

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

- LEADER:** Please kneel for our prayer for vocations. Let us ask God to give worthy Priests to His Holy Church and Brothers and Sisters to Religious Orders.
- ALL:** O God, we earnestly beseech You to bless this diocese with many priests, brothers and sisters, who will gladly spend their entire lives serving Your Church and making You known and loved.
- LEADER:** Bless our families. Bless our children.
- ALL:** Choose from our homes those who are needed for Your work.
- LEADER:** Mary, Queen of the Clergy!
- ALL:** Pray for us. Pray for our priests and religious. Obtain for us many more. Amen.

PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL: Holy Michael, the Archangel, defend us in the day of battle. Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God thrust down to hell Satan and all the wicked spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. *Amen*

FROM THE SAINTS: "What are you doing, O Magi? Do you adore a little Babe, in a wretched hovel, wrapped in miserable rags? Can this Child be truly God? ... Are you become foolish, O Wise Men ... Yes, these Wise Men have become fools that they may be wise" (*St Bernard of Clairvaux, 1090-1153*).

SUNDAY VESPERS AND BENEDICTION:

Our monthly Sunday Vespers and Benediction before Easter will be on the following dates at **6pm: 13th January, 24th February, 10th March and 7th April.**

THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS: January is the month dedicated to the Holy Name of JESUS which means "God saves", and we celebrated the feast last Thursday. Our Lord Himself tells us the great power of His Name. "*Whatever you ask for in My name, I will do*" St Paul writes in his letter to the Phillipians, "*at the Name of JESUS every knee should bend.*" A good Catholic tradition is to bow your head at the name of JESUS. The priest is directed to do this at Mass. This is a beautiful way to honour the power of the Holy Name. Perhaps we could all resolve to bow our heads slightly at the name of JESUS from now on.

Fr Paul

ROSMINI CENTRE. New monthly item: '*God in my life: Invitation, Mission, Gratitude*'; a number of people reflecting on God's hand in their lives (Fr Frank Daly, Rev David Knight, Fr John McCay and others). Starts **Saturday 12th January** 2-4.30pm with Br William Rees, Rosminian Novice and Poet. Wishing you a Blessed New Year from the Centre Community.

FINANCE

First Collection 23/12: £908	Town of Sanctuary: £181
First Collection 30/12: £802	Christmas Collection: £1897 of which £612 was Gift Aided
Standing Orders: £ 665 @ 25.11	<i>Thank you</i>



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Served by the Rosminians: Fr Paul Gillham, Parish Priest;

Rev David Jones, Deacon. In community: Fr Simon Giles

Newsletter for Sunday 6th January 2019

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD - Psalter Week 2

"We have Seen His Star in the East"

With this being the first newsletter of 2019, on behalf of all the priests at St Mary's, may I wish you a very happy New Year! Today is the Solemnity of the **Epiphany** when we celebrate the three **wise men** from the East coming to **worship** the Child JESUS, bringing Him gifts of **gold, frankincense and myrrh**. This is a continuation of our celebration of the birth of our Divine Saviour, God made man. Up until this point His birth had been revealed only to Israel. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and the shepherds tending their flocks in the field had been told by the Angel of Our Lord's birth and that they should seek Him out. They were all Jews of course. But God didn't only come for the people of Israel. He came for the whole of mankind. This truth is represented today by the coming of the **Magi**.

So who were the Magi? They were pagan kings and astrologers who could never have come to know the True God without what we call **the divine condescension** (God becoming man). We might wonder how they could have known of the birth of our Saviour by means of a star. **St John Chrysostom** (ca 349-407) gives us an answer in his Sermon for the Epiphany:

"We read in the books of Moses that there was a certain prophet of the Gentiles, Balaam, who foretold in definite words the coming of Christ and His incarnation from a virgin. For among other things he said: A star shall rise out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall spring up from Israel (Numbers 24:17). The Wise men, who saw the new star in the East, are said to be descendants of this Balaam, a prophet from the Gentiles. And seeing the sign of the new star they accordingly believed, knowing that the prophecy of their ancestor was fulfilled."

However, this was no normal star. It was something entirely **supernatural**. It appeared on the night of Our Lord's birth and then promptly disappeared again after the arrival of the Magi. It moved with them and rested exactly over the house where the newborn Child was. Normal stars do not do this. The star was also extraordinarily bright, and although smaller than a normal star, it appeared bigger as it was closer to the earth. These peculiarities are all in the Gospel account. Therefore it seems attempts to explain the star scientifically are rather pointless, since God put it there simply so that the Magi would know the location of the newborn King. The closest parallel we have, according to **St Thomas Aquinas** (1225-74), is the **pillar of fire and cloud** which led Israel out of Egypt in the Old Testament. Just as God had liberated His people Israel from slavery in Egypt through the pillar of fire and cloud, He has now liberated the Gentiles from slavery to sin by the guidance of this star. As we sing in the well known Christmas carol: "*Oh, star of wonder, star of might. Star with royal beauty bright. Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.*"

MASS TIMES AT ST MARY'S

Sat	5 th	5.30-5.55pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation + on request
		6.00pm	Vigil Mass
Sun	6 th	<u>EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (SOLEMNITY)</u>	
		9.00am	Parish Mass
		10.30-10.55	Sacrament of Reconciliation + on request
		11.00am	Parish Mass
		12.45am	Polish Mass
		4.00pm	Italian Mass
Mon	7 th	9.15am	Monday after Epiphany
		11.00am	Baptism
Tues	8 th	9.15am	Tuesday after Epiphany
Weds	9 th	9.15am	Wednesday after Epiphany
Thurs	10 th	9.15am	Thursday after Epiphany
Fri	11 th	9.15am	Parish & Whole School Mass in Church
Sat	12 th	9.15am	Saturday after Epiphany
		10.00-11.00	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Confessions
		5.30-5.55pm	Sacrament of Reconciliation + on request
		6.00pm	Vigil Mass
Sun	13 th	<u>BAPTISM OF THE LORD (FEAST)</u>	
		9.00am	Parish Mass
		10.30-10.55	Sacrament of Reconciliation + on request
		11.00am	Parish Mass

THIS WEEK AT ST MARY'S

Tues	8 th	6.45-7.15pm	Rosary - Church
Weds	9 th	2.00-4.00pm	Senior Citizens: 'Spot the Object' – Hall
		7.30pm	UCM – Library
Thurs	10 th	7.00pm	RCIA – Library
		7.00pm	Catholic Social Action – Hall
Fri	11 th	1.30pm	Crochet – Hall

NB: Due to the new government regulations regarding personal data (GDPR), we are only able to publicise the Mass intentions in the printed edition of the newsletter.

EPIPHANY HOUSE BLESSINGS: It is traditional on the Feast of the Epiphany for the priest to bless chalk and for families to use it to inscribe a blessing either above the lintel or on the step of their homes. This is a good Catholic custom, and over the past three years many in our parish have taken up the practice. Chalk will be blessed this weekend at all Masses. Please take some and ask for God's blessing on your homes and families. A sheet with the text is available with the newsletter. *Fr Paul*

KNIGHTS OF ST COLUMBA: There will be an Epiphany liturgy of readings, hymns and carols in **Sacred Heart Church** at 4.00pm THIS AFTERNOON, **Sunday 6th January 2019**, led by the young adults of the two Loughborough parishes. Adult support of the service would be appreciated. There will be refreshments in the hall afterwards.

THE CRIB will remain in the church until **2nd February** (Candlemas), forty days after Christmas, which is the traditional end of Christmastide. We did the same last year and it met with a favourable response. Candlemas commemorates both the Purification of Our Lady and the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple forty days after His birth. By Law, Mary had to wait forty days before presenting her newborn Child. *Fr Paul*

SHARING OUR STORIES OF FAITH - a day for Catholic women, will be hosted at St Joseph's Church, Leicester, 10.30 to 4pm, on **Saturday 23rd February**. Organised by international women's network, Catholic Women Speak, the day will include opportunities to listen to women's experience of their faith, as well as sharing your own. Free of charge. Light lunch can be purchased onsite. For more information speak to Catherine Brady or email catherinemarybrady@gmail.com.

101 CLUB: The first winning prize number of the year is **3**.

THANK YOU from Fr Simon, Fr David and myself for your many expressions of kindness and generosity during the Christmas season - your gifts, cards and words of kindness do mean a lot to us. Thank you for your especially generous Christmas Offering. We really do appreciate it. Thank you also to those who worked so hard to decorate the church for Christmas, our flower arrangers and also to those who helped clean it. The church does look wonderful. Thank you also to our musicians, servers, readers, Extraordinary Ministers and collectors for their help in the Liturgy. All these things really do help us to worship and glorify God in a more fitting manner. Thank you to you all. *Fr Paul*

PLEASE PRAY for those who have recently died: Carmen Nunes, Rob Conlon, Tess Rearden, David Burton, John Merwick and Edward Tett **May they rest in peace**

and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Carlo Cutillo, Sabine Sienko, Joe Guarasci, Frank Savage, Roy Dakin, Carlos Garcia, Frank Barraclough, Margaret Tickle, Rosemary Pearson, Robert Milnes, Juozas Petrenas, Marie Paparozzi, Cedric Spencer, Tony Kennedy, Frederico Buccheri, Helly Claydon, Armando Zollino, May Adam, Montague McArdle, Laurie Devaney and Mary Brookes.