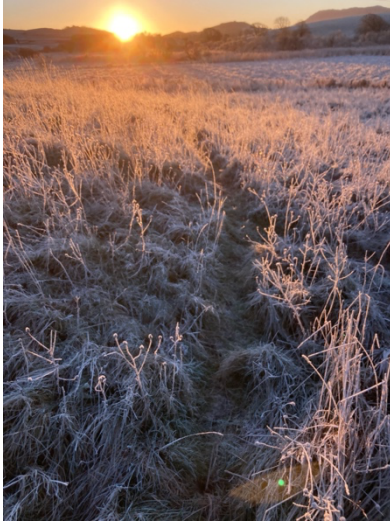


## **Advent 3 & Feast of the Immaculate Conception**

St. Ninian's, Castle Douglas & Christ Church, Dalbeattie  
SC011079 & SC010918

<https://dcdchurches.org.uk/> tel: 01556 505894



PAX

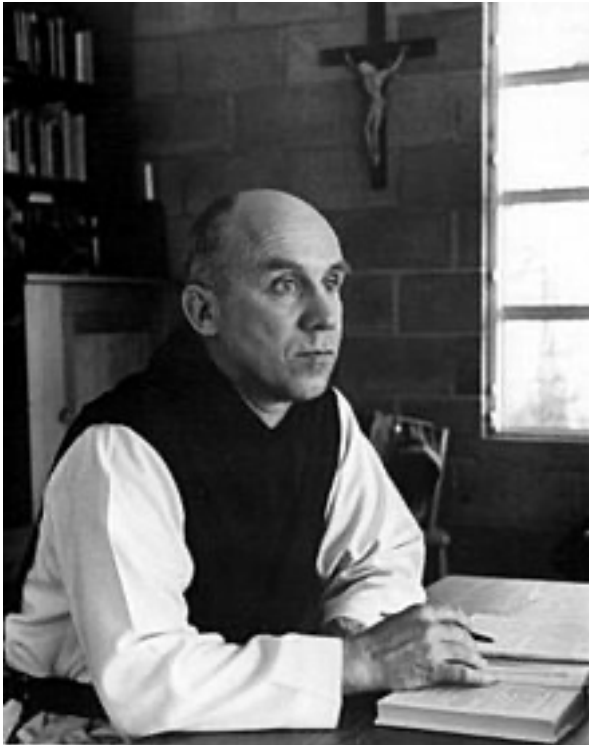
Dear Friends in Christ

I am writing to you on one of those controversial feast days of the church: The Feast of the Immaculate Conception (of Mary) or as we Episcopalians like to call it, a Feast of Mary! Whatever your thoughts, it is appropriate at this stage in Advent we think of Mary. Without Mary, there would be no Birth of Christ, no Christmas and no Salvation. It all depended on a simple word: 'Yes!' I wonder when you last said 'Yes' to God?

As the Sun rose this morning over Screel Hill and our lovely home of Galloway. I couldn't help thinking how lucky we are to be alive and live in such a wonderful and safe place. Saying 'Yes' to God may not always lead to such happy outcomes. We need only to read the 'Birth Narrative of Jesus' to realise how unsettling saying 'Yes' to God can be. Saying 'Yes' though can be transformational, as transformational, as a beautiful sunrise on a frosty day! Could you be 'ready' and 'willing' to be transformed?

Perhaps you would like to read the Annunciation to Joseph (Matt 1: 18-25) or to the Shepherds (Luke 2: 8-14) imaginatively? How would you react? Would you leave what you are doing at this moment? Would you be prepared to risk your reputation? All this is before we consider Mary: betrothed and yet prepared to say "Yes" to carrying God's Son!

Following Jesus 'Faithfully' is not easy, though it can prove to be life fulfilling. We are not all Called to be Mother Theresa of Calcutta - thankfully. We are, however, called to be ourselves and to live full and exciting lives, even though they may be extremely trying at times. These difficult times are when God is there for you and for me. We must just say 'Yes' and walk with God, trusting in His Son. As Fr. Thomas Merton OSCO has written:



*“Discovering vocation does not mean scrambling toward some prize just beyond my reach but accepting the treasure of true self I already possess. Vocation does not come from a voice out there calling me to be something I am not. It comes from a voice in here calling me to be the person I was born to be, to fulfil the original selfhood given me at birth by God.”*

**Our Travelling Through Advent in Hope** Zoom course on Wednesday mornings has been helping us centre ourselves on God in Hope and Faith. Why not join us at 11am this Wednesday?

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82652804942?pwd=YVA4Uk9odkIGU1RPVkk0TkIITEVvZz09>

**AdventWord**  
NOVEMBER 27 – DECEMBER 25  
**2022**

27	WALK	12	WILDERNESS
28	TOGETHER	13	STRANGER
29	TEACH	14	BELOVED
30	MOUNTAINS	15	THIRSTY
1	MAKE	16	TRAVELER
2	READY	17	MAJESTY
3	UNITY	18	PURIFY
4	DELIGHT	19	SIGN
5	RAIN	20	HEAR
6	WELCOME	21	OBEDIENCE
7	WINNOWER	22	CHOOSE
8	BREATHE	23	RESTORE
9	FIRE	24	BIRTH
10	FLOURISH	25	EMMANUEL
11	MESSANGER		

adventword.org 

You could also be involved in **Advent Word** as a way of deepening your Advent journey. Here are the words to consider:

Please send me (Mary Collins) your image, poem, etc along with the particular word, and I will do the rest! You can email Mary at

([marylouisecollins@gmail.com](mailto:marylouisecollins@gmail.com)), text, or WhatsApp her (07857767992). The calendar of Advent Words is above, and here is a link for you to learn more. <https://adventword.org/en/home/>

Advent is a busy time and finding time for you and for God is essential. Why not say 'Yes' to God.

Yours in the soon to be born king, Jesus Christ.

*Christopher*

Rector



**Help Needed Decorating Churches and our Christmas Trees'**

Fred and Fiona would welcome some help decorating St.Ninian's Christmas trees this Saturday at 4pm.

Christ Church is looking for people to decorate and install their Christmas Tree. Please contact Sue Thomas t. 01556 612863



**Coffee Morning:  
Churches Together**

**10<sup>th</sup>December Saturday**

**10.30 to 12pm Christ  
Church Hall**

*AN ADVENT PRAYER: HENRI NOUWEN*

Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.

We who have so much to do and seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day, we who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.

We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your Kingdom. We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.

We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light. To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"

*A Poem for Advent by Mary Oliver*

Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but still nothing is as shining as it should be for you. Under the sink, for example, is an uproar of mice – it is the season of their many children. What shall I do? And under the eaves and through the walls the squirrels have gnawed their ragged entrances – but it the season when they need shelter, so what shall I do? And the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard while the dog snores, the cat holds the pillow; what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly up the path, to the door. And I still believe you will come, Lord; you will, when I speak to the fox, the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know that I am really speaking to you whenever I say, as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.