

REALIZING THE CHRISTMAS GIFT

“God is with us” is the Christmas truth: “Realizing” is our believing it.

- **meaning #1** is realizing in awareness, to come to recognize, to appreciate the value of Christ’s coming and discovering personally the presence
- **meaning #2** is the sense of “making real”, enabling Christ’s work to take flesh again, become actual, enabling it to happen and make new history

REALIZING #1: PERSONAL DISCOVERY of the CHRISTMAS GIFT The LIVING CHRIST RETREAT:

We begin this Friday at 7.30pm with a cheese and wine welcome, and the first sessions, for this New Year Blessing for realizing afresh God’s presence in our lives. We will end about 9.30pm and then continue Saturday morning from 10am with breakfast provided, lunch also, leading up to end with mass about 5pm which is the Sunday mass. The Retreat is a whole process together with others so open only to those who can join in the whole time, sorry. Led by Fr Chris and Sr Moira, this retreat offers helpful teaching about down to earth living in faith, with friendship and support for each other and the invitation to join in continuing support of each other. **Signing up essential for your place.** Bring a friend for company and support.

PASSING ON THE FAITH:

Children: Thank you to our marvellous Children’s Liturgy Catechists who made Thursdays learning session with Ann Welsh so valuable. The “With You Always” catechists meet this Sunday after mass to prepare for the next **Family Catechesis** session on Wednesday at 6pm. Parents present their children for prayer with the whole community at masses on Jan 29th. Children start Holy Communion during parish masses on Sunday 21st May.

Adults: here and in St Marie’s the groups meet welcoming enquirers in our “Come and See” process. Enquiries welcome for new people to find out about faith with us

THE PARISH VISION : WELCOMING PRIORITY

Visitation Masses: Thank You Clare Mc Connell and all in the Learning Community for the wonderful work in the mutual Visitation masses. The next gathering of all who want to contribute further is on Thursday 26th January at 7.30pm, to review the Visitations, reflect on any future use of the joint mass, look at the other ideas from the past meetings. Everybody welcome

SHARING IN LEADERSHIP & MINISTRY:

Thank you for a wonderful joint Church Teams meeting with much insight and encouragement. The **Parish Vision Team** discussed things also and we will host an **extraordinary parish open forum** to share the concerns raised about the forbidding of general absolution: date t/b/a. **SJS Greeters & apparitors** are urged to come together next Sunday at 11.30 for ministry learning.

REALIZING #2: That the WORD of GOD may become OUR FLESH “SPREADING THE LIGHT”

on Tuesday 24th January at 7.15pm in SJS all are invited to learn new ways and encourage each other in **letting the light of Christ shine out** in Southport:

- extending the work of “Come and See” by inviting and celebrating in Lent
- learning confidence from the Prophet Jonah to share the faith with others
- making 2017 a year of passing on faith in Ecumenical ways
- working to have Christ lit up in next year’s Christmas.

This evening is part of the Pastoral Area Missionary Outreach work.

CHRISTIAN UNITY PRAYER WEEK

This year is the 25th anniversary of the Ecumenical Covenant in Ainsdale. “Crossing Barriers” is the theme for this week’s annual shared reflection and prayer that the wounds of history may be healed among us in our times. All Christians from all churches are invited. We host on Wednesday 18th January at 7pm in Sacred Heart: see the front page for other days’ venues.

CHARITY AND SERVICE IN SOCIETY IMPROVE WOODVALE:

Work from volunteers progresses with Cllr Thompson to come together, develop the corner site, bring more beauty to our area and appreciate each other: next gathering Wed 15th Feb; community breakfast at Sandbrook Resource Centre on Saturday 28th January from 9.30am before it closes!

WELCOMING THE STRANGER:

we continue links to welcome those seeking healing and new life in Britain: with Asylum Link Merseyside and Migrant Workers Sefton Community.

LIVING WELL WITH DEMENTIA:

We continue stage one of this help, thanks to Declan Barry, who leads our next **Dementia Information Sessions:** one hour in Sacred Heart Hall on Friday January 27th at 10am or again at 2pm; or on Tuesday 31st January at 7pm. All Ainsdale is invited.

OUR CARING COMMUNITY:

SVP host Scouse lunch at SJS on Thurs 23rd Feb. **A.L.L.** invite all to great value lunch each day, and **French With Friends** on Fridays 1.30-3pm, and **Line Dancing** on Mondays 10-10.45am. **Sociable Sunday in SJS** begins on 26th February: 3.30-5pm for company, cake and connecting with family. **Coffee and Chat** meets next on Monday 30th Jan at 2pm in SH.

BAPTISMS: parents wanting infants christened/baptised please apply well in advance for preparation and the ceremony on second Sunday monthly.

WEDDINGS: for marriage this year applications must come in now, and all couples are invited to mass and meet up on February 12th.