

St Mary Magdalen Catholic Church

468 Norwich Road, Ipswich, IP1 6JS

☎ 01473 741975

☎ 07939 920844

🌐 www.marymagdalens.org

Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia 🌐 www.rcdea.org.uk

📧 @marymagdalens



Parish Priest: Fr Mathew George

✉ parishpriest@marymagdalens.org

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

Head of School: Mrs Lucille Martin

☎ 01473 742074

Catholic chaplain to the Ipswich hospitals: Fr Bineesh OCD ☎ 01473 684963
*Please contact Fr Bineesh 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.*

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph: 27th December, 2020 **Sunday Readings: Year B. Weekday Readings: Christmas Octave** **Services This Week**

Sunday 27 th – The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph	8:00 am Holy Mass 10:00 am Holy Mass (Live Streamed) 6:00 pm Holy Mass – The people of the parish
Monday 28 th	The Holy Innocents 10:00 am Holy Mass – Janes family
Tuesday 29 th	St Thomas Becket 10:00 am Holy Mass – Vieira family
Wednesday 30 th	Sixth Day within the Octave of the Nativity 10:00 am Holy Mass
Thursday 31 st	Seventh Day within the Octave of the Nativity 10:00 am Holy Mass
Friday 1 st January 2021	Mary, The Holy Mother of God 10:00 am Holy Mass
Saturday 2 nd	Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen 10:00 am Holy Mass
Sunday 3 rd – Second Sunday of Christmas	8:00 am Holy Mass 10:00 am Holy Mass (Live streamed) 6:00 pm Holy Mass – The people of the parish

The 10:00 Mass on Sundays is streamed live. You can find the link to watch this on the Mass Times page of the parish web site

We are back again – the New Normal

Under the current restrictions there will be no Children's Liturgy group, no coffee after church and no hymns sung at 10:00 Mass. The bidding prayers will not be said, the homily will be kept short, the collection and offertory procession will be omitted, the sign of peace will not be exchanged and special arrangements for Holy Communion will apply.

We are committed to following the Government guidelines on social distancing.

Please ensure you maintain a 2 metre distance separation from each other whilst entering, leaving and inside church and remember that government regulations require that you wear a face covering whilst in church.

Today's Gospel

Today the Church celebrates the Feast of the Holy Family. This celebration is assigned to the Sunday within the octave of Christmas. The Gospel for today is taken from the Gospel according to Luke and is part of Luke's Infancy Narrative.

Today's Gospel describes the presentation of the child Jesus in the Temple and shows Joseph and Mary as devout Jews, following the prescriptions of the Law of Moses. The Gospel alludes to several aspects of the Law of Moses: circumcision, the dedication of the firstborn son to the Lord, and the purification of a woman after childbirth.

According to the Law of Moses as presented in the Book of Leviticus, a woman was considered ritually unclean during her menstrual period and for a prescribed period of time following the birth of a child. After the birth of a son, a woman was considered ritually unclean for 40 days. After the birth of a daughter, a woman was considered unclean for 80 days. In order to be restored to ritual purity, a Jewish woman performed the appropriate rites of purification and made the prescribed ritual offering.

Today's Gospel notes that Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day after his birth, in accordance with the Mosaic Law. At that time, he was called Jesus, the name he was given by the angel Gabriel. On the 40th day after Jesus' birth, Mary performed the appropriate purification rites and made her offering at the Temple. Although the Law of Moses required an offering of a lamb, those who could not afford a lamb could substitute two turtledoves or two pigeons. In this scene, Luke identifies Joseph and Mary as being poor, and indeed throughout Luke's Gospel, Jesus will show special concern for the poor.

Another Jewish rite referenced in this Gospel is the dedication of the firstborn son to the Lord. In remembrance of the feast of Passover, when the firstborn children of the Israelites in Egypt were saved from death, the Law of Moses prescribed that all firstborn males of Israel should be consecrated to the Lord. In this tradition, Mary and Joseph present the infant Jesus in the Temple in Jerusalem.

In Jerusalem, Luke reports that Mary and Joseph encounter two devout Jews, Simeon and Anna, who recognise the infant Jesus as the fulfilment of Israel's hope for redemption. In Simeon's words we find a prediction of Mary's witnessing of Jesus' death on the cross. The Canticle of Simeon, also called by its Latin name, *Nunc Dimittis*, is prayed at night prayer, or compline, during the Liturgy of the Hours.

Christmas Message from Bishop Alan

Dear Friends,

Christmas is a powerful season for us human beings. We celebrate in joy the birthday of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. For many of us, it will be a celebration with our family and friends as we appreciate the gifts that God has given. For many others, however, every Christmas will be tinged with sadness as we remember the death of a loved one with whom we can no longer share this special time. This year, Christmas will be a time of both joy and sorrow for so many. Hardship, sickness, isolation, fatigue, the possibility of unemployment, poverty, homelessness, fear of death – all the present challenges which the pandemic crisis has brought in its wake – these will tinge our celebration. It will not be perfect. But this is exactly why Jesus Christ was born in the first place. This Child, who is our Lord and God made flesh to be like us, to live and die like us, was born into poverty in a cave, rejected, unrecognised, and isolated with Mary his Mother and with Joseph. Indeed, those of us who follow this Child today, reflect on the shadow cast upon Bethlehem: the wood of the Crib is destined to become the wood of the Cross. The Almighty God, who created the cosmos, emptied himself of all glory, in order to feel what it is like to be us. He reaches down into our imperfect world, and then draws us up to himself, to show us the destiny he intended for each one of us when he created us: life with himself in perfect happiness, eternally in heaven. A wonderful exchange of places. Jesus Christ is the Word of Hope from heaven: that all shall be well – all manner of things shall be well. For eternal happiness is not to be found here on earth. Our joys here are real joys, but they are fleeting. Life is fragile. Our material comfort and health is impermanent. Jesus Christ, the Child born in a manger in Bethlehem, is our gateway to this eternal happiness and he opens this gateway for each one of us at Christmas. That is what we are celebrating. That is why, in any circumstance, we can rejoice at Christmas: the day when the sun – the Son of God – rises to bring an end to the dark winter. So, in whatever circumstance you find yourself right now, always try to remember that Jesus Christ was born for you. He comes to fill you with hope and confidence and to dispel your fears. His arms are wide open, beckoning you to welcome him into your home and into your heart – not just this Christmas, but every day of the year. I wish you all a truly hope-filled and happy Christmas!

Christmas Post

The letter rack in the narthex is being used by many people to leave Christmas cards for fellow parishioners. Please check the rack before you leave church and take any cards addressed to you as, in previous years, we have sadly had to dispose of several cards that were never collected by the intended recipients.

150 Club

Due to pressure of other Christmas activities, the December prize draw of the parish 150 club, including the 3rd quarter bonus prizes, will be made after the 10:00 Mass on Sunday 3rd January, one week later than scheduled.

Christmas Offering

As you will all be aware, Easter and Christmas present us with two scheduled opportunities to collect the traditional personal gift from the parish community to our parish priest, Fr Mathew. The pandemic completely ruled out the Easter gift in 2020 and now the Christmas collection is upon us. For many people these will be the most difficult of economic times, and Mass attendance has been significantly reduced as people respond in various ways to the current crisis. These two factors may make the total of our Christmas offering less than might otherwise have been the case. Therefore our generosity, particularly for those who can still more readily afford to contribute, is perhaps under greater scrutiny than ever. All contributions, big or small, will be much appreciated. Either put your offering in the special Christmas collection envelope, or in any envelope clearly marked as 'Christmas Gift' and return it at any time between now and the end of January. We will ensure that it gets to Father Mathew. The total realised will be published in the newsletter after the closing date.

Parish Development Project

Work continues apace on the construction of the new parish room. The vast majority of the funding for this project has been provided by a generous, Gift Aided donation from one of our parish families, but there is a balance which we will need to raise ourselves. There is a letter from Fr Mathew to all parishioners which provides more information about this, but circulating this letter in the current lockdown will be a challenge. The letter can be seen on the parish web site and is being sent out to all parishioners for whom we have registered email addresses. Hard copies are available in the narthex should you visit church for private prayer.

The Sick of the Parish

Please pray for those who are sick or housebound: John Anderson-Hurst, Margaret Arbon, William Barnes, Peggy Barron, Jason Beaumont, Michael Clarke, Monica Ford, Josephine Kalagira, Fabiana Di Mascio, Ron Green, Jo Kelly, Molly Mc Garry, Yvonne Metcalfe, Robert Mullan, Anna Nelli, Mary O'Reilly and Pippa Williamson.

Own Dear Departed

Of your charity, pray for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed and especially for George Sharp, Bridget Sheerin, Margaret Limpenny, John Woodward, Margaret Potter, Rachael Abbott, Patrick Cooper, Casilda Janssen, Edith Brame, Dorothy Harris, Andrew Kervin, Michael Carroll, William McCormack, Stephen Spooner, Leslie Payne and Nora Heffernan whose anniversaries occur this week.

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.

Mass Readings: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph: 27th December, 2020

Entrance Antiphon: The shepherds went in haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger.

Collect: O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family, graciously grant that we may imitate them in practising the virtues of family life and in so, in the joy of your house, delight one day in eternal rewards. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

First Reading: Gen. 15:1-6,21:1-3 *Your heir shall be your own flesh and blood.*

The word of the Lord was spoken to Abram in a vision, 'Have no fear, Abram, I am your shield; your reward will be very great.' 'My Lord,' Abram replied 'what do you intend to give me? I go childless'. Then Abram said, 'See, you have given me no descendants; some man of my household will be my heir.' And then this word of the Lord was spoken to him, 'He shall not be your heir; your heir shall be of your own flesh and blood.' Then taking him outside he said, 'Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants' he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord,

who counted this as making him justified. The Lord dealt kindly with Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised. Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps.04:1-6,8-9

Response to the psalm is: *He, the Lord, is our God. He remembers his covenant for ever.*

Give thanks to the Lord, tell his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.

O sing to him, sing to his praise;
tell all his wonderful works!

Be proud of his holy name,
let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice.
Consider the Lord and his strength;
constantly seek his face.

Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, the judgements he spoke.
O children of Abraham, his servant,
O sons of the Jacob he chose.

He remembers his covenant for ever,
his promise for a thousand generations,
the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac..

Second Reading: Heb. 11:8,11-12,17-19 *The faith of Abraham, Sarah and Isaac.*

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going. It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore. It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He offered to sacrifice his only son even though the promises had been made to him and he had been told: It is through Isaac that your name will be carried on. He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead; and so, figuratively speaking, he was given back Isaac from the dead.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! At various times in the past and in various ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son. Alleluia!

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40 *The child grew, filled with wisdom.*

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said: 'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see, a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel.' As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.' There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem. When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

Prayer Over the Offerings We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of conciliation, humbly asking that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God and Saint Joseph, you may establish our families firmly in your grace and your peace. Through Christ our Lord.

Communion Antiphon: Our God has appeared on the earth, and lived among us.

Prayer after Communion: Bring those you refresh with this heavenly Sacrament, most merciful Father, to imitate constantly the example of the Holy Family, so that, after the trials of this world, we may share their company for ever. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.