

## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

### THE GIFT OF WISDOM

Sunday 7<sup>TH</sup> January 2024

Mass Book Page 115

When we pray with the Gospels, and listen with our hearts to the story of Jesus, it's pretty clear that Simeon's prophecy came true. Jesus was accepted by some and rejected by others. But the great surprise for the infant church was His acceptance by people who were not Jews. For them, this was God's work.

In the story of the Magi, Heaven and Earth come together: Heaven in the form of a star and Earth in the first breaths of the Beloved Son of God. Those who ponder this text are left in no doubt that God is the author of the life of Jesus and through Him God speaks to all of humanity. As always, the rejection of Jesus is violent and evil. The news of his arrival causes fear in the hearts of those who have been faithfully unfaithful to their religious heritage. Jesus is a clear threat to their position and power. They have corrupted the faith they pledged to protect; when true faith arrives, they will be exposed.



The birth of the New King means only one thing to them - He must be killed. Herod has murder on his mind, but he is no match for God. He stands in the Gospel as an example of all those who say pious and respectable things but only have treachery in their hearts. In contrast to these idiots, the Wise Ones' hearts are only filled with joy. When the star halts over the stable, Heaven and Earth are one. They are joined, symmetrical and balanced. And they have found the One who is the fulfilment of their life's longing. The gifts they bring make it clear that they understand who they bow to adore. Gold, for his ordinary needs. Frankincense to honour his divinity. Myrrh for his saving death. What Herod tried to kill, the Wise Ones accept and worship.

This is truly a story which celebrates the manifestation of the divinity of Christ to the Gentiles. Herod and his allies take a back seat so that this may be clearly seen. The story then becomes an occasion for the giving and receiving of gifts. Christ Himself is the present. But now, Gift giving is the way that the invisible becomes visible. And at Christmas Time this is spiritual activity of the highest order. Why? Because it is our attempt to communicate our spirit to someone we care for, in such a way, that our spirit flows into them and they become stronger by our presence. When the gift symbolises a flow of Love, it is the perfect gift, no matter what is inside the wrapping paper. The gifts of the Wise Ones have always been seen as the perfect gifts. On the one hand it shows that they know who Jesus is, they are not fooled by outward trappings and they have truly discerned the inner identity and mission of the child. On the other hand, the gifts reveal the hearts of the ones who give them. The gifts are perfect because they reveal two hearts. The perfect gift is one that carries one heart to another.

One of my favourite stories is O'Henry's 'Gift of the Magi'. It is the story of Jim and Della. They are poor but each have a possession. Della has long, beautiful hair and Jim has the watch. As Christmas approaches, Della cuts her hair and sells it and buys Jim a platinum fob chain for his watch. When she gives it to him, he reveals that he has sold his watch to buy her a set of pure tortoise shell combs for her hair! They fall in the sofa laughing. O'Henry says, "Of all who give and receive gifts, such as they are the wisest". Jim and Della are wise because although their gifts are now completely useless, they have done their job and carried them into each other's hearts. The gift has strengthened their relationship, assuring them that they know and are known, love and are loved. Oh, to be so Wise!



The funeral service for Mark Stephen Sophocleous will take place on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2pm at Easthampstead Park Crematorium.

**MAY THE SOULS OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED,  
THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD, REST IN PEACE. AMEN.**



### **GIVE Campaign Update #004**



***After a period of downtime over Christmas we're back promoting the GIVE campaign initiative. We encourage everybody to look on the GIVE section of the Parish website for ways they may be able to assist if they haven't done so already, to enable us to begin the new year in the best way possible!***

<https://bracknellcatholicchurch.org/give/>

***If you think of a way you may be able to help the Parish that isn't on the GIVE section of the website, please reach out to the Parish office who will be able to assist you. Thank you!***

### **Father Danny Absent**

Father Danny will be taking a much needed week off next week, a period of rest and relaxation after the busy Christmas period. The office does not yet have 100% clarity on any changes in services that will occur, but will provide updates (primarily through social media) as and when we know more. Thank you for understanding.

### **First Aiders & Fire Marshals Needed**

Are you a first aider or a fire marshal for your employer, or are you somebody who isn't currently trained but willing to help in a medical emergency or put a fire out after having done the necessary training?

The Parish needs a first aider and fire marshal at each mass asap to comply with regulations. Training will be paid for by the Parish, thank you!

### **CAFOD School Volunteers Needed**

Do you enjoy working with children and young people? Could you help to inspire and empower children and young people in your local Catholic schools by delivering an assembly or a workshop? Supported by CAFOD with training and all resources provided please consider the role of CAFOD school volunteer. For more information contact Jo Lewry: [jlewry@cafod.org.uk](mailto:jlewry@cafod.org.uk) or phone 07710 094447.

### **Baptism Preparation Evening**

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> January, 7:30pm-9:15pm. Please complete a Baptism Enquiry Form if you haven't already.

### **Clothes Bank Giveaway**

The Winter ClothesBank giveaway will be held on Tuesday 23rd January 2024, 10:15am-1pm at St Mark's Church, Popeswood Road, Binfield, RG42 4AH. There will be a free shuttle bus from Bracknell train station should you need it, leaving every half an hour between 10am – 12am. To receive an e-voucher for the giveaway please contact the Parish office.







### Saturday Vigil Tea and Coffee Trial

There will be a trial of teas and coffees after the 6pm Mass starting on Saturday January 6<sup>th</sup>. The next one will be January 13<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 7pm. Please support this opportunity to meet and chat with other parishioners.

### First Holy Communion Cohort 3

Emails initiating the next Holy Communion process will be sent out later in January. If you have not heard anything by February, then please contact the office.

Care Home Singing	Cuppa & Chat, 60+	Children's Liturgy	Soup & Roll
17/01, 2pm – 3pm, Bracknell Care Home, Crowthorne Road, RG12 7DN	Back ongoing, every Tuesday, 2pm – 3pm	07/01, 21/01, both Sunday masses	12/01, 09/02, 08/03, 12/04 after 12 noon mass
			

Amanda Killestein	Ann D'Ambrosio	Ann Lynch	Ann O'Sullivan	Anne Hardy
Arthur Hardy	Audrey Lam	Bernard O'Neill	Beryl Pilgrim	Blanche Shap
Brenda Lynch	Bridget Riordan	Charles Hose	Claire Hose	Clarita Kokou-Tchri
Dorcas Innes-Grant	Doreen Pryor	Douglas & Bernadette Hunt	Eddie & Flo Moore	Edmund & Kate Carroll
Ethna Sweeney	Inge Walker	Janet Read	Jerry & Susan Tobin	John Moir
Leonie Macintosh	Louis Burgisser	Lucia Saligo	Margaret Finnieston	Margaret Pearce
Marie Swash	Mary King	Mary Murray	Mary Phelan	Maureen Baxter
Patricia Holmwood	Phyllis Lewis	Prim & Ian Maynard	Rico Morales	Sally Torode
Sharon Bryan	Terri Landmann	Terry and Peggy McCullough		Tony Andrews
Ursula Docherty	Vilma Taborda	Vivienne Halfpenny	Zac Hoy	

**WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN OUR PARISH COMMUNITY WHO ARE SICK, HOUSEBOUND OR IN HOSPITAL AND FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR THEM**

To add or remove a name to this list with consent, please contact the Parish Office.

If you or your relative is housebound, or because of illness cannot come to Mass and wish to receive Holy Communion at home, call the office on 01344 425729 or email [office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org](mailto:office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org)

*We pray that our young people will be open to their unique vocation through prayer and will adore Christ the King by their faithfulness to His call.*

## PARISH OF ST JOSEPH and ST MARGARET CLITHEROW, BRACKNELL

**Parish Priest:** Fr. Daniel McAvoy **Deacon:** Rev. Aidan Lynch

**Parish Administrators:** Francis Barton and Donna Mody

**Safeguarding Team:** Marion McGuire, Sarah Birch, Paula Read

**07712 048695** [safeguarding@bracknellcatholicchurch.org](mailto:safeguarding@bracknellcatholicchurch.org)

**Parish Office, St. Joseph's Church, 39 Braccan Walk, Bracknell, RG12 1HA**

**Office Hours:** Monday - Tuesday 9:00-3:00pm, Wednesday - Friday 9:00-5:00pm

**Telephone:** 01344 425729

**Email:** [office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org](mailto:office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org) **Website:** <https://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org>

### MASS TIMES

#### THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, *solemnity*

Saturday	6th	6pm	Mass	<i>Nicolas's 7th Birthday</i>
Sunday	7th	8:30am	Mass	<i>Parish Intentions</i>
		10:30am	Mass	

#### THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD, *feast*

Monday	8th	<b>NO MASS</b>		
--------	-----	----------------	--	--

#### BEGINNING OF ORDINARY TIME

Tuesday	9th	10am	Mass	
Wednesday	10th	10am	Mass	
Thursday	11th	10am	Mass	
Friday	12th	11am	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament TBC	
		12pm	Mass	<i>Jackie Braithwaite RIP</i>
Saturday	13th	10am	Mass	TBC
		11am	Confessions TBC	

#### SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Saturday	13th	6pm	Mass	<i>Freda Crookall RIP</i>
Sunday	14th	8:30am	Mass	
		10:30am	Mass	

**ALL MASSES ARE LIVESTREAMED** <https://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org/watch-live>

**New to our parish or not yet registered?**

<https://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org/parish-life/parish-registration>



**01344 425729**

[office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org](mailto:office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org)

Are you lonely? Are you ill and in need of prayer and/or support? Perhaps you have not had contact with the Catholic Church for a while. Whatever the reason, please do get in touch for a chat.



**07852 497 218 / 07851 200 987**

[office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org](mailto:office@bracknellcatholicchurch.org)

Are you in the land of loss & would appreciate a chat with someone in our group? If so, do not hesitate to get in touch.



Call **IN CONFIDENCE**  
**07731 862 349**

If you are struggling financially and need practical assistance, the local Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) may be able to help. Do call us in confidence for a chat.

**DONATIONS TO PARISH FUNDS** Online, Bank Transfer, DD, <https://bracknellcatholicchurch.org/give/>

**BANK DETAILS:** Account Name: CDP Bracknell St Joseph Sort Code: 30-93-04; Account Number: 00875520

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO: **CDP BRACKNELL ST JOSEPH**

South Berkshire Pastoral Area, Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Registration Number: 1199568