

# THE ORATORY—dedicated to THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

141 Hagley Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B16 8UE

Registered as a Charity

## Parish Weekly Newsletter

Telephone: 0121 454 0496

Fac simile: 0121 455 8160

E-mail: parish@theoratory.org.uk

Web-site: www.theoratory.org.uk

Oratory Primary School: web.oratory.bham.sch.uk



*This newsletter is available in large-print format. Ask at the Sacristy.*

## December 30th 2007: The Feast of the Holy Family



### THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

This year the Gospel of the Feast of the Holy Family is taken from St. Matthew's account of St. Joseph's second dream, in which God warned him to take his young wife and the infant Jesus away from the danger of Herod's rage and envy to the relative safety of Egypt. It is an event which recalls the exile of Jacob and his sons in Egypt many centuries before, from which the great Exodus under Moses had eventually freed their descendants, the twelve tribes named after each of Jacob's sons. St. Matthew sees in the "Flight into Egypt" the Holy Family symbolically reliving that ancient exile, so that once again God could "call His Son out of Egypt" and back into His own Land. Once again we learn of Joseph's great faith in God's command. St. Matthew tells us how important for the fulfilment of God's plans was the obedience and the courage of St. Joseph, who had to face great dangers and difficulties in protecting both the Mother and the Son of God from all harm in such a perilous journey through unknown lands among strangers. Matthew even tells us that the journey was accomplished "by night", in order to impress upon us the hazardous nature of the undertaking and the weight of responsibility which St. Joseph bore.

Today at Mass in place of the homily we will hear a Pastoral Letter from His Grace the Archbishop on "Marriage and Family Life", in which he reminds us that "the Holy Family is an image of the Church", and that this image "also applies to each and every family, with a marriage at its heart". The Archbishop says that "to embrace the reality of God's presence within marriage and family life is to embrace a prospect that draws us into eternity"; and in order to get there, "daily life is the ladder of our ascent". So we pray today for God's blessing on all our families at Christmastide and throughout the year ahead. It is so important for us to realise that even the Holy Family in all its graced life of joy, had to encounter and overcome many difficulties, as do we all, but never without God's help.

### MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD

Although we are used to thinking of Our Blessed Lady as the Mother of God, and honouring her as such, we must remember that there was a time in the history of the Church when certain theologians denied that Mary was God's Mother. They were prepared to allow that she was Mother of Christ the Lord, but claimed that she could not be, nor could any human person be, the Mother of Almighty God. But the Church constantly believes otherwise, and at the Council of Ephesus in the year 431 A.D. the Bishops of the Universal Church met together to decree solemnly that the faith of the Church from the time of the Apostles has always been that Our Blessed Lady is indeed the "God-bearer" or, in Greek, the "Theotókos". To celebrate this definition, Pope Liberius built a magnificent Church in Rome to honour Mary the Mother of God, the Church we still know today as "St. Mary Major", adorned with beautiful ancient mosaics depicting the role of the Mother of God and the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in her. The Roman Church from those times has honoured "The Mother of God" on January 1st.

### Sunday December 30th: The Feast of the Holy Family (White)

*Year 1 or A of the Lectionary at Mass*

- 8.30 a.m. *Low Mass*
- 9.30 a.m. *Tridentine Mass (in the church)*
- 10.30 a.m. *Solemn High Mass*
- 12.00 p.m. *(Families with young children)*
- 5.30 p.m. *Sung Congregational Mass*
- *Vespers and Benediction at 7.30 p.m.*

### The CHRISTMAS SEASON: Liturgical Calendar

*Monday and Wednesday to Friday: Masses at 7.30 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m.*

*Rosary at 7.45 p.m.*

*Confessions are heard from 12.30 p.m. and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass*

**Monday December 31st: Seventh Day within the Octave of Christmas.** (White).  
Optional memoria of *St Sylvester, Pope.* (White)

- **Blessing with St Philip's relic at 8 p.m.**
- **NEW YEAR'S EVE VIGIL at 9.30 p.m. (See below)**

**St Sylvester** (d.335) He was Pope at the accession of Constantine to the Roman Imperial Throne in 312, and for the first time, the Church was liberated from persecution. Pope Sylvester organised public worship in Rome, and when the Emperor gifted the palace of the *Laterani* family for his use as a residence and cathedral, the Pope dedicated it to our Blessed Redeemer and the two St Johns (the Baptist and the Evangelist), both of whom are depicted on either side of Our Blessed Lady in the mosaic behind the High Altar of our Church.



**Tuesday January 1st: New Year's Day: The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.** (White);  
**BANK HOLIDAY**

- **Masses at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. only. No evening Devotions. N.B. 11 a.m. Mass is sung.**

**Mother of God** is our Lady's title as solemnly defined at the Council of Ephesus in 431A.D., to counteract the heresy of Nestorius, who falsely taught that the Son of God and the son of Mary were not the *same person*, but were merely connected in some other way. By defining Mary as the Mother not simply of the human Jesus, but of the *Word made flesh*, the Council upheld the truth that Mary's role and titles protect the identity of her Son and the Church's Faith in His godhead and manhood united in one Person.

**Wednesday January 2nd: St Basil the Great and St Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors of the Church.** Memoria. (White)

**St Basil & St Gregory of Nazianzus** were friends who studied together in Athens and both became bishops and Doctors (teachers) of the Church; Basil in Caesarea and Gregory in Nazianzus, both of which are in Cappadocia in modern-day Turkey.

**Thursday January 3rd: The Most Holy Name of Jesus.** Memoria. (White)

**The Most Holy Name of Jesus** celebrates the meaning of the Name of our Saviour: "God saves", the name which was given to Him by the Angel Gabriel at the Annunciation (Lk 1:31) and also communicated to St. Joseph in the dream which God sent him to assure him of Our Lady's innocence (Mt 1:21).

**Friday January 4th: Weekday of Christmas.** (White)

**Saturday January 5th: Weekday of Christmas.** (White)

- **Mass at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.**
- **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8.30 to 10.45 a.m.**
- **Benediction at 10.45 a.m.**
- **Confessions from 10.55 a.m. to 12 noon & from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass**
- **Vigil Mass of THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD at 5.45 p.m.**

**Sunday January 6th: The SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD** (White)

**Mass & Service Times:**

- **8.30 a.m. Low Mass**
- **9.30 a.m. Latin Mass 1962 Missal** (Please note *new time*—now in Church)
- **10.30 a.m. Solemn High Mass**
- **12.00 p.m. (Families with young children)**
- **5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational Mass in English**
- **Solemn Vespers and Benediction: 7.30 p.m.**

**Please pray for the sick:** Marie-Thérèse Jones, Nellie Cowan, Margaret Walshe, Barry Whelan, George Saunders, Margaret Casey, Jacqueline Griffiths, Desmond Williams and Kerry Mooney. **Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently:** Christina Ford, Denise Williams, George Sylvester and Joe Houston; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** Fr Edward Caswall & Fr Ralph Blakelock, both of this Oratory, Mabel Reeves, Albert Walker, Mary Mitchell, Christopher Hogan, Francis, Catherine and John Guinness, Archie Lusk, Susie Wilkie, and Jim & Lily Scott.

George Sylvester's funeral is on Wednesday at 12.45 p.m. Reception of remains: before Mass  
Michael Maguire's funeral is on Thursday at 12.45 p.m. Reception of remains: Wednesday at 4 p.m.

**The following are requested to read next weekend, January 5th / 6th: The Epiphany**

**Saturday 5.45 p.m.:** Brigid Hogan  
**Sunday 8.30 a.m.:** Margaret Hawkins  
**12.00 p.m.:** Eamon Grant  
**5.30 p.m.:** David Doran

**Fourth Sunday of Advent, 23rd December:**

Offertory: £1,413  
Second: Music Fund: £573

**Christmas Day**  
Offertory: £2,281  
Second: Offering for the Clergy: £4,374  
*Very Many thanks*

**The second Collection today will be for the DDF.**

### TODAY

**The CRIB COLLECTION THIS YEAR** is for Asylum seekers and the homeless in Birmingham.

**THE FATHERS AND BROTHERS** of the Oratory thank you all most warmly for your many kind greetings and gifts, and for your generous Christmas Offering. God bless you all!

**1962 "Tridentine" MASS:** please note that the Sunday Mass time and venue are both changed from today: It will be at 9.30 a.m. in Church for an experimental period.

**The CHRISTMAS DRAW : Takes place on Saturday— PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL TICKET STUBS AND MONEY ARE HANDED IN BY MIDDAY ON FRIDAY.** Stubs and money can be handed in the Oratory House or at the sacristy (preferably in an envelope marked 'Christmas Draw') (Tickets: £1 per book or 20p each.) **The draw will be made after the 11 a.m. Mass, in the Lower Cloister Hall, (soft drinks & mince pies will be available).** If you have items to donate to the draw, all items gratefully received. (Please note that they must be new and unused).

**CATHOLIC DIARIES & CALENDARS** are on sale in the Lower Cloister Hall. **All Christmas cards are reduced by at least 20%.**

### THIS WEEK

**NEW YEAR'S EVE VIGIL: On Monday** commences with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 9.30 p.m. with prayers (as requested by Our Lady of Fatima) for World peace, the conversion of sinners, and in reparation for the sins against her Immaculate Heart. Mass of the Solemnity of the Mother of God will be at 11.45 p.m. Refreshments will be served after Mass.

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**ADORATION AT REDNAL** will resume next week on Wednesday, January 9th.

**SOCIETY OF ST HUGH** will meet on Saturday, 12th January at 2 p.m. in the Oratory House, for their Christmas party. All welcome.

### NOTICES

**APF RED BOXES:** The quarter will come to the end on 31st December, so box holders will be contacted soon by their collectors to arrange for exchange of boxes.