

St Michael and All Angels Belmont Abbey



PARISH NEWSLETTER

5th January 2014

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
(Cycle A)

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or The Parish Office

Happy New Year!

Today we celebrate the great solemnity of the Epiphany. On this feast the young Messiah is revealed as the light of the nations. It is so much more than the belated arrival of three 'Magi' bearing odd gifts. "Today, the *Child born in the night of Bethlehem is manifested to the world as the light of salvation for all peoples.*" The Christ child revealed first to the Jewish shepherds is now revealed to the world. The message of salvation is shared with the whole of humanity. To this episode, the Fathers of the Church associated two others in which Jesus manifested his glory: his *Baptism* in the River Jordan, and the *Wedding at Cana*. We rejoice in Christ's coming and the beginning of our salvation. Let us treasure this wondrous news and share this wonderful event with all those we meet in this New Year.

Walking with Kings

A service of carols and readings in celebration of the feast of the Epiphany.

This afternoon at Belmont Abbey at 3:00 pm

The second collection today is for Abbey Maintenance.

Fr Nicholas

Last Sunday's	1st Collection:	£266.21
	Standing Orders:	£480.00
	2nd Collection:	£204.52
<i>The Poor at Christmas - Thank you</i>		

CHORAL EVENING PRAYER

To Celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity CHORAL EVENING PRAYER will be held at ST DAVID'S CATHEDRAL, Charles Street, Cardiff, CF10 2SF on SUNDAY JANUARY 19th 2014, at 3.00pm. All are welcome. Come and join in the hymns, prayers and psalms. It will be followed by tea & coffee at 'The Cornerstone'. For further details contact: Canon Peter Collins, Tel. 029 2023 1407



MISSIO (APF) RED BOX HOLDERS

A big thank you to all those very generous Red Box holders; this year we have raised just over £600 for our missions overseas. A big thank you,too, to the promoters without whom my job would be much more onerous. If any one would like to have a Red Box and contribute their spare change please contact me on 356878

Liz Norman



LITTLE ANGEL

A mini version of The Angel has been put together for "Young People". Please take a copy from the Porch. Thank you to Chris Moore for putting this together.



WALKING WITH KINGS

A service of carols and readings in celebration of the Feast of the Epiphany. Belmont Abbey, Sunday 5th January at 3:00 pm.



THE BOOK SHOP

will be closed from 23 December to and including 11 January 2014 re-opening on Sunday 12 January 2014.



HOMILY

"We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage."

Illustration

About five thousand years ago, before the pyramids in Egypt or Stonehenge in England, Neolithic people in Newgrange, Ireland, constructed an underground chamber, which is illuminated by a shaft of sunlight for about seventeen minutes at sunrise on the winter solstice, 21 December, each year. For thousands of years our ancestors observed the movement of the sun, the moon and the stars with great accuracy, trying to understand our place in the universe. Without the aid of modern technology they charted the relative positions of sun, moon and stars, and came to know their influence on our daily life, with the changing seasons, the weather and the way we find our way around our world. Wise men and women are still searching the heavens for greater understanding of

the mysteries of life. How did it all happen? Where did it all begin? Where are we all going?

Today we hear the story of wise men from the east who observe the light of a new star and try to discover meaning in this extraordinary event. Our modern preoccupation with scientific explanations would situate the birth of a new star in the expansion of the universe after the “Big Bang”, but the wise men of the Gospel associated it with an even deeper mystery: the entry into human history of a God who would be a king and who would suffer and die.

Gospel Teaching

The wise men from the east were not alone in their search. For centuries the wise men of Israel had been looking out for signs of hope and the prophets had given promises of salvation from God. Today we hear the hopes of the prophet Isaiah, who sees light at the end of his people’s dark tunnel of exile. A day was coming when Jerusalem would be a beacon of light to welcome the exiles home; but not only that, it would be a focus of unity for all the nations of the earth to gather and share their wealth, to come and worship the Lord.

Matthew’s Gospel sees the birth of Jesus as the fulfilment of this extraordinary vision. The wise men are the representatives of the pagan nations who come to offer their gifts and do homage, revealing Jesus as the newborn godly king, not just of the Jews but of all the peoples of the earth. What Isaiah had

foreseen for the city of Jerusalem is fulfilled in Jesus, but it is St Paul who is given the mission to announce the good news of salvation to the pagans. The promise of eternal life with God, first announced to the Jews, is meant for everyone.

Application

Not so many years ago, a poster outside a church declared: “Wise men still seek him”, which is a reminder to us that it is easy in our modern world to treat the message of Christmas as something for children, as cosy stories to brighten up the dark nights of winter. But like the wise men and women of old, our task is to keep on searching for meaning in our own world and in our own lives. While scientists stretch the boundaries of human knowledge and experience, people seek answers for the big questions. In the darkness of our world, with all its wars and violence, poverty and oppression, is there a light that can give us hope that we can be saved? Or are we doomed to carry on blindly exploiting our world and one another until we finally extinguish life on earth?

Even in Neolithic times there were wise people who recognised order and stability in a world where the sun rose predictably each day. Life was not a haphazard gamble. It could be organised, and so civilisations developed and grew. The wise figures of history recognised a power beyond our human limitations that had to be responsible for creation. For us, Jesus is the light in this world of darkness. He shows us the way into a new world,

the kingdom of God, where we are invited to a life of which this life is merely a foretaste. The prayerful attention of the wise ones of Jewish and Christian history has helped us to discover the unfolding mystery of God's purpose for each one of us. It is a mystery of love that has created us *in love, for love, to love*: to love God, to love our fellow human beings and to love the world in which we live. If we are wise, we will sit up and take notice.



FAITH IN FOCUS: MODERN-DAY MAGI

The Epiphany is the feast of the catholicity of the Church. This means that the Church is for everyone, in all places and at all times. The opposite of catholic is exclusive. But the Church is not exclusive; it's all embracing and catholic. We don't stand like nightclub bouncers at our church entrances, deciding on who should be let in and who should be excluded. We stand there to welcome in anyone of any race, colour or creed who wants to know more about Jesus Christ, the God who became one of us.

And so the wise men entered the stable at Bethlehem at the end of their star-led journey to find this new king and to pay him homage. The Magi from the East show that Christ's message was not just for the neighbours, but for the ends of the earth. Epiphany is Christ's manifestation to the whole world, far and wide.

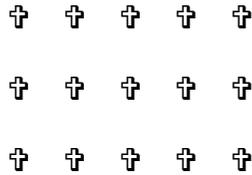
You and I are called on today to be both stars and wise men. It was a star that led the Magi to know where to find Jesus. In a world that seems so often to flounder in a sea of darkness we are called to shine, to shed our light on the difficult task of making sense of life. We are to offer the wisdom of God to a world that seeks true meaning.



We must presume that, when the Magi left, they returned home to tell other people about what they had seen and heard. It would be pointless to keep it to themselves. So too with us. We cannot leave it to those with theology degrees to let the world know what a difference believing in Jesus makes. We must be Magi, wise men and women.



A simple test of how we are doing as Magi in the 21st century is to ask ourselves how many people we brought to Christ last year. What sort of advert are we for Christianity? Are we ashamed of the Good News or proud to let others know how much it means to us? And at the end of this new year how many people will we have led to Jesus by the light of the way we live?



*“Dear God, thank you for my baby brother.
But what I prayed for was a puppy.”*

SOMETHING TO PRAY ABOUT

We can join Pope Francis in his prayer intentions for the month of January:

Universal: That all may promote authentic economic development that respects the dignity of all peoples.

For Evangelization: That Christians of diverse denominations may walk toward the unity desired by Christ.

NOTES AND QUOTES

We read of no greater faith than this in all the Bible. It is a faith that deserves to be placed side by side with that of the penitent thief. The thief saw one dying the death of a malefactor and yet prayed to him and called him 'Lord.' The wise men saw a newborn babe on the lap of a poor woman, and yet they worshipped him and confessed that he was the Christ.

(J C Ryle)

Gold is the gift fit for a King. Frankincense was in constant use by the priests in the temple. Myrrh was used to embalm the dead. In those three gifts we see who he is, what he came to do, and what it would cost him.

(John Stott)

With all liturgy we can easily fall into the trap of simply re-enacting ancient religious events. But liturgy is about making present here and now the saving power of Jesus Christ. Epiphany is not simply recalling some cosy crib scene. It's about our 21st century commitment to worship God. And of course we cannot come empty handed. Like the wise men we have to turn up with our gifts. What is the gold I bring to God? What is my frankincense and how do I use it to beautify the celebration? What is the myrrh of my life and have I remembered to bring it before God? If Epiphany is not to be relegated to a mere historical remembrance then I have to offer my whole self to the God who took human form in Christ. Only then will it come alive; only then will I, like the wise men, be transformed by the encounter.

(Elizabeth Turner)

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is part of our Christian duty to ensure the well-being of our fellow parishioners. Therefore it is essential that the names of parishioners who are sick, in hospital, need home Communion or just need someone to visit them as they are old or lonely are made know to the Parish Priest.

To that end, and to ease the load on the shoulders of the clergy, Margaret Rose is the point of contact to whom names should be made known as she is coordinating the various ministries.

Margaret is on - Tel:01432 376782 email: mr@belmontparish.plus.com.

If any parishioner would like to volunteer their services as a 'parish visitor' please let Margaret know.

Fr. Nicholas

Ministers, etc. For next Sunday 12th January - BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Service	Welcomer(s)	Liz Norman	
8:30 am	Reader(s)	Extraordinary Ministers	Offertory procession
	Liz Norman, Adrian Eyre & Frances Grant	Frances Dees & Julia Davey	Children's Liturgy
9:30 am	Lucy Zammitt	Welcomer(s) Anne Stapleton	Margaret Campbell & Frances Riddell
11:00 am	Sacristan	Welcomers	
	Rob Corrigan	Ross & Anne Williams	
	Readers	Extraordinary Minister	
Margaret Rose, Jacqui Corrigan & Tony Archer		Monica Russell	
NEXT SUNDAY: Second Collection - SPUC			
Next week - Newsletter Folding - RS			

<u>Dates to be noted</u>	
Wed 15 Jan	7:30 pm - PAC Meeting in the Parish Centre
Thu 16 Jan	9:00 am - Cleaning of the Abbey Church

<p>BELMONT RETREAT <i>Benedict & Francis</i> Jan 31- Feb 2 (2 days Reg Fee £26) <i>'What Benedict stored, Francis scattered'</i> wrote Chesterton. We reflect on two saints, two sons of Umbria and the vision of life and faith carried forward in two Popes for today's renewal of the Church. Dom Brendan Thomas</p>

CHILDREN'S LITURGY	
8.30 am Next Children's Liturgy Jan 12th	
11.00 am Liturgy	
05-Jan	Jacqui Corrigan & Jan Wyman
12-Jan	Jacqui Moore
19-Jan	A Morawiecki & M Russell

DEATHS and ANNIVERSARIES: Please pray for all those who have died *Edna Wilson, Doris Corrigan, Seb Wood*, and those whose anniversaries occur at this time: *Rev Fr. Philip Garrett, Kevin Harrington, William Jones, Frances Mary Connell, Beatrice Powell, Hugh George, George Baker, Olive Baker, John Burn, James Lewis, Leonard Cosgrove, Winifred Garrett, Thomas Hogan, William Rankin, Mary Sharp, Mildred Evans, Bro Antony Lacey OSB, Mabel Lewis, Frederick Meredith, Michael Podmore and James Snead*. May they rest in Peace.

The SICK: Please pray for *Elizabeth Lee, Ken Harding, Brian Holberry, Gordon Wilson, Mary Smith, Joan Sheeran, Mary Jo Donnelly, Elaine White, Jennifer Snell, Edna Ledford, Toby Sutherland, Jim Smith, Catherine Williams, John Keeler, Peter Davies, David Ellis, Wendy Lyle Cameron, Siobhan Hayes, Sadie Bowyer, Vincent Hanna, Brigid Smith, David Wales and Beryl Swain*.

Belmont Abbey Parish is part of Belmont Abbey Mission Trust (Registered Charity - 226277)

Liturgy for Sunday 5th January 2014

Readings: Sunday Cycle A; Weekdays: Cycle 2; Divine Office: Week 2

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Entrance: *Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come; and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion.*
Psalm: *All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.*
Acclamation 2: *When we eat this Bread*
Communion: *We have seen his star in the East, and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.*

Principal Celebrants, Extraordinary Ministers, Readers, etc.

8:30 am Fr. Nicholas	<i>1st Reading & Resp. Psalm: William Jackson</i> <i>2nd Reading: Anne Jackson</i> <i>Welcomer(s): Annette Mansie</i> <i>Bidding Prayers: Jacqui Ramage-Smith</i> <i>Offertory: The Hayes Family</i> <i>Ext Minister(s): Seamus Hayes & Frances Smallwood</i> <i>Mass Intention: Muriel Davies RIP</i>
9:30 am	<i>Welcomer(s): Desmond Keohane & Georgina McGurk</i> <i>1st Reading: Paul Nickhold</i> <i>Offertory: Maria Large & Frances Riddell</i> <i>Mass Intention: Benefactors</i>
11:00 am Fr. Nicholas	<i>Sacristan: Tony Archer</i> <i>Welcomer(s): Monica Russell & Marnie Archer</i> <i>1st Reading: Brian Draper</i> <i>2nd Reading: Pat Draper</i> <i>Bidding Prayers: Marje Hayes</i> <i>Ext Minister(s): Jan Wyman</i> <i>Mass Intention: Parish Intention</i>

Second Collection - Abbey Maintenance

Order Tesco Gift Cards next week

What's On for the week

Mon	Monday after Epiphany - Mass at 8:00 am
Tue	Tuesday after Epiphany - Mass at 8:00 am
Wed	Wednesday after Epiphany - Mass at 8:00 am: NO Midday Mass
Thu	Thursday after Epiphany - Mass at 8:00 am
Fri	St Gregory of Nyssa - Mass at 8:00 am: NO Midday Mass
Sat	St Aelred - Mass at 8:00 am: Sacrament of Reconciliation 10:00 am