

The Week Ahead

Mon 8th	BAPTISM OF THE LORD	7.15am, 12.30pm, 6.00pm
Tues 9th	feria	7.15am, 12.30pm, 6.00pm
Wed 10th	feria	7.15am, 12.30pm, 6.00pm
Thur 11th	feria	7.15am, 12.30pm, 6.00pm
Fri 12th	S Aelred	7.15am, 12.30pm, 6.00pm
Sat 13th	S Hilary	10.00am [6.00pm Vigil Mass]

Sun 14th SECOND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR 8.30am, 9.30am [*Extraordinary Form*]
10.30am [*Solemn Latin*]
Missa Hodie Christus natus est *Palestrina*
Tubilate Deo *Hassler*; O sacrum convivium *Tallis*
Lobet den Herren miy Pauken und Zimbeln Schön *Karg-Elert*
12.00 Noon, 4.00pm & 7.00pm

As in past years, **Crib offerings** are being given to the **Westminster Catholic Children's Society** – they can be left in the marked slot near the main door. Up till now, **£770** has been donated.

A Prayer to the Child Jesus:

O Jesus, Prince of Peace and King of the Universe, you chose to humble yourself and come into the world, not as a powerful ruler, but as a helpless infant; grant us the grace of humility and gentleness before you and our brothers and sisters. Grant, too, O Lord, that we may always strive to achieve the virtue and innocence of your own holy childhood. Instil in us a growing faith in you, O Lord, and the strength to resist temptation in a world which so widely rejects you. Look upon us with compassion and forgive us our sins. Fill our hearts with kindness and understanding especially for children, the aged and those we dislike or who dislike us. O Jesus, who so loved the young that you admonished us "unless you become like little children you will not enter the kingdom of heaven", grant us a child-like faith and purity of heart. Give us the grace not only to pray fervently, but to help spread your Gospel by deed as well as word. **Amen.**

Holy Hour and Benediction

Saturday
4.45pm-5.45pm

Confessions

Weekdays 12.00-1.00pm
Saturday 10.30am-Noon

Last Week's Giving
£3,237.00

*(includes envelopes but not
bankers orders etc.)*

St James's Roman Catholic Church, Spanish Place
22 George Street, London W1U 3QY

Epiphany
of
The
Lord



7th
January
2018

Latin texts
pages 77/78
in the
Mass Book

**TODAY'S
LITURGY**
Parish Mass Book
page 118

Isaiah 6:1-6; Ephesians 3:2-3.5-6; St Matthew 2:1-12

Psalm Response:

All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.

10.30am Paukenmesse *Haydn*
Omnes de Saba *Lassus*; Fiat lux *Dubois*

*Refreshments are served in the Social Centre after
the 9.30am & 10.30am Masses. Do join us.*

The Reverend Christopher G. Colven (Rector)

The Reverend
Nicholas
Kavanagh

The Reverend
David J Irwin

The Reverend
Hugh MacKenzie

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The Rector writes

It is paradoxical, but social media seem to reinforce rather than challenge current orthodoxies: instead of evidence based opinions, we too easily fall into the trap of accepting views merely because they are often repeated. I have to admit that I have been guilty of perpetuating the notion that we live in an increasingly secularised environment and, while this is still what most people seem to think, it is a theory that is beginning to fray at the edges. Certainly allegiance to traditional patterns of religious expression are becoming more tenuous (in our own country nowhere is this plainer than in the decline of its Established Church) but it is wrong to draw from this the conclusion that the search for an understanding of the mystery of God is any less prescient – a fact that to which the BBC has now woken up in the recent revision and significant increase in its religious programming as being “*what people want*”.

The celebration of Christmas at Spanish Place this year has proved something of an eye-opener (and perhaps a game-changer). Many, if not most, of our regular congregation leave London at the major festivals – this year was no exception. Yet the church was fuller at the Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve than I have ever seen it: over nine hundred people filled every seat and stood in every available space. At Midnight, another six hundred crowded in, and the Midday Mass on Christmas Day saw a congregation of three hundred and fifty. With the other Masses included, there were well over two thousand people in Saint James’s in less than twenty four hours. What does this mean? Numbers in themselves are not of great significance, but they do point to the conclusion that our acceptance of the idea of a growing secularisation of society (in our own case of this metropolis) needs some revision. The evidence would seem to be moving in another direction and to show that, not only are those from a Catholic background wanting to keep in contact with their roots (the numbers of young people here over Christmas was noticeable) but that there are also many among the “*un-churched*” who are more than willing to enter a Catholic church to gauge the Gospel that is being offered within its walls.

While on the one hand I am not saying that Catholics in this country are about to experience a “*third spring*” and some sort of return to a glorious pre-Reformation past (pace Eamonn Duffy), I do believe that there are green shoots appearing and that we have a responsibility to see that they are nurtured and brought to fruition. Because it is my faith that the fullness of Christianity subsists in the Catholic Church and that it is within her communion that the means to salvation are most readily available, I am absolutely committed to finding means

to evangelisation which address the ache for God which is to be found within each human heart. Saint Augustine said it all those centuries ago: “*my heart is restless till it rests in Thee*”. Whether there exists a religious gene by which some people are more sensitive to the things of God, or not, it remains our understanding that no human person is truly complete without a reciprocal relationship with his or her Creator. “*The desire for God is written in the human heart, because we are created by God: and God never ceases to draw us to himself. Only in God will we find the truth and happiness we never stop searching for*” (Catechism).

The search for religious meaning takes many forms – and we acknowledge and respect the paths followed by other faiths, most notably in our own locality by that of Judaism and Islam – but if we do believe that Jesus is “*the image of the unseen God and the first-born of all creation, for in him were created all things in heaven and on earth*” (Colossians 1:15) then we must use every opportunity to help others live with and in Christ. The New Year is a time for resolutions: why not promise God that a) in 2018 you will deepen your knowledge of your Catholic faith and practice, and b) that once a month you will bring someone new along to Mass with you? “*Would you like to see God glorified by you? Then rejoice in your neighbour’s progress and you will immediately give glory to God*” (Saint John Chrysostom).

Christopher Colven

NOTICES

A very sincere “**thank you**” from your priests for all your kindness and generosity to them over Christmas: they much appreciated all your cards and gifts. The gratitude of the rest of the parish is extended to those who worked so hard – in the sanctuary and the organ loft especially – to ensure that Christmas went so smoothly and happily.

This weekend sees the annual **White Flower appeal** which will be collected at the end of each Mass by the main door. The appeal is made on behalf of the pro-life work undertaken by the **Society for the Protection of the Unborn**.

With the beginning of the New Year and the return to school of our young people the **sacramental programmes** are starting up again. The **First Holy Communion** children meet either on Tuesday or Thursday this week: the **adult instruction** is from 7-8pm on Tuesday in the rectory (not too late to join), and the teenagers’ **Confirmation programme** meets next Sunday (14th) from 5-6pm in the social centre.