

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH In NEW MILTON

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

15 Mount Ave, New Milton. BH25 6NT.

Parish priest: *Father George Ngwa*

Church opening hours **07.30- 17.00** (during winter)



Epiphany of the Lord Year B 7 January 2018

EPIPHANY – THE WISE MEN - HEROD AND ALL OF US TODAY: WHERE DO YOU SITUATE YOURSELF ?

It was in Bethlehem that Jesus was born. Bethlehem was quite a little town six miles to the south of Jerusalem. The name Bethlehem means The House of Bread, and Bethlehem stood in a fertile countryside, which made its name a fitting name.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem there came to do him homage wise men from the East. These wise men (Magi) were men who were skilled in philosophy, medicine and natural science. They believed in astrology and could foretell the future from the stars and also believed that a man's destiny was settled by the star under which he was born. They were soothsayers and interpreters of dreams. But at their best the Magi were good and holy men, who sought for truth. Their journey and quest brought them to Herod.

Herod: He had wielded power for long. He was called Herod the Great. He had one terrible flaw in his character. He was almost insanely jealous and suspicious. He had always been suspicious, and the older he became the more suspicious he grew, until, in his old age, he was, as someone said, "a murderous old man." If he suspected anyone as a rival to his power, that person was promptly eliminated. He murdered his wife Mariamne and her mother Alexandra. His eldest son, Antipater, and two other sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, were all assassinated by him. Augustus, the Roman Emperor, had said, bitterly, that it was safer to be Herod's pig than Herod's son

Something of Herod's savage and bitter nature, can be seen from the provisions he made when death came near. When he was seventy and knew that he was to die soon, he retired to Jericho, the loveliest of all his cities. He gave orders that a collection of the most distinguished citizens of Jerusalem should be arrested on trumped-up charges and imprisoned. And he ordered that the moment he died, they should all be killed. He said grimly that he was well aware that no one would mourn for his death, and that he was determined that some tears should be shed when he died.

It is clear how such a man would feel when news reached him that a child was born who was destined to be king. Herod was troubled, and Jerusalem was troubled, too, for Jerusalem well knew the steps that Herod would take to pin down this story and to eliminate this child. Jerusalem knew Herod, and Jerusalem shivered as it waited for his inevitable reaction.

Herod summoned the chief priests and the scribes. The scribes were the experts in scripture and in the law. The chief priests consisted of two kinds of people. They consisted of ex-high priests. The high priesthood was confined to a very few families. They were the priestly aristocracy, and the members of these select families were called the chief priests. So Herod summoned the religious aristocracy and the theological scholars of his day, and asked them where, according to the scriptures, the Anointed One of God should be born.

No sooner was Jesus born than we see men grouping themselves into the three groups in which men are always to be found in regard to Jesus Christ. Let us look at the three reactions.

There was the reaction of Herod, the reaction of hatred and hostility. Herod was afraid that this little child was going to interfere with his life, his place, his power, his influence, and therefore his first instinct was to destroy him.

There are still those who would gladly destroy Jesus Christ, because they see in him the one who interferes with their lives. They wish to do what they like, and Christ will not let them do what they like; and so they would kill him. The man whose one desire is to do what he likes has never any use for Jesus Christ. The Christian is the man who has ceased to do what he likes, and has dedicated his life to do as Christ likes.

The Herod in us: We become Herod when we allow hatred and jealousy enter our lives and then trouble begins.

1 - Jealousy robs you from relationships and it keeps you from being content with what God has called you to do. **2** - Jealousy says, "I don't look like that and I cannot do it like her so I measure myself against her and I deem myself as not enough." **3** - Jealousy ruins your confidence because you place your hope in what you can see and not who God called you to be. **4** - Jealousy is a sin. And if God hates it, we should too. **5** - Jealousy makes you feel discontent with your portion which means that you will never be satisfied with who you are. **6** - Jealousy is dangerous because the more you compare your life to others, the more you will focus on what you are not and you will stay in that place for the rest of your life

As Christians how can we fight this vice? – **1** - Pray for whoever you're jealous of. Yes. Pray. This will soften your heart towards them and help you to see them the way that God sees them. **2** - Eradicate bad jealousy thoughts that attack you throughout the day. Remind yourself that you are a new creation through Christ Jesus and that your old man is GONE. **3** - Stay away from people that cause you to stumble until you're strong enough to be around them and follow them. **4** - Spend time in prayer to God. The more time you spend with God, the less you will blame others for your portion. **5** - Refuse to gossip, spread gossip or hang out with people that are intentional about drama and confusion.

There was the reaction of the chief priests and scribes, the reaction of complete indifference. It did not make the slightest difference to them. They were so engrossed in their Temple ritual and their legal discussions that they completely disregarded Jesus. He meant nothing to them.

There are still those who are so interested in their own affairs that Jesus Christ means nothing to them. There are some Christians who are not interested in the Church or whatever is happening in it. They are not interested in the Bible either.

There was the reaction of the wise men, the reaction of adoring worship, the desire to lay at the feet of Jesus Christ the noblest gifts which they could bring. Surely, when any man realizes the love of God in Jesus Christ, he/she, too, should be lost in wonder, love and praise. By the grace of God there are some Christians who would seize any moment to praise, worship and thank the Lord God for being ever present in their lives.

Gifts for the new born King: From very early times people saw a peculiar fitness in the gifts the wise men brought. They have seen in each gift something which specially matched some characteristic of Jesus and his work.

Gold is the gift for a king. It was the custom that no one could ever approach the king without a gift. And gold, (the most precious of all metals), is the fit gift for an earthly king. So then Jesus was "the Man born to be King," and who was to reign, not by force, but by love over men's hearts, not from a throne, but from a Cross. Jesus Christ is King. We can never meet Jesus as equals. We must always meet him on terms of complete submission. Before we must be friends with Christ, we must submit to Christ. The gift of Gold was complete submission to him who was / is above all earthly kings and people.

Frankincense is the gift for a priest. It was in the Temple worship and at the Temple sacrifices that the sweet perfume of frankincense was used. The function of a priest is to open the way to God for men. The Latin word for priest is pontifex, which means a bridge-builder. The priest is the man who builds a bridge between men and God. That is what Jesus did. He opened the way to God; he made it possible for men to enter into the very presence of God.

Myrrh is the gift for one who is to die. Myrrh was used to embalm the bodies of the dead. Jesus came into the world to die. Jesus came into the world to live for men, and, in the end, to die for men. He came to give for men his life and his death.

Gold for a king, frankincense for a priest, myrrh for one who was to die--these were the gifts of the wise men, and, even at the cradle of Christ, they foretold that he was to be the true King, the perfect High Priest, and in the end the supreme Saviour of all peoples.

Father George Ngwa

CHOIR - Our practices resume Thursday January 4th. after 10:00 Mass. We need more voices to cover for those unable to attend sung Mass for various reasons.

If you wish to help in this way please contact any choir member or Jane - 501 126. *Thank you*

Parish Council Meeting. This Wednesday 10th January 6pm in Church Hall

Don't forget that The Living Rosary meeting is on the 8th of January at 5.45pm. Please let Mary Know if you are unable to attend.

National White Flower Appeal by SPUC is the weekend of 13th/ 14th January.

News from the diocese.

The Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage 2018 is not taking place. We are taking the opportunity to review and thoroughly rethink the format of the pilgrimage and its

many and various arrangements. If you have any ideas or suggestions to help the review please let us know.

The crib offerings for this year are designated by the Bishop to the **Friends of the Holy Land.**

If you subscribe to Portsmouth enews please find info on the following:-

Reflections by Jennifer Geach ,
The Holy Father's New Year Message
Welcome to Worship in Avon Stour
Visit to Bamenda
Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility
Don Bosco Summer Camp

I hope you all picked up your copy of the Matthew Kelly book that the Bishop bought for everyone titled, **Rediscover Jesus** and are reading it. There are lots of copies still not taken. Perhaps you know someone who might like a copy.

The Portsmouth People magazine should have been handed out to you. If you did not receive one please take one. There is a lovely photo of the Queen and Prince Philip on the current issue. We need some of you to volunteer to take some copies to other places in this parish such as, any housebound, schools, library, civic offices etc. Everyone think where a copy can be left that someone may chance to pick it up. Your help is appreciated in this matter. The next edition will come in March so there is not a lot of time. Please don't let me have to throw away extra copies in the recycling as there are always lots of leftover previous editions. The Bishop is trying to spread the word in many ways so we must help him in this ministry. Help get it out there.

VERY IMPORTANT Father George is away at the end of January, for a National Course for priests from Overseas. So if you have any contacts who could say Mass over the weekend of the 27/28th January, please contact the office. Thank you. Father George is happy to say any masses for you privately while he is away so if you would like that please let the office know.

Changes to lists of Readers and Holy Communion

There are a few people coming off the list for various reasons. If you want to become a reader or are new and were an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion in a previous parish or wish to change your commitment to the rota please let the office know by the end of January. Thank you. So far I have heard from R&M Yon, M Tanner, P Clarke, so if you are not these people and have mentioned something to me please remind me before the next list is done. Father would also like to speak with you. Thank you very much.

There are a few raffle prizes still to be collected by:-Shelly Salinger, R Watts. Jpona Barnayga, Sarah Dooley, Emma Tyler, A Fittell, John (from Edmunds Close), Jenny Major, Andualyn Yopii, "David" and Stuart Merlino Please check after Mass. Let us know if you don't want them.

New years Resolution?? The Christmas clean was done by 5 people. Thank you to those of you who helped. It was appreciated. The new Cleaning rota is up at the back of the Church. Please help. Thank you to the few regular stalwarts who help keep the church clean.

Sunday	7	January	Epiphany of the Lord	18.00 Vigil Mass – <i>Maria Alonzo's intention</i> 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Missa pro populo</i>	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass
Monday	8	January	Baptism of the Lord and end of Christmastide	10.00 Holy Mass – <i>private intention</i>	17.45 Rosary group
Tuesday	9	January	Ordinary time	18.00 Exposition, 18.30 Rosary 18.50 Benediction 19.00 Holy Mass – <i>Pat Brennan RIP</i>	
Wednesday	10	January	Ordinary time	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Hilary Sendall's intention</i>	Rosary intentions for the Sick and housebound. 6pm Parish Council meeting
Thursday	11	January	Ordinary time	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Katherine & Alfred Skipp RIP</i>	Rosary intention for peace in the world
Friday	12	January	St Aelred	09.00 Exposition, 09.30 Rosary 09.50 Benediction 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Lucien's intention</i>	Confessions after Mass
Saturday	13	January	St Hilary Our Lady on Saturday	09.30 Divine Mercy chaplet veneration of the relic of Sr Faustina 10.00 Holy Mass – <i>Stephanie Bryce's intention</i> 18.00 Vigil Mass – <i>Roy Fitzell RIP</i>	Confessions after morning Mass & before Vigil Mass
Sunday	14	January	2 nd Sunday in ordinary time	10.00 Holy Mass - <i>Missa Pro Populo (the people of the parish)</i>	Coffee & tea in hall after Mass

Prayer to St Michael, said at the end of Masses. St Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who wander through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

Collections 24/25 & 30/31 December	
loose	£347.08, £432.98
envelopes	£248.00, £165.56
Profit from party - £554.00	
Thank you for your continued support	

	Sat 6 Jan	Sun 7 Jan	Sat 13 Jan	Sun 14 Jan
Reader	J Marriott	S Ramsay	T Gearey	C Barrett
	B Coyne	J Thomas	A Nash	P Caffyn
EMHC	C d'Espagnac	J Kurian	B Dempster	J Nichols
	M Harwood	M Tanner	K Dempster	P Clarke
	R or M Yon	A Joseph	T Gearey	S Salinger

Live Streaming December totals

Viewers 4156 unique viewers 1355 total time 1488 hours.

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Parish office: 01425 614968 Hall Booking via Parish Office

ololnewmilton@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

Secretary: Johanna Thomas Wed/ Fri 10.45-12.00.

Our Parish Live streaming: <http://churchservices.tv/newmilton>

Website: wwwnfw.org.uk

Safeguarding: Katherine Dempster Tel: 01425 611643 email: katherine.dempster@btinternet.com

