

## **ADVENT**

Every year the Church retells with its annual sequence of festivals—Christmas to Easter to Ascension to Pentecost—the wonderful story of our salvation in Christ. Advent Sunday marks the beginning of the new Christian Year. The change of the liturgical color from green to purple underlines the solemnity of the four weeks' Advent season. It is, as it were, a 'little Lent', preparing us for Christmas as the forty days of the true Lent prepare us for Easter. But it is also more than that. Advent means 'coming', and our minds are directed, not merely backward to the coming of the Christ at Bethlehem more than 200 years ago, but forward to his promised coming again in great glory at the end of time. John in his vision of the Last Things saw 'him who is and who was and who is to come' (Revelation 1: 8). So at Advent the Church holds before our eyes the vision of him who has come, who will come, and who is ever coming, here and now, to individuals and nations in their moments of decision, to judge and to save.

Join us as we focus on our Advent theme "Feasting on the Word" every Sunday until Christmas Eve.

Our Christmas Eve Service will be celebrated at 4.00pm and Christmas Day Service at 10.30am

## **ST NICHOLAS SUNDAY DECEMBER 17 – CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICE AT ST. CYPRIAN'S**

### **ALL WELCOME!**

Who is St. Nicholas?

St. Nicholas was a bishop of an ancient Greek town called Myra, in present-day Turkey.

St. Nicholas always had a love for the poor and would work for their benefit. The story goes that there was a poor man in town with no money for a dowry for his daughters. No dowry meant no marriage, which would have left his daughters to be sold into a life of servitude. Late one night, St. Nicholas dropped a bag of money down the chimney of the family home, thus allowing the daughters a dowry. Most famously, he is the real-life historical figure from whom we get Santa Claus. His generosity inspired the "chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf" - Santa meaning Saint and Claus is short for Nicholas.

Who is St. Nicholas the Patron Saint of?

A patron saint is a saint who is known for praying for and helping people in specific walks of life or particular circumstances. Saints are typically patron saints of people, things and situations that were similar to experiences they had when they were alive.

St. Nicholas is the patron saint of children, bakers, brides, unmarried women, grooms, sailors and travelers. Because he was persecuted for his faith we can pray for all people who are being persecuted around the world. He was a Bishop, so we can ask him to intercede for bishops. And he helped the poor, sick and suffering, so we can ask him to pray for those most in need in our communities.

The story of St. Nicholas is fun to know and a great way to remind us and our kids that Christmas is about more than just presents.

One fun way to celebrate is to make traditional St. Nicholas cookies. In the United States gingerbread and sugar cookies. Come and enjoy the tradition of eating cookies and meeting our own St. Nicholas.

