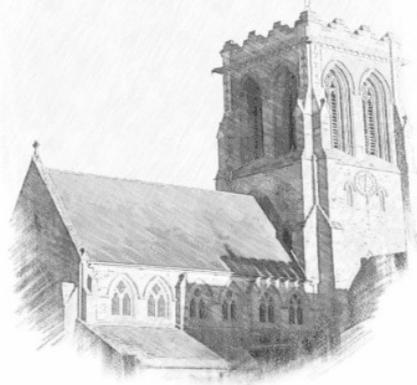


# ***St Michael and All Angels Belmont Abbey***



PARISH NEWSLETTER

**7 January 2018**

***The Epiphany***

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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

At the beginning of a new year, 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!

*Fr Nicholas*

Last Sunday's	1 <sup>st</sup> Collection	<b>£300.79</b>
	Standing Orders	<b>£501.23</b>

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

	2 <sup>nd</sup> Collection	<b>£196.85</b>
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The 2<sup>nd</sup> collection is reserved for specific charitable causes or appeals and our own Outreach projects as detailed in the Newsletter. Last week was for: **SPUC. 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).



**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.



**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**12 January**  
**Church Cleaning**  
**9:00**

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



**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 on 01432 265177 or fr.matthew @ live.co.uk.



**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.



**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.



**Taize Prayer**

You are invited to the next Taizé Prayer to be held at 8 pm on Friday 12 January in the Methodist Chapel in Ewyas Harold. For the New Year, the theme will be one of New Birth and New Beginnings quietness and candlelight. Following this one the next Taizé Prayer will be on Friday 13 April at Dore Abbey.



**Holy Father’s Catechesis**

on the Eucharistic Celebration: in the context of the rites of introduction, on the penitential act.

The full text is available on:  
<https://zenit.org/articles/general-audience-on-the-penitential-act-full-text/>.



**Homily**

*“The sight of the star filled them with delight.”*

**Illustration**

Christmas cards and carols, nativity plays and paintings, all have three kings coming to worship the Lord. But in Matthew’s Gospel they are called not kings but wise men. And although tradition tells us that there were three of them, the Gospel never states that this was so. The traditional number of wise men, three, comes from the three gifts that Matthew tells us were given to the child Jesus: “gold and frankincense and myrrh”.

So who were they really, these mysterious visitors from the east, and why did they come? They are also sometimes called “magi”, from a Greek word which is the origin of our word “magic”. They were pagans, magicians, astrologers, readers of the stars, rather than crowned monarchs.

**Gospel Teaching**

We need not think of the pagans and worshippers of other gods in the Graeco-Roman world of Jesus’ time as living in total darkness; and the same is true today. The Second Vatican Council’s Dogmatic

Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium*, speaks of how members of other faiths are part of God's plan of salvation, and also says, "Nor is God remote from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, since he gives to everyone life and breath" (LG 16). The magi went off in search of a greater light, the uncreated light and very source of light. Their reading of the stars succeeded on this occasion, led by God. Yet when they reached their destination, the magi left behind their worship of the stars, and fell down to worship the one who made the stars and sun and life itself.

Matthew had his reasons for describing, so near to the beginning of his Gospel, the coming of these magi from pagan or Gentile lands. For at the end of the Gospel he tells us of Jesus sending out the apostles to the Gentile lands, instructing them to "Go... make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you." The magi from the east represented all these Gentile nations coming to Christ, and the homage of their kings and people, as the light of the Gospel began to spread all over the world. Magicians they may have been when they went in search of Christ, but wise men they were when they returned

home; wise enough not to go back to Herod, after being warned in a dream. Full of excitement and joy at what they had seen, they went back and shared their story.

### Application

Two thousand years have passed since those magi travelled to Bethlehem, searching for the light. Their journey cannot have been easy. The journey to Christ often isn't. They no doubt had to give up a great deal to find him, but nothing was more important to them than their spiritual quest. Moreover, they grasped the truth that, while they were searching, God had been leading them. It was God who lit the star, and God who encouraged them to set out, because God loved them, and God wanted to be found by them.

One of the things that the wise men's journey gave them was time. They reflected, they thought, perhaps they prayed. That is one great benefit of a spiritual journey or pilgrimage. There is time to ponder fundamental questions; and to realise, like the wise men, that deep down, whether we are Catholics or not, Christians of other churches, members of different



faiths, or people who are still searching to find faith, there is always something more to seek and find. It was a very significant moment when the magi fell down to worship Jesus and give him their gifts, and it is a similar moment when a person is baptised, comes into the Church or takes a new step in faith.

At least once, Matthew tells us, the magi were lost on their journey, first arriving in Jerusalem rather than Bethlehem; but then they were wise enough to ask the way. May our parish community always be ready to welcome, encourage, provide opportunities, and show the way to those who are seeking, that, like the magi, they may find Christ, the light of the world. He is not far from those who seek him, for, as he himself has told us, “the one who searches always finds”.



### **Baptism of the Lord**

*“You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.”*

#### **Illustration**

The journey to sainthood begins with baptism. One of the very moving visits during a pilgrimage to Lourdes is the walk to the parish church, which is situated in the old town away from the shrine. It is usually a quiet place and a reminder of the life of the French town where St Bernadette

lived and grew up. Built at the end of the nineteenth century, this church replaced the original church where St Bernadette prayed, which was destroyed by fire. At the rear of the church is the baptismal font, which was rescued from the fire, and in which she was baptised.

One can imagine the joy her parents experienced at her birth on 7 January 1844, the first child of their family. She was baptised two days later on her parents’ wedding anniversary. In an age of high infant mortality, a quick baptism was important so that the child was purified from original sin, became a member of the Church and was placed under the protection of God. St Bernadette began her Christian life in this font; the life that became that of a remarkable saint. St Bernadette’s baptism is a reminder of our own baptism and that each one of us too is called to become a saint, just like Bernadette.

When we begin our prayers, we recall our baptism by making the sign of the cross. When we enter a church, we remember our baptism by dipping our fingers in the holy water and blessing ourselves. The baptismal font is a reminder that we begin our Christian lives in a font of a church, in a particular place, and that we are baptised, “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”.

The answer “Amen” renews assent to the promises of God and places trust in God. God’s grace begins to strengthen us in a new way from this time onwards.

### **Gospel Teaching**

Just as the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus at his baptism, so baptism for each and every child is the gateway to life in the Spirit. The words of God the Father to Jesus – “You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you” – are echoed to each baptised person. We rejoice that we are the beloved of the Lord. Each of us shares in this wonderful title and wears the white garment of baptism. Baptism with water marks our birth into the Church as members of the body of Christ. We become adopted sons and daughters of God whose favour rests upon us. By the waters of baptism, sin is washed away and we are purified. Baptism is also the beginning of the entry into eternal life. On the last day, we will find happiness in the presence of God and every tear will be wiped away.

Just as the newborn baby needs the mother’s milk to grow and become strong, so Christians need spiritual nourishment to grow in faith. Firstly, we learn our prayers and begin to say the Our Father and Hail Mary. Then we grow by listening to the Bible stories; some children’s Bibles have wonderful

graphic illustrations. Later we are healed by reconciliation and nourished by Holy Communion. Later still, the Holy Spirit renews our strength in the sacrament of confirmation.

### **Application**

At the beginning of this year, it would be good to find out more about our baptism. Do you know when you were baptised and the church where this took place? It is important to find out the date so that you can celebrate the anniversary of your entry into the Church.

This year offers a new opportunity to deepen life in the Holy Spirit by becoming more attentive to God’s word in prayer. Can you find ten extra minutes each day to allow the word of God to quench your thirst and satisfy the longings of your heart? You could begin by focusing on the Sunday readings and allowing them into your hearts. For those of you travelling by public transport, apps like “Pray as you go” or the Bible can be downloaded and used on trains and buses. What would happen if you looked at the Bible as many times as you check for new messages, emails or postings on social media? God desires to speak into your heart. Are you ready to listen?

**Ministers, etc. for next Sunday 14 January 2018 - 2 Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B Cycle 2**

	<b>08:30</b>	<b>9:30</b>	<b>11:00</b>
Celebrant	Fr Nicholas		Fr Nicholas
Welcomers	Liz Norman	Anne Stapleton	Hackman Family
Sacristan			Tony Archer
1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	Mary Hayes	Brenda Warde	Lucy Reed
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	Fran Smallwood		Monica Tomlin
Bidding Prayers	Ann Jackson		Margaret Rose
Offertory	Hayes Family	Frances Riddell & Teresa Harriss	
Extraordinary Ministers	Seamus Hayes & Fran Smallwood		Rob Corrigan & Jane Davies

***Next Sunday - Parish Outreach - St Joseph's School, Makeni***

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	
	07-Jan	Pat Wood & Monica Russell
	14-Jan	Jacqui Moore & Jan Wyman
	21-Jan	Andrew M & Pauline Gill
	28-Jan	Jackie King & Mary Wood

Please pray for all who have died: ***May they rest in peace.*** (W/C 7 Jan)

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

***Anniversaries:*** Anne Kuhn, George Baker, William Rankin, Mary Sharp, Mildred Evans, Bro Antony Lacey OSB, Frederick Meredith, Michael Podmore, James Snead, Cecilia Methven and Catherine Williams.

***The Sick:*** Please pray for: Sonja Hayes, Sheila Langford, Robin Hayward, Julia Davey, Gil Savory, Denise Ellis, Michael Kennedy, 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)*

**Liturgy for Sunday 7 January 2018**     *Cycle B; Weekdays: Year 2 : Wk 1*

<p><b>The Feast of the Epiphany</b></p>	<p><b>Entrance:</b> All the earth shall bow down before you, O God and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!</p> <p><b>Acclamation:</b> We proclaim your death ....</p> <p><b>Communion:</b> You have prepared a table before me and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.</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	Hayes Family	Brenda Warde	Rita Chamberlain & Monica Russell
Sacristan			Rob Corrigan
1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	Fran Grant	Lucy Zammit	Gabrielle Stanley
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	Bill Jackson		Sergio Pavia
Bidding Prayer	Adrian Eyre		Sally Johns
Offertory	Ramage-H Family	Nickerson Family	
Extra-Ordinary Minister(s)	Kath Parry & Fran Smallwood		Monica Tomlin & Jan Wyman
Mass Intention	Bill & Nora Mills RIP	<i>Pro Populo</i>	

**Second Collection - St Joseph's School, Makeni**

**Food Bank Collection: Eddie & Jan Wyman**

**What's On for the week**

Mon	<b>The Baptism of the Lord:</b> Mass at 8:00 am
Tue	<b>Feria:</b> Mass at 9:00 am
Wed	<b>Feria:</b> Mass at 8:00 am: Midday Mass in the Oratory
Thu	<b>St Aelred:</b> Mass at 8:00 am
Fri	<b>St Benet Biscop:</b> Mass at 8:00 am: Exposition at 11 or Midday Mass
Sat	<b>BVM:</b> Mass at 8:00 am: Sacrament of Reconciliation at 10:00