

THE WEAVINGS

Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle Department for Spirituality

December 2013

Living in the Promise

Advent resources are now available in parishes, deaneries and schools. The theme is *Living in the Promise*—reflecting the Season when we remember God's promises and the generations of people who have lived in faithfulness and confidence that God will fulfil those promises—even if it is not in a way we might expect.

One person who was charged with speaking of the promises of God was Isaiah. He was called to speak to people in exile who had lost just about everything—including a sense of themselves. He was to encourage and comfort them—and to give them the belief in themselves and in God that would eventually enable them to rebuild as a people when they finally returned home.

Some of his words are as fresh today as they were three thousand years ago. The following extracts are taken from the First Readings of the Sundays of Advent. Spend a few minutes now reflecting on one or more of them and then, during Mass (or ideally beforehand!) listen or read them in full and ponder what the message and promise of the words are for today's world.

God shall judge between the nations,
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
and their spears into pruning-hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

*Where do people really need to hear
and take heart from these words today?*



(The Messiah) shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.

*Where in the world do people need the assurance of justice
and mercy—especially for the poor?*



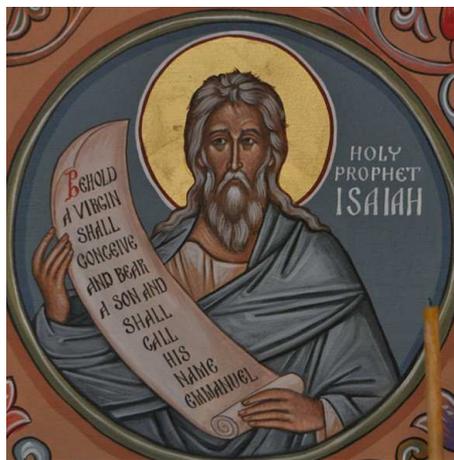
Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
'Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.

*When do you feel the need for someone to help strengthen
your "trembling knees" or fearful heart?*



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.
What is the promise that comes with
every new-born child?

*And how does it speak of God fulfilling
his promises to humanity?*



Diocesan Festival 2014

21-22 June 2014

Youth Village

As this is Corpus Christi weekend, the Festival will have a Eucharistic theme. It will pick up on words of St Augustine about the Body of Christ:

Behold what you are—become what you receive!

The speakers will be:

Bishop Séamus

Karen Kilby (new Bede Chair)

Kathryn Turner

with **TenTen Theatre**
and **More than Dance.**

There will be streams for children and young people.

Opportunities for Adoration in the chapel.

Marketplace of things going on in the Diocese.

And more...

Publicity will be available after Christmas but you can register your interest and be among the first to receive information by contacting us using the details below.

Contact Details

To sign up for **Weavings** or the daily e-mail, contact Kathryn Turner, Head of the Department for Spirituality via the Department for Education

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Moving Forward in Faith

At the End of Year of Faith Mass, we had a final reflection on the Year of Faith logo—
and how it could lead us into the months to come.

Here are extracts that you might like to spend time with as we embark on a new Church Year.

The first thing we see in the logo is a boat – representing the barque of Peter...reminding us that we are people on a journey.

Over the last year, people have visited the Holy Land, Rome, Fatima, Santiago and Lourdes and also made pilgrimages to some of the holy sites in our own diocese, honouring those who gave their lives in loving service or martyrdom for the glory of God.

As we look ahead, perhaps we could think about ways in which we could continue to visit these and other places – remembering the lives and work of the Northern Saints who have hallowed our land... and do what we can to continue that work and witness.

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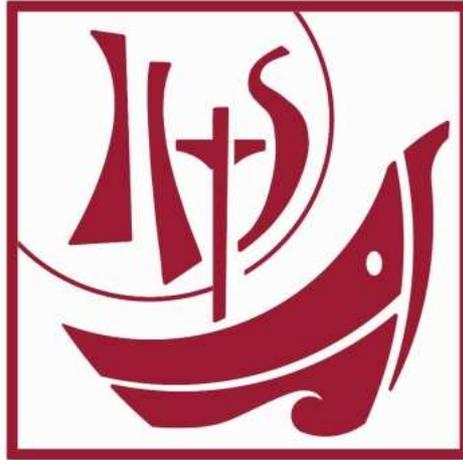
The mast of the boat forms a cross which reminds us that, at the Mass which opened our Year of Faith, over 40,000 lapel crosses were given out to people throughout the diocese.

The cross is the sign under which we were all baptised – and the sign we make at the beginning and end of prayers and on other occasions when we remind ourselves of God's blessing us in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Have you still got your lapel cross?

How might you use a cross – the Sign of the Cross – or other small sign to show that you are proud to be a Christian – and be willing to share something of what it means to you with others?

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YEAR OF FAITH 2012
2013

The sails – filled with the breath of the Holy Spirit also make up the letters IHS which represent the name of Jesus Christ.

Our Faith is centred on a person – Jesus Christ. It is his name we bear –

his teaching that we follow – his mercy that forgives and heals us – his death that opened the way to eternal life...

How much did we take advantage of the opportunities for growing in faith during the Year of Faith?

How might you continue to learn more – to grow in wonder at the inexhaustible richness of the mysteries of God and the Church?

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Behind the IHS is the rising Sun – representing the Light of the World.

The combination of a circle and IHS also bring us to the Eucharist – the sacrament that is the source and the summit of our lives as Catholics.

There have been countless Masses said during this Year of Faith.

Each one was a unique celebration but each making present again the sacrifice of Christ and bringing us to the threshold of the heavenly liturgy.

What Masses stand out for you from the past year?

How might you deepen your love of the Eucharist as God's great gift to the Church in the coming months and years?



Prayer Station of the Month...

During Advent, we will hear words from the prophets—particularly Isaiah who is sometimes known as the Advent and Christmas prophet as so many of his writings seem to point towards the coming of Christ.

Isaiah wrote at a time of great suffering for the Jewish people. He did not offer platitudes but his words offered strength and comfort to those who heard and read them.

When we look around our world today, the suffering has not gone away. With the use of the media, we are more aware of suffering in places that Isaiah did not even know existed. It is easy to be overwhelmed by the problems.

On a "scroll"
write or draw
what you would like to see
as part of God
fulfilling his promises to humanity.

Roll it up and, if you wish, decorate it.

Tie it with a ribbon
and keep it to hang
on your Christmas Tree.



Use it to remind you
that God fulfilled the promise
to send the Messiah in Jesus...

Our prayer station this month invites people to think about some of the words they will hear during the Liturgy of the Word and then to think what they would like to say about God coming through for people—healing and strengthening them.

You will need strips of paper and pens. You may also like to have some narrow dowel cut to fit the width of the paper. People can then use sticky tape to fix their "prophecy" to the dowel and create a scroll. Supply some narrow ribbon to tie up the scroll or to tie onto the ends of the dowel to form a hanging loop. The scroll can be taken home—or left in a basket to decorate the church's Christmas Tree with words of hope. 