

PARISH NEWS

Heating issues continued:

Presbytery: the house is now all but uninhabitable and having survived on blow heaters and oil radiators for a week, the diocese has decided to move Fr Rajesh and I out of the house and into temporary diocesan accommodation in **Seaford**. Unfortunately, the completion of the flats has not yet 'completed'. I will commute to the parish to celebrate a Facebook Live Mass and to assist the Administrators with the ongoing Administration of the Parish but will have the relief of returning to and waking up in a warm house! Our administrators can continue to work in the parish office as we have temporary heating for that one room and **no one during lockdown should be calling at the door of the presbytery** as this does not constitute an essential journey. We have determined that the administrator working from home does not work and the office is COVID secure.

All Public Masses are currently suspended until either the heating is fixed, or the ambient temperature rises to a satisfactory level. As needed, we will work with Funeral Directors, Families and neighbouring Parishes to find alternative venues for funerals. Mass intentions will be celebrated as Facebook Live Masses or privately during the suspension of public Masses. The diocese is fully aware of our heating issues and suspension of public Mass.

Fr Simon.

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord B

The Parish of Our Lady of the Rosary, Bexhill-on-Sea

Comprising St Mary Magdalene, Town Centre & St Martha's, Little Common

Heating Problems in the Parish

St Mary Magdalene Church & Presbytery: The heating was working as normal throughout the autumn, and then failed without warning on New Year's Eve. As the Church and Presbytery are on the same system, there is currently no heating in the Church, Office, and House. With the drop in temperature at New Year, the temperature in the Church is about 6.5 degrees leading to a necessary suspension of public Mass. The heating engineer visited on Monday 4th January. He worked on the St Mary Magdalene Church / Presbytery boiler for an hour but could not reset it or coax it back to life, declaring it broken. Parts have been ordered but due to COVID there are significant lead times on delivery.

St Martha's: We tried to turn the heating on at the beginning of November and could not get heat. The heating engineer tried to get it going but was stumped; then the November lockdown hit, and everything stopped. Then after lockdown we asked for a progress report, to which the heating engineer said it was an electrical fault and the electrician said it was a plumbing issue, a real back and forth. Fortunately, we had a mild autumn and although chilly we were able to tolerate it and managed to celebrate Mass throughout December and Christmas. Last Sunday, the temperature dropped to 5 degrees in the Church and with real risk to health of parishioners I suspended Mass. The engineer now says it will also require parts, and again there will be a wait for them to be delivered.

St Mary Mags. Hall: The heating in the hall also failed but has now been fixed. Facebook Live Masses will be broadcast from the hall for the time being as there is some warmth. These will not be public Masses as with social distancing it is not big enough.

[continued on left side panel on front page].

We pray for those who have died: Brian Maher RIP, Lem Murphy RIP.

We pray for the sick: Roy Cox, Margaret Pink, Margaret Hitchman, Martin Stiles, David Spooner, Doreen Turner, Lem Murphy, Martin Murphy, Linda Scully, Janie Butcher, Samuel Barden.

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord brings the season of Christmas to an end (*unless you are following the old rite calendar, which continues the season until the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord – Candlemas*). This is a second manifestation or ‘Epiphany’ of the Lord. As Jesus descends into the River Jordan, God is revealed as Trinity. With the voice of the Father, and the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Baptism of the Lord is a Trinitarian event, and so for validity, we are baptised with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. John’s baptism was a preparation for Christian baptism, moving the people to express repentance, inducing the people to confess their sin, but it is Christ’s baptism that has the power to forgive sin. Jesus did not need John’s baptism but submits to it as an act of solidarity with a humanity that he had come to redeem and save. His baptism, then, is a sign of his future entering of the Tomb and his Resurrection from the Dead. In descending into the waters of the Jordan, he sanctifies them and gives water the power to baptise, to remove sin and create us a new so that we become children of God. The Baptismal Font, then, is our Tomb and Mother; in Baptism we die with Christ and rise with him to new life. This Feast suitably completes Christmas because it marks out the start of the mission of the Saviour. We have rightly rejoiced at the Nativity of the Saviour but now we must return to Ordinary Time, that means we must get on with our baptismal calling to announce the Gospel of the Lord. As the Good Shepherd, the Messiah continues to feed his flock in Word and Sacrament, strengthening us and making us holy, and thus, making us fit for the kingdom. At Baptism, we too became a beloved son of God in the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom the Father is well pleased. Our Baptism marked our entry into the Church, and in playing our full part in building up the Kingdom of Heaven, we long to take our place in heaven, the Father’s house, and our true home.

Baptism of the Lord School Mass Homily: We continue our celebration of Christmas with a second celebration of the Epiphany, with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. We offer our Mass for all children who are in school or who are at home, asking the Lord’s blessing on our New Year.

Jesus did not need to receive Baptism from John, but his Baptism has 4 effects: 1) It is an Epiphany, that means it is an opportunity for God the Father to reveal the identity of Jesus: ‘*this is my Son, the beloved!*’. 2) It is an Epiphany of God as Trinity. We started our Mass in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and we were baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. 3) As God, Jesus enters the waters, cleanses, and purifies them making them ready for our own baptism. 4) His baptism is an act of solidarity with a humanity who suffers and struggles; and in this year of 2021 we need this solidarity more than ever! Remember that Christmas teaches us that God is Emmanuel – He is God with us!

Parish Clergy: Fr Simon Dray, Fr Rajesh Minz, Deacon Simon Kirkdale

Administrators: Bonita Osmond-Maher & Lisa Young

Safeguarding: Sylvia Cousins

This Feast shows us that the birth of a Saviour needs an act of Salvation and this happens in 4 ways: 1) Jesus preaches his gospel; his words are of eternal life, and so, 'listen to him!' 2) He stretches out his hands on the cross, taking away the sins of the world. 3) By rising from the dead, he destroys death and restores life to us in Holy Baptism. 4) In giving us the Church and the Mass, he continues to feed us in Word and Sacrament, strengthening us and making us holy.

This Feast moves us from Christmas to Ordinary Time, and so our response may also be in 4 ways: 1) We all share a universal call to holiness, to live good and upright lives. 2) We are to worship God and give thanks to him for all the blessings we have and continue to receive from him. 3) We are to keep learning about our faith: *to know the Lord Jesus more clearly, to love him more dearly and follow him more nearly, day by day.* 4) We are to go and announce the Gospel of the Lord, to tell everyone else about our joy of being a child of God.

Wishing you every blessing for the New Year and hope and pray that your learning bears much fruit all, for the greater glory of God. The Mass in which this homily was preached can be found here:

[\(4\) Online School Mass to celebrate Christmas and the New Year \(Feast of the Baptism of the Lord 2021\). - YouTube](#)

First Holy Communion 2020 & 2021

We will not set new dates for the delayed 2020 First Holy Communion celebration whilst we are in this period of National Lockdown as although public worship is still permitted there are still restrictions on household mixing; and this is not the time for significant sacramental celebrations. Additionally, the heating systems in both Churches and the Presbytery have failed and so we are experiencing a temporary closure. We need to get on top of this before we can begin to consider the First Holy Communion celebrations. **However**, as preparation for Holy Communion usually takes several months, we invite applications for 2021 children, found at the sacramental section of the parish website:

[First Holy Communion – Catholic Parish Of Bexhill \(stmmbehill.co.uk\)](#)

Baptism applications can still be submitted: www.stmmbehill.co.uk/baptismal-form/ You will then be directed to the online preparation.

Non-Urgent Pastoral Visits to the Housebound: If you need the Sacraments please contact the Parish Office on 01424 210263 or email stmm@btconnect.com to make an appointment for a priest to make a one-off visit. Please let us know of any COVID concerns.

Parish Office in Lockdown 3: Please use the email: stmm@btconnect.com to contact the Parish Office.

Please do not call personally at the office door, as this does not constitute an essential journey.

Parish Office
Remains closed to casual callers.
All enquiries:
stmm@btconnect.com

Sacrament of the Sick

Urgent Requests

Last Rites does not mean Last Minute!
As soon as a person begins to be in danger of death because of illness, injury or old age, the time for anointing has surely already come.

Office hours
stmm@btconnect.com
01424 210 263 opt 4

out of hours
simon.dray@abdiocese.org.uk

Hospital Visits
For **DGH Eastbourne & Conquest Hastings** you must contact the Conquest Chaplaincy on 01424 757088 who co-ordinate all visits to both hospitals (out of hours ask the Ward to call the on-call Catholic chaplain). For **Bexhill Hospital**: contact Fr Rajesh on 01424 210263

Care Home Visits
You must first clear the visit with the Home before contacting us to arrange a visit. We will discuss with you / the home as to what is most appropriate.

Home Visits
Please contact us above to discuss the most appropriate response. A member of the family bubble should be present when a priest visits, stepping out of the room for Confession.

Remember next week the priests will be living in Seaford!

PARISH NEWS

Page 4

The Sunday Obligation remains suspended

Parish Mass Diary and Intentions

Facebook Live: www.facebook.com/stmmbexhill

Saturday 9th January **Ferial** **9th Jan (Sat after Epiphany)**
Facebook Live 10.00am Cyril Hanson RIP
St Mary Magdalene 10.30am **No Confessions today**
Private Mass - Cesidio Capaldi RIP

The Baptism of the Lord (B)

Alternative Readings for Year B: Is. 55:1-11, 1 John 5:1-9 & Mk 1:7-11

Sunday 10th January **Public Masses**
Facebook Live 11:00am Nellie Irwin RIP
Private Mass - Amalia Young RIP

Second Collection: Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC)
Donate at www.spuc.org.uk

Monday 11th January **Ferial** **Monday Week 1**
Facebook Live Mass 10.00am Joseph Thomas RIP

Tuesday 12th January **Ferial** **Tuesday Week 1**
Facebook Live 10.00am Jack Oliver Lucy RIP

Wed. 13th January **Requiem** **Requiem Mass**
Location to be confirmed 10.00am Requiem Mass of Lem Murphy RIP

Contingency plans will be worked out with the Funeral Director and Family

Thursday 14th January **Ferial** **Thursday Week 1**
Facebook Live 10.00am Holy Souls
Private Mass - People of the Parish

Friday 15th January **Ferial** **Friday Week 1**
Facebook Live 10.00am Elizabeth Francis RIP

Saturday 16th January **Ferial** **Saturday Memorial of the BVM**
To be determined 10.00am Mike Davis GE
To be determined 6.00pm People of the Parish

2nd Sunday of the Year B

1 Sam 3:3-10, 19, 1 Cor 6:13-15, 17-20 & Jn 1:35-42

Sunday 17th January **Mass intentions:**
To be determined tbc John Ireland RIP
To be determined tbc Mick Hanson RIP
St Mary Magdalene tbc Priest's Intentions

Second Collection: tbc

Parish Offertory

A simple way to donate (+gift aid) online via Diocesan Website:

<https://abdiocese.churchsuite.com/donate/>

For Mass offerings & other payments: BACs:

Name: St Mary Magdalene, Account No. 21077139, S/C 40-05-20