



St. Augustine's Church Limerick 7th January 2024 The Baptism of the Lord

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Mass Times

Monday-Friday

7.30am, 8.30am,
10.15am, & 4pm

SATURDAY

8.30am, 10.15am
3pm Mass of the Sick

SUNDAY

9.00am, 11.15am
& 7.30pm

CONFESSIONS

MONDAY & FRIDAY

10.45am-12 Noon
3.00pm-4.00pm

SATURDAY

10.45am-12noon
2.30pm-4pm



St. Augustine's Church

Child Safeguarding
Representatives.

Fr. Flor O'Callaghan O.S.A.

Fr. John Lyng O.S.A.

Ms Geraldine van Dam

Mr. Robert Ryan

Ms Charlotte Gleeson

Mr. John Doyle



Epiphany: We Gave them Camels and made them Kings

We lived in a place, not Bethlehem, where you'd see gold, frankincense and myrrh come in from Arabia. The traffic in gold has modernised since the days of the Magi. Students and others flew to Medina, took in the pilgrimage to Mecca, bought their gold and flew home. Then, they sold the gold at a price which covered expenses and left a bit over. God and Mammon had been served. It was, T.S. Elliot might say, satisfactory. The ways of the incense and myrrh trade seem to have developed more slowly. Some still came by camel train. You'd see them laid out on the ground in a corner of the Monday market any day, like frozen teardrops of resin attached to chunks of the tree from which they'd seeped or weeped. Characters that might have stepped out of an old tableau of the Magi sat or mooched around. They greeted and haggled but generally just contemplated big things as practised stargazers and wise men do. The adjacent bit of floor space was given over to a selection of bottles ornate and odd. Now empty, these had come from the east full of spices, unguents and perfumes. There were beautiful bottles there. I remember being particularly taken by one and buying it. It was a decanter-type thing and looked better and clearer-cut than anything to come out of Waterford. We would use it for altar-wine, replacing a crudely labelled bottle and adding dignity to our liturgical furnishings. For its first official outing it had a prominent place beside the altar and we poured with a flourish. All well until our taste buds told us that wine from this decanter didn't taste like wine at all. Repeated washing and scouring with a variety of detergents did nothing to eliminate the taste of whatever that bottle had brought from the east. Perhaps it was distilled myrrh. You couldn't see it, you could scarcely smell it but you could taste it and you could taste nothing else for the rest of the day. This spirit of the orient could not be exorcised and the paragon of the glassblower's art was retired to a purely decorative ministry.



Gold, frankincense and myrrh may have been the stock-in-trade of Matthew's men from the east, for selling or giving. Just as a shepherd might offer a lamb or the baker a loaf. Nothing exotic at all. Maybe the Magi were no more exotic than that before we gave them camels and made them kings. We made them three—a number we liked to play with - and named them, this the last step in bringing them under our control. The precise significance attributed to each gift by commentators of later centuries was maybe no more than the hot air that makes up so much commentary on anything and everything.

The Incarnation was in the ordinary and maybe so too was it's publishing. J.L.

Thought for the Day

In all our lives, there are "before and after" moments, whatever they might be (parenthood, marriage, career etc.). In my life as a disciple, can I name any particular "before and after" moments? This probably won't include baptism, because mostly



we were just babies. But later, what happened to bring faith alive and to help me grow up as a believer? Such reflection may help us grasp the significance of John's baptism for Jesus himself. For him, it was a true

"before and after" event, sustained by the ringing affirmation, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Prayer Father, we are all your beloved sons and daughters; we dare to say that with us too you are well pleased. Help us embrace our new reality by letting ourselves be loved by you. Amen.

Source: www.tarsus.ie/ Sunday Readings

WINTER GOD

God of Hope
in the darkness of these Winter days
keep the promise of Spring
alive in my heart.
In the wilderness,
hold me open to
the hope of new life.
Give me an awareness of bulbs
awakening from
their Winter sleep,
life stirring in the darkness
of the earth.
In the bleak places of my own spirit
help me to notice
the seeds of 'resurrection'.
Give me time and space
to reach down into the soil of my
own existence.
Show me how to nurture the
roots of faith and love in the
desert places of my life.

Amen. L R.



Grow Mental Health

Grow Mental Health- Friendly Community based groups for anyone experiencing mental health issue through 12 Step Program of connection, hope, identity by empowering people to nurture their positive wellbeing by supporting personal growth through education, peer support and self-teaching. Based in 33 Henry Street and Croom, several meetings including new meeting on Monday 11-1pm. Contact Michael 086-6063182/Celia 0861526966/Wwww.grow.ie

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18-25 Jan

You shall love the Lord your God...and your neighbour as yourself (Luke 10:27)

The theme for 2024 is based on a text from the Gospel of St. Luke, with material prepared by an ecumenical team from Burkina Faso, facilitated by the local Chemin Neuf Community, whose members have a special commitment to Christian Unity. The theme leading to the parable of the Good Samaritan and the material prepared during such a precarious period in the country's history helps us to recognise that the love of Christ unites all Christians and is stronger than their divisions.

Source: excerpt taken from the Liturgical Calendar for Ireland 2024



In Concert

The Sacred Heart University Concert Band USA
at St. Mary's Cathedral
Sunday 7th Jan at 5.00pm