

Parish OF THE ENGLISH MARTYRS Goring Way

3.01.2021

Father Liam O'Connor, 37 Compton Avenue, Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex. BN12 4UE

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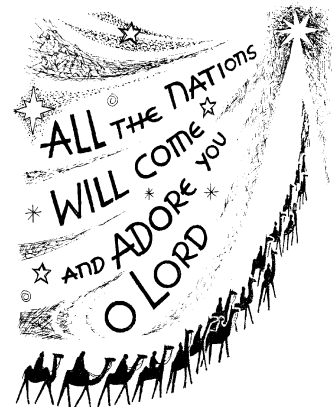
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Deacon Gary Bevans 01903 503514

Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No: 25287

Second Sunday of Christmas

Saturday	2 nd	6.00 pm	Intention of Anne Steere
Sunday	3 rd	8.15am	Peter Sivyer RIP
	1	0.30 am	Pauline McCaul RIP
		6.00 pm	Polish Mass
Monday	4 th	9.30 am	Margaret Mould RIP
Tuesday	5 th	9.30 am	Peter Cope RIP
The Epiphany	6th	9.30 am	Nicholas Murphy RIP & Family
Of the Lord		7.30 pm	Reg Marshall RIP
Thursday	7 th	9.30 am	The Parish
Friday	8 th	9.30 am	Margaret & Edward Seary RIP & Family
Saturday	9 th	6.00 pm	Michael O'Driscoll RIP
Sunday	10 th	8.15 am	Thomas Joseph Hern RIP
		10.30 am	Buddy Lovell RIP



SATURDAY: Reconciliation: 10.15–10.45 am and 5.15 – 5.45 pm

TODAY'S READINGS: Ecclesiasticus 24:1,2,8-12; Ephesians 1:5-6,15-18; John 1:1-5,9-14

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 55:1-11; 1 John 5:1-9; Mark 1:7-11

Wednesday is the Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord and would normally be a Holy Day of Obligation. A recording of this Mass – and our Sunday Masses - can be seen on the Parish Website.

COLLECTIONS: Church: £260 Homestart: £540 (Total) Thank you for your generosity.

Contributions to the Christmas Crib will be sent to Christian Schools in the Holy Land

THIS SUNDAY there will be a second collection for 'Turning Tides' (Worthing Churches Homeless Project)

NEXT SUNDAY there will be a second collection for SPUC (See Note 6)

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: Peter Williams, Sister Raymond, Liz Harvey, Mick Brouder, John Smith, Father Chris Ingle, Eileen Beech, Ian Threlfall, Thomas Duggan, Len Argent, Sister Catherine Lai, Maithe Bennett, Justin Gould, Rose Little, Lelia Murray, Mary Murphy, Anne Steere, Anthony Canneaux, Lawrence Brownlee, Margaret Birch, Lita Yong, Patrick Ryan, Brenda Peazold, Mary Wessel, Gina Palermo, Elizabeth Hoskins, Joan Cutmore, Christine Watson, Gordon Milne, Alfred Deacon, Roni Horstead, Ronnie Tyler, Jenny Begley, Bill Hogg, Breda Schlimgen, Michaela Finn, Winifred Lyons, Yvette Allen, Kerry McStravick, Lydia Van Melsen

2. THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY: YVONNE CARROLL and those whose anniversaries occur about now. Bob Carey, John Donald, Maureen Barrass, Patricia Wyant, Charles Simpson, Herbert Foreman, Beryl Snadden, Brenda McDonald, Donald Perriman, Peggy Smith, Fiona Hague, Kathleen McCarney, Mary Castanes, Anna De Vido, Catherine Bennett, Anna Rofe, Lilian Shaw, Adriana Gaboli, Elvira Kelly, Janine Leyder. *May they rest in peace and rise in glory*

3. FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CLASSES: It has been decided to postpone the weekly lessons for children preparing for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. They had been due to restart on Tuesday but parents have enough on their hands at the moment. The earliest date for resumption will be 19th January. We will keep you posted

4. WHAT IS YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION? Or should it be '**ARE YOU UNDER 70 - YOUR PARISH NEEDS YOU!**' We are, in normal times, a busy parish with many good things happening in it but with Covid-19 we are not able to use our very able over 70's, 80's and 90's thus creating a real need for assistance from those who are under 70. This can only happen if **you** are prepared help. Help is needed with Stewarding at the weekend Masses, Ministers of the Eucharist, Ministers of the Word, Cleaners after each Mass, Flower Arranging. We have a small band of helpers who have been 'on duty' every weekend since 4th July to whom we say a '*Very Big Thank You*'. With more helpers it would be possible to expand the Rota. Please don't leave it to someone else – the Parish really needs **your** help. Please contact Anne in the Parish Office for further information and with your offers of assistance.

5. MARY'S MEALS: There will be a special collection on 16th/17th January. Gift Aid forms will be available in both porches from next weekend

6. WHITE FLOWER APPEAL – The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) will be holding its annual appeal next weekend. SPUC is currently campaigning to stop home abortion, which gives women abortion pills to take home without medical supervision. This is one of the most dangerous threats to unborn children and their mothers in decades. Please be as generous as you can to help us defeat this latest attack on unborn babies and help protect mothers from increased risk of coercion and serious health risks. Donations can also be made online at www.spuc.org.uk/donate.

6. CRIB DONATIONS: We will be sending crib donations to Friends of the Holy Land. Every penny will help the poorest Christian families, especially in and around Bethlehem, the West Bank, Gaza and Israel, with education, employment, health or housing costs and initiatives. FHL is non-political and ecumenical. As we are unable to have our crib this year there is a basket in the West Porch for your donations

FATHER LIAM SAYS: We have arrived at the first Sunday of 2021! We Confidently look forward to a very different and happier year than last year. For us in this Parish 2020 got off to a very splendid start. On this Sunday last year – the first Sunday of the Year – we celebrated the feast of the Epiphany. Even though it was the 5th January it was the day of the Epiphany in England and Wales. It was also the day that we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of our Parish Church of English Martyrs. Our Parish, of course, has been in existence for longer than that and the Barn served as our Parish church until Christmas Day 1969 when the first Mass here was the Midnight Mass. For our Golden Jubilee we decided on the Feast of the Epiphany and Bishop Richard was the chief celebrant. It seems a long time ago, but 2020 has been a very long year, not only for us but for the whole world.

This year the Feast of the Epiphany is celebrated on its traditional date – the 12th day of Christmas. From Sunday last year it moves to Wednesday this year. Covid19 obviously is still raging and still has a long time to go before it is vanquished. Let us all continue to do the best we can to make that happen as quickly as possible. We certainly hope that it will not be necessary for our public Masses to be cancelled ever again. Remember last Lent! All our Holy Week and Easter ceremonies were cancelled and even the churches were closed for private prayer. Public Masses were not allowed until July – and then with many restrictions and conditions which are still in place. We don't expect this to change for some months to come. Easter Sunday this year falls on the 4th April. It would be great if the restrictions could be lifted by then! People who cannot come to Sunday Mass have been finding it much more comfortable and reassuring to participate in Weekday Masses. There is room for many more! We must not become too accustomed to living without the Mass. It is our special meeting with Christ. I would like to express the gratitude of the Parish to Dermot Casey who has been making it possible to view our Sunday Masses on the Parish Website ever since last April. We now come to Epiphany 2021. Normally we would be putting the Magi into the Christmas Crib at this time. This year we have had no Christmas Crib! It would have been very difficult to maintain social distancing, as people would want to gather around the crib. So we have simply placed the figures of Mary & Joseph and the Christ-child in front of the altar. These are the people who have made Christmas happen. The infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke were written to reveal the identity and mission of Jesus. Luke in his account has told us of the shepherds who had heard of the birth of the Messiah, the Lord and came to worship him and welcome him and went away proclaiming him. Without Luke we would have had no shepherds or sheep in our Christmas Crib. Luke is emphasising that Christ has a special love for the poor and the marginalised. Shepherds at that time and place did not enjoy a particularly good reputation and respect but they are pictured as the first to worship the Lord. Luke's Christian community were poor and persecuted and would be greatly encouraged by his message. In Luke's account there are no magi with expensive gifts and no rising star. Matthew and Luke are the only gospel writers who have given us narratives about the infancy of Jesus as a means of revealing who the adult Jesus really is.

The Gospels of Mark and John begin at the start of the ministry of Jesus and the other New Testament writers make no mention of the events surrounding the birth either. So the manner of our celebration of Christmas is based entirely on what Matthew and Luke put before us and it is they who people our traditional cribs and inspire our beautiful Christmas carols and Christmas plays.

The Feast of the Epiphany is one of the few occasions this year when we have a reading from Matthew's Gospel. He wrote his gospel when non-Jews were flocking into the church and Christians who had come to the faith from Judaism had difficulty in welcoming them. Matthew as a Christian and as a Jew is reaching out to his fellow Jews to encourage them to recognise that Jesus is the fulfilment of their scriptures and their hopes. The Magi or the wise men represent the non-Jews who had come to accept Christ. They lacked the scriptures which had been the privilege of the Jews so they had to beg guidance from the Jewish texts of Revelation before they could finish their search for the Christ. The star which was commonly believed to appear at the birth of an important leader was not sufficient. Matthew was rejoicing that the non-Jews – the Gentiles – were now availing of the Jewish heritage and of the Jewish Scriptures and had begun to accept the Messiah. But Matthew was saddened that the Jews themselves had in large measure failed to recognise Jesus as their Messiah. The Magi – the Gentile wise men – discovered Jesus and fell on their knees and paid homage. The gifts they brought expressed their belief in his Kingship (gold), in his priestly people (incense) and his redeeming death (myrrh). The Jewish leaders however stayed where they were in Jerusalem. Matthew is pleading with them to reconsider their attitude to Jesus and recognise him as the Messiah – the Christ. Jesus is the new Moses. There are echoes of the birth of Moses, Pharaoh had ordered the killing of the male infant children of the Jewish people in Egypt but Moses escaped the massacre and grew to lead his people out of slavery. Jesus is the new liberator and the new lawgiver. Jesus is also presented in terms of David, the great Shepherd-King. It was in Bethlehem, the town of David, that Jesus was born. In this introduction to the story of Jesus he invites his fellow Jews to re-read and re-interpret their holy scriptures and find Jesus.