



PARISH OF OUR LADY QUEEN OF MARTYRS

Reg. Charity 242380

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Feast of the Epiphany B – 4 January 2015

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

Responsorial psalm: *All nations shall fall prostrate before you O Lord*

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

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



"It was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery." That is how St Paul describes the gift of faith to the Ephesians. In Matthew's Gospel that same gift of faith is explained in another way: "We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage." That is how the Wise Men describe it to King Herod when they arrive in Jerusalem enquiring, "Where is the infant king of the Jews?" The Prophet Isaiah also spoke of that gift but in these terms, "Above you the Lord now rises and above you his glory appears, though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples." The Wise Men followed a star and yet, centuries before, Isaiah told the people of Israel that the Lord himself would rise and shine, bringing light and life to his people and to all those who "lift up their eyes and see." "It means" writes St Paul, "that the pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body."

"The sight of the star filled them with delight." What was that delight? - A spirit of joy and thanksgiving, of peace and of hope, a sense of fulfilment. The journey of the Magi is, in fact, the Exodus of the Gentiles, an exodus from the darkness of separation, ignorance, idolatry and paganism to the light of revelation and the knowledge of God, he who is life and the very source of life. The gift of faith always requires a journey, a pilgrimage: from Ur of the Chaldeans to Canaan, from Egypt to the Promised Land, from Nazareth to Bethlehem, from distant lands to Jerusalem. The physical journey is but the manifestation of an inner and more intimate journey of grace and conversion, a journey from self-centredness and the worship of self to the knowledge, love and worship of God. "Falling to their knees they did him homage."

Now the Wise Men could have come all the way to Jerusalem only to listen to Herod and follow his example. The shepherds could have stayed in the fields with their sheep. Mary and Joseph could have said, "No," to the bidding of the angel. St Paul could have rejected that revelation on the road to Damascus. The disciples did indeed abandon Jesus at Gethsemane. It was only the experience of Easter that ultimately convinced them that Jesus was the Christ, the promised Messiah.

Christmas and the Epiphany together constitute the celebration of the Easter Mystery "in the bleak mid-Winter", just as the star over the manger is a light that shines in the darkness. The Epiphany, a much more important feast than Christmas, has always been known as "Easter in Winter". The wood of the manger soon becomes the wood of the Cross and the cave at Bethlehem replaced by an empty Tomb. The title given to Jesus by the Magi, "King of the Jews" will be used by Pontius Pilate and nailed to the Cross with Jesus. The star leading the Wise Men will give way to the dawning light of Easter. Their question, "Where is he who is born?" will be echoed by that of Mary Magdalene, "Where have you put him?" Just as today the Magi kneel down and do homage, so Peter will jump naked into the water, when he hears the Beloved Disciple say, "It is the Lord," and Thomas, falling to his knees, will cry out, "My Lord and my God."

Today we celebrate the threefold revelation of the Mystery of Salvation. Not only do the Kings present their prophetic gifts to the Christ-child; Jesus is baptised by John in the waters of the Jordan and at the Wedding Feast of Cana water is transformed into wine. But what can this mean for us today? St Leo the Great answers that question in a homily he preached a millennium and a half ago:

"The gifts the Magi first brought to Bethlehem are still being offered by all who come to Christ in faith. When we acclaim Christ as King of the universe we bring him gold from the treasury of our hearts; when we believe that the only-begotten Son of God has become one with our human nature, we are offering myrrh for his embalming; and when we declare him to be equal in majesty to the Father, we are burning the incense of our worship before him."

Dear friends, if we listen to Jesus and do what he tells us, then we will be filled with his Spirit and the water of our humanity will change into wine of his divinity; we will see God, not lying in a manger but face to face in the glory of the Kingdom. That is where the star is leading us.

Dates for Your Diary

Please come along and enjoy tea and coffee in the parish room after the Sunday morning Masses

The numbers drawn week 14 were 29 39 7 19 13

No winner

Prize money for week 18 is £550.00, and six numbers to be drawn

Tote tickets will be back on sale on Sunday 11th January 2015 at all masses

Second collection: For Hall and Church Decoration

Tuesday devotions: Divine Mercy chaplet before Mass and the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary afterwards

Christmas Decorations" Help required on Saturday after Mass for the removal and storage of the Christmas decorations, many hands make light work.

Crib Competition Well done to everyone who entered last week's crib competition, what a talented bunch you are! In a close vote, which raised £14.50, runner up was Pearl Bray with her stunning knitted crib and the winner was Molly Fishlock with an ingenious paper tube version. Well done Molly! It's never too early to start designing your entry for next Christmas!

Diocesan Year Books: are now available for 2015. They can be found at the back of church, by the piety shop at £3. While there, browse our Christmas cards and gifts of a holier nature than you can find in most shops

Kraków is preparing ... are you? Plans are underway as Kraków prepares to welcome over a million young people from around the World to celebrate World Youth Day 2016 with Pope Francis. The last World Youth Day (WYD) celebrations were held in 2013 in Rio and this was the moment when Pope Francis asked the world to meet in Poland. Dioceses throughout the world are already making arrangements to converge on Kraków and the Archdiocese of Cardiff intends to be there! Will you join us in Kraków? We sure hope so ... why not register your interest? Kraków is preparing ... Cardiff is preparing ... are you? Full information can be found on the diocese's WYD website - www.Cardiff2Krakow.org

Dear Friends in Christ,

Over the next eight months Fr Andrew Berry, monk of Belmont, and I will have the great privilege of serving the people of Our Lady's Parish, together with Our Lady's School and all those who consider Our Lady's to be their spiritual home. This includes the sick and the housebound, those in hospital, those living outside the city boundaries in the Herefordshire countryside and, of course, our beloved Poor Clares at Much Birch Monastery. At times we will be helped by other members of the Belmont Community, as both Fr Andrew and I are already very busy with our many jobs at Belmont and elsewhere. This means that we will also be relying on you all to help us in the pastoral work associated with a busy Catholic parish. We thank Fr Cenydd for leaving it all so well organised, but please forgive us if we get things wrong from time to time. We will endeavour to continue doing everything that Fr Cenydd did so well and to keep to the present timetable, though there might have to be slight adjustments. We will always be available for you. Our telephone numbers are as follows: Abbot Paul 01432374718 and Fr Andrew 01432374724. Our e-mail addresses are: abbot@belmontabbey.org.uk and brandrew@belmontabbey.org.uk

Do not hesitate to get in touch if you need us.

On behalf of the Belmont Community, I wish you all a very Happy New Year and every blessing on the Feast of the Epiphany.

Fr Paul

Octave of Christmas/Christmastide

Psalter week II

Today:

9:30 am	Leach Family intention
11:30 am	Mulloy Family Intention
6:30 pm	

Monday 5 January 9:30 am Mass – Georgina Edwards Int
Christmas weekday

Tuesday 6 January 7:00 pm Mass – RhianFirth Int
Christmas weekday

Wednesday, 7 January 9:30 am Mass – Sheila & David
Christmas weekday Bartlett int

Thursday, 8 January 10.00am Mass – Maureen Bellamy Int
Christmas weekday

Friday, 9 January 7..30pm Mass – Pamela Leach int
Christmas weekday

Saturday, 10 January 9:30 am Confessions
St John Apostle & Evangelist 10.30am Mass – Sutton Family Int

Sunday, 11 January (Baptism of the Lord)
9:30 am Bellamy Family Int
11:30 am Agnes McGowan Int
6:30 pm Fr Nicholas Wetz

Rota Schedule for 5 to 11 January 2015

Flower Arrangers: N & C Scotford

Cleaners: Volunteers

Ushers: 9:30am J Sullivan M Whent
11:30am J McGowan J Kelly
6:30pm R & R Seamarks

Readers:
9:30am A Spanjers
11:30am H Meenaghan
6:30pm V Woods

Eucharistic Ministers:

9:30am C Sharland T Bray Fran Keogh
11:30pm M Davies C Mulloy D Lissaman
6:30pm J Winter

Altar Linen: J Callingham

Polish Information:

Następna Msza Św w języku polskim odbędzie się w niedzielę, 25 Stycznia godz 16:00

Finance:

The collection on Sunday, 28 December raised £421.02
thank you

Please pray for:

The sick, especially Ann Morris, Brian Morris, Alice Jones, Sue Watkins, Shelaigh Fawcett, Dymphna and John O'Neil, Andrew Walker, Sylvia Jones, Sylvia Aiello, Chris Turville, Eva Zakrzewska, Pat Franklyn, Glyn Matthews, Anna Foggo, Catherine Rollings, Katie Richardson, Agnes McGowan, Anne Jenkins, Michael Morris, Phil Thompson, Chris Burns Rita O'Leary and all in our prayer book

The recently dead, especially Fr. Donal Gillespie, Fr. Laurence Beer OSB, Monica Thompson and Helena Grabowska

Those whose anniversary falls in the month of January, including: Lillian Orchard, Walter Jennings, Kathleen Jones, Kathleen Shawcross, Marjorie Sullivan, Ellen Willis, Elizabeth Farley, Ernest Cooper, Patrick Taylor, Margaret Ryan, Jamie McGoran, Winifred Brennan, Catherine Ross, Syd Swann, Eileen Harris, Patrick Lynch, Denise McQuaid, Ronald, O'Connor, Joseph Kelly, Raymond Watkins, Leslie Foulkes, Celia Methven, Reginald Sly, Shirley Walters, Irene Brennan, Jean Chappell, Angelo Moruzzi, Raymond Breeze, Amelia Smith, Jerzy Schmidt, Michał Piwień, Baden Powell, Francis Seymour, Eileen Scott, William Graham, James Jones, Louise Champion and Margaret Dean, Simon Williams

It was a few days before Christmas. The trip went reasonably well, and he was ready to go back home. The airport on the other end had turned a tacky red and green, and loudspeakers blared annoying elevator renditions of cherished Christmas carols. Being someone who took Christmas very seriously, and being slightly tired, he was not in a particularly good mood. (Almost a scrooge) Going to check in his luggage (which, for some reason, had become one suitcase with entirely new clothes), he saw hanging mistletoe. Not real mistletoe, but very cheap plastic with red paint on some of the rounder parts and green paint on some of the flatter and pointer parts that could be taken for mistletoe only in a very Picasso sort of way

With a considerable degree of irritation and nowhere else to vent it, he said to the attendant, "Even if we were married, I would not want to kiss you under such a ghastly mockery of mistletoe." "Sir, look more closely at where the mistletoe is." "Ok, I see that it's above the luggage scale which is the place you'd have to step forward for a kiss." "Ok, I give up. Why is it there?" "It's there so you can kiss your luggage good-bye."