



Our Lady Help of Christians & St Helens

Sunday 7th – 21st January 2018

Parish Priest: Fr Joseph Whisstock 27 Milton Rd, Westcliff-on-sea, SS0 7JP.

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Reflection for 7th January 2018 By Adrian Graffy The Epiphany of The Lord - Year B

Gospel reading: *Matthew 2:1-12*

Other Readings: Isaiah 6:1-6 Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6

The story of the magi carries with it an extraordinary richness. In it the evangelist teaches us about the mission of the Son of God. Jesus is 'made manifest' (epiphany = manifestation) as Messiah not only for his own people, but for those who come 'from the east', for all the peoples of the earth. At the same time this is the Messiah heralded by the prophets. The Scriptures are fulfilled.

This Messiah is born into danger, as the cruel tyrant, known to history as 'Herod the Great', is the first to threaten his life. The gift of myrrh alludes to the death he is to suffer. The presentation of gifts from the peoples of the world completes the Christmas scene. The magi represent the nations, but also the age-old quest among the peoples of the earth for true wisdom. This wisdom is found in Christ.

What lies at the heart of the epiphany story?

How is Matthew preparing us for later events in the gospel story?

Let us rejoice with the peoples of the whole world that God's love has been revealed in the birth of Jesus.

We pray for a growing solidarity with those all over the world who suffer.

Reflection for 14th January 2018 By Fr Adrian Graffy The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Peace Day)

Gospel reading: *John 1:35-42*

Other Readings: 1 Samuel 3:3-10,
1 Corinthians 6:13-15, 17-20

Our reading this Sunday is taken from the later verses of the first chapter of John, which is generally read during the Christmas season. These verses cover the early days of the ministry of Jesus. We have a last glimpse of John the Baptist, who heralds Jesus for a second time as 'the Lamb of God'. Jesus is the one who is to lay down his life like an innocent lamb 'for the sins of the world'. This is the purpose of his coming into the world, the purpose of the Son of God 'becoming flesh' and 'living among us'.

Attention quickly moves away from John the Baptist to the conversation between Jesus and the two disciples. They follow Jesus, but he challenges them with the question 'what are you seeking?' This is translated here as 'what do you want?' They counter this question with another, 'where do you live?' Jesus invites them: 'Come and see!' The time they spend with Jesus makes a deep impression on them. Andrew cannot contain his enthusiasm. He is convinced that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. He calls his brother Simon Peter. When Jesus meets Simon Peter, he does not hesitate to enlist him among the disciples and immediately gives him the new name, Cephas, which means Rock.

These verses are marked by the enthusiastic response of the first disciples to Jesus and their eagerness to spread the news about him. This eagerness is an echo of the first reading, in which Samuel is called as a boy to be a prophet. When the good news of salvation comes, when the encounter with the word of God arrives, it cannot be contained or suppressed. It is imperative to let others know!

'What are you seeking?' What would be your response to Jesus' question?

How often do you invite others to 'come and see' something of your life of faith?

We pray that, as another year begins, we may meet Jesus with new enthusiasm.

Let us have the courage to make Jesus known to others, as the first disciples did.

MASS TIMES & INTENTIONS

Sunday 7th January (Year B)

Epiphany of the Lord

9.30am Mary English RIP

11.15am Deceased Clergy: Secular Clergy New Common Fund

6pm Parish Community

Monday 8th January 2018 – The Baptism of The Lord

10am Mass @ Nazareth House

Tuesday 9th January 2018

10am Mass @ Nazareth House

Wednesday 10th January 2018

10am Mass @ Nazareth House

Thursday 11th January 2018

10am Mass @ Nazareth House

Friday 12th January 2018

10am Mass @ Nazareth House

1pm - 4pm Exposition in the Adoration Chapel

Saturday 13th January 2018

10am Mass @ Nazareth House

No Confessions

6pm Polish Mass

Sunday 14th January- Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B) (Peace Day)

9.30am Deceased Clergy: Secular Clergy Common Fund

11.15am Parish Community

6pm Wiggins Family - Intentions

Monday 15th January 2018

9.15am Fr Bart Lynch RIP

Tuesday 16th January 2018

10am Mass @ Nazareth House

Wednesday 17th January 2018 – St Anthony

9.15am Families of Abdul, Bond, Chaitoo, Edwards,
Jones & Thompson - Intentions

Thursday 18th January 2018

{9.30am Class Mass @ St Helen's School:
Sidney George & Louise White RIP}

10am Mass @ Nazareth House

Friday 19th January 2018

1pm - 4pm Exposition in the Adoration Chapel

4.30pm Novena for St Nino

5pm Deceased relatives & Friends of Melinda Wetherley

Saturday 20th January 2018

10am Mass @ Nazareth House

No Confessions

{3pm Mass @ Southwark Cathedral: Feast of St Nino}

6pm Polish Mass

Sunday 21st January – Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)

9.30am People of Parish

11.15am Deceased Clergy: Secular Clergy Common Fund

6pm Deceased Relatives & Friends of Susi Webb

The Holy Father's Prayer Intention for January 2018 Religious Minorities in Asia

That Christians, and other religious minorities in Asian countries, may be able to practice their faith in full freedom.



CRIB COLLECTION

25th Dec 2017 – 2nd Feb 2018
WILL BE FOR BCCS - CHILDCARE

All funds raised from crib collections around the Diocese will go directly to ensure they are able to continue vital work, supporting those children and families who turn to them for support.
Thank you for your support

Please pray for the recently departed especially;
Kwadwo Boateng RIP who died on 27th December 2017.
Nancy Curran RIP who died on the 30th December 2017.
Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

Second Collection Next Week (14th January) is for the White Flower Appeal (SPUC) and other Pro-Life Charities

White Flower Appeal

The Society for Protection of Unborn children (SPUC) will be holding its annual appeal next week, 14th January 2018. SPUC is currently campaigning to stop the decriminalisation of abortion, which means taking abortion outside the law. This is the most dangerous threat to unborn children and their mothers in decades.
Please be as generous as you can to defeat this latest attack on unborn babies and their mothers, and to stop abortion getting even worse in this country by decriminalisation

Brentwood Diocesan Notices

Saturday 13th January – Brentwood Catholic Youth Service

As you know the Youth Service are no longer based at Walsingham House. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Sisters of The Institute of Our Lady of Mercy for their kindness, generosity and support to the Diocese over many years in allowing us the use of their property at Canvey Island which became known as Walsingham House. On 13th January there will be an open house at Abbotswick between 12 noon and 4pm for anyone who would like to visit to look at the refurbishment.

Saturday 27 January - Essex Recusant Society Meeting @ 2.30pm (Brentwood Diocesan Historical Society) The Grange, 93 Queens Road, Brentwood CM14 4EY. The speaker will be Rev. Dr Ken Carleton (Permanent Deacon, Elm Park) on 'Cardinal Pole and the Progress of the Catholic Reformation.' All welcome.

Sunday 4 February - Mass for the Sick @ Brentwood Cathedral Our Lady of Lourdes is both the patroness of our diocese and the sick. At 3 pm on, Bishop Alan will celebrate Mass in her honour at Brentwood Cathedral. This is a diocesan celebration; all are invited. During the Mass, the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will be given to those who are unwell. This Mass is also an opportunity for those who attended the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes in 2017 to give thanks for graces received.

VOCATIONS PROMOTION The Vocations Team have put together vocation stories from Priests and Seminarians and these can be viewed on <https://soundcloud.com/user-837815870> There is also a Facebook page which also includes videos too https://www.facebook.com/Brentwood-vocations1406259206077035/?notif_id=1510762632352497¬if_t=pag_e_unpublish&ref=notif

Job Vacancies: "Vacancy – Bookkeeper (Sage Accounts experience essential) required to support the Finance Office at Cathedral House, Brentwood. The role is part-time, working two days a week (14 hours). If you – or any of your family or friends – are interested in this role, please first contact finance-recruitment@dioceseofbrentwood.org for a copy of the job description and person specification. You should then send in your CV, with a covering letter demonstrating how your experience and skills match the essential requirements and attributes of the role as per the job description and person specification. Closing date for CVs/applications is Friday 12th Jan 2018. Interviews commencing 22nd Jan 2018." Advertisement on behalf of the Medaille Trust: "Vacancy – Diocesan Representatives to carry out the work of the Medaille Trust in Brentwood. Do you want to be part of the Church's fight against Modern Slavery? Could you help us raise awareness of Human Trafficking in our midst? Want to be part of a helping Catholic charity? We are now looking for Diocesan Representatives with good people skills, the ability to make presentations in schools and churches, plus sympathy with a charity such as ours. It is an enjoyable and flexible people-facing fundraising role that would suit a range of individuals. For application pack, visit the website www.medaille-trust.org.uk, or e-mail recruitment@medaille-trust.org.uk."

Fitness Boot Camp Class @ St Helen's Hall Every Monday evening 7-8pm (Starting 8th January)

Fitness boot camp class with Lyndsey Mower (Qualified Personal Trainer & Exercise Referral & a Sports Science degree). All fitness abilities welcome - everyone has to start somewhere! Take your fitness to the next level in 2018! Classes include a variety of training GREAT for fat burning & improving your fitness. **We are made to move so let's move together!** Price: **First Session Free!!! £7 per session or £25 for 4.** To book a FREE trial let Lyndsey know on 07875163305 or email: wildfitnesslyndsey@gmail.com

St Helen's Parish Notices

PARISH DIARY 2018

Monday 8th January

2pm – Friendship Club

Wednesday 10th January

7pm – R.C.I.A (1st weekly session of the New Year)

Sunday 14th January

Coffee Morning - Fundraising FIHM

Coffee & cakes next week in the hall after 9.30am Mass. There will be a mini performance of dance routines from our talented children. Raffle tickets will be on sale. All welcome

Primary School Applications Forms

Fr Joseph will be available on the following dates to issue "Certificate of Catholic Practice" for Primary School Applications for St Helen's:

Wednesday 17th January 2018 - 5pm onwards

Thursday 18th January 2018 – 7.30pm onwards No need to make an appointment just turn up.

Please go to the hall on either date to see Fr Joseph to request a "Certificate of Catholic Practice" which is then to be handed in to the school direct.

Monday 2nd – Saturday 7th April 2018 - St Helen's Pilgrimage to Lourdes

By air. Staying at the fabulous 4* Hotel Grande Moderne closest to the Sanctuaries. Full board basis. All rooms are en-suite. Price is £630 per person based upon 2 people sharing a room.

Full spiritual programme and free time. **£100 deposit secures place!**
For further info contact Sue Baillie on 07979 746707

St Helen's Catholic Church Building & Restoration Fund

For the two weeks to the 31st December, £449.50 was collected from envelopes and cash. When grossed up for gift aid this comes to £552 against a two weekly target of £300. The total includes a generous gift of £400 from a parishioner.

The cumulative position for the 35 weeks since the relaunch is £2,717 (including gift aid tax relief) against a 35 week target of £5,350 and an annual target of £8,000.

We can only maintain St Helen's with your help, the Collection box is at the back of church.

Thank you, Fr Joseph & Parish Finance Team

If you are able to help clean the church on Friday mornings from 9.30am for one hour, please sign up on the form at the back of church. Thank you Fr Joseph

Steward of the Gospel Update

As many of you know the process of renewal and restructuring for the diocese has reached the stage of first formal proposal. As a proposal it still remains possible for outcomes to change. The entire process is now over 18 months old and has been coordinated by Bishop Alan (SM) and the Diocesan Strategic Planning Group (DSPG). This group consists of Stewards of the Gospel with associates plus the Parish Priest, and various committed members of the Diocese, both lay and clergy. There have been several meetings through the year and opportunities for parishioners to respond to developments, primarily through Newsletter announcements and our website www.shwos.co.uk

The three stages are short, medium and long term and start in 2019, 2025 & 2035. The current proposal suggests that Our Parish will remain with a resident Priest, as will Sacred Heart Southchurch and Our Lady of Lourdes Leigh on sea. There are proposed changes in the responsibilities of the Parish Priest at St Helens and many other Parishes. There are also potential changes in the medium range proposal, which may include Priests being specifically assigned to Hospitals and schools, in other words a reshaping of the role of a Parish Priest according to their strengths, age and special gifts.

As Steward for our parish I am encouraging all parishioners to read the full document on our website www.shwos.co.uk under Working together to Evangelise our Diocese (advent edition) and respond by email to Westcliff@dioceseofbrentwood.org with the Subject heading 'WTED Advent Edition'. Alternatively, there are still hard copies available of the document in the sacristy. If you want to contact directly about the proposal feel free to contact me on 07722 043074 and we can arrange a time to talk.

Yours in Christ

Andrew Downey (Steward of the Gospel) for St Helens.