



PARISH OF SAINT FELIX, FELIXSTOWE

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December 26th, 2021 : FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Sunday Mass

Sunday 10.0am Int. For the People

Weekday Masses

Monday FEAST OF ST.JOHN
9.30am Int.
Tuesday FEAST OF THE HOLY
INNOCENTS
9:30am Int. For the safety of Unborn
Children
Wednesday FEAST OF ST.THOMAS
BECKET
9:30am Int. The Clergy of the Deanery
Thursday SIXTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS
OCTAVE
9.30am Int.
Friday SEVENTH DAY OF
CHRISTMAS OCTAVE
11:00am Int. +William & Margaret Robinson
Saturday SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE
HOLY MOTHER OF GOD
10.00am Int.
6:00pm Int. For the People

The Daily Office

Lauds (Morning Prayer) is said a quarter of an hour before Mass on weekdays.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Tuesday at 10.0am Benediction at 10.30am

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 5.15pm to 5.45pm, or by appointment.

The Mass today

The readings can be found on p.105 of the Parish Mass Book, and on p.98 of The Sunday Missal.
Hymns at the 10.0am Mass : 131, 128, 145, 152

THIS WEEK

Friday Noon Funeral of John Collins at the Crematorium of the Seven Hills. Because of this, we will have to adjust our Friday morning programme this week : please note that Lauds will be at 10.45am, and Mass at 11.0am. No Exposition or Rosary.

Today being in the Octave of Christmas, we are dispensed from the Friday abstinence.

Saturday New Year's Day, and the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Please note that Mass today will be at 10.0am. Do try to attend : it is the best way to begin a New Year!

PARISH NOTICEBOARD

Anniversaries this week Sr.Barbara Brent (2014), Malachy Hodgen (2016), Michael Sutcliffe (2017), Emily Duck (2000), Charles Colson (2013), Jim McGuire (2006), Eileen Newland (2014), Terence Versey (2012), and Johanna Norgan (2016). May they Rest in Peace.

Money Matters Last Sunday £515.37 was given at the Offertory, and £75.75 for CAFOD

The Penitential Service - held last Monday : I wondered how we would fare, not having had such a service for two years, experimenting now with an afternoon instead of an evening time, and in the face of a renewed COVID threat. But in the event between thirty and forty people came along! It was most heartening, and showed that in Felixstowe people still appreciate a Penitential Service before the great festivals of the Church. We were grateful to Fr.Joseph and Fr.Paul for their assistance.

A Thank You to all those who have prepared

the church for Christmas, whether by cleaning, polishing, flower-arranging or preparing music. We are all very grateful to you for all the time and care which you have given.

ALONE AT CHRISTMAS

The fact is that a great many people are spending Christmas alone. For some this will be by choice - people who are perfectly happy with their own company. But for many, I suspect, it will not be by choice : they would much prefer to be with other people, and know the warmth of companionship. Christmas for many people can be a difficult time, indeed the most difficult time in the whole year. For some there will be the heartache of bereavement. For others the distress of a relationship which has broken down, or a child who has put themselves out of contact. There are many different reasons which lead to loneliness at Christmas, but just one common hurt and sadness.

If you are lonely this Christmas, I'm suggesting that you should go to Bethlehem, and spend Christmas with the Holy Family. This is not quite so odd and unrealistic as it sounds. I'm thinking of the Bidding Prayer written for the King's College Cambridge Service of Nine Lessons and Carols nearly a century ago, in which come the words 'Let us now go in heart and mind even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us, and the Child lying in a manger'.

Going 'in heart and mind even unto Bethlehem' means exercising ones God-given faculty of imagination. And allying this with a real desire to be with the Holy Family, to be in their company. And doing this on several occasions each day. It is not wishful thinking or mental gymnastics. Rather it's an excise in the profoundly Christian practice of meditation.

In your imagination, be with Mary and Joseph, walking by their side as they make their way to Bethlehem. Feel the hardness of the road and the chill of the Winter wind. Listen to St. Joseph share with you his anxiety about where they will stay, and let Mary confide in you her fear

that the pains of labour may come upon her before they reach the town.

Then trudge around Bethlehem with them as they try to find somewhere to stay ; hear the refusals to provide accommodation, and share in their mounting anxiety about where they will spend the night. And then share too in their relief when a stable is offered, and go with them into its warmth. Hear the animals there shifting in the straw, and take charge of the donkey whilst Joseph seeks to make his wife more comfortable.....

Then position yourself with the shepherds round their fire, out on the hills. See the clear stary sky above, and feel the warmth of the fire . Listen to their low voices - see one of them throw on another log - and pull your cloak closer around you for warmth. And then look up, and see the sky full of light, and hear the singing of the angels. Listen attentively to the message of the angel who announces the birth down in Bethlehem. Then get to your feet with the shepherds, and hurry along the track that leads down into the town. Search with them for the stable, and hear the creaking of the door as, with them, you go inside, and by the light of a single lantern, pick out the figures of Mary and Joseph, and then the manger close by, and the serene face of the new-born baby.....

In the next few days, go often to the stable. Sit with Mary and Joseph, and gaze upon the Holy Child. Take some food for them, and hear Joseph thanking you, and see Mary look at you with eyes of tender gratitude. Ask if you can hold the baby, sing to Him and hold Him close. Know that stable to be a place of wonderful peacefulness and calm.

If one has the gift of imagination, and the desire to accept comfort and joy from the Holy child of Bethlehem, there is no reason why one should endure complete loneliness at Christmas. A Christmas spent with the Holy Family can be a time of great blessing. The Holy Family are inviting you to be with them this Christmastide. They do not want you to be alone.