

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

THE GIVING AND RECEIVING OF GIFTS

5th January 2025

Missal Page 86

The life, death and resurrection of Jesus is evidence enough that He was welcomed and loved by some, hated and rejected by others. As a rule of thumb, those with 'power' are among those who can't let Him in. He is rejected by the so called religious and political leaders. But one of the big surprises which visited the new community Jesus began was His acceptance by people who were not Jews. For sure, it happened in little ways during His ministry, but later there was a huge influx of new sisters and brothers from the Mediterranean. This could not be explained except to say that the hand of God was clearly at work here.

In The Lord's Prayer, we pray that it will be 'on earth as it is in Heaven'. When Heaven and earth come together it is a sign that God is near. This, of course, is what happens in the story of the Feast of the Epiphany. Heaven, in the form of a star, and earth, in the form of a child, align with each other. The reader is left with no doubt that Jesus has His origins in God.

The rejection of the Beloved Son is pure evil. News of His long-awaited arrival has frightened Herod and the religious establishment. The Advent of God is a threat to their positions and their power. They have corrupted the faith they were supposed to protect and their corruption is to be exposed. Herod, rather stupidly, sets out to play chess with God but he is no match for Him. The resulting violation of children, an all too familiar pattern from those who prefer the love of power over the power of love.

In contrast, the Wise Ones Rejoice! When the star aligns itself with the babe in the manger, Heaven and earth are One. The Wise Ones are not just happy, they are overwhelmed with joy. They have found the One for whom their hearts have longed. Their gifts reveal their inner understanding of His Origins and His Destiny. What Herod rejects, the Wise Ones Adore. The Divinity of Christ is revealed to the Gentiles.

The Beloved Son of God is THE Christmas Present. Gift giving is, if you like, the way the invisible becomes visible. The way the hidden heart is made known, the way Spirit risks itself by taking form. So, the giving and receiving of gifts could be described as spiritual activity of the highest order. It is the heart's desire to express itself in such a way that the heart of the giver, and the heart of the one who receives the gift becomes one. When a gift embodies the flow of love, it does not matter what it is, or how much it costs. It is perfect because of what it has achieved.

Can you remember a time when you received a gift at Christmas and it was very special just because of the One who gave it? Who was that and what was the gift? Notice that the gift might not sit within the 'cheap-expensive' continuum. Like the bread and wine, it cannot be rated in this way. A great example of this is the story of the Little Drummer, who is poor. He offers the gift of 'playing his drum', which draws a smile from the Beloved Son. In cash terms it is worthless. In the school of love, it is priceless.





GIVE Campaign Update #053



FLAME Fundraising Volunteers We are seeking the support of a few parents who can assist with our fundraising efforts for the upcoming FLAME day out in Wembley next year. Your help would make a significant difference and directly benefit the whole group. Please reach out to Bernard or the office if you're able to help, thank you!

Winter ClothesBank Giveaway The winter ClothesBank Giveaway will be held on Tuesday 28th January from 10:15am to 1pm at St. Mark's Church, Popeswood Road, Binfield, RG42 4AH. We are once again providing vouchers for the ClothesBank to those in need, so please contact the office should you need a voucher. If you also need transport to the ClothesBank, a free minibus shuttle courtesy of Newbold College will be operating between Bracknell train station and St. Mark's Church, and will leave from the train station at 10am, 10:30am, 11am, 11:30am, and 12 noon. Please let us know in advance if you intend to travel using the minibus so a seat can be reserved.

After the several years of lockdown, Parish funds have become depleted. The parish really struggles with paying all its bills every quarter –these include the normal things like heating, lighting, cleaning, routine maintenance, but also extra projects like building disabled facilities, toilets, ramps, security cameras, cutting down dangerous trees etc. If you could pay even a small amount by standing order (for example £3 per month) that would be really helpful. Please scroll to the bottom of this webpage <https://bracknellcatholicchurch.org/give/financial/> and thank you in advance for your generosity.

Confirmation Retreat

With a month to go until our Confirmation Retreat, please can all those that have not yet done so complete the Confirmation Retreat Consent Form, as we need these details when confirming final numbers to the retreat centre (those this applies to will have received an e-mail). The payment deadline for deposits is the 5th January, and the programme restarts on Thursday 9th January at 7:30pm.

Weekday Missals

Please can anyone interested in purchasing a weekday missal inform the office over the next week, so we can get an idea of quantity and if they're feasible to purchase, thank you.

Candle Boxes

There will be a reduced number of candles at each of the candle stands for the foreseeable future. If there are no candles available we will aim to replenish supplies promptly.

Couple Counselling

If you are experiencing any difficulties in your relationship with your spouse/partner, we have collaborated with a local relationship counsellor based in the Bracknell area who will be able to assist you. For more information please visit <http://www.marriagecare.org.uk> or call 0800 389 3801. Your call is confidential.


World Day of Peace

On the 1st January each year, the Catholic Church observes the World Day of Peace, first instituted in 1967 by Pope St. Paul VI. In England and Wales, the Bishops have designated the second Sunday in Ordinary Time as 'Peace Sunday', a day when you are encouraged to reflect on the Pope's message for the year. This year the message is '**Forgive us our trespasses: Grant us your peace**'. You can read the full message here: <https://paxchristi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/20241208-messaggio-58giornatamondiale-pace2025.pdf>

Bickerton House Care Home Events (RG12 2JB):

<p>Canine Café</p> <p>The first Wednesday of each month, 2pm – 4pm</p> 	<p>Friendship Café</p> <p>The second Thursday of each month, 10:30am – 12noon</p> 	<p>Community Cinema</p> <p>The third Thursday of each month, 2:30pm – 4:30pm</p> 
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Parish Events	When?	Where?
Gospel Outreach with Music (Carols)	06/01, 1:45pm-3pm	Bracknell Care Home, RG12 7DN
Gospel Outreach with Music (Carols)	13/01, 1:45pm-3pm	Bickerton House, RG12 2JB
Gospel Outreach with Music (Carols)	22/01, 1:45pm-3pm	Bracknell Care Home, RG12 7DN
Cuppa & Chat (60+) ☕	07/01	Church Hall
Children's Liturgy (please pre-book) 👧👦	05/01, 19/01, 02/02	Church Hall
Soup & Roll 🍲	10/01 (second Friday of the month)	Church Hall
Parish Prayer Group 🙏	07/01	Church Hall
RCIA 📖	Every Wednesday, 7:30pm-9pm	Church Hall



We pray for the repose of the soul of Maureen Taylor, who passed away recently and is being cremated on the 7th January.

May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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

FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR THEM				
Amanda Killestein	Angela Dossett	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	Douglas & Bernadette Hunt	Dymphna Slade	Eamon McNeill
Eddie & Flo Moore	Edmund & Kate Carroll	Inge Walker	Janet Read	Susan Tobin
Joe Rice	Leonie Macintosh	Louis Burgisser	Lucia Saligo	Margaret Finnieston
Marie Swash	Mary King	Mary Murray	Mary Phelan	Mary Stocking
Maureen Baxter		Patricia Holmwood	Paula Sandford	Phyllis Lewis
Rico Morales	Sally Torode	Terri & Andy Landmann	Terry & Peggy McCullough	Tony Andrews
Ursula Docherty	Vilma Taborda	Vivienne Halfpenny		

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

Wishing you all a joyful, peaceful, and blessed 2025! May this year bring abundant blessings, renewed faith, and countless opportunities to grow closer to God and one another.

With prayers and gratitude for your continued faith and fellowship,

God bless.

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

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 **Website:** <https://www.bracknellcatholicchurch.org>

MASS TIMES

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, *solemnity*

Saturday	4th	6pm	Mass	<i>David Hancock RIP</i>
Sunday	5th	8:30am	Mass	Parish Intentions
		10:30am	Mass	

Liturgy of the Day 'Monday of Christmastide after Epiphany'

Monday 6th **NO MASS**

Liturgy of the Day 'Tuesday of Christmastide after Epiphany'

Tuesday 7th **NO MASS**

Liturgy of the Day 'Wednesday of Christmastide after Epiphany'

Wednesday 8th **NO MASS**

Liturgy of the Day 'Thursday of Christmastide after Epiphany'

Thursday 9th **NO MASS**

Liturgy of the Day 'Friday of Christmastide after Epiphany'

Friday 10th **NO EXPOSITION**
NO MASS

Liturgy of the Day 'Saturday of Christmastide after Epiphany'

Saturday 11th **NO MASS**
NO CONFESSIONS

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD, *feast*

Saturday	11th	6pm	Mass	
Sunday	12th	8:30am	Mass	<i>Marie Hibbard</i> <i>(100th birthday)</i>
		10:30am	Mass	Parish Intentions

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>

Pastoral Care 01344 425729

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.

Bereavement Support

07852 497 218 / 07851 200 987

bereavement@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.

SVP 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**

JOBS AVAILABLE IN THE DIOCESE: <https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/about-us/other/jobs>

South Berkshire Pastoral Area, Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Registration Number: 119956