

THE ORATORY—dedicated to THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

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Registered as a Charity

Parish Weekly Newsletter

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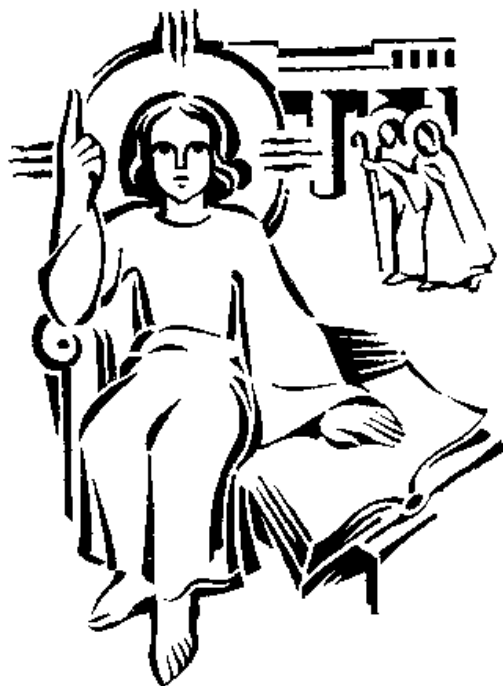
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This newsletter is available in large-print format. Ask at the Sacristy.

December 27th 2009: THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY



MY FATHER'S AFFAIRS

The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple of which we hear in today's Gospel is the only event from the "hidden life" of Nazareth which is recounted in the Gospels. As with the entire infancy narrative which we have heard over the last week or so, this event is taken from St. Luke's Gospel and is evidence of the special connection between St. Luke and Our Blessed Lady, for only she can have given St. Luke the information on which he bases his accounts.

In fact, on three occasions in St. Luke's account of the early years he uses a very telling phrase in connection with Our Lady—he tells us that "*Mary stored up all these things and pondered them in her heart*". This is the reason why this event is remembered—because She remembered it and pondered its true significance not just once but throughout her life. Our Lady is the first of Our Lord's disciples—the first to reflect deeply over and over again on the meaning and depth of all His words and deeds. She knew from the Angel Gabriel who her Son was, but she also grew in her own understanding of just what it meant to say that He was the "Son of God".

What does this event tell us about Our Lord and His Mother? First, that Our Lady remembered this event as the first indication from her Son that He knew exactly who He was Himself. He always behaved as the son of Joseph, living under his authority and even being known in Nazareth as Joseph's son. But in reality He knew, just as His Mother knew, that

though He was certainly Mary's son, He was not conceived of Joseph.

Secondly, it shows us that Our Lord was already a most impressive young boy, showing great intelligence and wisdom in connection with "His Father's affairs". The religious authorities based in the Temple were the leading scholars and teachers of the Jewish religion and of the interpretation of God's word in the Scriptures. They were "astounded" at the questions He asked them and the answers He gave to their own questions. Yet even after this, St. Luke tells us that Jesus "*continued to grow in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and men*". Some commentators have suggested that if Jesus could grow in wisdom and in favour with God, then He cannot already have been the Son of God, but rather was an exceptionally gifted child who grew into a special relationship with God. This idea is false because it ignores the central fact of the story, which was the very reason why Our Lady remembered it: **Our Lord's own words.**

Our Lady recalled this event not because of the trauma of seeming to lose her Son for three days, however terrifying the experience was for her. That fact alone did not warrant its inclusion in the Gospel. No—the one reason why she pondered on this event and so recounted it to St. Luke for inclusion in his Gospel was because of Jesus's answer to her question, "*Son, why have you done this to us?*" He replied, in exactly the way He would so often do in His future public ministry, by posing another question to her: "*Why were you looking for me? Did you not know I must be busy with my Father's affairs?*" The very strangeness of the words and the depths of meaning that they implied was the reason for Our Lady's pondering them and telling them to St. Luke, so that he could in turn tell us about the self-understanding of the Son of God even when He was only a boy.

Sunday December 27th: The Feast of the Holy Family (White)

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| • 8.30 a.m. <i>Low Mass</i> | • 12.00 p.m. <i>(Families with young children)</i> |
| • 9.30 a.m. <i>Latin Low Mass—1962 Missal</i> | • 5.30 p.m. <i>Sung Congregational Mass</i> |
| • 10.30 a.m. <i>High Mass</i> | • 7.30 p.m. <i>Vespers and Benediction</i> |

OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS: Liturgical Calendar

Year 2 of the Lectionary at Weekday Mass and Psalter Week 1 in the Divine Office

Tuesday to Friday: Masses at 7.30 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m.

Confessions are heard from 12.30 p.m. and from 5.30 p.m. until the end of Mass.

PLEASE SEE OVERLEAF FOR EXCEPTIONS THIS WEEK

<p>Monday 28th December: The Feast of the Holy Innocents. (Red) BANK HOLIDAY: Masses at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No evening devotions <hr/> <p>Tuesday 29th December: Fifth Day within the Octave of Christmas. (White) Optional memoria of <i>St Thomas Becket, Bishop & Patron of the English Pastoral Clergy. (Red)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Mass in the 1962 rite at 11 a.m. Benediction at 8 p.m. <p>St Thomas Becket (d. 1170) at his friend King Henry II's urging the Pope made him Archbishop of Canterbury so that the King might gain greater control over the Church. However, Thomas was changed by the grace of ordination and became a strong defender of the freedom of the Church from royal influence. This led him to be seen by King Henry as an enemy rather than a friend as he had been before his consecration. So on 29th December 1170 St. Thomas was murdered at the King's wish by the King's knights in Canterbury Cathedral.</p> <hr/> <p>Wednesday 30th December: Sixth Day within the Octave of Christmas. (White)</p> <hr/> <p>Thursday 31st December: Seventh Day within the Octave of Christmas. (White) Optional memoria of <i>St Sylvester, Pope. (White)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Years Eve Vigil at 9.30 p.m. concluding with the First Mass of the Solemnity of the Mother of God (Please see below for details) <p>St Sylvester was Pope at the time of the Constantine's accession as first Christian Emperor of Rome. Freedom from persecution granted by the new Emperor allowed him to build up the public life of the Church, founding the Church of St. John in the Lateran Palace, which remains to this day the Cathedral of the Pope.</p> <hr/> <p>Friday 1st January 2010: Octave Day of Christmas: Solemnity of Our Lady, Mother of God. (White) BANK HOLIDAY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low Mass at 8 a.m. Extraordinary Rite Low Mass at 9.30 a.m. Solemn High Mass at 11 a.m. No evening devotions <hr/> <p>Saturday 2nd January: St Basil the Great and St Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church. Memoria, (White)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Masses at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8.30 to 10.45 a.m. Benediction at 10.45 a.m. Confessions from 10.55 a.m. to 12 noon & from 5.30 p.m. 	<p>January 3rd: The Solemnity of the Epiphany (White) .</p> <p>Mass & Service Times:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.30 a.m. Low Mass 9.30 a.m. Latin Low Mass 1962 Missal 10.30 a.m. High Mass 12.00 p.m. (Families with young children) 5.30 p.m. Sung Congregational in English 7.30 p.m. Vespers and Benediction <hr/> <p>Please pray for the sick: Pat Cartwright, Geoff Jones, Francis Ratcliffe, Leroy McCoy, Carolyn Knight, James Foynes, Michael McCann, Philip McCann, Dorothy Josebury, Maureen Smith and Celia Reddy.</p> <p>Of your charity please pray for Thomas Gilraine and Christina McDougall;</p> <p>and of the souls of those whose anniversaries occur about now: Fr. Edward Caswell and Fr. Francis Etherington both of this Oratory. Bill Chavasse, Russell Roebuck, Susie Wilkie, Michael Shiels and Alfredo Testa.</p> <hr/> <p>The following are requested to read at Mass next weekend, January 2nd/3rd, The Epiphany:</p> <p>Saturday 5.45 p.m.: Jenni Hardwick Sunday 8.30 a.m.: Murray Wilson-Browne 12.00 p.m.: Dulcie Robinson 5.30 p.m.: Simon Stacey</p> <hr/> <p>Collections:</p> <p>4th Sunday of Advent: 20th December, 2009 Offertory: £1,277 Second: SVP: £670</p> <p>Christmas Day Offertory: £1983.00 Clergy Offering: 3747.00</p> <p>Thank you</p>
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<p>TODAY</p> <p>THE SECOND COLLECTION THIS WEEKEND will be the Diocesan Pro-Life collection.</p> <p>The CRIB COLLECTION this year is for SURVIVEMIVA, the Association which provides vehicles for Missionaries throughout the world.</p> <p>EPIPHANY DRAW tickets are at the Church Doors. Please take as many as possible for yourselves and to sell to others. Please return counterfoils and money in an envelope marked "Prize Draw" to one of the Fathers or to the Oratory House. We would be glad to receive donations of unwanted Christmas presents to offer as prizes. (Please note that the items must be unused!)</p> <p>The PIETY STALL is open after Saturday 11 a.m. and 5.45 p.m. Masses and all Sunday Masses.</p> <p>CARDINAL NEWMAN HERITAGE PROJECT: The Oratory Primary School's very interesting exhibition in the Cloister Buildings, which can be viewed over the next few weeks, covers aspects the history of life in Ladywood at Christmastide</p> <p>THIS WEEK</p> <p>The ANNUAL PRO-LIFE VIGIL of the Holy Innocents takes place in the Cloister Chapel on Sunday night (27th) at 10 p.m. and ending with Holy Mass at 6 a.m. on Monday. (Entrance via the car park)</p>	<p>The NEW YEAR'S EVE VIGIL will Commence at 9.30 p.m. with prayers, as requested by Our Lady at Fatima, for peace, the conversion of sinners and reparation for sins against her Immaculate Heart. Mass of the Solemnity of the Mother of God (January 1st) will be at 11.45 p.m. Refreshments will be served after Mass.</p> <p>ADORATION AT REDNAL will not take place this week.</p> <p>The SOCIETY OF ST HUGH of LINCOLN Christmas Party is at 2 p.m. on Saturday 2nd January in the Oratory House. All are welcome.</p> <p>FORTHCOMING EVENTS</p> <p>The ANNUAL EPIPHANY PRIZE DRAW will take place in the Lower Cloister Hall. after the 8 p.m. High Mass on Wednesday 6th January. There will be a light buffet and soft drinks for which there will be an entrance fee of £2, (The cost will also cover a separate raffle for those there.) You are welcome to bring your own alcohol.</p> <p>ORDER OF MALTA PILGRIMAGE TO LOURDES 30th April-7th May: Sick, disabled and aged people are invited to take part in a pilgrimage £250 is asked towards the cost, but anything over that amount is welcomed from those who can afford it. Accommodation in the Accueil Notre Dame. Contact Anthony Brown on 01823 480441 or email: alison-anthony@battensfarm.fsnet.co.uk</p>
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<p>YEAR FOR PRIESTS—a reflection by Pope Benedict XVI</p> <p>St John Vianney's example naturally leads me to point out that there are sectors of cooperation which need to be opened ever more fully to the lay faithful. Priests and laity together make up the one priestly people and in virtue of their ministry priests live in the midst of the lay faithful, "that they may lead everyone to the unity of charity, 'loving one another with mutual affection; and outdoing one another in sharing honour'" (Rom 12:10). Here we ought to recall the Second Vatican Council's hearty encouragement to priests "to be sincere in their appreciation and promotion of the dignity of the laity and of the special role they have to play in the Church's mission. ... They should be willing to listen to lay people, give brotherly consideration to their wishes, and acknowledge their experience and competence in the different fields of human activity. In this way they will be able together with them to discern the signs of the times".</p>
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