

CRUCIS

Magazine of St. Salvador's Scottish Episcopal Church Dundee

December 2011

"Far be it from me to glory except in the cross of Christ,
by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world." Galatians 6:14

In the Beginning...

Christmas is a heart-warming time of year. People tend to feel free to be unashamedly loving and sentimental at Christmas. The object of our love and sentimentality are usually those closest to us. It is why at Christmastime we consider particularly unfortunate those who – for whatever reason – find themselves with no-one upon whom they can lavish their affection. Christmas is a time of giving; in order to give there must be someone to receive.

There is a Christmas legend from Mexico about a poor little orphan girl living on the streets. The children of the parish had been gathered together on Christmas Eve to help decorate the church for Mass. All the children were to bring flowers from their gardens. The best that the little girl could come up with were some weeds with large green leaves from a bush that she passed on the way to decorate the church. Upon arrival, all the other children laughed at her pathetic bunch of weeds. The priest took her floral gift, however, and placed it near the Lady Shrine in the church. That night, as the Midnight Mass began, it was discovered that the little girl's bunch of green-leafed weeds had been miraculously transformed into bright red – and ever since then the poinsettia has been associated with Christmas.

In the story, the priest had allowed the little girl to give God what she could—even a bunch of weeds. The miraculous transformation of the weeds revealed God's especial pleasure in her loving gift.

My favourite Christmas carols is one that I sang as a chorister and choirman in the Cathedral choir in which I grew up: *In the bleak midwinter*.

In one of the verses the writer (Christina Rossetti) asks:

*"What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a Shepherd, I would give a lamb.
If I were a Wise Man I would do my part.
Yet what I can I give Him – give my heart."*

God is here to receive our gifts, and He cares not whether they are large or small, but that they be heart-felt. There is no-one so surrounded with loved ones or so lonely who cannot make an offering to Him of our love. It is the gift He will prize most of all.

Fr. Clive

OUR CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sat., 24 December: Christmas Eve:

Mass of the Angels at 11.45 PM

Sun., 25 December: Christmas Day:

Mass of the Shepherds: 9 AM;

Mass of the Incarnate Word: 11 AM

Mon., 26 December: St. Stephen:

Mass at 10 AM

Tues., 27 December: St. John: Mass

at 7 PM

Wed., 28 December: Holy Innocents:

Mass at 10 AM

Sun., 1 January: The Naming of Je-

sus: Masses at 9 & 11 AM

FESTIVE CONCERTS by CANTIONES SACRAE

Cantiones Sacrae is planning two festive concerts this year and we are hoping and praying that the weather is more favourable than it was at this time last year! As well as the popular "Renaissance Christmas by Candlelight" which will take place on the Sunday before Christmas, Cantiones Sacrae will give a short lunchtime concert the weekend before.

On Saturday, 10th December at 1pm, the group is delighted to present a FESTIVE LUNCHTIME CONCERT of seasonal music. It is hoped that this will appeal to those who prefer not to venture out on a dark winter's night. Music for this hour-long concert will include favourites such as *O little town of Bethlehem*, *Away in a manger*, *God rest ye merry, gentlemen* and *Ding dong! merrily on high*.

A RENAISSANCE CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT takes place at 7.30pm on Sunday, 18th December. By the light of over 200 candles, Cantiones Sacrae will perform a selection of festive music including compositions by Victoria, Gibbons, Byrd, and Bach as well as popular carol such as *Silent Night*, *Shepherds in the fields abiding*, and the *Coven-try carol*.

If you haven't heard Cantiones Sacrae before, these concerts provide the ideal opportunity to enjoy some fine unaccompanied singing in a stunning setting and acoustic. Tickets are priced at £5

for the Saturday lunchtime concert and £7 for the Sunday evening performance. They are available directly from Graeme Adamson and also in person at Dundee City Box Office, 6 City Square, by telephoning Dundee 434940, or via the internet at www.dundeebox.co.uk A proportion of the proceeds from the concerts will be donated to St Salvador's Church to support its work and mission in the local community.

Linda Dallas (*soprano*) Lisa Rose (*alto*) Jonathan Matheson-Dear (*tenor*) and Graeme Adamson (*bass*) have received many favourable comments about their performances including a recent review in the Perthshire Advertiser which described the group's singing as "...music that touched the soul."

More information is available by visiting www.cantiones.net

Donations Asked

The eight-day candles that burn in the Sanctuary before the Altar and Blessed Sacrament cost £12 for a month.

Christmas flowers and the tree will require an extra expenditure, and what we can provide will depend on donations received. Donations to Susan or the Rector.

Any of these items would be a very fitting memorial for departed loved ones or a suitable expression of thanksgiving for blessings received.

Please consider assisting us with a donation toward these costs and at the same time marking something important in your life.

Thanks!

W5: Who, What, When, Where, Why

The Advent colour is purple, the same colour that we use for the penitential season of Lent. Why is that? At the Sunday Liturgy we also use the Litany (at 11 AM) and we don't use the Gloria in excelsis – just like in Lent. Why? What is there about the pre-Christmas season that suggests a whiff of penitence?

In ancient times, Christmas/Epiphany was one of the main occasions in the Christian Year for the administration of Holy Baptism. In the lead-up to the festival, a portion of the Christian family was undergoing rigorous baptismal preparation and all the others were in some way assisting in their training. Eventually, the preparation time was applied to the whole Christian community, especially in the light of the two main themes of the pre-Christmas (Advent) season.

Advent is about preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ. We prepare ourselves, firstly, to mark the celebration of His Incarnation, when He came first to our world at Bethlehem. In our preparation we reflect on our need for the Saviour. We also prepare for Christ's second coming to our world to be our Judge at the end of time. This is the second Advent theme. As we prepare, we reflect upon our sins and resolve to do better.

Our Sanctuary Candles have been given to the Glory of God and:

December: in memory of loved ones by Phyllis McIntosh

Food Cupboard

We are hoping to provide something extra per person alongside our regular bags at Christmas time this year and would be grateful for any donations of suitable items. Suggestions include chocolate, chocolate biscuits, tinned rice pudding/custard, biscuits, small packs of fruit cake, tinned meat, selection boxes for the children, small jars of coffee, packs of tea, fruit/mince pies, packs of sweets, hot chocolate and whatever else you might like to share. (value/basics items are fine)

Katie

ADVENT GIFTS IN KIND

This year, our Advent "Gifts in Kind" can be found on an Advent Tree, containing decorations having an Advent theme. On the back of each decoration there is a request for a gift item that we use regularly in our life as a congregation.

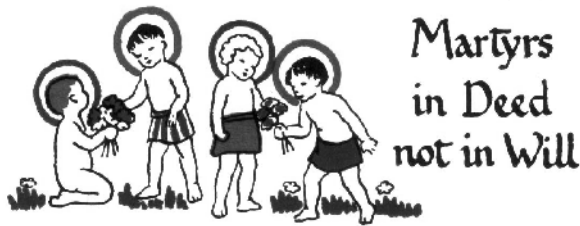
The idea is to make the Advent Tree bare of its decorations during the course of the season until at Christmas it is replaced by our decorated Christmas Tree.

We really count on these Gifts in Kind throughout the year to keep our running costs down.

This year we particularly need:

- Second Class Postage Stamps (lots)
- C5 Size Envelopes (no windows)
- DL Size Envelopes (no windows)
- Epson Stylus Black Ink (T1285)
- Toilet Paper
- Tea, Coffee and Sugar
- Salt for Snow
- Energy-Saving Light Bulbs (Bayonet)
- Garbage bags
- Dishwasher tablets
- Liquid hand soap

HOLY INNOCENTS



Come Celebrate!

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St Nicholas of Myra, Bishop (6 December)

Nicholas was a fourth-century Bishop of Myra in Asia Minor. His reputation as a worker of wonders was enhanced by a ninth-century hagiography and he is now best known through these stories. Many of them concern his love and care for children, how he fed the hungry, healed the sick, saved endangered sailors and cared for the oppressed. He saved three girls from prostitution by providing them with dowries, and so developed the tradition of bearing gifts to children on his feast day, a practice appropriated for the Christmas celebrations. St Nicholas is also patron saint of seafarers, and is one of the patron saints of Russia.

St Ambrose of Milan, Bishop and Teacher (7 December)

Born in Trier in 339, St Ambrose was of an aristocratic family and was governor of northern Italy, with his headquarters in Milan. Whilst trying to bring peace to the Christian community, with Arianism and orthodoxy each trying to gain the election of its candidate as bishop, St Ambrose, known and respected by all, though not yet baptised, found himself urged to accept the role of bishop himself. He was consecrated on this day in the year 374. St Ambrose proved his worth, becoming a teacher and preacher of great renown, promoting the

essential divinity of Christ. He is credited with being the first person to introduce hymns into Western worship, and wrote several hymns himself which gave a clear understanding of orthodox teaching. He came up against the Imperial powers and, with the support of the whole community, stood firm against the interference of the state in church affairs and matters of faith. He also baptised the future Saint Augustine. Ambrose died on Good Friday, April 4, in the year 397.

The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (8 December)

This festival in honour of the Conception of the Mother of our Lord is celebrated on this day in both the Eastern and the Western Church. This feast, which dates from the seventh century, marks the dawn of the New Covenant, celebrating the gracious preparation by God of his people to receive their Saviour and Lord, putting 'heaven in ordinary' and showing that mortal flesh can indeed bring Christ to the world.

St John of the Cross, Priest and Teacher (14 December)

Born into an impoverished noble family near Avila in Spain in 1542, St John was brought up by his widowed mother and went to a charity school. He worked as a nurse and received further education from the Jesuits before entering the Carmelite order when he was twenty-one. Having distinguished himself at Salamanca University, he was ordained in 1567 and met St Teresa of Avila soon afterwards. Small of stature, he made a great impression on her and she persuaded him to help with her reform of the Carmelites. His labours brought him into conflict with the religious authorities, and he was even imprisoned for a period, yet these experiences prompted some of his finest poetry and mystical writing. He described the 'dark

night of the soul' as it is purified in its approach towards God. After ten years as superior to several different houses, he again fell out of favour and was banished to Andalusia in southern Spain, where he died after a severe illness on this day in 1591.

St Stephen, Deacon and Martyr (26 December)

In the Acts of the Apostles, St Stephen is described as one of the first seven deacons appointed to care for the widows in the early Church in Jerusalem. He is the Church's proto-martyr, the first to bear witness to Christ by offering his life. The name 'Stephen' means, appropriately, 'crown'.

St John, Apostle and Evangelist (27 December)

St John was one of the sons of Zebedee, along with James, who followed Jesus. He is described as 'the disciple whom Jesus loved', and was one of the inner circle of Jesus' followers who witnessed and shared in all the major events of our Lord's ministry. In both the Gospel that bears his name and in the epistles credited to him, the powerful theological concept of the incarnate Word of God is proclaimed. St John is believed to have been the only one of our Lord's disciples to have lived to old age and not to have been put to death for his faith in the One who loved him and the One whom he loved. It is thought that he died in Asia Minor.

The Holy Innocents (28 December)

Although there is no historical evidence outside the Holy Scriptures for the massacre of the children of Bethlehem by King Herod, it is an act consistent with his other misdeeds that are well documented by non-scriptural sources. Today is a particularly appropriate occasion to remember all innocent victims of human cruelty.

MEET THE VESTRY

Following the St Salvador's AGM held on Sunday 13th Nov 2011 we have a newly elected vestry.

Martin Andrews is Rector's Warden
Muriel McKelvie is People's Warden
Jennie Parkinson is the Lay Representative

Susan Smith is a vestry member and the Alternate Lay Representative

Norma Cassells is a vestry member and Envelope Secretary

Katie Clapson is a vestry member and was appointed Secretary

Craig Cassells has been appointed as Treasurer (non voting member of the vestry)

The new vestry will be having a special meeting with Bishop Nigel on Nov 23rd to discuss the future pattern of ministry at St Salvador's. Their first regular meeting will be in December.

Please remember the vestry and its members in your prayers as they have an important and responsible role to play as trustees of the Scottish charity which is St Salvador's. Together we must seek God's will for St Salvador's in the weeks and months ahead.



Sermon preached by the Rector
on the Feast of Christ the King,
Sunday, 20 Nov., 2011

"Then [the Son of Man] will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these members of my family, you did it to me.'" Matthew 25: 40

Some of the finest Byzantine art anywhere can be found in the ruins of the medieval city of Mystra, near ancient and modern Sparta in southern Greece. Many of the frescoes in the derelict churches there are remarkably well preserved, despite the ravages of time, weather, Muslim occupation and war. Artistically and architecturally, Mystra is a treasure. One can wander the streets and visit its buildings almost alone, imagining that the original inhabitants might at any moment emerge.

On one of my visits there I was looking closely at a series of wall paintings in one of the churches and became confused. I couldn't figure out to which story in the Gospels it referred. It showed Our Lord in prison, but not as part of the story of the Passion. I looked at the neighbouring paintings that had survived, to see whether there was some clue. Then, suddenly, it dawned on me. This was a very clever series illustrating today's Gospel. I was kicking myself that I had not immediately recognised it, because it was hardly subtle. Our Lord was shown literally in prison being visited, hungry and being fed, naked and being clothed, and so on.

Perhaps my dullness of perception was due to my being on holiday, but quite possibly as an average modern Western Christian I am unused to religious art that it is anything other than pretty and/or representational. I expect church art either to decorate or to tell a story from the Bible. Like many of us in the West, I'm not generally open to even unsubtle theological messages in church art. In the Christian East, of course, icons are venerated not as merely decorative artistic portrayals, but as theological statements and spiritual signs. While Eastern Orthodox art is always representational and never abstract, it is also always inviting the worshipper to discover God's presence and His truth within it. So it was and still is at Mystra, the last stronghold of the first and greatest Christian empire.

If we in the West have eyes to see them, however, there are examples in our own tradition and in our own time of this kind of iconic art. One of the most prevalent is probably the Christus Rex crucifix. This is the cross that shows not the Lord naked, suffering and dying, but clothed in priestly and kingly robes, crowned and very much alive. It shows us Christ as

King, reigning over all things from the Cross. We know, of course, that this is an unrealistic depiction of Christ, but it is not an untrue one. We find it acceptable because it tells us clearly about an aspect of Christ that a more realistic representation might not. It is a truth about our Lord that we must never lose sight of.

The Kingship of Christ is essential to understand who He was, who He is and who He will be. One can go so far as to say that having Christ as our King is fundamental to all that we are and all that we do as Christians.

But we modern Westerners struggle with issues of allegiance and authority, don't we? We may find images derived from them, such as those of kingship, rather unhelpful. Indeed, given a choice of representations of the Lord on the Cross, we might prefer the weak, tortured Christ who elicits our love and pity to the Christus Rex who demands our loyalty and reminds us of the responsibilities of our Christian citizenship. But if only we knew! There is very much a power and a kingliness in the suffering Lord crowned with thorns, if only we would look carefully, and what we discover is every bit as demanding.

Our Lord frequently spoke of the relationship between God and His People as akin to that of the shepherd with his sheep. This was also a theme of the Old Testament prophets such as Ezekiel. The shepherd personally leads to good pasture, personally looks for the lost, personally binds up the wounded, personally looks after the weak, and defends the flock personally, with his life if necessary. In ancient Israel, leadership was often also expressed in terms of shepherding. David was a shepherd both before becoming king and as a king. To be a good shepherd was the highest expectation of Jewish kings by their people. It was by no means an easy, undemanding and largely ceremonial job.

The Christus Rex reminds us of the important truth that Christ is a King. The tortured and suffering Saviour on the Cross speaks to us of the nature of His Kingship. It is costly. For us to live, He died. To give us Heaven He descended into Hell And He calls us now to share His Kingdom, expressed not in self-indulgence and ease, but in the costly self-giving He has shown us, as we serve others in His Name and find Him in them.

Kalendar

Sun., 4 December: Advent 2: Masses at 9 & 11 AM; Evensong and Benediction at 5 PM

Tues., 6 December: St. Nicholas: Mass at 7 PM

Wed., 7 December: St. Ambrose: Mass
at 10 AM

Thurs., 8 December: Conception of the BVM:
Mass at 7 PM

Sun., 11 December: Advent 3: Masses
at 9 & 11 AM

Tues., 13 December: St. Lucy: Mass at 7 PM

Wed., 14 December: St. John of the Cross:

Mass at 10 AM

Sun., 18 December: Advent 4: Masses
at 9 & 11 AM

Tues., 20 December: Mass at 7 PM

Wed., 21 December: Mass at 10 AM

Sat., 24 December: Christmas Eve: Mass of the
Angels at 11.45 PM

Sun., 25 December: Christmas Day: Mass of
the Shepherds: 9 AM; Mass of the Incarnate
Word: 11 AM

Mon., 26 December: St. Stephen: Mass
at 10 AM

Tues., 27 December: St. John: Mass
at 7 PM

Wed., 28 December: Holy Innocents: Mass
at 10 AM

Sun., 1 January: The Naming of Jesus: Masses
at 9 & 11 AM (Evensong transferred to the fol-
lowing week)

Tues., 3 January: Feria: Mass at 7 PM

Wed., 4 January: Feria: Mass at 10 AM

Fri., 6 January: The Epiphany: Mass at 7 PM

Sun., 8 January: The Baptism of Our Lord:
Masses at 9 & 11 AM; Evensong and Benedic-
tion at 5 PM

Tues., 10 January: William Laud: Mass at 7 PM

Wed., 11 January: St. David of Scotland: Mass
at 10 AM

Fri., 13 January: St. Kentigern (Mungo) :
Mass at 7 PM

Sun., 15 January: Epiphany 2: Masses
at 9 & 11 AM

Tues., 17 January: St. Anthony of Egypt:
Mass at 7 PM

Wed., 18 January: The Confession of St. Peter:
Mass at 10 AM

Sun., 22 January: Epiphany 3: Masses
at 9 & 11 AM

Tues., 24 January: St. Francis de Sales:
Mass at 7 PM

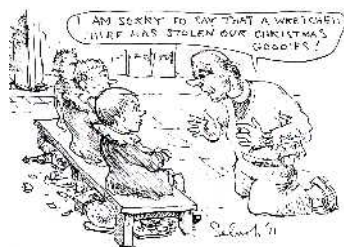
Wed., 25 January: The Conversion of St. Paul:
Mass at 10 AM

Sun., 29 January: Epiphany 4: Masses
at 9 & 11 AM

Tues., 31 January: Charles Mackenzie:
Mass at 7 PM



We continue to collect used postage stamps (domestic and foreign) and post cards, as well as old spectacles and (clean) tin foil to raise money for a variety of good causes. Please bring any contributions to church and leave them in the basket at the back. Thank you!



O GOD of unchangeable power and eternal light, look favourably on thy whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; and by the tranquil operation of thy perpetual providence carry out the work of man's salvation, and let the whole world feel and see that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and all things are returning to perfection through him from whom they took their origin, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The deadline for the Jan./Feb. issue of 'Crucis' is Sunday, 18 December. Please send any material to the Editor (the Rector) by that day. Thank you!

St Salvador's Directory

Web: www.stsalvadors.com Registered Charity SC010596 **E-mail:** enquiries@stsalvadors.com

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Saint Salvador's is a member of the Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC) and is in the Diocese of Brechin. The SEC is part of the Worldwide Anglican Communion headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

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Magazine

Please send comments, corrections and material to the Rector. Note: material may be omitted, or edited for length and suitability. Postal subscriptions £12 p.a. inc. p&p. Also available free as a PDF.