

MASS TIMES AND INTENTIONS

Sunday 7 January 2018: The Epiphany of the Lord

6.30pm (Saturday)	Rose O'Driscall
9.00am	Kieran Hughes
11.00am	Parishioners
5.30pm	Maira Devlin
Monday 8 January	Baptism of the Lord
7.30am	Friars & benefactors
Tuesday 9 January	
7.30am	CMA
Wednesday 10 January	
7.30am	Margaret Ryan
Thursday 11 January	
7.30am	Antonio Palumbo
Friday 12 January	St Bernard of Corleone
7.30am	Sister of Providence, deceased
Saturday 13 January	
8.00am	Arthur Vancuylenburg RIP

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturday 11.30am-12 noon; 5.30-6.25pm

Please pray for those members of our community who are sick.

Pray, too, for those whose anniversaries occur about this time, including:

George Reid, Patrick Hartigan, Violet Shields, Domenico Rosato, Liboria Salamone, Mary Guckian, Giovanni Diliberto, Florie Fernandes, Michael Flaherty, Hannah Chittenden, Francis Brannigan, Richard O'Brien, Michael Reeghill, Beatrice Bennett & William Zelly.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.

COLLECTIONS:

Second Collection today: Diocesan Schools Fund

Last week's collection:

Offertory £458.31 + Gift-aided £117.00

No Second Collection next week

SS Edmund and Frideswide Roman Catholic Church

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Why Camels?

About those camels—we're not too sure about them. Yes, every Nativity scene shows the Magi seated on stately dromedaries, or leading the beasts of burden by bit and rein. But, quite honestly, the Gospel story of the Magi never tells us how they got there. They could have travelled on foot, in a chariot, by camel, on horseback, even on an elephant—we just don't know.

Why do we keep putting them on camels in our art? Because of Isaiah's prophecy. He said that caravans of camels would fill Jerusalem, and that people from the East would come bearing gold and frankincense. 'Rise up in splendour, Jerusalem!' he proclaims. 'Your light has come.'

In Matthew's story, the Magi realize that Jerusalem's light has come. They follow the star and bring their gifts of gold and frankincense—myrrh, too. By telling of these gifts, Matthew turns our attention back to Isaiah. Reading that prophecy, we realize that the light Isaiah mentioned is the Light of the World, Jesus Christ.

When we see the Magi seated on camels, we are remembering Isaiah. When we remember Isaiah, we remember the light that came to shatter the darkness of our world. Those camels carry hope.



1st Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

Response: **All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.**

2nd Reading: Ephesians 3:2-3,5-6

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Entrance Antiphon: Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come; and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion.

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

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

Sunday 7 January 2018: The Epiphany of the Lord

Today we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord.

Early Christians considered the gifts of the Magi to be highly symbolic. Gold is the 'king of metals' and is therefore symbolic of Jesus' kingship. Frankincense is used in worship and is therefore symbolic of Jesus' divinity. Lastly, myrrh is used in burials and is therefore symbolic of Jesus' humanity.

If I were to give Jesus one gift to symbolize the role I'd like to give him to play in my life—what might that gift be?

What keeps me from letting Jesus play that role more fully than he is now?

This week:

Church Cleaning

This week is the turn of Group C: Margaret Madden & family, & Michael. Thank you.

Monday 8 January: The Baptism of the Lord

Routine establishes itself, school re-opens, people will chirp up, 'How did you get over/survive Christmas?', making it sound like some sort of assault course to be negotiated. True! In it all, we may forget today that there is one more holiday worth observing: the Baptism of the Lord. It's strange, but understandable, how we can readily recall dates of birth, but never of baptism. It wasn't always that way. In Scripture, only Matthew and Luke record anything about Jesus' birth, but all four Gospels narrate his Baptism. Baptism says loud and clear, 'I am somebody.' The world may seek to ignore you and say they have no interest in or need of you. But baptism says of you, as it did of Jesus, 'You are God's beloved son/daughter; his favour rests on you.'

At Christmas we celebrate His Birth. Today we realize the work of Christmas truly begins.

Friday 12 January: St Bernard of Corleone, Capuchin

Bernard was born in Corleone in Sicily in 1605. In his youth he was of a quarrelsome and violent nature. After his conversion he joined the Capuchin Friars. Seeking God alone, he strove to become like Christ crucified through acts of charity and penance. He died in 1667.

Also on Friday: Rosary followed by First Friday Mass

Every Friday at 7pm, the Holy Rosary is recited in the church. All are welcome.

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Looking ahead:

First Holy Communion Classes

Please note that the First Holy Communion classes start on **Sunday 14 January** at 10am in the Friary chapel. The children meet in the church and will be taken to the chapel. For part of the first meeting a parent should be present. Classes are followed by the 11am Mass.

Oxford Winter Night Shelter (OWNS)

Seven local churches will be taking turns to provide overnight accommodation for homeless people each night of the week during January, February and March. This enterprise is called 'Oxford Winter Night Shelter' or OWNS.

One of the seven churches is St Mary and St John's in the Cowley Road, who will be providing shelter on one night in each week in the parish hall of St Albans, Charles Street. The shelters will be supported by volunteers working in three shifts over the night. Two members of our parish's Justice and Peace group have volunteered.

We have agreed to partner St Mary and St John's in this work with prayerful support, and so we will be commending the work and our volunteers to Our Lord in prayer through bidding prayers and at Holy Hour during these months. The organisers of OWNS have also asked for volunteer support to do shopping for the centres and to do some laundry. If you would like to volunteer to do this please contact Beth Edwards at bethisolde@gmail.com (mobile: 07717 224036).

Our Lady's Primary School First Holy Communion Fair, 3 March

Our Lady's Primary School, Oxford Road, Cowley, OX4 2LF, will be hosting a First Holy Communion Fair on Saturday 3 March. *Simply Perfect*, a company selling dresses, ties, accessories and memorabilia, will be in the school from 11am–3pm selling their merchandise.

Weddings 2018/2019

If you are planning to get married this year (2018) or in 2019, you should contact Br Gordon as soon as possible to make the necessary arrangements.

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A New Year moves each Christian to ask fundamental questions.

'What have I done with my Baptism? How do I answer my vocation?

What have I done with my Confirmation? Have I used the gifts and charisms of the Holy Spirit to bear fruit?' (St John Paul II)

RENEW YOUR COMMITMENT TO CHRIST!

Worried? Fearful? The Solution: Go to Sunday Mass

Pope Francis reminds us: we need the Holy Eucharist. God waits to meet us on Sundays, to give us the weekly 'nourishment' that will get us through every week, and the rest of our lives. The Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is the centre of the life of the Church. From the beginning, the first disciples met on the first day of the week, the day when Jesus rose from the dead, to live in communion with him. 'In the celebration of the Eucharist [the Mass], the living presence of the Lord comes to meet us' (Pope Francis).

My brothers and sisters—we need the Holy Eucharist.