

THE ORATORY—dedicated to THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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Registered as a Charity

Parish Weekly Newsletter

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

January 6th 2008: The Solemnity of the Epiphany of Our Lord

The Provost writes:

The Epiphany

This Sunday we celebrate another of the great feasts of the Christmas season: The Epiphany of Our Lord. In Ireland it was often called the "Little Christmas", and yet its origins are older than the celebration of Christmas Day itself. The Epiphany, as the word itself indicates, traditionally marked the manifestation of Our Lord to the world at large. This was summarised in a threefold fashion: the coming of the Magi, representing the Gentiles; Our Lord's Baptism in the River Jordan at the hands of John the Baptist; His first miracle when He changed water into wine at the marriage feast at Cana.

Nowadays we tend to separate out these three events, with the result that the Epiphany itself has become the preserve of the Magi, the wise men, those strange characters from a far away country, who come seeking the Christ Child.

The Magi responded to a sign – the appearance of a new star which they interpreted (correctly) as heralding the birth of the Messiah, a figure they knew would be of supreme importance not just for the Jews, to whose race he belonged, but for the whole world. The journey the Magi then undertook was one which was guided and motivated by a powerful hope. Led by the star they sought out the new King of the Jews and, through him, they sought the one true God. They left everything in order to respond to the beckoning of that star. It was as though this was the journey they had been waiting for and preparing for their whole lives long: it was the fulfillment of their vocation. Pope Benedict XVI teaches us that the Magi's journey is one we all must make – it is part of the story of every Christian – the journey to fulfill one's destiny in Christ.

At their journey's end, when they come to Bethlehem, what happens? St Matthew tells us that "going into the house they saw the Child with Mary His Mother, and they fell down and worshipped Him." This at last was the long-awaited moment. This was their personal encounter with Our Lord. It is interesting to note that the meeting took place with Our Lady, as if to teach us that the Child and His Mother go together, that she has a unique importance, and that a true encounter with the Christ means being with His Mother too. "They worshipped Him" we are told. A true meeting with Our Lord inevitably leads to adoration. "It blossoms into an act of faith and love which acknowledge Jesus, born of Mary, the Son of God made man..." as Pope Benedict describes it.

Outwardly the Magi's journey ends with the climax of their act of worship, but inwardly a new journey begins for them, one which changes their whole lives. Their search for a King has led them to a Baby – in circumstances quite unlike what they were expecting. They teach us that God is not as we so often expect Him to be. They had to change their ideas about power, about God and about man, and in doing that they had to change themselves, becoming more like the King and God they worshipped at Bethlehem, that King who reigns through giving Himself in selfless love. The Wise Men, in order to be truly wise, had now to become "men of truth, of justice, of goodness, forgiveness and mercy" in the words of Pope Benedict. That transformation is surely the real lesson the Magi teach us this Epiphany. At the start of this New Year of 2008, let us ask for the graces we need to follow them, not just in our outward acts of adoration of our Saviour, but also in that real interior change, which our King seeks for in each and every human heart.

Sunday January 6th: The Solemnity of the Epiphany (White)

Year I 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 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 January 7th: Weekday after Epiphany. (White). Optional memoria of **St Raymond of Penyafort, Priest.** (White)

- **Blessing with St Philip's relic at 8 p.m.**

St Raymond of Penyafort (1175-1275) He became a priest in his native Barcelona, then studied law at Bologna and became a famous preacher. He joined the Dominicans in 1222 and was then asked by Pope Gregory IX to Rome to collate Canon Law. He returned to Barcelona and was soon appointed Master General of the Dominicans, and devoted much of his time to procuring the release of slaves. During his time in Rome, he had heard many accounts of the difficulties faced by Missionaries, particularly in dealing with the non-Christians of North Africa and Spain and so he established schools to teach Arabic and Hebrew. He was a very compassionate man and was devoted to Our Lady. He is the patron saint of Canon lawyers.

Tuesday January 8th: Weekday after Epiphany. (White)

- **Benediction at 8 p.m.**
- **Brothers of the Little Oratory meet after Benediction in St Philip's Chapel.**

Wednesday January 9th: Weekday after Epiphany. (White)

Thursday January 10th: Weekday after Epiphany. (White)

Friday January 11th: Weekday after Epiphany. (White)

Saturday January 12th: Weekday after Epiphany. (White). Optional memoria of **St Aelred of Rievaulx, religious.** (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 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD at 5.45 p.m.**

St Aelred of Rievaulx (1109-1167) The son of a Saxon priest, he was educated at Roxburgh, where he was known for his intellectual talents. He became the steward to King David of Scotland, but resigned to join the Cistercian community at Rievaulx. He was the first abbot of Rievaulx's daughter house in Revesby, Lincolnshire, but he returned to Rievaulx in 1147 to be abbot. He became a noted spiritual guide and writer. Two of his works are still widely read: *The Mirror of Charity*, written at the request of St Bernard of Clairvaux, and *On Spiritual Friendship*, his most famous work, is a Christianized version of Cicero's *De amicitia*. He suffered from very poor health for the last ten years of his life.

Sunday January 13th: The BAPTISM 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**
- **Vespers and Benediction: 7.30 p.m.**

Please pray for the sick: Marie-Thérèse Jones, Margaret Walshe, , George Saunders, Margaret Casey, Jacqueline Griffiths, and Desmond Williams

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died recently: Edel Brack, Thomas Kenny, Freddie Willington, Susan King and Bridget Kelly; **and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now:** John Chavasse, Erminia Boffa, Patrick McKenna, Brendan McGill, Chrysostoma & Gladys D'Silva, Eileen Heraghty, Peter Job, Minnie Saxon, Reginald Thomas, Katherine Hodgkins and Chris O'Neill.

The following are requested to read next weekend, January 12th/13th: The Baptism of Our Lord

Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Tracy Butler

Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Paddy Martin

12.00 p.m.: Sr Hilary

5.30 p.m.: Simon Stacey

Collections

Feast of the Holy Family, 30th December:

Offertory: £1,511

Second: Diocesan Development Fund: £436

Many thanks

The second Collection today will be for Pro Life Charities.

TODAY

The SECOND COLLECTION today is for **PRO-LIFE Charities.**

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

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

CATHOLIC DIARIES & CALENDARS and the 2008 DIOCESAN DIRECTORY are on sale in the Lower Cloister Hall. **All Christmas cards are reduced by at least 20%.**

THIS WEEK

The ALTAR SOCIETY meets on Tuesday at 2.30 p.m. in the Oratory House.

ADORATION AT REDNAL will take place this week on Wednesday, commencing, as usual, with Holy Mass at 2.30 p.m., followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, with prayers, and ending with Benediction at 3.45 p.m. Please keep the long-term safety of Rednal as one of your prayer intentions this New Year.

The WALSINGHAM ASSOCIATION AGM will be held on Saturday at 11.30 a.m. in the Lower Cloister Hall. If you are interested in joining the Association, or would like more information about it, please call Anne Roebuck on 0121 454 0130.

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

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ORATORY PATRICIANS meet next Sunday, 13th, at 3.15 p.m. in the Oratory House. The subject will be "Is suicide ever morally justifiable?". All are welcome.

ORATORY PRIMARY SCHOOL TALKS FOR PARENTS/ Carers: The new season of talks commences on Monday 21st January from 2 .00— 3.15 p.m. in the Oratory School Hall, on the subject of **Sex Education**, and is open to all parents of children in the school. The title of the introductory talk is: **"Moral Formation : the Internet, T.V. and all that."** The talk will be given by Greg and Aghi Clovis. Greg is the Director of Human Life International. We hope that, if at all possible, parents will attend these very important talks.

NOTICES

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Many thanks to all who took part in the New year's Eve Vigil and made such a wonderfully prayerful and joyful beginning to 2008.

CHRISTMAS DRAW: a List of the Prizes and Winners is on the Notice Boards. If you are a winner, please collect your prize in the Lower Cloister Hall after Mass on Sundays. Or, you can arrange collection by telephoning 454 0496 during normal office hours, Monday to Friday.

CONFIRMATION will be administered in the early part of the year. If there is anyone who wishes to receive the Sacrament, please contact the Parish Priest, Fr Guy, in writing as soon as possible.