

The Little Flower Messenger

Year A THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD 5th January 2020

Welcome to our Parish Community of St. Theresa of Lisieux

The Presbytery, High Lane, Stansted Mountfitchet CM24 8LQ

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Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

We saw his star and have come to do the king homage.

Mass book (P. 115)

1st Reading:

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalm 23:

All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.

2nd Reading:

Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! We saw his star as it rose and have come to do the Lord homage. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon:
(P. 93)

We have seen his star in the East, and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.

This Week's Good News

Dear Friends

Today marks the feast of the Epiphany. The Greek word Epiphany means appearance or manifestation. In today's Gospel we see the revelation of Jesus as God to the Gentiles or non-Jews, represented by the Magi.

The Magi were not Kings, but a caste of Persian priests who served Kings, using their skills in interpreting dreams and watching movements of stars. The sixth century Italian tradition, that there were three Magi, Casper, Balthazar, and Melchior, is based on the three gifts that are mentioned in Matthew's Gospel: gold, frankincense and myrrh. These gifts may be thought of as prophesying Jesus' future: gold representing his kingship as well as divinity; frankincense a symbol of his priestly role; and myrrh a prefiguring of his death and embalming.

The gift of gold to the Christ Child was symbolic of His Divinity—God in flesh. Frankincense is highly fragrant when burned and was therefore used in worship, where it was burned as a pleasant offering to God. Frankincense is a symbol of holiness and righteousness. The gift of frankincense to the Christ Child was symbolic of his willingness to become a sacrifice, wholly giving himself up, analogous to a burnt offering. Myrrh was used by the High Priest as an anointing oil. Myrrh was used in ancient times for embalming the bodies of the dead before burial. It was a fitting "gift" for Jesus who was born to die. It was also sometimes mingled with wine to form an article of drink. Matthew (27:34) refers to it as "gall." Such a drink was offered to and refused by Jesus when he was about to be crucified, as a stupefying potion (Mk 15:23).

Today's Gospel reminds us that if God permitted the Magi – foreigners and pagans – to recognise and give Jesus proper respect as the King of Jews, we should know that no matter how broken or sinful our lives may be, there is nothing that will keep God from bringing us to Jesus.

Deacon Des

Prayer & Liturgy

The Latin Mass:

St Theresa's now offers a weekly Mass in Latin, this Mass, commonly called The Latin Mass (TLM) or Mass in the Extraordinary Form (EF), was the Mass of the Church offered, virtually unchanged, for nearly 1500 years before 1970 when the new Mass was brought in. This Mass takes place each Tuesday at **8:00 p.m.** Everyone is welcome to attend this Mass, there are booklets provided.

Holy Hour:

Each Thursday evening at **7:30 p.m.** The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed on the altar for an hour of Adoration. The Holy Hour will conclude with Benediction.

Rosary Group:

Meets each Wednesday at **1:30 p.m.** in St Theresa's room. All welcome.

Intercessory Prayer Group:

Third Friday of each month. A time to bring our needs and prayers to the Lord. If you would like prayers said but cannot make it, feel free to email Deacon Des with your prayer requests.

Christian Meditation:

Every Wednesday evening in St. John's Church, 7:00 p.m. -7:45 p.m.

Sacramental Preparation

Sacrament of Baptism: The next Baptism Preparation Course will take place in Church on **Wednesday 22nd January 2020 at 7:30 p.m.** Do please let Deacon Des or Fr. Lee know if you would like to attend this course.

Sacrament of Marriage: Catholics must approach the Parish Priest / Deacon, at least 6 months prior to their intended wedding, and before setting a wedding date.

Social News and Events

Parish Office:

We welcome our new Parish Administrator Clair Rava, who starts work this week. Clair will be based in the parish office located through St Theresa's room. She will be working on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Do please make her feel welcome. For those wishing to 'book' Masses could you please fill in the usual envelope and give them to Clair who will enter your Mass in the Parish Diary.

Change of Mass Times:

This week we start our new our weekday Mass Schedule. Do look carefully at the Mass times at the back of this newsletter.

Brentwood Diocesan Directory:

Is available to buy from the repository priced £4.00 for ringbound copies and £2.80 for normal binding. These directories have lots of useful information in them so do please buy them. The diocese has asked us to try and sell all the copies we have to keep the cost of production as cheap as possible, the cost will increase if copies go unsold.

Of your Charity:

Please pray for the repose of the Soul of our dear sister Marie Keane, who has recently died. Her funeral rites will be celebrated here at St Theresa's this Thursday 9th January at 12:30 p.m. Her body will be received into Church on Wednesday 8th January at 5:00 p.m. **Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace.**

The Epiphany of the Lord

On your travels you may have seen a mysterious series of letters and numbers, looking for all the world like an equation, inscribed in chalk over some doorways. If you don't know what the chalk mark is all about, don't be ashamed. You're certainly not alone.

Epiphany (also known as Twelfth Night, Theophany, or Three Kings Day) marks the occasion of a time-honoured Christian tradition of "chalking the doors." The formula for the ritual — adapted for this year 2020 — is simple: take chalk blessed by Fr. Lee at this Mass and write the following above the entrance of your home: 20 + C + M + B + 20.

The letters have two meanings. First, they represent the initials of the Magi — Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar — who came to visit Jesus in His first home. They also abbreviate the Latin phrase, *Christus Mansionem Benedicat*: "May Christ bless the house." The "+" signs represent the cross, and the "20" at the beginning and the "20" at the end mark the year. Taken together, this inscription is performed as a request for Christ to bless those homes so marked and that He stay with those who dwell therein throughout the entire year.

The chalking of the doors is a centuries-old practice throughout the world mostly in Europe. It is, however, an easy tradition to adopt, and a great practice whereby we dedicate our year to God from its very outset, asking His blessing on our homes and on all who live, work, or visit them there.

The timing for the chalking of the doors varies somewhat in practice. In some places, it is done on New Year's Day. More commonly, it is performed on the traditional Feast of the Epiphany — the Twelfth Day of Christmas. Most often the chalking takes place after Epiphany Mass, and can be done at any church, home, or dwelling. Traditionally the blessing is done by either a priest, the father, or head of the family. This blessing can be performed simply by just writing the inscription and offering a short prayer, or more elaborately, including songs, prayers, processions, the burning of incense, and the sprinkling of holy water.

Practising traditions like the chalking of the doors helps us to live our Faith more concretely and serve as an outward sign of our dedication to Our Lord. Our homes are also the place where many of us will make the greatest strides in our spiritual growth, through observance of daily prayer, spiritual reading, and work offered as an oblation to God.

The chalking of the doors of a home encourages Christians to dedicate their life at home to God and to others. Seeing the symbols over our doors can help to remind us, while passing in and out of our daily routines, that our homes and all those who dwell there belong to Christ. It also serves as a reminder of the welcoming the Magi gave to Jesus. We should strive to be as welcoming to all who come to our homes to visit us!

Fr. Lee has provided a short handout of how this ceremony can be performed. Do please take one home with you along with a piece of blessed chalk to inscribe your home.

Mass Times and Intentions

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD Year A		
Saturday 4 th January	Confessions: 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m.	Angela Smith RIP (T & M Rhead)
Sunday 5 th January	Confessions: 9:15 – 9:45 a.m. Mass: 10:00 a.m.	People of the Parish
Monday 6 th January <i>Christmas Weekday</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m.	
Tuesday 7 th January <i>Mass of the Epiphany</i>	Confessions: 7:00 p.m. Mass (Latin): 8:00 p.m.	
Wednesday 8 th January <i>Christmas Weekday</i>	Confessions: 12:00 p.m. Mass: 12:30 p.m. Rosary Group: 1:30 p.m. Wednesday Club: 2:00 p.m. Reception of Marie Keane RIP: 5:00 p.m.	Marie Keane RIP (Wednesday Club/Rosary Group)
Thursday 9 th January <i>Christmas Weekday</i>	Confessions: 11:00 a.m. Requiem Mass: 12:30 p.m. Holy Hour: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction: 7:30 p.m.	Marie Keane RIP
Friday 10 th January <i>Christmas Weekday</i>	Confessions: 9:00 a.m. Mass: 9:30 a.m.	Monica Kapadia RIP (K Kapadia)
THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD Year A		
Saturday 11 th January	Confessions: 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Mass: 6:00 p.m.	People of the Parish
Sunday 12 th January 1 st Reading: <i>Isaiah 42:1-4,16-7</i> Psalm: 28 2 nd Reading: <i>Acts 10:34-38</i> Gospel: <i>Matthew 3:13-17</i>	Confessions: 9:15 – 9:45 a.m. Mass: 10:00 a.m.	Michael Aldridge RIP (T & A Aldridge)

