



Advent Two – The peace of giving



Hello from St Mary's church in Bottesford, it's lovely to be back with you again. I hope you enjoyed making your Advent wreath! I wonder what you made yours out of...

Today we are in the second Sunday of Advent; remember, there are four Sundays in Advent altogether because the church believes it takes this long to get ready for something as

important as Christmas. If you have an Advent calendar, you might be on door number 6 already!

For our Advent message this week we are starting in the supermarket. How many of you have helped your mum or dad do the food shopping? All those tins of food on the shelves. If you pick up a tin that says Baked Beans on the label, you would expect it to have Baked Beans inside it, wouldn't you?

As followers of Jesus, we sometimes wear 'labels' that tell other people we love God. Some wear a cross on a chain, or have a fish symbol on their car. When other people see these labels, they expect us to live as though we love God. So, what does this mean?



In the Bible, in Luke's gospel, we are told about someone whose job it was to get everyone ready for Jesus' coming. His name was John the Baptist. He wanted people to start behaving as though they loved God, and he gave some simple examples. "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same." You can read this for yourselves if you have a Bible at home – in Luke chapter 3 verse 11.



John wanted people to know that the labels are not important if they don't show what you're really like on the inside. If you love God, your life should show it! Real peace comes from knowing that the things you do show God's love to other people. I wonder, what can we do this Advent to show God's love?

If you've been into St Mary's church, you might have seen a supermarket trolley. A strange thing to find in a church, you could say! People from across Bottesford and beyond come into church to leave food in the trolley for the food bank in Grantham. Food banks collect donated food and give it to families in need. People who are blessed with plenty of food share with those who have none – just like John the Baptist said!



At this time of year, St Mary's church usually has a Toy Service. Maybe you've been to one of these? Everyone brings a new toy, they are brought to the altar at the front of church and blessed with a prayer. Afterwards they are given to the food bank to share with families who need help to give toys to their children.



We can't have the Toy Service as usual this year because of coronavirus. But we can still collect the toys! If you know that you have plenty of toys, maybe you can think about bringing a new toy to church to share with another family. St. Mary's Church is open between 10am and 12 noon every day except Sunday for you to bring your donations of food or

a new toy for the food bank. This is one way you can show God's love this Advent.

Advent Activity – Make an Advent Kindness Jar

This is a bit like an Advent calendar, but instead of you getting a nice picture or some chocolate behind a door each day, you take out a piece of paper on which you and your family have written something you can do for someone else that day! You can have fun decorating the jar and coming up with kind things to do!



Advent Prayer Here is a prayer you can say when you light the second candle on your wreath, which stands for peace:

Lord Jesus, light of the world,
John told the people to prepare,
for you were very near.
As Christmas grows closer day by day,
help us to be ready to welcome you now.
Amen.

