

PARISH OF SAINT FELIX, FELIXSTOWE

Parish Priest : The Very Revd. Canon John Barnes VF
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December 31st, 2023 : FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY JESUS, MARY. AND JOSEPH

Sunday Masses

Saturday 6:00pm Int. For the People
Sunday 10:00am Int. Tom & Brenda Brazier
4.00pm (Convent) Int.

Mass Book, and on p.101 of The Sunday Missal.
Hymns at 10.0am : 154, 128, 138, 141

Weekday Masses

Monday SOLEMNITY OF MARY,
MOTHER OF GOD
10.00am Int. +John Henderson
11.30am (Convent) Int.
Tuesday ST.BASIL & ST.GREGORY
9:30am Int.
Wednesday CHRISTMAS FERIA
No Mass today
Thursday CHRISTMAS FERIA
4:30pm (Convent) Int.
Friday CHRISTMAS FERIA
11:30am Int. +Catherine Searson
Saturday CHRISTMAS FERIA
9:30am Int.
6:00pm Int. For the People

THIS WEEK

Monday New Year's Day, and quite the best place to begin a new year is at the Altar. We keep the day as the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God – an important day in the Church's Year. Times of Masses are given opposite.

Tuesday The Catechism Group is on holiday until next Tuesday.

PARISH NOTICEBOARD

Anniversaries this week Johanna Norgan (2016), Pauline O'Reilly (2007), Marion Groundwater (2006), John Dimascio (2003), Francesca Warford (2009), Mary Underwood (2011), Mary Cawston (2021), Boniface Pinto (2023) and Adrian Cotton (2013). May they rest in peace.

Money Matters Last Sunday £327.10 was given in the Offertory and £22 for CAFOD. The Christmas Offering was £1202.80.

The Giving Tree Barbara writes : Thank you so much for your generous support of the Giving Tree. Suffolk Refugee Support group collected 78 gifts on Sunday 17th December. They were delighted and very grateful. They were having a party on Thursday 21st when hampers and gifts would be distributed. Please see email on the notice board.

The Daily Office

Lauds (Morning Prayer) will be said a quarter of an hour before Mass on Mon, Tues, Fri, & Sat.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Tuesdays at 10.0am, Benediction at 10.30am
Friday at Noon

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 5.15pm to 5.45pm, or by appointment.

The Rosary Friday at Noon

The Mass today

The readings can be found on p.105 of the Parish

Christmas seemed to go well – the church

looked very attractive, and the Masses were better attended than they were last year. A special thank-you to our musicians cleaners, and flower arrangers, and all who contributed in any way to our common celebration of the festival.

Many thanks Fr. John is most grateful for the cards and presents which came to the Presbytery at Christmas. He is very appreciative.

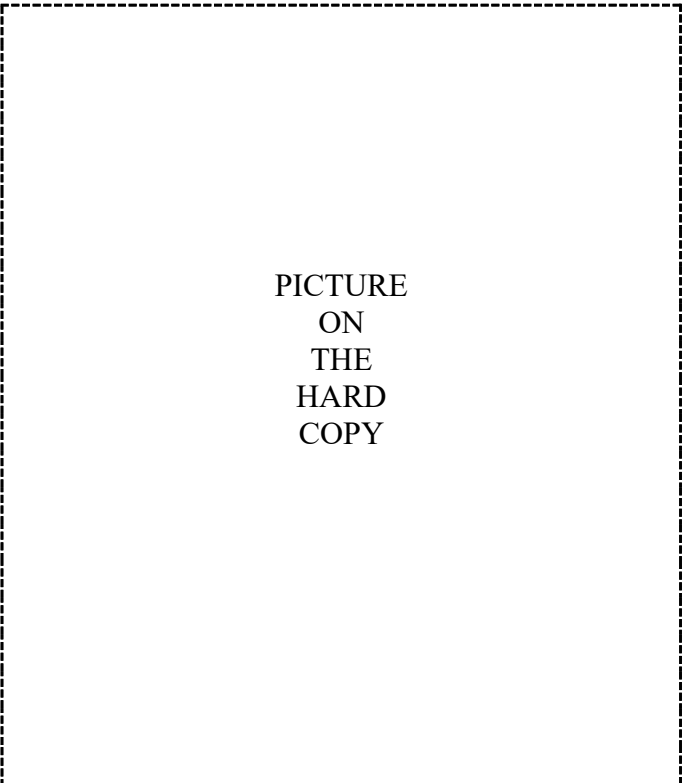
May Bunt RIP It was sad to hear of the death of May Bunt (Sue Hudson's Mother). She died at Cotman House, where she had lived for a while, on Christmas Day. Fr. John used to take her Holy Communion, and it was always a pleasure to visit her. We send our love and sympathy to Sue and the rest of the family.

THE TWO CHRISTMASSES

Through December the Church kept the season Advent, during which we considered the theme of the Coming of Christ, and thought about his coming in the past, in the future, and in the present. Advent is also a time of self-restraint and the practice of penitence. And all this to prepare ourselves for a joyful celebration of the Incarnation and Birth of Our Lord which begins on the night of December 24th. Whilst all this was happening, the world was celebrating its annual festival of Yuletide, which it confusingly calls 'Christmas' – a time of bright lights and high spending, of partying and street decorations. No mention of Jesus was allowed, although a few Christmas carols were heard as a quaint survival of the past. The radio programme Classic FM had 'Christmas Music' on every day, and throughout December announced itself as the 'Programme of Christmas music'.

A few days ago, on the night of the 24th, the Church began its celebration of the real Christmas, and this will last until January 8th, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. But already the Yuletide (ie. Secular Christmas) decorations have been taken down in the shops, and not a note of Christmas music is heard on Classic FM. For the world, 'Christmas' (really Yuletide) has ended – just at the time when the 'real' Christmas is getting underway!

I think the disparity between these two Christmases – the Christian Christmas, a celebration of the birth of Jesus – and the World's 'Christmas' (which I call Yuletide) is telling – not least because the second ends just when the first is beginning. They are two quite different entities, and it is best to be honest about this. The one centres on the baby lying in a manger, the other upon the mythical figure of Santa. These two very different 'Christmases' throw into sharp contrast the difference between the Church and the World. We Christians are in the world, but not of it. We don't belong to the World. Our allegiance is quite different from that of secular man. It was a difference which was very clear in the early centuries, when the Church was persecuted, and faith was costly. It is becoming clear again. Ultimately we have to choose where our loyalty lies – are we for Christ, or are we for the World, with all its shams and emptiness. Are we disciples of Jesus, following his teachings, and living lives which are disciplined and have Him at their centre, or are we followers of the crowd? It is a challenge which it is good to consider as we embark on a New Year, a time when we look ahead to the future. Are we on the side of God, or of the enemy? Fences are not comfortable places to sit on for very long.



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THE
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