

ST THOMAS MORE – PARISH NEWSLETTER

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SUNDAY 7TH JANUARY 2024

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (Year B)



Christmas Season

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Epiphany. The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord tomorrow, Monday 8th January, then concludes the Christmas Season.

The Crib remains in place a few more weeks, until 2nd February, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. During these days after Christmas, it has been good to see people coming to the church during the day to pray before the Crib. We encourage you to continue to do this. The 2019 Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis, *Admirabile signum*,

On the Meaning and Importance of the Nativity Scene, is an example of a text that can be very useful for contemplating the great mysteries which we are now celebrating.

At times, for security reasons, the doors leading from the Narthex to the church may need to be locked. However, when this is the case, if the front doors of the church are open, you are welcome to come in and pray from the Narthex. When the Crib lights are on it is possible to see it from the entrance (and on-line via the web camera).

Club Lodwar

1st	£166.40	7	Rosemarie Karlsson
2nd	£124.80	59	Luciano Biancardi
3rd	£41.60	81	Max Sharman
4th	£41.60	92	Edward Tenet
5th	£41.60	108	Rita Ayers

Thank you for your support. Membership is open. A great way to start the New Year!

Offertory Collections

Once again, many thanks to everyone for your contributions to the upkeep of the Parish and the generous Christmas offerings for the clergy.

Dates for January

There will be tea and coffee after the 11am Mass today, **Sunday 7th January**.

The next Seniors' coffee morning will be on **Wednesday 10th January** after the 10am Mass.

Young Adults Group

Sunday 14 January, after 6pm Mass. Talk: *Catholics and Public Service*, Prof. Luis G. Franceschi, Assistant Secretary General of the Commonwealth. As a distinguished thinker, educator, diplomat and writer, Prof. Franceschi's profound expertise offers a distinctive insight into the potential role of faith in public life.

To notify interest or for more details: diegocobiang@gmail.com

January Magnificat

Copies of the January Magnificat are available (2 copies left) to buy at £5. There is also a Lenten companion at £3. You can pay using the card reader at the entrance or by putting cash in the newspaper/leaflet box.

Special Collection for the Holy Land

There will be a special retiring collection today, **7th January**, for the Holy Land. Cardinal Vincent has written:

I thank all those who have made contributions to charities seeking to support victims

of the conflict between Israel and Hamas. I thank all who have made those contributions through Friends of the Holy Land who continue to do such remarkable work in these difficult times. An appeal has arrived, as well, from the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pizzaballa, who is also deeply concerned about the impact on the Palestinian population in the West Bank, for many of whom sources of earning have effectively ended.

The crib offerings this year will be applied, as is our custom, to the Catholic Children's Society for the relief of poverty at home.

I ask that you hold a special collection immediately after Christmas, on the Feast of the Holy Family or on the Solemnity of the Epiphany, for relief for those suffering from the conflict in the Holy Land.

The Cardinal then explains that this collection will be forwarded to the Latin Patriarch as a response to his appeal.

Crib Collection

To implement the Cardinal's decision about the Crib Collection we will use the candle stand at the Thomas More Chapel for donations to the *Westminster Catholic Children's Society* until the end of the Christmas Season.

First Holy Communion Classes

Classes begin again on **Saturday 13th January**.

Mass intentions

We have already allocated the Mass intentions several weeks ahead. However if your Mass intention is for someone who has recently died or is seriously ill, we shall try to allocate a Mass as soon as possible.

Please speak to Maggie Ainsworth in the Parish Office (Tuesday or Friday mornings) or email her at swisscottage@rcdow.org.uk about any Masses you wish to be offered on a specific day. Alternatively please use the brown Mass intention envelopes in the

Narthex. These can be handed to a priest or put through the letterbox of the presbytery.

Parish Notes

Fr Nicholas returns on Monday 8th from his retreat to take up the reins of the Parish.

Once again we thank all those who helped make the Christmas celebration truly uplifting: cleaning and decorating the church, arranging the flowers, building the crib, taking the collections, reading at Mass, serving at the altar...

We have come to worship Him

From Pope St John Paul II's message for the World Youth Day, 2005.

"And the star... went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was" (Mt 2:9). The Magi reached Bethlehem because they had obediently allowed themselves to be guided by the star. Indeed, "When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy" (Mt 2:10). It is important, my dear friends, to learn to observe the signs with which God is calling us and guiding us. When we are conscious of being led by Him, our heart experiences authentic and deep joy as well as a powerful desire to meet Him and a persevering strength to follow Him obediently.

"And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother" (Mt 2:11). There is nothing extraordinary about this at first sight. Yet that Child was different from any other: He is the only Son of God, yet He emptied Himself of His glory (cf Phil 2:7) and came to earth to die on the Cross. He came down among us and became poor in order to reveal to us His divine glory, which we shall contemplate fully in heaven, our blessed home.

Who could have invented a greater sign of love? We are left in awe before *the mystery of a God who lowered himself* to take on our human condition, to the point of giving His life for us on the Cross (cf Phil 2:6-8).

In His *poverty*, – as St Paul reminds us – *"though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich"* (2 Cor 8:9), and came to offer salvation to sinners. How can we give thanks to God for such magnanimous goodness?

The Magi found Jesus at "*Bêth-lehem*" which means "*house of bread*". In the humble stable in Bethlehem on some straw lay the "*grain of wheat*" who, by dying, would bring forth "*much fruit*" (cf Jn 12:24). When speaking of Himself and His saving mission in the course of His public life, Jesus would later use the image of bread. He would say "*I am the bread of life*", "*I am the bread which came down from heaven*", "*the bread that I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh*". (Jn 6: 35.41.51).

Faithfully pursuing the path of our Redeemer from the poverty of the *Crib* to His abandonment on the *Cross* we can better understand the mystery of His love which redeems humanity. The Child, laid by Mary in the manger, is the Man-God we shall see nailed to the Cross. The same Redeemer is present in the sacrament of the Eucharist. In the *stable at Bethlehem* He allowed himself to be worshipped under the humble outward appearances of a new-born baby, by Mary, by Joseph and by the shepherds; in the *consecrated Host* we adore Him sacramentally present in his body, blood, soul and godhead, and He offers himself to us as the food of eternal life. The *Mass* then becomes a truly loving encounter with the One who gave himself wholly for us. Do not hesitate, my dear young friends, to respond to Him when He invites you "*to the wedding feast of the Lamb*".

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Tel: 020 7435 1388

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

7th January – 13th January 2024

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/swisscottage/>

	MASS	OTHER ACTIVITIES
SUN 7th January The Epiphany of the Lord (Readings. Year B)	9.30am People of the Parish 11am Mass Club Lodwar/People of Lodwar 6pm Mass Carlos Dos Reis (RIP)	The Church opens at 9.15am 10.30am Confessions 5.30pm Confessions
MON 8th January THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD	10am Mass Derek Disson (intentions)	Church opens at 9.30am Monday to Saturday Church closes after Mass
TUE 9th January Feria	10am Mass Holy Souls	
WED 10th January Feria	10am Mass Bella Tabet (intentions)	After 10am Mass Seniors' Coffee morning
THU 11th January Feria	10am Mass Paul Covenden (in thanksgiving)	
FRI 12th January St Aelred of Rievaulx, Abbot Friday abstinence	10am Mass For innocent victims of persecution and war	10am to Noon Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
SAT 13th January Blessed Virgin Mary on a Saturday	10am Mass Duarte Costa Pereira (RIP)	The Church opens at 9.30am 11am – 12pm First Holy Communion Class (11)

Prayer Intentions:

Recently deceased: Alex Solomon-Tabet; Ken Brown; Fr Dominic McKenna; Jeanette Francise-Tabet; Robinson Emmanuel; Joan Ross; Maria Maguire; Mervyn Agnew; Fr Terry Murray OMI

Anniversary: Brigid Monaghan; Helen O'Neil; Cristina Pancha; Jamil Tayar-Tabet; Erik Karlsson; Maria Fernanda; José Miguel Vargas Alvoraz; Mark Sharman

Confessions:

Weekdays: before and after 10am Mass
Saturday: before and after 10am Mass
Sunday: 10.30am and 5.30pm (before Mass)

Forthcoming liturgical celebrations:

2nd February: THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD
14th February: **ASH WEDNESDAY**