

# St Francis of Assisi Church

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SUNDAY MASSES: Saturday 5pm, Sunday 8 & 10.30am.

(Confessions are available after each Sunday Mass)

WEEKDAYS: Monday no Mass, Tuesday to Friday 7am, Saturday 8am

Thursday 6-7pm - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

## NEWSLETTER



## 7<sup>th</sup> January 2018

### *THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD*

*transferred to the Sunday*

To prepare for Sunday Mass, the feast of the Epiphany, it is a good idea to read and give thought to the readings in your missal or Bible. Here are some questions to ponder.

**First Reading** [Isaiah 60:1-6] This reading says that, though darkness covered the earth, light and glory had come to Jerusalem. What is the darkness in my world and where do I see the light from God?

**Second Reading** [Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6] "I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you." Have I been entrusted by God with the grace meant for other people? In what way am I meant to be a star leading others to Christ? Who or what have been such stars in my life?

**Gospel** [Matthew 2:1-12] Consider the people to whom Christ was revealed, Herod, the Magi, the shepherds, and what different effects the revelation had on them.

### **THE COMING OF THE MAGI**

What a strange story St Matthew tells us in his gospel: Magi (magicians or wise men?) following a star. How on earth do you follow a star? And how can a star stop over a particular house? If a star or meteor stopped right over Barbados, everyone in the island would say "it was just above my house". St Luke's account of Bethlehem and the child in the manger describes what happened, as he learnt it from Jesus' mother Mary or her friends. St Matthew's story of the Magi is different, not so much concentrating on what happened as to offer us a symbolism to help us to understand the deeper meaning of Jesus' birth. That is why some elements in the story can seem rather strange, such as people following a star or the gifts they brought.

**Gold** is to remind us that he is our king (at least, if you want to accept him as your king). **Incense** is offered to God; in other words this baby, this tiny fragile baby, is Almighty God, Creator of the universe. **Myrrh**, which was used for embalming, was already indicating the importance of the death that this child was eventually to accept.

What stars or events have led us in the direction of Christ, even if we haven't arrived there yet? Perhaps a child or a word someone has said or something on the news or the beauty of a sunset when you're on holiday. Don't worry where it comes from, whether it is from God or from yourself; all that matters is where it is leading.

The story of the coming of the Magi is called the Epiphany of the Lord, meaning the revelation of the coming of Christ. By reflecting on the real meaning of the story we come to know Christ in our hearts and form a closer relationship with him.

## **PRAYING FOR VOCATIONS**

The number of men being ordained priests has dropped dramatically in the last few years. A typical example is that when I became a Jesuit there were 900 Jesuits in the British province (a third of them on foreign missions). Today there are 150. This is the pattern across Europe and the Americas and the numbers continue to decrease – whilst in Asia and Africa they are on the increase.

Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; so asked the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest." In other words, we need to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Starting next Sunday, as a way of praying, we are suggesting that each family should taking to their home for a week at a time a chalice which is used at Mass, knowing that it has held the body and blood of Christ. And during that week the family would pray for vocations. Any prayer can be used and we will offer prayer-cards which might help.

## **CHRISTOLOGY** A Certificate Course of Five Saturdays **SATURDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY – SATURDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY**

Who do YOU say that I am?

Who is Jesus Christ?

Who is Christ for us today?

**Facilitated by Reverend Dr. Winston Layne in the Upper Room, St. Patrick's Cathedral**

**Email: [formationinstitute@gmail.com](mailto:formationinstitute@gmail.com) or tel: 426-3510 to register**

**COLLECTIONS** The Offertory collection for last Sunday and New Year's Eve: **\$4,772.58**

**Please would you also pray for these people who are ill :** We pray especially for little Sebastian Peichl, Richard Roach, Shenicia Hurley, Stanislaus Alexander, Jacqueline Coles-Austin, Dorothy de Gale, Norma Laura Herrera, Paddy Melville, Kenneth Miller, Carlos Phillips, Phillip Alleyne, Lucille Alleyne, Joan Mahon, Mervin Mahon, Carolina Restrepo, Marie Edmund, Carlyle Glean, Taylor Pluna, Peter-Xavier Iweze, Lourdes Rouco, John Griffith, Shimisha Butcher, David Gittens, Annie Bromham, Alison Howard, Noel Shirley, Natari Edwards, Carol Rowe, Marie Cornibert, Aurelija Vasilevskiene and Joyce Blennman

All services held in St Francis Church may be viewed on the Internet: <http://iwcpinc.com/portfolio-view/church-st-francis/>

A shortened form of Fr Michael's homily can be found in the Advocate on Sunday

and after the Sunday on: [Michael A J BarrowYoutube](#)

Prophets of a Future Not Our Own ~ Oscar Romero

This is what we are about:

We plant seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.

This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,  
an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results,  
but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers not master builders ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own.



