

# St Mary Magdalen Catholic Church

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**Parish Priest:** Fr Mathew George

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**Parish school:** St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Stratford Road, Ipswich, IP1 6EF

**Head of School:** Miss Lucille Southgate ☎ 01473 742074

## Catholic chaplain to the Ipswich hospitals:

*Please contact Deacon Clive Brooks (01206 396319) or let Fr Mathew know if you, or any member of your family, are going into hospital. Please be aware that for reasons of patient confidentiality, the current practice in the NHS is **NOT** to inform the chaplains of any Catholics that are admitted to hospital. So unless you or your relatives inform the chaplains of your hospital stay, you will not be visited by a priest or any other member of the chaplaincy team.*

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent: 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2019

### Sunday Readings: Year A

### Weekday Readings Year II: 4<sup>th</sup> Week of the Year

We offer a warm welcome to all new parishioners and visitors.

## Services This Week

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of  
Advent

8:00 am Holy Mass – Molly McGarry

10:00 am\* Holy Mass – Eileen & Anthony Bretherton

### Hymns for 10:00 Mass

Entrance: - The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came (516)

Offertory: - In Bread We Bring You Lord (243)

Communion:- On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry (418)

Recession: - O Come O Come Emmanuel (384)

6:00 pm Holy Mass – People of the Parish

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>  
December

Advent FERIA

9:30 am Holy Mass – Janes family

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>  
December

Advent FERIA – Christmas Eve

9:30 am Holy Mass – Janes family

9:30 pm Carol Service followed by Mass of Christmas Night - Eileen & Anthony Bretherton

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>  
December

The Nativity of the Lord – Christmas Day

8:00 am Holy Mass – People of the Parish

10:00 am Holy Mass - Robert & Sean

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup>  
December

St Stephen – the First Martyr

9:30 am Holy Mass – Janes family

Friday 27<sup>th</sup>  
December

St John – Apostle and Evangelist

9:30 am Holy Mass – Vieira family

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>  
December

The Holy Innocents

9:30 am Holy Mass

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>  
December

8:00 am Holy Mass – Vieira family

10:00 am\* Holy Mass – George Sansome RIP

The Holy Family 6:00 pm Holy Mass – People of the parish

\* Children's Liturgy is held during the 10:00 Mass each Sunday.

Tea and coffee will be available in the Guild Room after 10:00 Mass – please do come and join us!

## Today's Gospel

Today, the fourth Sunday of Advent, our Gospel reading permits us to begin our contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas: "Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about" (Matthew 1:18). The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the birth of Jesus from Joseph's perspective. Today's Gospel passage is the second movement in this story. In the preceding verses of the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel, the evangelist has listed the genealogy of Jesus, tracing his lineage through King David to Abraham. In the chapter to follow, Matthew tells of the visit from the Magi, the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, and Herod's massacre of the infants in Bethlehem - the other stories which we associate with Christmas, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the angel and the shepherds, are found in the Gospel of Luke.

We must not gloss over too quickly the difficult circumstances described in today's Gospel. The way that Joseph and Mary face these circumstances tells us much about these holy people and their faith in God. Joseph and Mary are betrothed to be married. This is sometimes described as an engagement period, but it is more than that. Betrothal in first century Jewish culture was in fact the first part of the marriage contract. A breach of this contract was considered adultery. Mary is found to be with child. If adultery is proven, the punishment might be death. Joseph has rights under Mosaic law, but chooses to act discreetly in his plans to break the marriage contract, so as to protect Mary, but then God intervenes. The message of the angel of the Lord given to Joseph in his dream tells us much about the child that Mary bears and his role in God's plan: He is conceived by the Holy Spirit, His name will be Jesus, which in the Hebrew means "Yahweh saves", He will be the fulfilment of the prophecy heard in today's first reading from Isaiah: "... the virgin shall be with child .... and shall name him Emmanuel [God with us]."

Joseph does as the angel of the Lord directs - he takes Mary to be his wife and accepts the child in her womb as his own. Joseph and Mary are both cooperative with God's plan. They are both models for us of what it means to be faithful servants of God.

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## Advent Wreath

Today, the fourth and last Sunday in Advent, we light the last purple candle. This candle, often called the *Angel's Candle*, represents peace.

*Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."*

On Christmas Eve at midnight Mass, the white centre candle is lit. This candle is called the *Christ Candle* and represents the life of Christ that has come into the world. The colour white represents purity. Christ is the sinless, spotless, pure Saviour. Those who receive Christ as Saviour are washed of their sins and made whiter than snow:

*"Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."*

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## Christmas 2019

On Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December we begin our Christmas celebrations with a carol service starting at 9.30 pm and followed by the Mass of Christmas Night at 10.00 pm. It will be a solemn Mass but not a long one, as parents might like to bring their children along. On Christmas Day, Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>, Mass will be celebrated at 8.00 and 10.00 am. There will be no children's liturgy on Christmas morning and there will be no evening Mass anywhere in Ipswich on Christmas day. On boxing day, the feast of St Stephen, Mass will be at 9.30 am as usual.

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## Merry Christmas!

Fr Mathew writes: *I am so glad to celebrate Christmas with you this year. I wish you all blessings and happiness. I am sure that the child born for us will bless us all and help and support us. It was wonderful to have the Carol Service at the school on 18<sup>th</sup>. While you had a great Christmas last year with Fr. Mathias who was kind enough to cover for me when I was away, there is no getting away from that fact that I missed you all at Christmas last year. I am so glad that I am with you this year and I am looking forward to all the goodness that the Divine Child offers to all of us at Christmas. Have a Grace filled Christmas and a wonderful New Year.*

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## Friday Abstinence

Good news! During the Christmas Octave, which commences with the feast of the Nativity of the Lord on Wednesday, Friday abstinence is dispensed with.

## **Offertory Collection**

The offertory collection for Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December was £337.96. The retiring collection for Christmas flowers amounted to £161.33. Thank you.

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## **The Sick of the Parish**

Please pray for those who are sick or housebound: Margaret Arbon, Peggy Barron, Jason Beaumont, Michael Clarke, Deacon Peter Coates, Monica Ford, Fabiana Di Mascio, Richard Fox, Ron Green, Jo Kelly, Molly Mc Garry, Yvonne Metcalfe, Robert Mullan, Anna Nelli, Mary O'Reilly, Annick Smith and Pippa Williamson.

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## **St. Pancras Catholic Primary School**

St Pancras Catholic Primary School Applications for Reception 2020/21 places should be submitted online to Suffolk County Council by midnight on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020. St Pancras Catholic Primary School requires a completed Supplementary Information Form (SIF) which can be found on the school website. It is imperative that the Supplementary Information Form is received by the school before the deadline date of 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Thank you.

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## **Our Own Dear Departed**

Of your charity, pray for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed and especially for Gordon Potter, Edward Mawhart, Joseph Dodds, Gaudio Fella, Winifred Fisher, George Snapp, Bridget Sheerin, John Woodward, Margaret Potter and Rachel Abbott whose anniversaries occur about this time.

*Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.*

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## **Advent Confessions**

On the last few remaining days of Advent there is still an opportunity for confession every day before and after Mass. Today, you may have to wait for a while after Mass to allow Fr Mathew to greet people. Alternatively, confessions can always be heard by appointment - please ring, e-mail or text Fr Mathew.

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## **Epiphany Candlelight Mass**

Organised by the Diocesan Youth Service, the annual Epiphany Mass for all young people and their families from across the diocese will be held at 5 pm on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January at the White House, 21 Upgate, Poringland, Norwich. Mass will be followed by hot dogs, a bonfire and fireworks. There will be a collection of presents for children who are refugees (please bring wrapped presents and indicate whether suitable for a boy or girl or either, and approximate age).

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## **Commissioning Of Readers**

2020 is the 1,600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Saint Jerome's death and the 10<sup>th</sup> of Verbum Domini - Benedict XVI's Apostolic Exhortation on 'The Word of the Lord'. The Bishops of England and Wales are marking these events by designating 2020 a year of focus on the Bible. Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January is the Sunday of the Word of God. The Bishop is going to commission all the readers from across the diocese at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Norwich on that day. Ipswich parishes are arranging a coach to attend this service. Will all readers please book the date in their diaries. More details to follow in due course. Further information can be found on the Bishops Conference of England and Wales web site: <http://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/the-god-who-speaks/>

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## **Parish 150 Club**

The December prize draw of the parish 150 Club will be made in the Guild Room on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December after the 10:00 Mass. This draw will include the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter bonus prizes.

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## **Confirmation 2020**

The Deanery based confirmation programme for 2020 will consist of 3 sessions in St Mary's parish hall to be held between 11.00 am to 5.00 pm on Saturdays 29<sup>th</sup> February, 21<sup>st</sup> March and 25<sup>th</sup> April, followed by a day retreat on 23<sup>rd</sup> May. Confirmation candidates will be required to attend all of the sessions and the day retreat. The confirmation Mass will be celebrated on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 at 6.30 p.m. in St Mary's Church, Woodbridge Road. Application forms for those in year 9 or above who wish to join this programme, are available now from the narthex or can be downloaded from the parish web site. Completed application forms should be returned no later than Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February, to enable catechists to prepare materials.

## **Christmas Offering**

*The collection taken at each of the three Masses of Christmas will be the traditional personal gift from the parish community to our parish priest, Fr Mathew.*

## Readings for 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent – 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2019.

### Entrance Antiphon:

Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

### Collect:

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by his passion and cross be brought to the glory of his resurrection. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

### First Reading: Isa. 7: 10-14 *The maiden is with child.*

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, "Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above." "No", Ahaz answered "I will not put the Lord to the test." Then he said, "Listen now, house of David: are you not satisfied trying the patience of men without trying the patience of my God too? The Lord himself, therefore, will give you a sign. It is this: the maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son who she will call Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'."

### Responsorial Psalm: Ps. 23:1-6

Let the Lord enter! He is the king of glory.

### Second Reading: Rom. 1:1-7 *Jesus Christ, descendant of David, Son of God.*

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called an apostle, and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago through his prophets in the scriptures. This news is about the Son of God who, according to the human nature he took, was a descendant of David: it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead. Through him we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith to all pagan nations in honour of his name. You are one of these nations, and by his call belong to Jesus Christ. To you all, then, who are God's beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send his grace and peace.

### Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, Alleluia! The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means "God-is-with-us". Alleluia!

### Gospel: Matt. 1:18-24 *Jesus is born of Mary who was betrothed to Joseph, son of David.*

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins." Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through his prophet: *The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'*. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

### Prayer over the Offerings:

May the Holy Spirit, O Lord, sanctify these gifts laid upon your altar, just as he filled with his power the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Through Christ our Lord.

### Communion Antiphon:

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.

### Prayer after Communion:

Having received this pledge of eternal redemption, we pray, almighty God, that, as the feast day of our salvation draws ever nearer, so we may press forward all the more eagerly to the worthy celebration of the mystery of your Son's nativity. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.