

# St Peter's Church Darwen

## The Fourth Sunday of Advent

### Hymn

### The Greeting and Welcome

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy  
Spirit

All **Amen.**

The Lord be with you

All **and also with you.**

### *The lighting of the Advent Candle*

#### A Prayer is said as the Advent Candle is lit:

A candle on our Advent Wreath will be lit today.

Each candle reminds us of those who prepared for the coming of Christ:

Advent 1: Patriarchs and Matriarchs

Advent 2: The Prophets

Advent 3: John the Baptist

**Advent 4: The Virgin Mary**

Christmas Day: The Christ.

Each week in Advent we say a special prayer which reminds us of their importance in our preparation for the coming of the Christ.

## **PRAYER OF PREPARATION**

### **Invitation to confession**

**All     Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,  
          all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden,  
          cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration  
          of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you,  
          and worthily magnify your holy name;  
          through Christ our Lord.     Amen.**

### **The Prayer of Penitence**

Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations into the piece of  
your kingdom. Lord have mercy:

**All     Lord, have mercy.**

You have come in word and sacrament to strengthen us in  
holiness: Christ have mercy:

**All     Christ, have mercy.**

You will come in glory with salvation for your people:  
Lord, have mercy.

**All     Lord, have mercy.**

A voice cries out in the wilderness,  
'Make straight the way of the Lord.'  
So let us listen and turn to the Lord in penitence and faith.

**All     Most merciful God,  
          Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
          we confess that we have sinned  
          in thought and word and deed.  
          We have not loved you with our whole heart.**

We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
In your mercy, forgive what we have been,  
help us to amend what we are,  
and direct what we shall be;  
that we may do justly, love mercy,  
and walk humbly with you, our God.

## The Absolution

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your  
sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All      Amen.

## The Collect

Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son,  
so we wait for his coming in glory;  
bring us through the birth pangs of this present age  
to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All      Amen.

## *The Liturgy of the Word*

### First Reading: **Isaiah 7.10-16**

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying,

‘Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.’

But Ahaz said, ‘I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.’

Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also?

'Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

'For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.'

*At the end of the reading:*

This is the word of the Lord.

All      **Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading: Romans 1.1-7**

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

*At the end of the reading:*

This is the word of the Lord.

All      **Thanks be to God.**

*A hymn may be sung.*

**Gospel Reading:**

Alleluia, alleluia. Blessed is the King who comes  
In the name of the Lord.

Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven.

**All Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to  
Matthew.

**All Glory to you, o Lord**

**Gospel: Matthew 1.18-25**

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.

But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’

All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ‘Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,’ which means, ‘God is with us.’

When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

*At the end of the reading:*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
All      **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

**The Creed**

**The Affirmation of Faith**

**Prayers of Intercession**

*This response may be used*

Lord, in your mercy  
All      **Hear our prayer.**

***The Liturgy of the Sacrament***

**The Peace**

**Hymn**

## Preparation of the Table

### The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you.

**All      And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**All      We lift them up unto the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All      It is right to give thanks and praise.**

*The President praises God for his mighty acts, and all respond:*

**All      Holy, holy, holy, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

*The president recalls the Last Supper.*

Great is the mystery of Christ  
**All      Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

### The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

All     **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done on earth  
as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

### **Breaking of Bread**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All     **Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

*The Agnus Dei may be said or sung*

### **Giving of Communion**

*During the distribution hymns may be sung.*

### **Prayer after Communion**

The Post Communion is said.

#### **Post Communion:**

Heavenly Father, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary  
to be the mother of the promised saviour:  
fill us your servants with your grace,  
that in all things we may embrace your holy will  
and with her rejoice in your salvation;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All      **Amen.**

All      **Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

## ***The Dismissal***

*Notices may be given. A hymn may be sung.*

**Blessing**

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,  
scatter the darkness from before your path,  
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory;  
and the blessing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy  
Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always,

**All      Amen**

Our Lord says, 'I am coming soon'.

**All      Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

May the Lord, when he comes, find us watching us watching  
and waiting.

**All      Amen.**

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