

Catholic Parish of Blackiriars

Issue 7
5th January 2020
Year A

Under the care of the Dominican Fathers



VERITAS



Epiphany

HOLY ROSARY CHURCH

Parish Priest
Fr Kieran Adams OP

Assistant Priests
Fr Rafael Cabezon OP
Fr Bernie Maxwell OP

Holy Rosary Church
Cnr Phillip Avenue &
Antill Street, Watson ACT

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Office Staff
Jacquie Cortese
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Office Hours
Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday, Friday
9.00am—12.30pm

Parish Council
Andrew Blakey

Mass times
Wed 5.30pm
Tues & Thurs 6.45am
Fri 5.30pm

Saturday 5pm (Vigil)
Sunday 8am, 10am & 5pm

9am Mass Saturday & Public
Holidays
excluding Mondays

Pray the Rosary
Wed & Fri before 5.30pm Mass
Saturday after 9am Mass
and First Saturday each month
3.30pm

Reconciliation
Saturday 12pm—12.30pm
and 4pm—4.30pm

ACU Chapel Signadou
Thursday—12.30 pm



**If you are in Urgent need of
a Priest Call - 6248 8253**

A warm welcome is extended to guests & parishioners celebrating our Eucharist today.

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| ENTRANCE | Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come; And kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion. |
| GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Alleluia, alleluia! We have seen his star in the East; and have come to adore the Lord. Alleluia! |
| COMMUNION | We have seen his star in the east, and have come with gifts to adore the Lord. |
| READINGS | Isaiah 60:1-6 Ephesians 3:2-3. 5-6 Matthew 2:1-12 |

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| In Your Prayers please remember those in our community who are ill: | Elizabeth Cronin, Mary Bui, Greg O'Neill, Una Bell, Fr Ellis Clifford, Mary Martin, Edith Jensen, Philip Bailey, Maureen Blood, Anne Corver, Barbara Wilson, Awny El-Ghitany, Joe Schimizzi, Elsie Loughton, Alexia Harris, June Pollard, Paul Neddrie, Beth Delos Santos, Rosa Maria Santos, Maria Martiniello, Elizabeth Webster, Frank Zobec, Mimma Giampietro, Zelma McManus, Catherine Feehan, Pamela Sandy, Margaret Suillivan, Fr Joe McGeehan, Charlotte Woolner, Angela Fleming Alphonsa Bankovsky, Ann & Bernard Slammon, Ivy-Pearl Simpson |
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| Our deceased | Patricia Smith, Maria Cuc Dong In Memory of our departed |
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OUR EPIPHANY?

This Sunday we have the marvellous and intriguing story of the 'three wise men from the East' who left their home country to follow a star. Eventually, the star stopped over a stable in Bethlehem. Overwhelmed with joy, they found a Child and his mother. They knelt before the Child, paid him homage, and offered him gifts. Then they left and were never heard of again – but their story has been told and retold thousands of times. I wonder if we are being called to follow their example. Called to be wise, to listen to the soft intimations of the Divine, leading us away from comfortable surroundings to undertake a journey – maybe into unknown territory - where eventually we, too, discover Jesus, with his mother?



THOUGHTS ON THE GOSPEL

‘Excerpt from a commentary by Fr Richard Lonsdale “The Magi or Wisemen. In ancient Iran - also known as Persia - a priest was called a "magus." The plural is "magi". The word "magic" comes from the same root. Magi were experts in astronomy. This was useful in determining the calendar and the end of winter and the spring planting season. They believed that stars and other celestial objects actually influenced, rather than merely coincided with, earthly events. One, or possibly a series of omens, led them to believe that a royal prince had been born in Israel. They were sent as ambassadors to provide tribute to the newborn. The bible does not say how many Magi visited. It is assumed that there were three because of the number of gifts.’
Fr R. Lonsdale <http://www.4catholiceducators.com/lonsdale>

PSALM: 71:1-2, 7-8, 10-13

Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

O God, give your judgment to the king,
to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice
and your poor in right judgment.

In his days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon fails.
He shall rule from sea to sea,
from the Great River to earth's bounds.

The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts
shall pay him tribute.
The kings of Sheba and Seba
shall bring him gifts.
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,
all nations shall serve him.

For he shall save the poor when they cry
and the needy who are helpless.
He will have pity on the weak
and save the lives of the poor.

Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS TOO LATE

Epiphany is the last official day of the Christmas season. Tomorrow, we as a Church transition back to Ordinary Time. The first day of my Christmas break, I would make all sorts of plans. Then, on my last day of Christmas break, I would wake up and realize how few of things I had planned to do I had actually done. Then I would get this overwhelming feeling that I had missed it all. And maybe that's how you feel about the Christmas season. You went to Christmas Mass, had Christmas dinner with your family, opened Christmas presents, but you don't feel a whole lot closer to Jesus. If you feel that way, don't despair! The Three Kings today remind us, it's not too late! Matthew tells us that the three magi, or members of the ruling class from Persia, noticed a new star in the sky, took it as a sign that a new king had been born in Israel and travelled to Jerusalem to greet the newborn king. The distance from Persia to Jerusalem was over 1,000 miles. In Jesus' time, a trip of that distance most likely would have taken months. Talk about arriving to the party late! The shepherds and the choir of angels would have come and gone. All the excitement of Jesus' birth would have been pretty much over by the time the three kings arrived. Even though they were late arrivals, that didn't stop them from having a life-changing encounter with Jesus. When they finally made it the place Jesus was they were overjoyed. When they saw "the child with Mary his mother, they prostrated themselves and did him homage. They opened their treasures" to Him and allowed Jesus into their lives. So, even though this is the last day of the Christmas season, you can still have a new encounter with the Lord this Christmas. Take some time to pray today, opening your heart to the Lord. Tell Him how overjoyed you are that He has Come into the world. Ask Jesus to use you And your treasures this new year. Ask the Three Kings to pray with and for you as you celebrate this last day of Christmas ...It's never too late to meet Jesus.



THE MAGIC KINGS

Epiphany.

Fr Edmund Hill OP considers the meaning of the star that rose in the east.

One must admit that we succeed in giving this feast a rather silly sounding name, in English, with the stress on the second syllable. It's not obvious to most of us what 'Epiphany' even means. Perhaps we would do better to imitate the Spanish and call it *La Fiesta de Los tres Reyes Magos*, the 'Feast of the Three Magic Kings'.

Preachers often remind us that St Matthew doesn't tell us there were three of them, nor that they were kings. But the Magi were, at an early stage of Church tradition, turned into Kings. Perhaps this was because of their gifts, which only kings could afford, but I wonder if there was more to it than that. It might have been because the word *magus* in Latin, as in Greek, quickly came to mean 'wizard' or 'sorcerer'; and sorcery was not considered a good thing in the times when Christianity had become the dominant and official religion of the Roman Empire and the nation states of Europe which succeeded it. So we have the carol 'We three Kings of Orient are..' rather than 'We three Wizards from the East'.

However, when the story that we hear in the Gospel was composed, *magus* referred specifically to Persian soothsayers, who were generally revered as 'wise men'. And so it is that when these wisemen, stargazers, astrologers, saw this new star, they were assumed by the story-teller to know what it meant. They knew what to ask Herod when they got to Jerusalem: Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him. And so they followed the star that, according to their Persian wisdom, presaged the birth of a new king of Judaea, until it stopped and stood over the lowly cattle shed where the child was.

That, of course, is what the star meant to them. But for us it has, or should have, further meanings. We have not only secular science to go on, but also the revealed word of God in Scripture. So first of all it means the fulfillment of the prophecy of Balaam, son of Beor, from the Book of Numbers chapter 24: The oracle of Balaam son of Beor, the oracle of the man whose eye is clear, the oracle of one who hears the words of God, and knows the knowledge of the Most High, who sees the vision of the Almighty, who falls down, but with his eyes uncovered: I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near -- a star shall come out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the borderlands of Moab, and the territory of all the Shethites. Edom will become a possession, Seir a possession of its enemies, while Israel does valiantly.

One out of Jacob shall rule, and destroy the survivors. So here the star represents the King, the wielder of the sceptre. But for us, the prophecy is now to be understood, of course, in a yet much grander sense than it had in the Old Testament where it looked ahead to the kingdom of David and the conquest of the national enemies of the Israelites. The King of the Jews whom the Magi now come to honour is the King of Kings, the King of all nations, the King whose Gospel is destined to conquer the whole world.

And this 'sceptre out of Israel' arose not to subject all the nations to the rule of Israel, but to submit himself to death at the hands of the most powerful empire that had ever arisen, in order to liberate us all from the rule of any earthly king. As we all know, these further meanings of the star in the east are found in the traditional symbolism of the Magi's gifts: Christ the King is represented by the gold, Christ the Priest is represented by the incense and Christ the Sacrificial Victim by the Myrrh, used by the women at his burial. The Child after all was 'born to be King', the King who would reign over the whole world from the cross.

<http://english.op.org/torch>

The strongest people find the courage and caring to help others, even if they are going through their own storm.

EMPTY HANDS

Epiphany.

Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP preaches on the gifts the wise men gave ... and received.

The magi gave the child Jesus 'gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.' Why did they bring him gifts? These would not have been useful for Mary's child. What would they have done with them?

The point of course is not that Jesus's family needed these presents, though presumably gold always comes in handy! These gifts were not in recognition of what he wanted but of who he was. The gold was the recognition of his kingship, the frankincense of his priesthood and the myrrh of the death that he would die.

So the magi gave him gifts in honour of the gift that he was to them, and is to us. These gifts show not that the child Jesus was needy but that *we* are, who long for this priestly king who gave his life for us. The magi go to seek him with their bags full of precious things, but more importantly they depart with their hands empty, and thus able to receive the gift of all that Jesus is. Contrast this with how Herod sees the child, as a threat to what he possesses, to his kingship and riches. His hands are too full to receive the gift that he too is offered in Christ. If we are to receive the gifts of this Epiphany, then we must empty our hands too.

Andreas English is a German religious journalist who had been deeply critical of Pope John Paul II. He accompanied the Pope to India in 1999. He went with the Pope to visit the home of Mahatma Gandhi. He was bored, and watched without interest the Pope remove his shoes to honour this holy Hindu. At best he hoped that the Pope would trip up so that he could get a good photo of him flat on the ground.

Then he got into conversation with an old Indian woman, who had known Gandhi and been sent by the Indian government to witness this event. She said 'Gandhi did not have anything. He had only his two empty hands and his Hindu belief. But the powerful British empire, with all its gunboats and armies, was not able to win the fight against his empty hands. They had no chance against a small faithful Hindu. And so it is with the Pope. He didn't have any armies either. He had only two empty hands like Gandhi, but the Russians were not able to win the fight against his belief, his deep trust in a liberating God.'

This was a moment of revelation that changed the journalist's life for ever.

This Christmas most of us will have given and received gifts. We have probably looked for gifts that our friends do need. Even more profoundly our gifts are, like those of the magi, in recognition of who *are* the people whom we love. We delight in their humanity. If we give them books or wine, it is not just because they need these things, but because we take pleasure in the pleasure that they will have in them. We celebrate their enjoyment.

But the heart of all these celebrations is the one who needs no gifts from us but is pure gift. His very being is given to him by the Father from all eternity, and he comes to give himself to us in turn. To receive that gift, then we too need empty hands. We need to recognise that God's fullness of life is what we most deeply yearn for and create a space to receive it.

The Herods of this world cannot receive the gift, for it would mean letting go of their own fullness and self-satisfaction. They can only see the powerless child as a threat. When Manuel Merten OP, who

told me of this German journalist, went to see the Archbishop of Ho Chi Min city in Vietnam, he asked what was the secret of the wonderful success of the Church in Vietnam. He replied 'I believe it's our powerlessness which makes us so powerful.'



IMPORTANT PARISH INFORMATION

It is important that you contact the office by email, phone or in writing if you would like to a Mass Intention, Memorial Mass, Baptism, or use of the Parish Centre a **minimum two weeks** notice for Wedding bookings **six months** notice is required.

If you DO NOT book through the Office we cannot guarantee your request.

If you would like a loved one in the prayers for the sick, anniversary or death in the *Bulletin*, details must be with the Parish Office **NO** later than **Tuesday 9am** of that week.

HOLY ROSARY CHURCH ACTIVITIES

SCHOOL OF RELIGION / CATECHISTS - This year-long faith education program is intended for children who do not attend Catholic schools. Please contact the Parish Office if you'd like more information. In recess until next year.

BLACKFRIARS MEDITATION GROUP meets on **Thursday** evenings in the 7.30pm Parish Centre. Enquiries John Jarvis 6296 2001 or Michael Flynn 6257 1038 - www.wccm.org

CARDS Play social style 'Cards for fun', **Monday** 10am-1pm in the Parish Centre. All welcome!!!

COFFEE GROUP Our monthly coffee group will meet the **third Thursday** of each month at Siam Twist Hackett at 10.30 am. We look forward to seeing our friends & welcome newcomers.

CRAFT GROUP meets noon - 4.00pm in the Parish Centre on the **first, second and fourth Wednesdays** of the month .

DOMINICAN LIBRARY will open **Saturday** mornings, 9.30am - 12.00 noon in the Parish Centre. All welcome.

HOLY MARY MOTHER OF GOD PRAYER GROUP meets 2.00pm **Thursdays** in the church. Contact the Office.

WEEKLY READER FORMATION Reflections on the readings for the following Sunday are held **Wednesday** evenings at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre. All Parishioners welcome.

PRAY THE ROSARY will be held the First Saturday of every month at 3.30pm in the Church. Confessions available afterwards followed by refreshments in the parish centre. Please bring a plate to share. For information - Letty 0418 518 033

COELIACS Parishioners who are coeliac (intolerant to Gluten) If you wish to receive a gluten free host at Mass you should advise the Celebrant or Acolyte prior to Mass.

PARISH BULLETIN - DEADLINE for notices is **NOON TUESDAY** Ph. 6248 5925 or Email: watson@cg.org.au

POSITION VACANT

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, North Belconnen, is seeking a **Parish Sacramental Program Coordinator**, five hours per week, to commence duties for the school year of 2020. For skills and experience required, please visit www.cg.org.au/belconnennorth. Applications must be submitted online via email by 31st January 2020.



THOUGHTS ON THE GOSPEL

'Through the Incarnation, the generosity and mercy of God have finally appeared among us - in the life of one who is the very expression of the Father's greatness. And so, from earliest times the Church's Christmas celebration has made reference the Epiphany, or "Manifestation" of the Lord - symbolised in the story of today's gospel.

'The story is filled with symbolic meaning. The Magi represent the nations of the earth finding the Saviour of the world - in contrast to the scribes of Israel, familiar with the scriptures but not recognising their fulfilment; the gifts of the Magi are symbolic of the world's confession of faith in Christ - gold for royalty, frankincense for priesthood, myrrh for the one who is to die; notoriously ruthless Herod reminds us of earthly powers that obstruct the designs of God. We should note, especially, the significance of the words, "going in they saw the child with his mother, Mary". While Luke's narrative of Christ's conception and birth has Mary as its central figure, Matthew's account of the virgin birth is centred on Joseph. The words we have quoted, however, reflect the importance already given to Mary in the community that gave us Matthew's gospel.'

Excerpt from a commentary by Fr John Thornhill SM

'A man's true wealth is the good he does in this world.'

| ROSTER | | 11 / 12 January | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Saturday 5pm | | | |
| Acolyte / Server | I. Buckley | | |
| Readers | M. Pentony | J. de Riva O'Phelan | |
| Presentation of Gifts | Tran Family | | |
| EMOE | A. Moore | | |
| Sunday 8am | | | |
| Acolyte / Server | N. McGahey | | |
| Readers | N. Clarke | G. Thompson | |
| Presentation of Gifts | Flynn Family | | |
| EMOE | J. Smith | | |
| Sunday 10am | | | |
| Acolyte / Server | Q. Vu | | |
| Readers | C. Barbaro | P. McDonald | |
| Presentation of Gifts | Vu Family | | |
| EMOE | A. Northcote | S. Tanzer | |
| Sunday 5pm | | | |
| Acolyte / Server | L. Kim | | |
| Readers | . Brotohusodo | M. Tuckwell | |
| Presentation of Gifts | Dobrowolska/Cheyne Family | | |
| EMOE | M. Proctor | K. Sneddon | |
| COUNTERS | G. Gleeson | I. Buckley | |

TRIBUNAL OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Marriage breakdown is usually a traumatic experience for all those concerned with many divorcees unsure of the validity of this marriage within the Catholic Church. The Church reaches out in support of those whose marriage has broken down, while upholding the permanence of a true Christian marriage.

If you are divorced or in the process of finalising your divorce and would like information about the annulment process, please contact the Tribunal on 6239 9813 or by email tribunal@cg.org.au. All enquiries remain confidential to the Tribunal.

TRANSPORT - Due to bus timetable changes a couple who live in the Ainslie area are unable to attend the 10am Mass. If you can help with transport please contact the office.