

Every day, as long as this 'today' lasts,  
keep encouraging one another" (Heb 3:13)

**Sunday, January 7th, 2024**

**Epiphany of the Lord  
Readings p. 115**

**Isaiah 60:1-6**

All the nations come to the light of the Lord.

**Ephesians 3:2-3a. 5-6**

The pagans now share the same inheritance and promise given to the Chosen People.

**St. Matthew 2:1-12**

The wise men at the end of their journey do homage to Jesus and, opening their treasures, offer him gifts.

"They saw the  
child with his  
mother Mary,  
and falling on  
their knees  
they did him  
homage"



Perhaps it's a good thing the three wise men arrived late at the stable. Had they arrived on time, Christmas would have been over on Boxing Day and we would already have bagged Christmas up and shipped it back up to the attic. Christmas would have been over for another year. We might be guilty of heaving a heartfelt 'glad-Christmas-is-over' kind of sigh, but are we really glad Christmas is over, or are we just glad that the rush and hassle and tatty tinsel have passed? The post-Christmas mood of the magi and the star is somehow all the more significant because we have stopped tearing around in circles and can enjoy Christmas from the perspective of the three wise men.

In Biblical days astrologers believed that strange planetary movement was a sign of a noble birth. It's interesting that when they arrived at the stable with their rich gifts they didn't scratch their heads in puzzlement and decide they'd arrived in the wrong place. Instead they appreciated the significance of Jesus' birth despite the unlikely circumstances. They trusted that their God given star had led them to the right place. We don't hear of the three wise men again, but we imagine the star has led them to greater meaning and fulfilment. Instinctively they knew the road back to Herod and everything he represented was the wrong decision.

We too search for meaning and fulfilment, but all too often we lose our way. God has given us each a star to follow. Deep down we know who we are and what we are about, but all too often we forget to follow our star. Herod comes to push us off course with many distractions. Instead of being true to ourselves we choose jobs dictated by society, we struggle to fit into roles carved out by others. We become obsessed by the need to make money or by some desperate need to be approved of.

The Epiphany is the time to renew our vision. What is our quest? What is it we are looking for, and what obstacles do we need to overcome? How will we recognise Christ in our lives and most importantly, how do we avoid the road back to Herod?

**Today's Psalm  
Psalm 71**

*All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.  
Epiphany means the revelation of Jesus to the world. The responsorial psalm is a prayer that a new king might bring true justice to the people.  
In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.*

The psalmist predicts that foreign kings would come to pay respect to this good king. The *Great River* is the Euphrates on the eastern border while *Tharshish and the sea coasts* are to the west. *Sheba and Seba* represent the south. The Queen of Sheba travelled with gifts of gold and incense in recognition of the wisdom of King Solomon. There was a tradition that her journey was guided by a star. Matthew takes this story as a template for the journey of the wise men from the East who were led by a star to bear gifts of gold, incense and myrrh, in tribute to the new born king. The Magi represent the coming of the nations to fall prostrate before Jesus. The child of Mary belongs to the whole world.  
*Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,  
all nations shall serve him.*

Fr. Silvester O'Flynn OFMCap.

## St. Mary's Catholic Church, Euxton - Tel: (01257) 262665

**Mass Intentions for w/c January 7, 2024**

**Sun: The Epiphany of the Lord**

8.30.am. Parishioners

10.30.am. Mary Lovatt

**Mon: The Baptism Of the Lord**

9.30.am. Private Intention

**Tues: No Mass Today**

**Wed: Weekday**

9.30.am. Bernard Harvey

**Thurs: Weekday**

9.30.am. Private Intention

**Fri: Weekday**

7.00.pm. Private Intention

**Sun: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

8.30.am. Parishioners

10.30.am. William(Whillie Nc Mahon

**0771 942 7926 (only for emergency use)**

**Confessions**

At your request

**On Admittance to Hospital or Nursing Home**

Staff need to be made aware by you: that you, or the member of your family, or the person you accompany, are Catholic, and require the services of the Catholic Chaplaincy.

**Cemetery**

All visitors are asked to help keep the Cemetery tidy and to use the appropriate waste bins.

**Mass Intentions received upto 06/01/2024**

William(Whillie)McMahon

Marjorie, Joseph, JAnd Ray Milner

**We pray for all sick, the specially the sick of the parish including Ryan Troop; Catherine Thompson; Maureen Beardsworth; TThomas Halligan And Fr. JonathanOSB**

Session 3 of our **Sacramental Programme** will take place this on Wednesday 6.30.pm January 17 our children will celetbrate their e 1<sup>st</sup> Confession in Church in Church.

Good news that changed historyIntroducing his message, the Pope said the “good news of great joy” we celebrate is the “sure promise of an unprecedented gift: the hope of being born for heaven” as the Lord’s birth reveals God’s tender love and the Jesus “gives us ‘power to become children of God.’”“This is the joy that consoles hearts, renews hope and bestows peace. It is the joy of the Holy Spirit: the joy born of being God’s beloved sons and daughters.”God’s light dispelling the darknessDespite the “deep shadows” covering Bethlehem today, “an undying flame has been lighted” the Pope underscored, as the God’s light has overcome the darkness.“Let us exult in this gift of grace!... Rejoice, you who have abandoned all hope, for God offers you his outstretched hand; he does not point a finger at you, but offers you his little baby hand, in order to set you free from your fears, to relieve you of your burdens and to show you that, in his eyes, you are more valuable than anything else.”

Next Stnday is Peace Sunday.At the back of Church today are 9 copies the Liverpool Archdioscese 2004 Directory, £4. This contains compleat information of all that goes on.Please put your money in the round tin.

“V“When the winds of change blow, some people build walls and others build windmills.” (Chinese Proverb)