

MASSTIMES & INTENTIONS FOR WEEK COMMENCING 4th JANUARY 2009

Sunday, 4 January, 2009 – Feast of The Epiphany of the Lord – White

This feast celebrates the epiphany (manifestation) of Christ to the Gentiles, symbolized by Christ's manifestation to the Magi (Wise Men). The word Magi comes from the Latin word meaning "sage." These particular sages were possibly Zoroastrian astrologers from Persia.

5.30 pm (Saturday) BERYL LIND, R.I.P. Ray Lind

10 am inc. Children's Liturgy FRANCIS CARNEY, R.I.P. Teresa Jones

Monday, 5 January, 2009 – Feria – White

NO MASS TODAY

Tuesday, 6 January, 2009 – Feria – White

4.30 pm EXPOSITION

MASS TIME CHANGE

5 pm LIZZY'S BIRTHDAY Dad

Wednesday, 7 January, 2009 – St. Raymond of Peñafort – White

Raymond of Peñafort (1175-1275). Born at Villafranca de Benadis, near Barcelona. In 1222 he joined the Dominican Order. A professor of canon law for fifteen years in Barcelona, and later in Bologna, he was appointed in 1230 by Pope Gregory XI, moving to Rome, to review the many different books of Canon Law and reorganise them in to one complete and definitive work. His collection of canon law, known as the Liber extra or Gregorian Decretals, became a standard for almost 700 years. He also co-founded with St. Peter Nolasco the Order of Mercedarians (Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mercy).

10 am MAY de LLOYD, R.I.P. Mrs. Hatch

Thursday, 8 January, 2009 – Feria – White

9.30 am EXPOSITION

10 am DOREEN MANAGHAN, R.I.P. Colleen

Friday, 9 January, 2009 – St. Adrian of Canterbury – White

Adrian (c.635 - 710), or perhaps more properly, Hadrian. Born in North Africa (probably Libya). Age ten, his family fled to Naples. He became a monk, eventually rose to become the Abbot of Hiridunum (the Isle of Nisida), in the Bay of Naples. Adrian became an advisor to the Pope and, later, he was offered the Archbishopric of Canterbury. He politely declined in favour of Theodore of Tarsus, but accompanied the him to England. On arriving in Britain, Adrian succeeded Benedict Biscop as Abbot of St. Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury. He died in Canterbury on 9th January.

NO MASS TODAY

Fr. John is attending the Requiem and Funeral of Fr. Joe Levins in Deal

Saturday, 10 January, 2009 – Feria – White

10 am GEORGE MARTIN, R.I.P. Ann Martin

10.45 am & 4.45 pm Confession

Sunday, 11 January, 2009 – The Baptism of Jesus Christ – White

5.30 pm (Saturday) DEREK & JEANNE OPIE'S FAMILIES

10 am Children's Liturgy SIOBHAN DOYLE, R.I.P. Avril Mobin

IF YOU WANT TO CONTACT THE NEWSLETTER CALL 835630 or EMAIL: office@stpeterswestgate.co.uk

FOR THOSE WHO MISSED GETTING A COPY, IN THE PORCH ARE COPIES OF FR. JOHN'S NEW YEAR LETTER TO THE PARISHIONERS, WHICH WAS IN LAST WEEK'S NEWSLETTER.

PETRINEWS

St. Peter's Church, Westgate-on-Sea

Priest in Charge: **FATHER JOHN SLATER**

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Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord (B) – 4th January, 2009

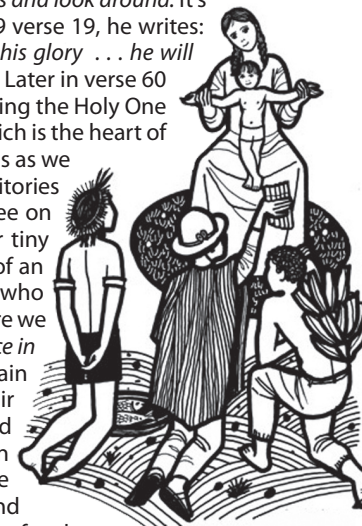
The Feast of the Epiphany marks in scripture our historic legitimacy to be true followers of Christ as we inherit these rights as demonstrated by the visit of the Magi to the infant Jesus – the child born of the Jews – but born for all people, Jew and gentile alike; a child born to be both recognised and worshipped, a child who will come as Redeemer. And it is through the Epiphany of this Christ, this new born child – a child to whom the wise men brought precious gifts, gifts fit for a Prince, a Prince of all nations, that the revelation of salvation is made. A salvation from the darkness of sin into the light of God's eternity. In the first reading from Isaiah he talks about this light, this dawning – the epiphany, a revelatory manifestation of a divine being. He goes on to say: *The nations come to your light and kings to the dawning of your brightness.* Here we have Isaiah reaching beyond the tribe of Jacob, the house of David, to the people of other kingdoms, people who are not referred to as the chosen race. Isaiah tells the Israelites to: *lift up your eyes and look around.* It's almost like a warning to them for in the previous chapter, 59 verse 19, he writes:

In the west men will see the name of the Lord and in the east his glory . . . he will come as redeemer, for those of Jacob who turn from their faults. Later in verse 60

Isaiah continues to expand the image of foreigners worshipping the Holy One of Israel. He is addressing this to Jerusalem, the Jerusalem which is the heart of the tribes of Judea and Israel. How apocalyptic all this seems as we

hear daily reports from the Holy Land and its surrounding territories of rocket attacks, reprisal bombings and devastation – we see on our television pictures of little children slaughtered – their tiny rigid bodies wrapped not in swaddling clothes but the flag of an oppressed people, an enslaved people, attacked by a people who should well know the meaning of enslavement. Where then are we

led by the words of Isaiah from later in verse 60: *I will put peace in as a magistrate and Integrity as the government?* Time and again the prophets warn the chosen race to look to the Lord their God, and it seems that too often the words are sadly ignored or forgotten. Isaiah is simply recounting the words of David in his psalm, the one we hear today. As well as forecasting the arrival of the kings with gifts the psalmist writes of justice and peace, of salvation for the poor, help for the needy and pity for the weak. These are all the gifts, the beatitudes, which Christ our Lord speaks about when he addresses his followers during the Sermon on the Mount. We are, it seems, being led to the conclusion that, as St. Paul writes in his letter to the Ephesians, we too have been chosen. Chosen in a special way, chosen by revelation not from a prophet, not from the expected route of the traditional teachers, established rabbis, but by God's Son, the Christ, the expected One. We, the foreigners, the gentiles have been fortunate to be able, through the writings of the Gospels and the letters of the Apostles, to recognise and accept the words of our Saviour. Maybe it was that fear of acceptance of the good news of Jesus' birth by the wise men which so troubled King Herod. We can imagine how he must



CONTINUED INSIDE

Fr. John Writes:-

Today we celebrate the Revelation of Christ to the World. We join all the people of the world in worshipping the infant King of the Jews. We transform the Crib into the Epiphany House and instead of the local shepherds, who have now returned to the fields to watch and wait, we see those who have watched and waited through the science of Astronomy, the Wise Men, who now bring their costly gifts, full of mystic meaning.

First of all may I wish you a very happy New Year, let us lay before the Christ Child our hopes and fears of 2009. Secondly, may I thank you all for your generosity, for your gifts which arrived at the Presbytery, plus the wonderful Christmas Offerings. In addition may I thank you for your get well prayers and good wishes. I think I am making some positive steps forward.

Thanks to all those who made the Church look beautiful for the Christmas Festival, plus the hidden workers like our Sacristan, to our Servers and of

REMEMBER TO VISIT OUR CHRISTMAS CRIB IN FRONT OF THE ALTAR ~ LEAVE YOUR DONATIONS, ROSARIES OR CASH, IN THE BASKET FOR ED-AID'S APPEAL FOR GAMBIAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

course to our Organists. May I say thank you for your loyalty throughout the year.

THANK YOU AGAIN

Fr. John wishes again to give his thanks to Fr. Charles for kindly covering the Sunday Masses last weekend.

FR. JOE'S FUNERAL

On Friday, 9 January, there will be no Mass at St. Peter's as Fr. John will be attending the Requiem and Funeral, in Deal, of Fr. Joseph Levins, former parish priest at St. Mildred's, Minster..

UCM MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 7 JANUARY, 7.30 pm

There will be a meeting of the Union of Catholic Mothers in the Church Hall next Wednesday, starting at 7.30pm.

PARISH CENSUS STARTS

As was written last week the illness of Fr. John, and the need to make last minute changes to the weekly schedule, prompted the idea that it would be a beneficial if there was some record of parishioners email addresses and mobile numbers for text messages. So please pick-up and complete a Parish Census form. You will see an entry called Skype name, this is for computer users who have the free-to-use Skype facility. It's not mandatory, just helpful when we need to make contact. Please return them to the box provided in the porch.

TEA & COFFEE IN THE HALL AFTER 10 am MASS ~ 20p

CHRISTIAN UNITY WEEK

St. Peter's is hosting TWO of the days for Christian Unity Week. Thursday 22 January, at 12 noon for a Prayer Service. And Saturday 24 January at 11.30 am for an open-air Witness in front of the Church.

INTERFAITH

We also host the next Interfaith meeting which will be on Thursday, 22 January, at 7.30 pm. See poster in porch.

MASS ATTENDANCES

Feast of the Holy Family

Saturday (27 December) 5.30 pm 48

Sunday (28 December) 10 am 71

Anniversaries this week:

Patrick Corrigan (1997), Owen Hart (1999), Theresa Nicholls (2000), Audrey Parry (2005), Doreen Managhan (2005), Elizabeth Lovell (2006), Albino Rizzo (2007).

FROM THE FRONT

have felt threatened by the news that a new king had been born: 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' asked the visiting Magi. This title 'King of the Jews' was one bestowed on Herod the Great by his Roman overlords. Herod was a 'puppet' King, but so great was his success in managing the territory of Palestine that his rule was extended over Judea, Samaria, Galilee, parts of Lebanon, Perea (the infamous modern-day West Bank) and areas in what we would call Syria. However, at the time of Christ's birth he had been king for over 30 years under the Roman protectorate and his influence seemed to be on the wane, certainly he was ever concerned about his security; it is believed that he had three of his sons executed to prevent his reign being usurped. Therefore it is not hard to accept the scripture story of the slaughter of the innocents, possibly up to twenty infant males from the Bethlehem area, in an effort by Herod to protect his vision of being 'King of the Jews'. In the Gospel Matthew quotes the Old Testament passage from Micah which specifies that Christ will be born in Bethlehem, although he does change the context; whereas Matthew writes: *you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah, for out of you will come a leader.* The Micah verse reads: *But you, Bethlehem, the least of the clans of Judah, out of you will be born for me the one who is to rule over Israel.* A subtle difference but the Micah version just goes to emphasise the lowly state in which our Lord was to be born – it gives that juxtaposition which makes the veneration by the Magi even more special, with their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, we are given an almost incongruous scene to contemplate. Perhaps at times we too are Herod-like, fearful of change, scared of having our self-importance questioned, or worse still, forced in to an unwanted chastened position. Whereas, the models we ought to strive after in our daily Christian lives are those of Mary and Joseph, models of true humility. After all, they both knew that something special had happened, that their son was unique, that he was the Chosen One – why else would angels appear and speak to them, why else would shepherds leave the hills and visit the anonymous stable of an inn, or wise men journey from far lands or their own country's king be so interested in the birth of this child! Their sole concern was the welfare of this infant; with news of Herod's plans to kill infant males they moved to safety in Egypt – after Herod's death they still didn't feel secure in returning to Judea and opted for the safer part of the now divided province and go to Galilee. Jesus lived the simple life with his loving mother Mary and Joseph, his kingship wasn't recognisable there . . . it awaited him much later in his father's heavenly home, in the mean time, on earth, the only trappings of 'royalty' would come after a palm strewn ride on a donkey followed with a purple robe and crown of thorns, which he would wear for us and all mankind – Jew and gentile alike.

Your Prayers are asked for:

Those who are sick: Esther Li who is very seriously ill, Sheila, Fr. Barry, Teresa Rowan, Archbishop Kevin, Sister Anna, Eva Brewer, Pat Whaley, Len Lane, Peg Bu1nnage, Sister Stephen, Myra Taylor and Canon William Clements.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions on Saturdays from approx. 10.30am until 11am and 4.45pm until 5.15pm. Other times by appointment.

HOLY COMMUNION

We warmly welcome all non-Catholic to our services. It is not permitted, however, to receive Holy Communion until a person is received into full membership of the Catholic Church. If you would like to know more about this, please contact Fr. John.

NEW YEAR CHANGES

Following advice from the Deanery and other trusted colleagues Fr. John has, reluctantly, bowed to the necessity to take at least one day's rest each week from Parish duties. As from this week (5/1/09) there will be no regular Mass on Mondays, also Exposition and Mass on Tuesdays will be moved to late afternoon (for a trial period). This will give Fr. John a break from midday on Sundays to midday on Tuesdays. Obviously if a Holy Day falls on a Monday or there is another need, such as a funeral, then Fr. John will amend the schedule.

YEAR OF ST. PAUL 2008 - 2009

From the letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians (ch 2: v 13)

Now in Christ Jesus, you that used to be so far apart from us have been brought very close, by the blood of Christ.