

# The Catholic Parish of St Luke

Benyon Grove, Orton Malborne, Peterborough. PE2 5XS

## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

### *Month of November Remembrance of the Dead*

The month of November is **traditionally a time in which the Catholic community remembers those who have died**. It begins with All Saints Day celebrated on November 1 to remember all the numerous holy souls who died and are believed to have entered into Heaven. November is also known as the Month of the Holy Souls in Purgatory. The end of November is the end of the Liturgical Year with a new year starting the First Sunday of Advent – the four-week period of preparation before Christmas.

**Remembrance Sunday** is held in the United Kingdom as a day to commemorate the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian servicemen and women in the two World Wars and later conflicts. It is held on the second Sunday in November (the Sunday nearest to 11 November, Armistice Day, the anniversary of the end of hostilities in World War I in 1918).

It is marked by ceremonies at local war memorials in most cities, towns and villages, attended by civic dignitaries, ex-servicemen and -women (many are members of the Royal British Legion and other veterans' organisations), members of local armed forces regular and reserve units (Royal Navy and Royal Naval Reserve, Royal Marines and Royal Marines Reserve, Army and Territorial Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Auxiliary Air Force), military cadet forces (Sea Cadet Corps, Army Cadet Force and Air Training Corps as well as the Combined Cadet Force) and youth organisations (e.g. Scouts, Boys' Brigade, Girls' Brigade and Guides). Representatives of the Judiciary also lay wreaths at local War Memorials throughout the country. Wreaths of remembrance poppies are laid on the memorials and two minutes' silence is held at 11am. Church bells are usually rung half-muffled, creating a sombre effect. The overall ceremony, including parades, service and wreath-laying, typically lasts about two hours.



### *Thursday, 9th November - Spiritual Topic*

## *What is Purgatory?*

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines purgatory as a “purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven,” which is experienced by those “who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified” (CCC 1030). It notes that “this final purification of the elect . . . is entirely different from the punishment of the damned” (CCC 1031).

The purification is necessary because, as Scripture teaches, nothing unclean will enter the presence of God in heaven (Rev. 21:27) and, while we may die with our mortal sins forgiven, there can still be many impurities in us, specifically venial sins and the temporal punishment due to sins already forgiven.

### **What Happens in Purgatory?**

When we die, we undergo what is called the particular, or individual, judgment. Scripture says that “it is appointed for



men to die once, and after that comes judgment” (Heb. 9:27). We are judged instantly and receive our reward, for good or ill. We know at once what our final destiny will be. At the end of time, when Jesus returns, there will come the general judgment to which the Bible refers, for example, in Matthew 25:31-32: “When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then

he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.” In this general judgment all our sins will be publicly revealed (Luke 12:2-5).

Augustine said in *The City of God* that “temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but all of them before that last and strictest judgment” (21:13). It is between the particular and general judgments, then, that the soul is purified of the remaining consequences of sin: “I tell you, you will never get out till you have paid the very last copper” (Luke 12:59).

### **The Catholic Church, Purgatory, and Money**

One argument anti-Catholics often use to attack purgatory is the idea that the

Catholic Church owes the majority of its wealth to the doctrine of purgatory. But the numbers just don't add up.

When a Catholic requests a memorial Mass for the dead—that is, a Mass said for the benefit of someone in purgatory—it is customary to give the parish priest a stipend, on the principles that the labourer is worth his hire (*Luke 10:7*) and that those who preside at the altar share the altar's offerings (*1 Cor. 9:13–14*). In the United States, a stipend is commonly around twenty dollars; but the indigent do not have to pay anything. A few people, of course, freely offer more. This money goes to the parish priest, and priests are allowed to receive only one such stipend per day. No one gets rich on five dollars a day, and certainly not the Church, which does not receive the money anyway.

But look at what happens on a Sunday. There are often hundreds of people at Mass. In a crowded parish, there may be thousands. Many families and individuals deposit twenty dollars or more into the collection basket; a few give much more. A parish might have four or five or six Masses on a Sunday. The total from the Sunday collections far surpasses the paltry amount received from the memorial Masses.

### Is Purgatory a Catholic "Invention"?

Fundamentalists may be fond of saying the Catholic Church "invented" the doctrine of purgatory to make money, but they have difficulty saying just when. Most professional anti-Catholics—the ones who make their living attacking "Romanism"—seem to place the blame on Pope Gregory the Great, who reigned from A.D. 590 to 604.

But that hardly accounts for the request of Monica, mother of Augustine, who asked her son, in the fourth century, to remember her soul in his Masses. This would make no sense if she thought her soul would not benefit from prayers, as would be the case if she were in hell or in the full glory of heaven.

Nor does ascribing the doctrine to Gregory explain the graffiti in the catacombs, where Christians during the persecutions of the first three centuries recorded prayers for the dead. Indeed, some of the earliest Christian writings outside the New Testament, like the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and

the *Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity* (both written during the second century), refer to the Christian practice of praying for the dead. Such prayers would have been offered only if Christians believed in purgatory, even if they did not use that name for it.

(See *Catholic Answers' tract The Roots of Purgatory for quotations from these and other early Christian sources.*)



### Why No Protests?

A study of the history of doctrines indicates that Christians in the first centuries were up in arms if anyone suggested the least change in beliefs. They were extremely conservative people who tested a doctrine's truth by asking, Was this believed by our ancestors? Was it handed on from the apostles? Surely belief in purgatory would be considered a great change, if it had not been believed from the first—so where are the records of protests?

They don't exist. There is no hint at all, in the oldest writings available to us (or in later ones, for that matter), that "true believers" in the immediate post-apostolic years spoke of purgatory as a novel doctrine. They must have understood that the oral teaching of the apostles, what Catholics call tradition, and the Bible not only failed to contradict the doctrine, but, in fact, confirmed it.

It is no wonder, then, that those who

deny the existence of purgatory tend to touch upon only briefly the history of the belief. They prefer to claim that the Bible speaks only of heaven and hell. Wrong. It speaks plainly of a third condition, commonly called the limbo of the Fathers, where the just who had died before the redemption were waiting for heaven to be opened to them. After his death and before his resurrection, Christ visited those experiencing the limbo of the Fathers and preached to them the good news that heaven would now be opened to them (*1 Pet. 3:19*). These people thus were not in heaven, but neither were they experiencing the torments of hell.

Some have speculated that the limbo of the Fathers is the same as purgatory. This may or may not be the case. However, even if the limbo of the Fathers is not purgatory, its existence shows that a temporary, intermediate state is not contrary to Scripture.

### "Purgatory Not in Scripture"

Some Fundamentalists also charge, "The word purgatory is nowhere found in Scripture." This is true, and yet it does not disprove the existence of purgatory or the fact that belief in it has always been part of Church teaching. The words *Trinity* and *Incarnation* aren't in Scripture either, yet those doctrines are clearly taught in it. Likewise, Scripture teaches that purgatory exists, even if it doesn't use that word and even if 1 Peter 3:19 refers to a place other than purgatory.

Christ refers to the sinner who "will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come" (*Matt. 12:32*), suggesting that one can be freed after death of the consequences of one's sins. Similarly, Paul tells us that, when we are judged, each man's work will be tried. And what happens if a righteous man's work fails the test? "He will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire" (*1 Cor 3:15*). Now this loss, this penalty, can't refer to consignment to hell, since no one is saved there; and heaven can't be meant, since there is no suffering ("fire") there. The Catholic doctrine of purgatory alone explains this passage.

Then, of course, there is the Bible's approval of prayers for the dead: "In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the

resurrection of the dead in view; for if he were not expecting the dead to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death. But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin" (2 Macc. 12:43-45). Prayers are not needed by those in heaven, and no one can help those in hell. This verse so clearly illustrates the existence of purgatory that, at the time of the Reformation, Protestants had to cut the books of the Maccabees out of their Bibles in order to avoid accepting the doctrine.

Prayers for the dead and the consequent doctrine of purgatory have been part of the true religion since before the time of Christ. Not only can we show it was practiced by the Jews of the time of the Maccabees, but it has even been retained by Orthodox Jews today, who recite a prayer known as the *Mourner's Kaddish* for eleven months after the death of a loved one so that the loved one may be purified. It was not the Catholic Church that added the doctrine of purgatory. Rather, the Protestant churches rejected a doctrine that had always been believed by Jews and Christians.

### Why Go to Purgatory?

Why would anyone go to purgatory? To be cleansed, for "nothing unclean shall enter [heaven]" (Rev. 21:27). Anyone who has not been completely freed of sin and its effects is, to some extent, "unclean." Through repentance he may have gained the grace needed to be worthy of heaven, which is to say, he has been forgiven and his soul is spiritually alive. But that's not sufficient for gaining entrance into heaven. He needs to be cleansed completely.

Fundamentalists claim, as an article in Jimmy Swaggart's magazine, *The Evangelist*, put it, that "Scripture clearly reveals that all the demands of divine justice on the sinner have been completely fulfilled in Jesus Christ. It also reveals that Christ has totally redeemed, or purchased back, that which was lost. The advocates of purgatory (and the necessity of prayer for the dead) say, in effect, that the redemption of Christ was incomplete. . .

. It has all been done for us by Jesus Christ, there is nothing to be added or done by man."

It is entirely correct to say that Christ accomplished all of our salvation for us on the cross. But that does not settle the question of how this redemption is applied to us. Scripture reveals that it is applied to us over the course of time through, among other things, the process of sanctification through which the Christian is made holy. Sanctification involves suffering (Rom. 5:3-5), and purgatory is the final stage of sanctification that some of us need to undergo before we enter heaven. Purgatory is the final phase of Christ's applying to us the purifying redemption that he accomplished for us by his death on the cross.

### Nothing Unclean or Purged

Catholic theology takes seriously the notion that "nothing unclean shall enter heaven." From this it is inferred that a less than cleansed soul isn't fit for heaven. It needs to be cleansed or "purged" of its remaining imperfections. Sanctification is thus not an option, something that may or may not happen before one gets into heaven. It is an absolute requirement, as Hebrews 12:14 states that we must strive "for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord."

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## Readings & Gospel for Sunday, 5th November 2023

**First reading**  
**Malachi 1:14-2:2,8-10**

**You have strayed from the way; you have caused many to stumble by your teaching**

I am a great king, says the Lord of Hosts, and my name is feared throughout the nations. And now, priests, this warning is for you. If you do not listen, if you do not find it in your heart to glorify my name, says the Lord of Hosts, I will send the curse on you and curse your very blessing. But you, you have strayed from the way; you have caused many to stumble by your teaching. You have destroyed the

covenant of Levi, says the Lord of Hosts. And so I in my turn have made you contemptible and vile in the eyes of the whole people in repayment for the way you have not kept to my paths but have shown partiality in your administration.

Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why, then, do we break faith with one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors?

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### Responsorial Psalm - Psalm 130

**Keep my soul in peace before you, O Lord.**

O Lord, my heart is not proud  
nor haughty my eyes.  
I have not gone after things too great  
nor marvels beyond me.

**Keep my soul in peace before you, O Lord.**

Truly I have set my soul  
in silence and peace.  
A weaned child on its mother's breast,  
even so is my soul.

**Keep my soul in peace before you, O Lord.**

O Israel, hope in the Lord  
both now and forever.

**Keep my soul in peace before you, O Lord.**

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### Second reading

**1 Thessalonians 2:7-9,13**

**We were eager to hand over to you not only the Good News but our whole lives**

Like a mother feeding and looking after her own children, we felt so devoted and protective towards you, and had come to love you so much, that we were eager to hand over to you not only the Good News but our whole lives as well. Let me remind you, brothers, how hard we used to work, slaving night and day so as not to be a burden on any one of you while we were proclaiming God's Good News to you.

Another reason why we constantly thank God for you is that as soon as you heard the message that we brought you



as God's message, you accepted it for what it really is, God's message and not some human thinking; and it is still a living power among you who believe it.

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### Gospel Acclamation

**Mt23:9,10**

Alleluia, alleluia!

You have only one Father, and he is in heaven;

you have only one Teacher, the Christ!

Alleluia!

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### Gospel

**Mt23:1-12**

#### **They do not practise what they preach**

Addressing the people and his disciples Jesus said, 'The scribes and the Pharisees occupy the chair of Moses. You must therefore do what they tell you and listen to what they say; but do not be guided by what they do: since they do not practise what they preach. They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but will they lift a finger to move them? Not they! Everything they do is done to attract attention, like wearing broader phylacteries and longer tassels, like wanting to take the place of honour at banquets and the front seats in the synagogues, being greeted obsequiously in the market squares and having people call them Rabbi.

'You, however, must not allow yourselves to be called Rabbi, since you have only one master, and you are all brothers. You must call no one on earth your father, since you have only one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor must you allow yourselves to be called teachers, for you have only one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you must be your servant. Anyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and anyone who humbles himself will be exalted.'

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### Reflection

#### **Love in Return for Love**

What's the problem with the way the scribes and the Pharisees go about things? Is it that they claim an authority



*Christ teaching, from a fresco by Fra Angelico  
from the cells of the Dominican convent of San Marco, Florence*

to teach people and to interpret the law when they shouldn't? It can't be quite as simple as that, because Christ himself in today's Gospel affirms their authority: they occupy the chair of Moses, and therefore people must listen to them and do as they say.

If they are not wrong to think they have this authority, perhaps even duty, to teach, then the problem must lie elsewhere. It appears, rather, to be in their motivation for teaching. Everything they do, Jesus says, is done to attract attention: wearing broader phylacteries and longer tassels and so on are obvious visible ways to draw attention to themselves, but that 'everything' would include also their very task of teaching and the exercise of that authority which is theirs. Their role as teachers of the law and the authority it carries are, it seems, something they value for what it brings to them.

It's in this context of flawed motivation for teaching and the exercise of authority that we might want to approach Our Lord's words in the second half of today's Gospel passage about calling no one Rabbi or father or teacher. After all, as we have seen, Christ has just said that the scribes and Pharisees do legitimately teach, and of course, we might also note that

everyone does have an earthly father. Given that, why does Christ teach us not to identify anyone on earth in those terms?

In our use of language in general, the original meaning of a word tends to expand by analogy and metaphor. So, for example, a field starts out as a plot of land where plants are grown for food, and the term comes to refer also to an area of knowledge in which ideas are, as it were, grown. This is true also of our use of language to speak about God. Our experience of authority starts out from that which parents and teachers exercise over us, so it is not surprising that we would use these kinds of term to talk about the authority of God. But in today's Gospel we learn that, however our use of language about God might have developed, the authority we observe exercised in human relations is ultimately founded and modelled on the dominion, fatherhood and teaching authority of God.

And here's where we see how the scribes and Pharisees go wrong in their use of their authority, as Jesus characterises it. For them, as we saw, their authority as teachers is something which gives them an exalted status of which they make the most. Yet Christ shows us that the true pattern of the

exercise of authority in our world looks very different: Christ, God made flesh and dwelling among us as a human being, exercises that authority by allowing himself to be tortured and put to a shameful death. As he tells us in today's Gospel, 'the greatest among you must be your servant ... Anyone who humbles himself will be exalted.'

It's not that somehow demonstrative humility is a hoop we have to jump through to get the exaltation we really want – that would be the same mistake the Pharisees are making with their long tassels and so on. Our sharing in the authority of Christ, in his heavenly kingdom, cannot be founded on pretence or dissimulation. We can only share in Christ's role as teacher and lord – and that is the exalted status, a share in his kingdom, to which he invites us – if we truly give ourselves for others as he does on the Cross, which is not just a necessary humiliating preliminary to his glory but the moment of his exaltation: 'now is the Son of Man glorified,' he says on the eve of his Passion (Jn 13:31). It is in that moment of perfect gift of self, of perfect obedience to the Father, that Christ reveals his majesty, and shows us the true pattern of all authority – not as a basis for attaining honour or an opportunity to push people around but a giving of self for others in love which prompts a response of obedience not out of fear, but out of love in return for love.

**Fr Gregory Pearson OP**

Readings: Malachi 1:14-2:2,8-10 |  
1 Thessalonians 2:7-9,13 |  
Matthew 23:1-12

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## History of the Catholic Church in Britain

### Part 7

## Nineteenth century and Irish immigration



*Irish statesman,  
Daniel O'Connell,  
influenced the  
passage of the Roman  
Catholic Relief Act  
1829*

After this moribund period, the first signs of a revival occurred as thousands of French Catholics fled France during the French Revolution. The leaders of the Revolution were virulently anti-Catholic, even singling out priests and nuns for summary execution or massacre, and England was seen as a safe haven from Jacobin violence. Also around this time (1801), a new political entity was formed, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, which merged the Kingdom of Great Britain with the Kingdom of Ireland, thus increasing the number of Catholics in the new state. Pressure for abolition of anti-Catholic laws grew, particularly with the need for Catholic recruits to fight in the Napoleonic Wars.

Despite the resolute opposition of George IV, which delayed fundamental reform, 1829 brought a major step in the liberalisation of most anti-Catholic laws, although some aspects were to remain on the statute book into the 21st century. Parliament passed the Roman Catholic Relief Act 1829, giving Catholic men almost equal civil rights, including the right to hold most public offices. If Catholics were rich, however, exceptions were always made, even before the changes. For example, American ministers to the Court of St. James's were often struck by the prominence of wealthy American-born Catholics, titled ladies among the nobility, like Louisa (Caton), granddaughter of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and her two sisters, Mary Ann and Elizabeth. After Louisa's first husband (Sir Felton Bathurst-Hervey) died, Louisa later married the son of the Duke of Leeds, and had the Duke of Wellington as her European protector. Her sister Mary Ann married the Marquess of Wellesley, the brother of the Duke of Wellington; and her other sister Elizabeth (Lady Stafford) married another British nobleman. Although British law required an Anglican marriage service, each of the sisters and their Protestant spouses had a Catholic ceremony afterwards. At Louisa's first marriage, the Duke of Wellington escorted the bride.

In the 1840s and 1850s, especially during the Great Irish Famine, while much of the large outflow of migration

from Ireland was headed to the United States to seek work, hundreds of thousands of Irish people also migrated across the channel to England and Scotland and established communities in cities there, including London, Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow, but also in towns and villages up and down the country, thus giving Catholicism in England a numerical boost.

## Re-established dioceses

At various points after the 16th century hopes have been entertained by many English Catholics that the "reconversion of England" was at hand. Additionally, with the arrival of Irish Catholic migrants (Ireland was part of the UK until the partition, in 1922), some considered that a "second spring" of Catholicism across Britain was developing. Rome responded by re-establishing the Catholic hierarchy in 1850, creating 12 Catholic dioceses in England from existing apostolic vicariates and appointing diocesan bishops (to replace earlier titular bishops) with fixed sees on a more traditional Catholic pattern. The Catholic Church in England and Wales had had 22 dioceses immediately before the Reformation, but none of the current 22 bear close resemblance (geographically) to the 22 earlier pre-Reformation dioceses.

The re-established Catholic episcopacy specifically avoided using places that were sees of the Church of England, in effect temporarily abandoning the titles of Catholic dioceses before Elizabeth I because of the Ecclesiastical Titles Act of 1851, which in England favoured a state church (i.e., Church of England) and denied arms and legal existence to territorial Catholic sees on the basis that the state could not grant such "privileges" to "entities" that allegedly did not exist in law. Some of the Catholic dioceses, however, took the titles of bishoprics which had previously existed in England but were no longer used by the Anglican Church (e.g. Beverley – later divided into Leeds and Middlesbrough, Hexham – later changed to Hexham and Newcastle). In the few cases where a Catholic diocese bears the same title as an Anglican one in the same town or city (e.g., Birmingham, Liverpool, Portsmouth, and Southwark),



this is the result of the Church of England ignoring the prior existence there of a Catholic see and of the technical repeal of the Ecclesiastical Titles Act in 1871. The Act applied only to England and Wales, not Scotland or Ireland; thus official recognition afforded by the grant of arms to the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh, brought into being by Lord Lyon in 1989, relied on the fact that the Ecclesiastical Titles Act of 1851 never applied to Scotland. In recent times, the former Conservative Cabinet Minister John Gummer, a prominent convert to Catholicism and columnist for the *Catholic Herald* in 2007, objected to the fact that no Catholic diocese could have the same name as an Anglican diocese (such as London, Canterbury, Durham, etc.) "even though those dioceses had, shall we say, been borrowed".

## Converts



**John Henry Newman**

A proportion of the Anglicans who were involved in the Oxford Movement or "Tractarianism" were ultimately led beyond these positions and converted to the Catholic Church, including, in 1845, the movement's principal intellectual leader, John Henry Newman. More new Catholics would come from the Anglican Church, often via high Anglicanism, for at least the next hundred years, and something of this continues.

As anti-Catholicism declined sharply after 1910, the church grew in numbers, grew rapidly in terms of priests and sisters, and expanded their parishes

from inner city industrial areas to more salubrious suburbs. Although underrepresented in the higher levels of the social structure, apart from a few old aristocratic Catholic families, Catholic talent was emerging in journalism, literature, the arts, and diplomacy.

A striking development was the surge in highly publicised conversion of intellectuals and writers including most famously G. K. Chesterton, as well as Robert Hugh Benson and Ronald Knox, Maurice Baring, Christopher Dawson, Eric Gill, Graham Greene, Manya Harari, David Jones, Sheila Kaye-Smith, Arnold Lunn, Rosalind Murray, Alfred Noyes, William E. Orchard, Frank Pakenham, Siegfried Sassoon, Edith Sitwell, Muriel Spark, Graham Sutherland, Oscar Wilde, Ford Madox Ford, and Evelyn Waugh.

Pre-1900 famous converts included Cardinals Newman and Henry Edward Manning, the less famous like Ignatius Spencer as well as the leading architect of the Gothic Revival, Augustus Pugin, historian Thomas William Allies, and Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins. G. E. M. Anscombe was also a notable convert during the early 20th century.

Prominent cradle Catholics included the film director Alfred Hitchcock, writers such as Hilaire Belloc, Lord Acton and J. R. R. Tolkien and the composer Edward Elgar, whose oratorio *The Dream of Gerontius* was based on a 19th-century poem by Newman.

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## DIARY DATES

### Over 60's Turkey & Tinsel Christmas Luncheons and Entertainment

Fridays 1st, 8th and 15th December  
12.30pm to 3.00pm  
Tickets & Menu available from  
the Parish Office @ £9.50 per person

**Social Evening**  
**Men's Fellowship with  
the Ladies' Bible Group**  
Wednesday 13th December at 7.00pm

### Grand Christmas Draw Tickets NOW ON SALE

To be drawn on 17th December.  
Obtainable from the Parish Office.

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## VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

**For all Saturday / Sunday Masses  
up to 17th December 2023**  
**For the distribution and sale  
of the Grand Christmas Draw Tickets**  
Contact the Parish Office

## VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

**Saturday 25th November**  
From 10.00am to 4.00pm  
To help set up the Church for the  
"Towards Advent" event.

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## THIS WEEK'S SOCIAL SUPPER

**Mild Chicken Korma Curry & Rice  
With Papadoms & Naan Bread**

Beers, Tea, Coffee, Cola and Fruit Juice

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