

GOSPEL REFLECTION FOR THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

New Year, Same Disastrous Outcomes?



It's a well-known saying that if you continue to do the same thing you will get the same results. Yet despite this obvious truth we continue to approach life in exactly the same old ways and repeat the same disastrous outcomes. We tend to get through life relying on the knowledge we already have, instead of searching for something new.

Today the Church commemorates the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. We call it the 'Epiphany' a word derived from the Greek meaning 'to appear' or 'to be shown forth'. The Epiphany is about searching for meaning purpose and revelation. The Magi were men of great learning, intellect and wealth, yet they weren't prepared to sit back and imagine they knew it all. Guided by a star and motivated by a hunger for truth, they stepped out of their comfort zone and set out across the desert not knowing what they would find or how long it would take. It was a journey of faith and great courage.

In the same way as the star got the wise men questioning, so too we find guiding stars in our lives that make us question. What circumstances get us looking for deeper meaning? The desire to leave a mind-numbingly meaningless job, the need to make sense of a family illness, or the curiosity to research the background to a motivational book are all circumstances in which we might find our 'guiding stars'. Today's gospel reading is an invitation for all God's people to step out of their comfort zones and search for a new way of life and a better truth.

Bitesize - When the winds of change blow, some people build walls and others build windmills. ~ *Chinese Proverb*



PARISH PRAYER – Father, pour out your Spirit upon our parish. Grant us a new vision of your glory, a new faithfulness to your Word and a new consecration to your service, that your love might grow among us and your kingdom come, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Permanent Deacon: Rev. Martin Sanderson
Parish Music team: Judy Reid, Kathleen Edmunds & William Preddy.
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Sunday 7th January 2024 – Epiphany of the Lord – Year B

[1st Week of the Year, Weekdays Year II, Psalter Week 1]

MASSSES in the PARISH

Saturday 6th January	18.00	<i>First MASS of Sunday</i>	+Joan & Fred Faulkner (AM)
Sunday 7th January			Epiphany of the Lord. Solemnity & Holy Day of Obligation.
	09.00	MASS	+Jacinto de Paulo Baptista and +Idinha de Fátima Doutel Sarmento Baptista
	11.00	MASS <i>Live streamed</i>	For the People of the Parish
Monday 8th January			Baptism of the Lord. Solemnity.
	10.00	MASS	Drury Family Foundation Mass
Tuesday 9th January			Feria
	10.00	MASS	Seabrooke Family Foundation Mass
Wednesday 10th January			Feria – No Mass today
Thursday 11th January			Feria – No Mass today
Friday 12th January			Feria – No Mass today
Saturday 13th January			Feria
	18.00	<i>First MASS of Sunday</i>	Stearman Family Foundation Mass
Sunday 14th January			2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
	09.00	MASS	English Family Foundation Mass
	11.00	MASS <i>Live streamed</i>	For the People of the Parish

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturday at 17.30

Anniversaries this week: Lillian Carter, Len Smith, Kathleen Strayton, Jane Elizabeth Winifred Oaksford, James Tinney, Margaret Jones, Pamela Whigham, Elizabeth Brocklehurst, Nell Hunt, V. Rev. Canon Herbert Gray (1st Priest at

For Live Streamed Masses Search for Dereham Catholic Church on YouTube, or use the link on the parish website.

The parish newsletter is available on the parish website from Friday each week.

Dereham), Harry Monk, Rachael McErleane. *May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.*

Hospital Visits: If you or any member of your family is admitted to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and would like to have a visit from a Catholic Priest, please inform a nurse on the ward and contact will be made through the Chaplaincy. If you are admitted to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn, please contact Fr. Peter Rollings at the Presbytery on 01553 772220. If you would like to receive the Sacrament of the Sick before going into hospital, please contact Fr. Jay either by phone or by email.

Sick & Housebound [with GDPR Permissions] – Please pray for: Shirley Liebenhals, Derek Williams, Patsy Gray, Colette Barrow-Nessian, Betty Reavey, William Dunne, Pauline Buckland, Gretta Cummings, Katherine Vella, Pauline Organ, Kevin Pugh, Joy Bussey.

Money Matters: Offering for last Sunday: Plate £313.85. Thank you.

For those who would like to make their regular offerings by Standing Order, the information you need is: Account name: **Catholic Church of Dereham**. The Sort Code is: **40-20-08** and the Account number is: **11311115**. If you are a tax payer, please also consider **Gift Aid**. **Gift Aid forms** are available at the back of church. This will help to maximize our donations in the Parish.

Please note: There will be no weekdays Masses while Fr. Jay is away between 10th – 23rd January. However, there will be a Service of the Word and Holy Communion each Monday at 10:00 a.m. commencing on 15th January.

Taking down of the Christmas Decoration in the Church - This will be happening on **Monday, 8th January 2024 at 10:30**. We may need your helping hands on this activity.

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, 8th January - What does Jesus' baptism say to us? Jesus' thirty years of preparation before his public baptism remind us that it takes time to get ready for God's mission. How many countless hours did Jesus spend in prayer? What study, what thought, what vision must he have undergone before appearing in front of John asking for baptism?

What do we learn from Jesus' baptism? January is a time for new beginnings and fresh resolution. John the Baptist was an expert on this. John's ministry was all about repentance and reform ... that's what his baptism was all about. But anyone who has ever seriously tried to change themselves will know how difficult change really is. We all fondly imagine that change is just beyond our reach, and all we have to do is reach that little bit further. Perhaps we would be more giving if we had more money. Perhaps we would be more helpful to others if we could manage our time better. Perhaps we would manage to be tidier if we had a home extension. Perhaps we could be happier if we found a perfect partner. Perhaps we could feel better fulfilled if we changed our job, passed a few more exams, moved to the country, lost weight, got a promotion, had a baby... the list goes on and on. Yet every January, we find ourselves in much the same situation as the

previous year. Those who were baptised by John were baptised as a sign of their intent to change from their old ways, but knowing how difficult change can be, we can't help wondering how successful they must have been. Perhaps John appreciated this too when he said "I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit."

When we look for change in our lives, perhaps we are looking in all the wrong places. Perhaps all we need to do is to ask the Holy Spirit for help. We are told that the same Holy Spirit that empowered Jesus at the outset of his ministry, is the same Holy Spirit that is given to us in our baptism. Validating our baptism anew every day, knowing that we are filled with the Holy Spirit ... perhaps change isn't just beyond our reach after all. The past doesn't have to equal the future.

Baptism of the Lord and New Year's Resolutions - If we remember daily to ask the Holy Spirit for inner strength, then change will not be beyond our reach after all, and world will be a better place because of it.

Parish Events for the week 7th – 13th January 2024	
Sunday: 1100	Children's Liturgy (for children <i>in Y1 to 1st Holy Communion age</i>)
Monday: 1400-1600	Tea Buddies –Tea, cake and chat – Emmaus Room. All welcome.
Tuesday, 1030	Music Practice – After Mass
Tuesday: 1900	Youth Club Chess & Table Tennis – Emmaus Room.
Thursday: 1730-1830	First Communion Class – Emmaus Room
Friday: 1915-2030	Altar Servers' Group – Emmaus Room
Friday Garden Club – Volunteers are asked to please contact Sonia on 07985 521578 for next meeting date.	

If you missed it last week, here is the list of second collections coming up in 2024:

- ❖ 25th February - CAFOD Family Fast Day
- ❖ 29th March, Good Friday - Holy Places of Palestine
- ❖ 21st April - Vocations Sunday
- ❖ 12th May - World Communications Sunday
- ❖ 16th June - Day for Life
- ❖ 30th June - Peter's Pence
- ❖ 14th July - Stella Maris
- ❖ 15th September – Home Mission Sunday
- ❖ 4th October - CAFOD Family Fast Day
- ❖ 20th October - World Mission Sunday
- ❖ 15th December - Diocesan Dependent Priest's Fund