell Mason.



"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." – Isaiah 9:6