

Like the Magi every one of us was born with a call we must answer, a need to find a purpose in life. If we take this call seriously it will mean a journey away from home and family into an unknown future; it is a journey that involves risk—there will be obstacles, detours, dead-ends, new beginnings.

There is one more thing: the Magi brought gifts—our gift is unique, it is the way I am willing to accept that we are all going the same way, by so many different routes. And this gift is tangible and visible—it is the ways we let go of mistrust, ignorance and prejudice—the many ways we have rejected those we don't understand. Today means this is the time for us to be together, to make our way home together—to God.

On our journey we will meet Herods and people who claim to know better...they may fool us, they may even cause us to lose our way—telling us there is no such journey; it is all myth and make-believe. We hear these voices in commercials that promise to ease our pain, improve our looks—tempting us to do it my way! It is sad that some can't cope, but that is their problem.

We have given and received presents over Christmas—we probably looked for gifts our friends would like—like the Magi, recognising the people we love; not answering a need but enjoying their enjoyment.

Epiphany reminds us that at the heart of all our celebrations is one who is pure and total gift. He is given to us by the Father, and he arrived to give himself to whoever has hands empty to receive—the gift to enjoy life by sharing our experience of this gift with each other.

The Herods of this world can't receive this gift that is offered to them too—their hands are too full. They would have to let-go first. They see this powerless child (born and unborn) as a thread to be got rid of.

Austin O.F.M.

ST. ANTONY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL RECEPTION APPLICATIONS

The parish office requires completed Forms A & B, together with copy of child's baptism certificate and non-returnable family photo. Closing date is 15th January 2014.

CHURCH CLEANING

Friday 10.30am 10th January Rachel Varney, Lisa McDonnell, Carole Burns, Sheila Charles, Janet Walker.

WELCOME

We welcome into the parish community William Austin Vida and Lois Gillian Magdalen Vida who were baptised in St. Thomas' over the Christmas period.

If you need to attend a baptism course please contact the parish office for details. We recommend parents to attend a course before the birth of their child.



HOUSE BLESSING

If you would like to have your house blessed, please contact the parish office for details.

MOTHER & TODDLER GROUP



Please note that the Mother & Toddler Group recommences in the Becket Centre on Tuesday, 14th January.

JOURNEY OF FAITH

Sessions for the Lenten and Easter term will recommence on Monday, 13th Jan. in the William Scott Room at 8pm.

IN TOUCH

The Christmas issue of In Touch, the parish magazine, is still on sale at all Masses this weekend price only £2.

LEGACY OFFICER

The Apostleship of the Sea is looking to appoint a Legacy Officer to join its team based in central London. The purpose of this role is to manage the charity's legacy programme to sustain the charity's work supporting seafarers. Applicants should have a minimum of two years' experience of working in legacy fundraising. This post is part time. For more information contact johngreen@apostleshipofthesea.org.uk. Applications close: 24th Jan 2014. Interviews 4th Feb. 2014.

ACCOMMODATION NEEDED

Family with 4 children seek rented accommodation within Redbridge area. Contact 07404511427 or 07955655726.

PARISH DIARIES 2014

Parish Diaries for 2014 are available from the back of the church. Please leave your donation in the basket provided at the back of the church.

VACANCY

Person required for paid position of Housekeeper at the Diocesan House of Prayer at Abbotswick. 3-5 hours p.w. Timing of work can be negotiated. If you or any of your family/friends are interested, please first contact Sr. Theresa on 01277 373959 or email info@abbotswick.org for a job description and person specification. You should then send in your CV, with a covering letter demonstrating how your experience and skills match the essential requirements and attributes of the role.

THANK YOU

For so many things over this Christmas celebration. We were glad to see so many volunteers who turned up to clean the church, the tree and crib—the work of the Parish Council and friends, the flower decorations, Choir and Music Group, Readers, Ministers, Servers, Ushers, Sacristans—thank you for responding in such good numbers

The Community would also like to say a big thank you for so many good wishes and presents received.

SOUP RUN

The next soup run is on Wednesday, 8th January 2014. We would be grateful to receive sandwiches, fruit cakes, sweets and warm men's clothing. Items can be left in the parish office on Wed. morning or in the Becket Centre between 7pm and 8pm on Wed. evening. The soup run will be operating every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month throughout the year.

SPONSOR A VINNIE PACK

Sponsor a Vinnie Pack containing a thermal hat, gloves, socks, foil blanket, toothbrush, toothpaste and pen for a suggested donation of £3 and let someone on the streets know that you care. The St. Vincent de Paul Society (England & Wales) hopes to distribute 10,000 Vinnie Packs to people on the street this winter. Please send donations (cheques made out to SVP to Vinnie Packs Project, PO Box 72264, London SW1P 9EZ. Thank you so much for your support.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Daniel Kemp and Diane Baker who were married in St. Thomas' on the 28th December. We wish them a very happy and blessed married life together.



P LEASE PRAY FOR

Sick:- Phil Archer, Ellen Armstrong, Mary Barnes, Alice Binder, Moira Bisset, Angela & Kerry Bromfield, Donald Dourado, Mary Duffy, Francoise Duprey, Michael Durcan, Harold Elston, Alan Farmer, Ray Finney, Fr. Jim Fitzpatrick, Irene & Carter de Freitas, Nora Gaiger, Martin Garnar, Judy & John Gilmartin, Kathleen Gissane, Pat Greene, Amelia Halfyard, Doris Harriss, Fr. Austin Kinsella O.F.M., Mary McKay, Anne McShea, Hannah Martin, Paul Mason, Sadie Meade, Jutta Menzies, Kathleen Meyler, Pat Meyler, Jean Morgan. Maureen Noden, Anthony O'Boyle, Mary O'Boyle, Joanne O'Boyle, Debbie Smythe, Karen Spencer, Carmel Sweeney, Mary Sullivan, Mary Taylor, Terry Wauer, Monica Worsfold.

And for all the sick and housebound of the parish.

Lately Dead:- Virginia Crook, Martin Dwyer, Augustino Freitas, Peter Howes (cousin of Brian), Craig Lobo, Ron Mallett,

Please remember in your prayers the Lobo family in this time of great sorrow.

Anniv: Mr & Mrs Mansbridge,

1ST COMMUNION REMINDER

Group B Session on Saturday, 11th January 10am—11am.

SUNDAY MASSES

St. Thomas'
1st Mass Sat. 6pm; 8.30am;
10am (Children's Liturgy)
11.30am
Chigwell Convent
10am
St. James URC
(Buckhurst Hill)
9am (Children's Liturgy)

WEEKDAY MASSES

St. Thomas'
10am
Chigwell Convent
9.30am
Saturday 10am
(1st Weds of the month)
No morning Mass
Trinity High School
8.20am on Lower Site.

SATURDAY

CONFESSIONS
St. Thomas'
10.30am—11.30am
5.00pm—5.45pm
Chigwell Convent
After 10am Mass
BAPTISMS
1st and 3rd Sundays
Of the month

MOTHER'S PRAYER GROUP

Tuesday, 7th January after the 10am Mass in the Francis Room.

CWL

Meeting Wednesday, 8th January 8pm in the William Scott Room.

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED

Teacher requesting a place to stay in Woodford while preparing for a Headship Monday—Friday Contact Suzanna 07938 373531 or 01773 885529.

SERENITY PRAYER

God grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to
peace;

Taking, as He did, this sinful world
As it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
If I surrender to His Will;
That I may be reasonably happy in this life
And supremely happy with Him
Forever in the next

Amen

St Thomas of Canterbury

557/559 High Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0RB

Served by the Franciscans



A FAIRTRADE PARISH

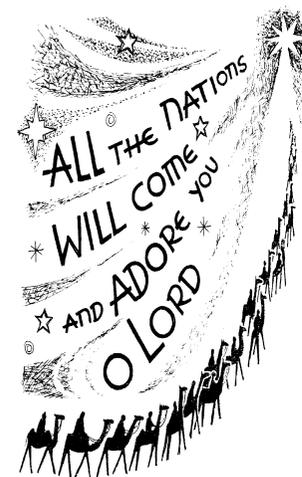
Tel: 020 8504 1686 Fax: 020 8504 1844



Email: parishoffice@friar.org Web: www.stthomaswoodford.org

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

5TH JANUARY 2014



The Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord celebrates the revelation that the infant Jesus is not only the newborn King of the Jews—his origins are divine and his destiny is to suffer and die for the salvation of all people.

First Reading (Isaiah 7:10-14)

Jerusalem is a beacon of hope, not only drawing the exiled Jews back to their home but also attracting all the nations to worship the Lord.

Second Reading (Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6)

The revelation given to Paul is that the pagans share with the Jews the same inheritance and the same promise through the Gospel.

Gospel (Matthew 2:1-12)

The wise men from the East follow the light of a star to find the newborn king of the Jews so that they can worship him and offer him their gifts.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.