

A few words from the Vicarage ...



So, Advent is upon us once again, and we have begun our 4-weeks series of our Advent Course. It is at this time of year that we need to reflect upon where we are and look forward to what may lie ahead. We all know what has taken place, but none of us can predict the future - yet we still need to prepare for it. Advent is set aside for us for precisely that purpose - to prepare to receive anew the ultimate gift - the Christ child.

It is a very special time for us all and yet we are too easily drawn into the commercialism which now surrounds Christmas. Increasingly we are being tempted to ignore or forget Advent by rushing headlong into Christmas - *yield not to temptation!*

During this period of preparation we may still enjoy the festivities around us - so long as we appreciate that they are only steps along the way to the big event - the headline act which is Christmas itself. Within this, we will be holding our Christingle Café and so we look forward to this unique way of celebrating God's creation of the world, its seasons and the fruits it bears. Through this we are able to enjoy and share time with each other as we raise money for the Children's Society.

Those 'extra events, of course, include the Carol Service and the Crib Service. There are both very special for the whole church family - for different, yet not unconnected, reasons. In each we tell the story of Christmas and we make ready to celebrate that special gift which is made to all and for all time. Whilst we may travel this journey each year, it is a pilgrimage of faith for the faithful, and is essential for us all.

Beyond Christmas, we look towards a New Year and reflect upon the year now drawing to its close; we reflect upon the successes and the failures as we give thanks for the former and hope to learn from the latter. I pray that you have had a good 2014 and that your successes far outweigh your failures. It does no good to dwell upon things past, we cannot change that; but we can seek to ensure that we progress positively, having learned from our experiences as we try to serve God as best we can.

Have a good Advent and a truly blessed Christmas.

Fr D.