

Message No 43: 3rd January 2021

Today's Mass Readings: The SECOND SUNDAY of CHRISTMAS

Sirach 24: 1-2, 8-12; *Psalms* 147; *Ephesians* 1: 3-6, 15-18; *John* 1: 1-18

First Reading: “*Wisdom speaks her own praises*”. Christians understand Wisdom as Christ, and this passage as describing how Wisdom (= Christ) makes its dwelling in Israel. Christ is present “*in the holy Tabernacle*”, that is to say in the Temple in Zion (= Jerusalem), and of course is present in the holy Tabernacle in our churches.

Psalm: a psalm of praise, giving some of God's deeds which are deserving of our praise.

Second Reading: if today's *Gospel* is profound, this passage is one of the most beautiful in all scripture, with a depth and resonance unsurpassed in Christian praise of God.

Gospel: the famous beginning, or Prologue, of *St John's Gospel*. *John* identifies Jesus Christ with the Word of God, through whom everything was created, and who is a light overcoming the darkness. *John* is analysing the significance of Jesus, as one commentator has put it, ‘from a transcendent and eternal vantage point’. *John* (the Baptist) was Christ's forerunner and witness. One could spend eternity meditating on this passage!

Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord - Wednesday (6th)

Wednesday is a Holyday of Obligation (or would be if we still had the Obligation), recalling the visit of the Wise Men to the Christ-child. This is the first time it has not fallen on a Sunday since the Bishops transferred it back to the proper date. Holy Mass as follows:

St Thomas's: 8:00am (Latin), 9:30am, 8:00pm. All three will be livestreamed. There is no 12:00 noon Mass.

Holy Trinity: 10:00am.

St Bernadette's: 11:00am.

St Joseph's: 6:00pm. There will be NO Mass on Thursday at St Joseph's.

Parish Office

reopens on Monday 4th, at the usual times of 9:30am - 12:30pm, Monday to Friday, for routine matters such as booking Mass Intentions, collecting First Holy Communion books, etc.

Crib Offerings

The Crib Offerings will be sent to the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre for onward transmission to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, to aid schools etc in the Holy Land.

St Thomas' School

At present it seems that the government have put back the beginning of Term in schools in this area, other than for vulnerable children and children of key workers. Parents/guardians should pay close attention to information from the school.

Priests' stipends

Several parishioners have asked me to clarify how the priests are 'paid'. Supply priests - like Monsignor Matthew Dickens and Fr Mark Odion, MSP - are paid a set amount for coming to offer Sunday Masses: £150 for one Mass and £200 for two. This sum includes mileage.

Fr David and Fr Paul - who have appointments as priests of the parish - receive your donations for Mass Intentions and Stole Fees (things like Baptisms, Funerals and Weddings) and your Christmas and Easter Offerings.

I have also been asked for the Parish Bank Account details, for you to make a contribution by bank transfer:

Bank: NatWest
A/c name: RCAS ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY SEVENOAKS
Sort Code: 60 19 02
A/c No: 25782002.

St Roch, pray for us.

St Joseph, pray for us.

St Thomas of Canterbury, pray for us.

St Bernadette, pray for us.

St Edith of Kemsing, pray for us.

Fr David

***Fr David Gibbons, KHS
Parish Priest of Sevenoaks***

*12 Granville Road
Sevenoaks TN13 1ER*

*davidgibbons@rcaos.org.uk
01732 454177*