

ST DAVID'S RC CHURCH

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This parish is part of the Westminster Catholic
Diocese Trustee Charity No: 233699

Parish Priest: Fr. Sidon Sagar



Epiphany of the Lord

07th January 2024

**"We saw his star as it rose and have come to
do him homage."**

Twelfth Night is the night when people traditionally take down the Christmas trees and put away the time-honoured decorations for another year. It is a moment often tinged with sadness as families and visitors have now departed. Many decorations have stood the test of time and tell a story of a family, sometimes joyful, other times marked by tears. The missing Christmas cards record the stories of bereavement and lost friends. The Three

Kings, who have been moving towards the crib, now take their proud place near Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. This intimate scene is explained to children who wonder at the sight of the crib.

Caspar bears the gold for a king, Melchior the frankincense for a deity, Balthasar the myrrh whose scent is already leading us towards the tomb at Easter. In the well-known carol We Three Kings we sing,

*"Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing,
Bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb."*

Yet the cold of the tomb will give way to Christ's glorious rising from the dead.

In the Christmas story, we discover our identity as a people who follow Jesus and are his disciples. The beauty of the scene at the manger captures the hope of the Christ Child and the joy that is proclaimed each Christmas.

The Magi bearing their gifts have followed the star that appeared as a mysterious sign in the night sky. They travelled from the East over mountain and desert. In their longing to understand the meaning of this twinkling light, they persevered on their hard journey through very long, cold nights and short days. Tiredness and weariness must have been part of their wintry journey.

They enter the house of the Holy Family where they see the Child with his mother Mary and his protector Joseph. Their house has the welcome and warmth of a home that is full of love. They are offered hospitality in the Eastern custom. They bow low and offer their

gifts to the innocent and fragile child who is utterly dependent on his mother and St Joseph. They pay homage to the new king. They see both a baby and a king. There is a poverty in the simple scene but also a richness because the presence of the Christ Child fills the whole room. They recognise him as their God.

T.S. Eliot writes in his poem *The Journey of the Magi* about their homeward journey:

"We returned to our places, these Kingdoms, But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,

With an alien people clutching their gods.

I should be glad of another death."

They know that their world has been changed and they no longer fit into the world in the same way. They are not sure what this will mean for their future. They begin to find the meaning of the Messiah who will save his people in the Jewish scriptures. They know in their hearts that this is the child they have met. All people have been sent a redeemer who will free them from their sins. He has been born in poverty in Bethlehem and will proclaim the coming of God's kingdom. The Magi learn that he will save all people by his death and resurrection and that they will have life in this world and eternal life in the next.

As we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany, we affirm our belief in Jesus Christ, true God and true man, light of the nations. We confess our belief that he is the Saviour of all people. We unite as Christians of East and West in our belief that the message of Christ gives hope and joy to all who believe. We bow down and pay him homage.

We thank God for the faith that has been handed down to us, whether from grandparents, within families, by friends, or by helpful priests and religious. We name in prayer those people who have sustained us in our faith and helped us in the difficult times.

As we move into the new year, let us make our new resolutions, perhaps to read the scriptures daily, to pray the rosary, maybe to be generous in almsgiving. Let us choose to do something to deepen our faith and love this new year.

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Offertory Collection - Thank you for your offertories last week

Contactless **£85** (Weekly collection of the **Dona contactless** PayPoint is in the Church)
Monthly standing order **£210.00**. Thank you for your offertories to the Parish.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Sunday: Please join us this Sunday for Teas / Coffees after the Mass, as it will be the first Sunday of the Year for all our us.

Please note: next Saturday 13th Jan 2024 afternoon 2pm, we invite parishioners to come and help to removing the Christmas decorations and clean the church. Once again I thank everyone who had put up the Christmas decorations. **So, please join in to help in removing the decoration and neatly organise in the boxes for Next celebrations to follow in 2024.**

The Crib. Pope Francis has sung the praises of the traditional Christmas crib, describing it

as a "**living Gospel**". Please do visit the Crib in Our Lady Chapel. The **Donations to the Catholic Children's Society (Westminster)** is for poor children, so please **be generous in your prayers and donations for these children**.

Mercia Wright RIP. Please pray for the repose of the soul of Mercia Wright. Funeral Service will take place on Friday 12th January 2024 at 11.15 am.

Caritas Westminster has provided the parish with vouchers as part of their response to food poverty within the Catholic Diocese of Westminster. If you live in our parish and are struggling financially, please contact **Lee Gibson on 07713 760281** and she will be able to issue you with Tesco vouchers. All requests are treated in the strictest confidence.

Baptism Preparation Course. The next Baptism Preparation Course is on Saturday 6th January 2024 at 10.00am in the presbytery meeting room. If you require the Sacrament of Baptism for your child in January, February, or March 2024 then you will need to contact ashfordcatechist@rcdow.org.uk so that the necessary paperwork can be finalised before the date of the course.

Safeguarding If you've any concerns or require advice regarding the safety or well-being of a child or vulnerable adult, please contact our parish safeguarding rep, Fey Worley on stanwellsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk.

You can also contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on 020 7798 9356 or safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

During Adoration before Saturday Evening Holy Mass (and by appointment)

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

To arrange a baptism please refer to the parish website

For the parish Mass timetable, please refer to the parish website:

<http://parish.rcdow.org.uk/stanwell>

PLEASE PRAY

for all the sick and housebound in our parish.

for Fr Jonathon Stogdon and the parishioners of St Edmund's Whitton in the Upper Thames Deanery.

for the Holy Father's Prayer Intention that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programmes which value their active participation.

Mass Intentions 07th - 14th Jan 2024

Sun	07 th	The Epiphany of the Lord (Sat Vigil) 06.00pm 10.30am
Mon	08 th	The Baptism of the Lord 06.00pm
Tues	09 th	06.00pm
Wed	10 th	09.30am
Fri	12 th	06.00pm
Sat	13 th	06.00pm
Sun	14 th	2nd Sunday in the Ordinary Time 10.30am

This Sunday's readings, 07th January – The Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60: 1-6; Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6; Matthew 2: 1-12

Next Sunday's readings, 14th January – Second Sunday in the OT

1 Samuel 3: 3-10, 19; 1 Corinthians 6: 13-15, 17-20; John 1: 35-42

The Pope says, "God so greatly desires to embrace our lives that, infinite though he is, he becomes finite for our sake. In his greatness, he chooses to become small. This is the wonder of **#Christmas**: the unprecedented tenderness of a God who saves the world by becoming incarnate."

- 29th December 2023

January is dedicated to **HOLY NAME OF JESUS**

"In the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth and under the earth" (Phil 2:10). **Christ's name is chosen in heaven**, and the Angel Gabriel announces it when he informs the Blessed Virgin of the incarnation: "Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son, **and thou shalt call his name Jesus**". The name of Jesus is the sweetest of all names, and He who bears it is most worthy of all love. **He who calls Jesus his friend can be assured that this friend is the most devoted and unselfish of all friends.** Jesus is our all. **In His name we may pray to the Father with assurance of being heard. In His name the Church administers all her sacraments.**

