

Collect for The Epiphany:

O God, who by the leading of a star manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith, may at last behold your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Post Communion prayer:

Lord God, the bright splendour whom the nations seek: may we who with the wise men have been drawn by your light discern the glory of your presence in your Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER POINTS:

- For the One Can Trust.
- For all those struggling with debt & the work of CAP.
- For our clergy, churchwardens, PCC and all those who volunteer at St Mary's.
- For the homeless, sleeping on the streets this winter.
- For all those affected by the fires in Australia & those working in the emergency services.
- For those caught up in the conflicts in Libya, Syria and Somalia.
- For the lonely and housebound.

PLEASE PRAY FOR ALL THOSE IN IMMEDIATE NEED OF HEALING AND PEACE:

Matteo Bellini, Philippa King, Maggie Wooster, Suzie Aries, Fred and Jenny Deverill, Frances Goodchild, Rob and Sally Goodchild, Marion Long, Joseph Fell, Iris Austin, Norman Edwards, John Hardy, Debby and Jim Cadwallader, The Goodridge family, Richard Hayward, Shirley and Eric Watts, Liz and Paul Bracken, Michael Hopkins, Kelly May, Joyce Bapty, Richard Heaney, Alex Lake, Barbara Higgins, Simon Clegg.

WE HAVE ALSO BEEN ASKED TO PRAY FOR:

Mel Rolfe, Gideon, Mary Jefferies, Keith & Judy Brambleby, Barbara Platts, Tony Mead, Hazel Boon, Helena Oecken, Jean Moses, Bill & Marge Philips, Jean Coleman, Liz Lister and Mary Williams.

WE REMEMBER WITH THANKSGIVING THE LIFE OF:

Josephine Hipwell, Eunice Clifford.

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Open: Mon & Tues: 9:30am -1.30pm, Weds & Thurs 9:30am -5.00pm

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St Mary's
with
St Peter's
PRINCES RISBOROUGH
& ILMER

News

**Sunday January 5th 2020,
Feast of the Epiphany**

Dear Friends

On New Year's Eve, BBC News mentioned that observers had noticed unusual activity in one of the stars and suggested that it might be dying. It would appear that there is nothing new in noting information of activity in the sky. The 'wise men from the East' were among that number. However, the best data collection at that time was carried out by the Chinese. According to their contemporary records, there was a spectacular comet with a long tail which appeared in the Middle East in 5BC and was visible for seventy days.

Of the number of censuses held in that region, the most likely date for the one which meant Mary and Joseph travelling to Bethlehem was also the same year. It is difficult to find evidence of the massacre of young children but such behaviour would not be too far from what we do know of Herod (who died in 4BC). He was suspicious of anyone who he thought might threaten his position – from friends to relatives to priests and nobles – he had them all killed. Most people now accept the discrepancy in dating around Jesus' birth but there is so much non-Biblical evidence to support much of the accounts we were brought up with that we cannot dismiss it as nonsense.

In our times, as we enter the twenties, two things come to mind. The first is the lust for power. A book written by Jeremy Paxman a few years ago pointed out how many politicians past and present had situations in their early lives – often with some form of hardship – that drove them with excessive force to seek high office. We might observe the additional dangers of having an over inflated *ego*. By contrast, Mary's song, even before the birth of Jesus, presented us with a world where values are turned upside down and the powerful are brought down from their thrones and the rich sent away empty. On the other hand the lowly are lifted up and the hungry are filled with good things. **P.T.O.**

The second point is that *they* (the Holy Family) *left for their own country by another road*. Events of recent times, where the values and standards that were part of my growing up seem to have been discarded, have, at times, made me think that I no longer here. However that is nothing compared with *having* to become a refugee. Can we imagine what it must be like to make a long journey to a 'promised land' of which we know little, cannot speak the language, do not understand the culture, have no contacts and no money and are open to many forms of exploitation? This is the lot of an increasing number of people on this planet. They are the humble and meek who are often at the mercy of the few who have much power but little sense of responsibility.

However, it is not all doom and gloom. Very often, in the scriptures, when God is doing the new thing, the human response is fear. Many are fearful at this time so it would do us well to try to get nearer to the spirit of the loving God who *makes all things new*. He keeps his promises: the word Emmanuel, after all, reminds us that God is with us - through all the changing scenes of life. This gives us hope at the start of a New Year! Be blessed!

Can Nick Molony

NEWS & NOTICES.

CHRISTMAS APPEAL: A huge **THANK YOU** to all who gave so generously towards our Christmas appeal to help the hospital where Nicci Maxwell, our CMS mission partner works in Uganda. The good news is that we raised the money needed for a new oxygen concentrator for their children's hospital and we raised over our target set to raise £850! Please see Kaye Lillycrop if you would like further information.

ALPHA: We will be running an Alpha course on Weds evenings in 2020, **starting on 29th Jan, 7.30pm**. Please tell your friends! Email stmarysprcurate@gmail.com

MESSY CHURCH: Excited about messy Church? Want to be equipped in how to be involved in this exciting ministry? Come along to our training morning on Saturday 1st February, 10am-1pm. Lunch will be provided, fun guaranteed. Email stmarysprcurate@gmail.com for more info.

MENS AND LADIES' BREAKFAST IN JANUARY: The first men's breakfast of the new year will be on Saturday 11th January at 8.45am in the Church Hall. Contact Phil on philince@gmail.com if you could like to attend. The next Ladies' breakfast will be on 18th January at 9am in St Mary's.

CORRECTION TO JANUARY 2020 VIEWPOINT P.20: In the Zero Carbon Cafe poster, the CANR online forum address should be corrected to <http://canrisborough.freeforums.net/>.

Sunday 5th January, The Epiphany **Readings: Isaiah 60: 1 - 6, Matthew 2: 1 - 12**

- 8.00am** Holy Communion at St Mary's
- 9.30am** Parish Communion followed by coffee .
- 11.15am** TGIS with children's groups
- 3.00pm** Open Door, a New Year Tea, in the Chapter House
- 3.00pm** Evensong at St Peter's, Ilmer

What's on in the week beginning Monday 6th January

- Weds 8th**
 - 8.30am** Morning Prayer in St Mary's
 - 9.00am** Wednesday Prayers in St Mary's
 - 10.30am** Holy Communion at St Mary's followed by coffee
- Thurs 9th**
 - 10.30am** Coffee in the Chapter House
- Fri 10th**
 - 8.00am** Morning Prayer in St Mary's
 - 2.00pm** Praise & Play
 - 6.30 – 8.30pm** Puppet Club in Church Hall
- Sat 11th**
 - 8.30am** Men's Breakfast in Church hall

Sunday 12th January, 1st Sunday of Epiphany / Start of Winter Sermon Series **Readings: Psalm 92: 1 - 15, Luke 2: 41 - 52**

- 8.00am** Holy Communion at St Mary's
- 9.30am** Parish Communion followed by coffee .
- 11.15am** TGIS with children's groups

Rector: Revd. David Williams 346984

Associate Minister: Revd. Michael Hunt 344150 **Curate:** Revd Pat Kerr 273980

Assistant Clergy: Revds. David & Nancy Wallace 290670;
Revds. Steve & Rose Williams 274225; Canon Nick Molony 273895;
Revd. Jenny Deverill 274269; **LLM:** Averil Stephenson 343649

Churchwardens: David Stephenson and Bryan Matthew