

PARISH NEWSLETTER

Corpus Christi Church, Langdon Street, Tring

8 January 2017



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Presbytery: 51 Langdon Street, Tring, Herts, HP23 6BA
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Pastoral Assistant: Wendy Hinds 01442 824369

Hall Bookings: Nicola Hickey 01442 826906

Parish Youth Worker: Pete Emmott pete@youthshb.org.uk 07541 412 128

Local Catholic Schools: St Thomas More (Primary), Berkhamsted, phone 01442 385060 website: www.stmore.herts.sch.uk;

Head teacher: Miss Isabel Cerasale

John F Kennedy (Secondary), Hemel Hempstead, phone 01442 266150

website: www.jfk.herts.sch.uk; Head teacher: Mr Paul Neves.

Times of Services

Sunday	Mass: 6.00 pm (Vigil), 8.30 am and 10.30 am
Holydays	Mass: 10.00 am and 7.30 pm
Weekday	Mass: Wednesday to Friday 10.00 am
Saturday	Sacrament of Reconciliation: 10.00 – 10.30 am 5.15 - 5.45 pm

Letter from Langdon Street

My dear people

Today we celebrate the Feast of Epiphany, a word which means showing or manifestation. On Christmas night the new born king was shown to the people of Israel through the shepherds. Today the child was shown to the world through the wise men who came from the East to worship the newborn King of the Jews. The visitors are sometimes called kings but St Matthew, who describes their visit, calls them wise men or Magi. Magi is a Persian word. Our word magician takes its root from Magi. They may have come from Iraq or from Persia. The Magi were wise men, priests or astrologers who were leaders of the Zoroastrian religion, a religion which still has believers in Iraq, Iran and other places in Mesopotamia. They studied the stars and movements of the planets and saw significance in the way these heavenly bodies travelled across the skies.

As astrologers they were excellent astronomers who knew every star and planet and drew significance from any rare or unusual movement in the heavens. Even today the appearance of an eclipse of the sun or moon or the appearance of a comet like Haley's Comet is seen as a bad omen. Those learned travellers came first to Jerusalem, the Royal City, the obvious place to look for the newborn Jewish King. Instructed by the Scriptures, they were directed further on by King Herod to Bethlehem. It was a strange sort of King they found there: a little child with Mary, his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. They offered their symbolic gifts; gold, acknowledging a king; frankincense, the symbol of God's presence; and myrrh, the ancient funeral spice, recognizing the mortal human nature of the Son of God, destined to suffer and to die in sacrifice for all mankind.

The wise men worshipped the pagan god Zoroaster but they were led to travel many miles to seek the king of a people they had read about in the Jewish Scriptures. We know very little about them. Centuries after the birth of Jesus they were given the names Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar. It was suggested that they came from Africa, Asia and Europe. All we know is that an unusual series of

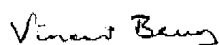
events in the heavens was enough for them to set off on a journey and to come face to face with the humble manger scene to encounter the divinity, the kingship, and the sacrificial destiny of the Infant Christ: How was divine glory shown forth there? Surely, it was a glory visible only to the eyes of faith: faith, to see in a helpless infant, who cannot even stutter, the Almighty Word of God; faith, to see the King of Kings, and Lord of all the worlds, in a swaddled baby, who cries for mother's milk; faith, to see the Son of God, "God of God, Light of Light", in all the poverty of a cattle stall, exposed to all the bitter winds of human indifference and disdain.

During the Twelve Days of Christmas we celebrate several feasts associated with our Saviour's birth. One is the Feast of the Holy Innocents. St Matthew tells us of their slaughter, boys newly born up to the age of two. On this feast day Pope Francis wrote a letter to all the bishops throughout the world. He reminded them of the words of the angel to the shepherds which still resound in our hearts – "I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour" (Lk 2: 10-11). He urges the bishops

to listen to that proclamation again and again; to hear over and over again that God is present in the midst of our people. In these days we experience how the liturgy leads us to the heart of Christmas, into the Mystery which gradually draws us to the source of Christian joy. As pastors, we are called to help foster this joy among the faithful. Christmas is also accompanied, whether we like it or not, by tears. The Evangelists did not disguise reality to make it more credible or attractive. They did not indulge in words that were comforting but unrelated to reality. For them, Christmas was not a flight of fantasy, a way of hiding from the challenges and injustices of their day. On the contrary, they relate the birth of the Son of God as an event fraught with tragedy and grief. Quoting the prophet Jeremiah, Matthew presents it in the bluntest of terms: "A voice is heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children" (2:18). It is the sobbing of mothers bewailing the death of their children in the face of Herod's tyranny and unbridled thirst for power. Today too, we hear this heart-rending cry of pain, which we neither desire nor are able to ignore or to silence. We live in a world where almost half of the children who die under the age of five do so because of malnutrition. It is estimated that in 2016 there were 150 million child labourers, many of whom live in conditions of slavery. According to the most recent report presented by UNICEF, unless the world situation changes, in 2030 there will be 167 million children living in extreme poverty, 69 million children under the age of five will die between 2016 and 2030, and 16 million children will not receive basic schooling.

Pope Francis concluded his message by saying that "Christmas is a time that challenges us to protect life, to help it be born and grow and to work to ensure them the bare minimum needed so that their dignity as God's children will not only be respected but, above all, defended....May we do this with the paternal fidelity of Saint Joseph and guided by Mary, Mother of tender love, so that our own hearts may never grow hard.

Yours sincerely



Parish Priest

CHILDREN'S CLOTHES FOR THAILAND

Donations of second-hand children's clothes are invited for 'One Sky Foundation', an organisation in Thailand that supports vulnerable children and their families. Michael and Jum Demidecki can arrange for these to be taken out to Thailand. If you would like to donate please leave children's clothes in the Narthex before 15 January 2017 with a note reading 'For Thailand'.

FINDING SILENCE

Is life too busy? Slow down and catch up. The priests and people of St Alban & St Stephen's Church, Beaconsfield Road, St Albans, invite you to join them on Saturday 28 January, 10.45 am to 2.30 pm. Bishop John Crowley will lead this time for anyone needing a bit of space and quiet. For further info email krystyna@faithknowledge.org.

NOTES ON BLINDNESS

Next Saturday, 14th January, there will be a special film showing at High Street Baptist Church (6.30pm for 7pm start) of *Notes on Blindness*. All the Tring Churches are invited. Marilyn Hull, widow of John Hull who is the subject of the film, will be present and will talk briefly about the making of this film. If you would like to see a trailer of the film, it can be viewed at: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=MCWouLeXRsl>

Notices for the week beginning 8 January 2017

Sunday 8 January Feast of the Epiphany

Mass 6.00 pm (Vigil) Laurie Taylor (Anniversary); 8.30 am Deceased members of the Leadbeater Family; 10.30 am Intentions of Anne De Cesco

Monday *Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord*

No Mass

Tuesday *Feria*

No Mass

Wednesday *Feria*

Mass 10.00 am Una Kelly (Lately Dead)

Thursday *St Aelred of Rievaulx*

No Mass Funeral of Canon John McDonald (Westminster Cathedral)

Friday *St Hilary of Poitiers*

Mass 10.00 am Holy Souls

Saturday *Feria*

Confessions 10.00 – 10.30 am; 5.15 – 5.45 pm

Sunday 15 January Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mass 6.00 pm (Vigil) People of the Parish; 8.30 am Thanksgiving;
10.30 am Kathleen Reddington (Lately Dead)

PRAYERS

Please pray for: **Sick:** Debbie Bewley, Edith Burch, Patrick Foster, Wendy Hinds, Michael Hornsby, Adeline Lewis, Peter McDonald, Paul Mostyn, Honor Owen, Eileen Scotland and Anne Wilkinson; **Lately Dead:** Ruth Keele and Tom Walsh; **Anniversaries:** Sister Elizabeth Barrett, Ewart Barker, Kay Boswell, Thomas Brogan, Maggie Brown, Joseph Chovanec, Joseph Close, Martin Conway, Margaret Dinwoodie, Caspor Grob, Helen Hinton, Rose Mary Glenister, Beatrice Keeley, John Kowalewski, Margaret Lynch, Joseph & Ludmila Mazany, Elizabeth Minshall, Neil Moore, Clare Nelson, Sam Perigini, Anton Tabone and Earnest Williams. May they rest in peace.

PARISH MINISTRIES

2017		6.00 pm	8.30 am	10.30 am
14/15 Jan	E	F Sherratt M Todd	A Halliday S Whitehead	H Houston
	R	D Leadbeater M Sherratt	L Hutt S Whitehead	P Apps G Maloney
	W		S Kerr	J Brown

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Envelopes £162.49 Loose £179.93 Building Fund £48.40

December standing orders:

Offertory £1,670 Building fund £96.00