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7th January 2024

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

3rd WEEK OF CHRISTMASTIDE

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

Sat 06 Jan	5.30 pm	St George's	Mark Crosbie RIP
Sun 07 Jan	9.30 am	St George's	People of the parish
	11.15 am	Holy Spirit	In thanksgiving to St Joseph for a favour greatly received
Mon 08 Jan	9.30 am	St George's	Tom Farrell RIP, 10 th Anniversary
Tue 09 Jan	9.30 am	St George's	Bridgie Gilroy RIP
Wed 10 Jan	9.30 am	St George's	Alappatt Joseph RIP
Thu 11 Jan	9.30 am	St George's	Sp. Intention, Jean & Malcolm Brocklehurst (AE)
Fri 12 Jan	9.30 am	St George's	Sp. Intention, Maura Litchfield & Family (AE)
Sat 13 Jan	9.30 pm	St George's	The McCartney & Brogan families
	5.30 pm	St George's	Donor's intention for good health MD
Sun 14 Jan	9.30 am	St George's	People of the Parish
	11.15 am	Holy Spirit	Gordon Perry RIP

GOSPEL REFLECTION:

O wise men from afar, O kings, where are you going in such haste? O wise men from afar, anger persecutes the child. Jesus came to bring light to our darkened world. Today's Feast of the Epiphany celebrates the unveiling of this light.

Our scene is set during the reign of the brutal king, Herod. Herod had been appointed king by the Roman Senate in 40 BC. He was a tyrannical despot with a penchant for parricide (he murdered his wife, three sons, uncle and mother-in-law). His taste for bloodshed, as we shall see, extended beyond his family circle. The Magi, who may have been astrologers from Persia or southern Arabia, followed a star (some scholars suggest it was a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn).

In feigning to be interested in the birth of the Messiah, Herod reveals his duplicity and cunning. In fact, his heart was bent on extinguishing the light of the world. The Magi, on the other hand, were bent on worshipping the light of the world.

St Pope John Paul II saw in the Magi's journey in search of a king a parallel to the human journey. 'Whatever the age, culture, civilisation or nation, people are always searching for God. Like the wise men, they glimpse him through the eyes of faith, then set forth in faith in the desire to draw closer to him in whom they believe and come to him in the eternal Bethlehem. However, if they have not found him through faith, in looking for the truth they seek this faith, and so seek God. As Saint Augustine put it "I would not have sought you, if I had not already found you."

As we celebrate the beginning of this new year, we unite our hearts to the vision of the Church, which is to proclaim the light of Christ to the world. We play a vital role in making Christ known – his love, mercy and compassion overwhelm the coldness and extinguish the darkness in our hearts.

Lord Jesus, on this most holy feast I proclaim that you are the light of the world. I dedicate my life to being a city on a hilltop and a lamp to radiate your life and light.

DEATH OF FR. PETER: It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Rev. Fr. Peter Peterken during the week. We thank God for his long priestly ministry and pray that he goes safely to his heavenly reward.

Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.

BACK TO SCHOOL: Please pray for all the staff and pupils of St George's and St Benedict's and our other local Catholic schools as they return for a new term and a new year. We do thank God for the really good schools that we have and wish them continued good progress and achievement in 2024.

CATHOLIC NEWS & CATHOLIC POST: Free copies available at church with quite a lot of interesting news and articles from the diocese and nationally. Please take a copy.

CONFESSIONS: SATURDAY ONLY: 10:15 – 10:45

ADORATION before the Blessed Sacrament daily before the 9.30 am Mass and then other times as announced.

SAINTS THIS WEEK:

Mon 8th Jan: The Baptism of the Lord

Sat 13th Jan: St Hilary, Bishop & Doctor of the Church

SECOND COLLECTION next weekend for the Sick & Retired Priests Fund.

RECENT DEATHS AND FUNERALS:

Please pray for Mary (May) Gallagher, wife of Michael Gallagher, deceased, who has died recently. Michael and May were long time parishioners of St George's and lived on Donnington Drive, Littleover. May's funeral will take place at St George's on Tuesday, 16th January at 11 am. Reception into St George's on Monday, 15th January at 6 pm.

The funeral of Dennis Rafferty of Littleover as announced will take place at St George's on Friday 19th January at 11 am.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

New Paths

...they departed for their country by another way. Matthew 2:12

The literal meaning of the final words in today's Gospel are clear. To avoid the murderous rage of Herod, the Magi change their route to arrive home safely. But is there something else indicated here? The Fathers of the Church thought so, and they never feared to draw out the deeper potentialities of God's Word. A genuine encounter with Christ cannot take place without affecting a change at the deepest core of our being. Going home by familiar paths – that is, returning to accustomed modes of seeing and acting – is incompatible with the manner and the mystery of God's coming among us.

Having bowed before God, who becomes one with us in our vulnerability, the Magi now set out on the path of placing their lives at the service of a greater love. The star has led them, and us, to the Way, the Truth and the Life. Come let us adore him.

Help me, Lord, to direct my path more assuredly toward you.

Fr. Dennis Gallagher. A.A.

CHRISTMAS THANKS AND NEW YEAR WISHES

Sincere thanks from Fr Alan & Fr Peter for all your help with the preparations for, and the celebration of Christmas. Thanks to everybody who helped in any way to prepare the church and the Masses at St George's and Holy Spirit. Thanks also for your kind thoughts with cards and gifts and for your generous donations to the church and to the Christmas offerings.

And every good wish and blessings as we travel into a New Year. We continue our sincere prayers and offer Masses for an end to warfare and violence and pray also for all the many initiatives in the battle to preserve our climate for future generations.

May God be with us in all our prayers and efforts.