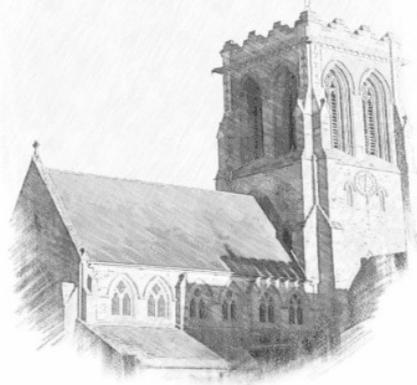


St Michael and All Angels Belmont Abbey



PARISH NEWSLETTER

31 December 2017

The Holy Family

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Today, the first Sunday after Christmas, we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family. Pope Leo XIII instituted this feast in 1892 to remind us of the sacredness of the family. The Feast of the Holy Family is not just about the Holy Family, but also about our own families. The main purpose of the Feast is to present the Holy Family as the model for all Christian families. Our family life becomes sanctified when we live the life of the Church within our homes. The Holy Family feast is a good time to remember the family unit and pray for our human and spiritual families.

As 2017 ends, I wish to express my gratitude to those many people whose help, in so many different ways, makes my task as Parish Priest all the easier. Thank you to all who help with the Liturgy, the music, the extraordinary Ministers and Servers, Counters, Collectors, Cleaners and Welcomers and those who run the Children's Liturgy, and not forgetting those who most importantly help with visiting the sick. Many thanks too for your kind Christmas cards and gifts. God bless you all. Thank you!

The second collection today is for SPUC – the annual White Flower collection for the Society for the Protection of unborn children

Sorry! No Coffee & Tea after Masses today

Fr Nicholas

Last Sunday's	1 st Collection	£403.35
	Standing Orders	£501.23

The 1st collection goes towards the maintenance of our Abbey church and parish, diocesan levies and other related costs.

	2 nd Collection	£317.67
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The 2nd collection is reserved for specific charitable causes or appeals and our own Outreach projects as detailed in the Newsletter. Last week was for: **Poor at Christmas. Thank You!**



Parish Outreach - Today, there is the annual White Flower collection. In January, our Parish Outreach collections will go towards supporting the St Joseph's School, Makeni project (7 & 14 Jan); and the local Acorns Children's Hospice (21 Jan) and the St Barnabas Society appeal (28 Jan).



Last week's Christmas collection for the Belmont Community and its Mission work raised just over £2000. Thank you very much!



First Holy Communion

classes start on Saturday 13th January 2018 from 10.30 am to 12pm in the Phillips Library at Belmont Abbey. Please contact Fr Nick or Rob and

Jacqui Corrigan if you would like your child to receive this special sacrament next year.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**2 January
Diamond Diners
12:45
The Three Horseshoes**

**16 January
Tea & Chat
2:30
Parish Hall**



Birthday Party

Monica Lynch is having an "at home" in the Party Room in St Michael's Court on Saturday 6 January from 2:30 to 4:00 for an early celebration of her 90th Birthday. Everyone welcome and definitely no gifts.



Hereford Hospital Chaplaincy

If you have a relative or fellow parishioner in hospital and they would like to be visited by Fr. Matthew, please contact him with the details at fr.matthew@live.co.uk. Or on 01432 265177.



Friends of Rotherwas Chapel

The Friends of Rotherwas Chapel invite you to join them at the chapel on Saturday 6 January 2018 from 2 – 3 pm for a Twelfth Night Celebration “Kings & Things.” Come and enjoy the music and readings. Refreshments available. Bring your own chair! Donations to the Chair Fund for the chapel.



Catenians Support Vocations

One of the aims of the Catenians is to help our clergy and to encourage and support vocations to the religious life in appropriate ways. Every Circle of the Catenians has at least one Mass said for Vocations thereby ensuring that Mass for this intention is celebrated almost every day of the year. We actively support the work of the National Office for Vocations in its building of vocations’ awareness in-

cluding prayers and regular financial contributions.



The Angel - Sadly we only have a couple of articles for the proposed Christmas edition of the Angel. I therefore suggest we postpone publication until the New Year in the hope that a few more articles emerge.



Homily

“The child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom.”

Illustration

A community was moving on, and a parish house, which had been occupied by five men, needed a lot of cleaning. The regular cleaner, who came in once a week, now took the opportunity to demonstrate what she insisted on calling “a woman’s touch”, and rearranged the furniture in the living room. The priest who was the last to leave the house spent the final few days musing on whether the life of the community would have been different if the furniture had been arranged her way from the beginning.

Geometry is important in the world. How we arrange things, order them, point them towards each other, or point them away from each other, matters. A good religious house will have a common table so that we sit next to each other at meals. Having lots of little tables is a sign of a community that is happy to break into cliques. Physical relations are important but this is because they express and enable the spiritual relations we form with each other.

The reality of the incarnation, that the Son of God did not just pretend to be human but was fully human, is shown by his need for a family; a family who struggled to find their place in this world. They brought him into the world, born in the manger, were forced to hide in Egypt, and approached Jerusalem with great caution. The stories of the infancy narrative can seem very romantic. We love to tell them to children, and yet they are stories of struggle and frustration. Struggle and frustration, but also triumph over all that would break them apart. Out of the unity of the Holy Family, the unity of the human race is to be formed.

Gospel Teaching

In the paintings of the great masters, Mary, Christ and, when included, Joseph rarely look directly at each

other. This is not because there is a lack of intimacy but because the painters wish to convey the mystery of this family. They are bound together by something more than mutual concern for each other. They are caught up in a great purpose, which is why they exist as a family. Sometimes they may be looking at a cross, sometimes at a symbol of grace such as a small flower representing suffering, but often enough they are gazing at something outside of the painting. What you do not see in these paintings is a family enclosed in itself.

There is a mystery in all families. Why does God join certain people together, and bless them, or not, with children? What are their struggles for? All of this is unknown. Yet for Christian families, the Holy Family reveals that all of our lives are enfolded in the great mystery of Christ.

The Gospels only give us glimpses into the life of the Holy Family, yet it is clear that before he began his public life, Christ lived for most of his short life in the circles of that family in the small village of Nazareth. God is telling us something here.

This life with his family is called the hidden life, yet it was from this secret time that the human thoughts of

Jesus emerged. The parables of the kingdom come from his experience as a human being among human beings. What is the kingdom of God like? It is like the life of Jesus, and what he saw of human yearnings for happiness in Nazareth.

Application

The Church preserves human goods in this world by showing that they are not ultimate goods. The family, if it is treated as an end in itself, cannot be sustained. We see this more and more in our times. When it is seen as being for the sake of the kingdom, then it flourishes. This explains the paradox of how the Church praises family life, yet also expects some people to renounce family life for God's kingdom.

Renunciation is not rejection. Renunciation of a good in Christian life is always for the sake of that good. By showing that the family is not the ultimate purpose of human life, but that life is to be lived in faith in the "something more" that God is always offering us, the family grows in strength. Mary and Joseph take the child Jesus to the Temple. They leave the Temple and it is in his family that Jesus "grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom". In short, the family becomes the temple.

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The Holy Father's New Year resolutions for 2015 but still valid for us all today.

1. *"Take care of your spiritual life, your relationship with God, because this is the backbone of everything we do and everything we are."*

2. *"Take care of your family life, giving your children and loved ones not just money, but most of all your time, attention and love."*

3. *"Take care of your relationships with others, transforming your faith into life and your words into good works, especially on behalf of the needy."*

4. *"Be careful how you speak, purify your tongue of offensive words, vulgarity and worldly decadence."*

5. *"Heal wounds of the heart with the oil of forgiveness, forgiving those who have hurt us and medicating the wounds we have caused others."*

6. *"Look after your work, doing it with enthusiasm, humility, competence, passion and with a spirit that knows how to thank the Lord."*

7. *"Be careful of envy, lust, hatred and negative feelings that devour our interior peace and transform us into destroyed and destructive people."*

8. "Watch out for anger that can lead to vengeance; for laziness that leads to existential euthanasia; for pointing the finger at others, which leads to pride; and for complaining continually, which leads to desperation."

9. "Take care of brothers and sisters who are weaker ... the elderly, the sick, the hungry, the homeless and strangers, because we will be judged on this."

10. "Making sure your Christmas is about Jesus and not about shopping."



The Magic of
Christmas
is not in the presents
but in *His* 
presence



"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Lam. 3:22-23

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." 2 Cor. 5:17

"Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead." Phil. 3:13

"But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." Is. 40:31

Ministers, etc. for next Sunday 7 January 2018 - The Feast of the Epiphany; Year B Cycle 2

	08:30	9:30	11:00
Celebrant	Fr Nicholas		Fr Nicholas
Welcomers	Kath Parry	Clare Wichbold	Brenda Sherwood & Maureen Stacey
Sacristan			Chris Moore
1 st Reading	Liz Norman	Sally Johns	Rob Corrigan
2 nd Reading	Richard Batho		Jacqui Corrigan
Bidding Prayers	Jacqui Ramage-S		Jane Davies
Offertory	Parish Children	Anthea Morton-S & Maria Large	
Extraordinary Ministers	Seamus Hayes & Fran Smallwood		Gabrielle Stanley & Margaret Evans
Next Sunday - Parish Outreach			

Low Mass in the Extraordinary Rite (Tridentine Mass) is celebrated here at Belmont Abbey on Wednesday evenings at 7 pm and Sunday afternoons at 4 pm.	CHILDREN'S LITURGY	
	31-Dec	No Children's Liturgy
	07-Jan	
	14-Jan	
	21-Jan	
	28-Jan	

Please pray for all who have died: **May they rest in peace.** (W/C 31 Dec)

Deaths: Rebecca Dykes, Philomena Nicholas, Sister Mary Clare and David Wood

Anniversaries: Hilda Rosser, Daniel Coke, Frances Prue, Sara Anne Ward, Richard Hardy, Mary Valerie Symonds, Francis Brian Hayes, Francesco Fuorvito, Margaret Morrison, James Smith, John Rosser, Ann Marie Impey, Rev Fr. Philip Garrett and Kevin Harrington.

The Sick: Please pray for: Sheila Langford, Robin Hayward, Julia Davey, Gil Savory, Denise Ellis, Chris & Sue Rogers, Peter Draper, Dominique Wetz, Sally Hayward, Lillian Allsop, Kenny Hanna, Shirley Brymer, Edward Medicott, Elaine White, Joanne Savory, Dame Catherine, Vincent Hanna and Sadie Bowyer.

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

<p><i>The Feast Of the Holy Family</i></p>	<p>Entrance:The Shepherds went in haste and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.</p> <p>Acclamation: When we eat this Bread</p> <p>Communion: Our God has appeared on the earth and lived among us.</p>
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Principal Celebrants, Extraordinary Ministers, Readers, etc.

	08:30 am	9:30 am	11:00 am
Celebrant	Fr Nicholas		Fr Nicholas
Welcomer	Kath Parry	Clare Wichbold	Rita Chamberlain & Monica Russell
Sacristan			Chris Moore
1 st Reading	Liz Norman	Menna McBain	Rob Corrigan
2 nd Reading	Richard Batho		Jacqui Corrigan
Bidding Prayer	Jacqui R-Smith		Tony Archer
Offertory	Hayes Family	Anthea Morton-S & Maria Large	
Extra-Ordinary Minister(s)	Seamus Hayes & Fran Smallwood		Gabrielle Stanley & Margaret Evans
Mass Intention		<i>Pro Populo</i>	<i>Seb Wood RIP</i>

Second Collection - SPUC**Food Bank Collection: Chris Moore*****What's On for the week***

Mon	Solemnity of the Mother of God: Mass at 9:00 am
Tue	SS Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen: Mass at 8:00 am
Wed	Feria: Mass at 8:00 am: NO Midday Mass in the Oratory
Thu	Feria: Mass at 8:00 am
Fri	Feria: Mass at 8:00 am: NO Exposition at 11 or Midday Mass
Sat	Feria: Mass at 8:00 am: Sacrament of Reconciliation at 10:00