

St Thomas More – Parish Newsletter

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Sunday 1st January 2023, MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD (Year A)

From the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters: In this Christmas season, our reflections on Jesus' birth can be enhanced by some thoughts of the great Doctor of the Church, Saint Francis de Sales. Today, on the fourth centenary of his death, I have published a new Apostolic Letter to recall some of the richness of his teaching.

For Francis de Sales, the mystery of Christmas directs our gaze to the poverty and simplicity of the manger as the sign of Christ's true identity as God among us. God, who knows our weaknesses, our sins and our hardness of heart, chose to draw us to himself by bonds of love, coming into our world as a newborn child. The birth of Jesus thus reveals God's utterly free, gracious and indeed "disarming" love.

Saint Francis teaches us to welcome the Lord into our hearts by joyfully imitating his detachment from worldly wealth and power, and, like the infant Jesus, by learning "to desire nothing and to refuse nothing, to accept everything that God sends us", with complete confidence in his loving providence.

May the lowly manger of Bethlehem inspire us to imitate that boundless love of God, made flesh in the Child of Bethlehem, the Saviour of the world.

Special Request

I would like to ask you all for a special prayer for Pope Emeritus Benedict, who is supporting the Church in silence. Remember him - he is very ill - asking the Lord to console him and to sustain him in this witness of love for the Church, until the end.

Audience 28th December 2022

Collections for 18th to 28th December

Sunday Offertory collection: £701.02

(Envelopes: £65; Loose: £636.02)

Contactless card machine: £83.57; **Grand total: £784.59**

Many thanks.

Tea/Coffee after Mass

Generally, on the first Sunday of the month, after 11.00am Mass, tea/coffee will be available in the Hall. But please note the date for January: Sunday 8th January 2023.

Many thanks to all those who help organise and run this activity! We are still looking for volunteers to help with this very worthwhile activity.

Mary's Meals

The number of children who are fed worldwide is staggering: 2,279,941 every school day. For more information see their website: www.marysmeals.org.uk

We can support them in the following two ways:

1. Until 31 January 2023, donations made to Mary's Meals will be doubled by a group of generous supporters, up to £1.5 million. It costs just £15.90 to feed a child with Mary's Meals every day for a school year. And this

winter, a donation of £15.90 will feed two children. I propose that we take up a retiring collection for Mary's Meals in January and send the money before 31st January.

2. Mary's Meals have come up with an alternative to "rags to riches". They have teamed up with a company that will accept old coins (and notes) of any denomination and turn them into money.

If you have old coins at home, this would be a good opportunity to send them on, to help feed children via Mary's Meals.

Valentine's Day Mass

Our traditional celebration of Christian Marriage, will be on Friday 10th February 2023. Mass at 6pm, followed by a reception in the Hall. All married couples, especially the recently married, and those preparing for marriage are welcome to attend.

Westminster Catholic Children's Society Crib Collection

The candle stand at the Thomas More Chapel will be used for this collection until the end of the Christmas Season.

Cathedral Adult Confirmations

"The next Adult Confirmation dates are 21st January 2023, 22nd April 2023 and 23rd September 2023.

If anyone wishes to put forward as an adult candidate for Confirmation at the Cathedral, please contact your parish priest."

Friday Adoration

Friday 6th January is the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, and a Holy Day of Obligation. Masses are at 7am and 10am. We shall have Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from after 10am Mass until 12noon.

Seniors' Coffee Morning

There will be a Coffee Morning in January, but which Wednesday, is uncertain at present. As soon as it is fixed we'll pass the date on.

On the New Year

As another year draws to an end, let us pause before the manger and express our gratitude

to God for all the signs of his generosity in our life and our history, seen in countless ways through the witness of those people who quietly took a risk. A gratitude that is no sterile nostalgia or empty recollection of an idealised and disembodied past, but a living memory, one that helps to generate personal and communal creativity because we know that God is with us.

Let us pause before the manger to contemplate how God has been present throughout this year and to remind ourselves that every age, every moment is the bearer of graces and blessings. The manger challenges us not to give up on anything or anyone.

To look upon the manger means to find the strength to take our place in history without complaining or being resentful, without closing in on ourselves or seeking a means of escape, looking for shortcuts in our own interest.

Looking at the manger means recognising that the times ahead call for bold and hope-filled initiatives, as well as the renunciation of vain self-promotion and endless concern with appearances.

Looking at the manger means seeing how God gets involved by involving us, making us part of his work, inviting us to welcome the future courageously and decisively.

Looking at the manger, we see Joseph and Mary, their young faces full of hopes and aspirations, full of questions. Young faces that look to the future conscious of the difficult task of helping the God-Child to grow.

We cannot speak of the future without reflecting on these young faces and accepting the responsibility we have for our young; more than a responsibility, the right word would be debt, yes, the debt we owe them. To speak of a year's end is to feel the need to reflect on how concerned we are about the place of young people in our society.

*Pope Francis, Homily,
31st December 2016*

Fr Stefan is still not strong enough to celebrate public Masses after being in hospital before Christmas. He sends his thanks for all the prayers, cards and messages and continues to pray for you all daily.

Please note there is no 6.00pm Mass today. There is no 7am this week, except on Friday 6th January, which is the Epiphany of the Lord.

A Happy New Year to all. May the good Lord bring us peace and blessing in 2023!

God Bless

Mgr Nicholas

Epiphany

“The feast of Epiphany (generally observed on 6th January in the Roman Rite), is one of the oldest liturgical celebrations, even before Christmas was established on 25th December .

The name itself refers to the “manifestation” of Jesus during three particular biblical events.

Pope Benedict XVI refers to this tradition in a homily on Epiphany in 2009.

Epiphany, the “manifestation” of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is a many-faceted mystery. The Latin tradition identifies it with the visit of the Magi to the Infant Jesus in Bethlehem and thus interprets it above all as a revelation of the Messiah of Israel to the Gentiles.

The Eastern tradition on the other hand gives priority to the moment of Jesus’ baptism in the River Jordan when he manifested himself as the Only-Begotten Son of the heavenly Father, consecrated by the Holy Spirit.

John’s Gospel, however, also invites us to consider as an “epiphany” the Wedding at Cana, during which, by changing the water into wine, Jesus “manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him” (John 2:11)”.



ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

1st January – 7th January 2023

Tel: 020 7435 1388; <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/swisscottage/>

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
SUN 1st January MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD (Readings. Year A)	9.30am People of the Parish 11am Mass George Adegbola (intentions) N.B No 6pm Mass today	The Church opens at 9.15am 10.30am Confessions
MON 2nd January Ss Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors	Bank Holiday No 7am Mass 10am Mass Michael Crook (RIP)	The Church opens at 9.30am (Monday to Friday)
TUE 3rd January Christmas feria	No 7am Mass 10am Mass Joan Ross (intentions)	
WED 4th January Christmas feria	No 7am Mass 10am Mass Rita Rogan (intentions)	
THU 5th January Christmas feria	No 7am Mass 10am Mass Peter Lombardi and family (intentions)	
FRI 6th January THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD No Friday abstinence	7am Mass Pope Benedict (intentions) 10am Mass Margaret Casey (intentions)	10am – 12pm Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
SAT 7th January Christmas feria	10am Mass Rose Marie Karlsson and family (intentions)	The Church opens at 9.30am

Prayer Intentions:

Recently deceased: Thomas Smullen; Helen Conlon; Gwen McGill; Dave Naicker; Emma Murphy; Nora Scott; Mike Cipolla; Michael Crook

Anniversary: Sofia da Silva; Maryann Estrella; James Patrick McNally; Brigid Monaghan; Josephine Abdala-Tabet; Christine Banks; Mark Sharman

Confessions:

Monday to Friday (before and after 10am Mass)

Saturday: before and after 10am Mass

Sunday: 10.30am (before Mass)

Forthcoming Events:

8TH January: THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (end of the Christmas Season)

Sunday Masses: 9.30am, 11.00am and 6.00pm