

St Mary's & St Columba's Parish Newsletter

Solemnity of The Epiphany of the Lord

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Epiphany fact and fiction

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany, meaning appearance or revelation. The best-known Epiphany Carol is "We Three Kings of Orient are". Unfortunately, the only part of that which we know to be true is that the visitors to Jesus came from the East or Orient. As we hear in today's Gospel, "some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east". We should note that Matthew is the only one of the Gospel writers to mention the Magi – and he doesn't mention the rest of the narrative which only comes from Luke.

The gospel never mentions the number of Magi. Still, most western Christian denominations have traditionally assumed there to have been three, based on the three gifts. In Eastern Christianity the Magi often number twelve. Furthermore, there is no reason to believe that they were all men; in the original, we have a group of people, at least one of whom was male.

The identification of the Magi as kings is linked to Old Testament prophecies in Psalms and Isaiah such as we have in today's Psalm which describes the Messiah being worshipped by kings. Early readers reinterpreted Matthew in light of these prophecies and elevated the Magi to kings.

We are conveniently celebrating the Epiphany 12 days after Christmas, giving the impression that the visit of the Magi is a continuation of the birth narrative and the visit by the shepherds. Nativity plays tend to reinforce that view. But Matthew doesn't say it is at the same time. He says that the Magi went into a house rather than a stable. We also know that when Herod discovers the Magi have not come back to him, he orders that all males under the age of two are killed. This clearly implies (but does not prove) that the visit of the Magi was one or even two years after Jesus' birth.

All that said, there are some important points from the visit of the Magi. Firstly, the gifts fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy from the first reading. Gold denotes royalty; Incense is used to honour God; Myrrh is used to embalm dead bodies. So, in those gifts we have the picture that Jesus is King, God and will suffer. Secondly, the Magi were foreigners. Jesus is King for the whole world, not just the Jews – which is perhaps as well for us.

Have a happy feast day.

Deacon Graeme

Please find below details of this week's Mass intentions and other services in our Parish of St Mary's, Castletown (C/T) and St Columba's, Port Erin (P/E).

Week commencing 7th January			
Sunday 7 th January Solemnity of The Epiphany of the Lord	C/T P/E	9 am 11 am	Pam Dalton-Brown People of the Parish
Monday 8 th January Baptism of the Lord			No Mass
Tuesday 9 th January Weekday in Ordinary Time	P/E	10 am	Bill Darcy (RIP)
Wednesday 10 th January Weekday in Ordinary Time	C/T	10 am	Kerry Doherty (Sick)
Thursday 11 th January Weekday in Ordinary Time	P/E	10 am	Anna Maley
Friday 12 th January Weekday in Ordinary Time	C/T	10 am	Elaine Morley (RIP)
Saturday 13 th January Weekday in Ordinary Time	C/T	10 am	Thanksgiving to Our Lady of Rushen
Sunday 14 th January 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time	C/T P/E	9 am 11 am	People of the Parish Anne Burns

Response to the Psalm:

All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, Alleluia!

We saw his star as it rose
and have come to do the Lord homage.

Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon:

We have seen his star in the East,
and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.

Offertory Collection: Sunday 24th December £228.14

Christmas Day £273.30

Christmas Offerings £225.00

Manx Language Service: Takes place this Sunday at St Mary's at 3 pm. The service will be of nine lessons and carols.

January: Fr Joseph will be away during this month, with the consent of Monsignor Devine. While Fr Joseph is away, Fr Peter will celebrate all the Masses in the parish, and the parish contacts are Deacon Alan and Brendan O'Friel.

Mass Intentions: Pam Dalton-Brown, Bill Darcy, Kerry Doherty, Anna Maley, Elaine Morley, Anne Burns and Thanksgiving to Our Lady of Rushen.

Parish Diary:

7th January 3 pm	Manx language service of nine lessons and carols St Mary's.
10th January 2-4 pm	Craft Club – Restarts for the New Year. This is a lovely social gathering where we bring along a craft we are working on or just drop in for a cup to tea and a slice of cake. All are welcome. 73 Ballacriy Park, Colby.
13th January 10 am to 1 pm	Island Spirituality Network at St John's Mill. The theme is Moving through the bible with Revd Jo Smart.
29th January 8 pm	Charity concert by Rushen Silver Band at St. Columba's.
20th April	Sacrament of Reconciliation.
18th May	First Communion Mass.

If there are other future events of which you are aware, please let us know so we can add them to the diary. **Social Club Committee contact details:** Susan 460514, Nick 431606, Dee 437487, or Lynn 472867.