

## Reflection—

On this, the Sunday within the Octave of Christmas, we honour the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. In honouring them, we also honour all families, big or small. In honouring all families, we honour the family of God, the Church, and most especially, we focus in on the hidden, day-to-day life of the Holy Family of Nazareth.



What was it like to live day in and day out in the household of St. Joseph? What was it like to have Jesus for a son, Mary as a wife and mother, and Joseph as a father and husband? Their home would have certainly been a sacred place and a dwelling of true peace and unity, but it would have also been so much more.

The family home of Jesus, Mary and Joseph would have been, in numerous ways, just like any other home. They would have related together, talked, had fun, disagreed, worked, eaten, dealt with problems, and encountered everything else that makes up daily family life. They had also been refugees fleeing to Egypt to escape Herod.

Their family would not have been exempt from daily toil, hurt and the challenges that face most families. For example, they would have encountered the death of loved ones, St. Joseph most likely passed away prior to Jesus' public ministry. They would have encountered misunderstanding and gossip from others. Our Blessed Mother, for example, was found with child out of wedlock. This would have been a topic of discussion among many acquaintances for sure. They would have had to fulfil all daily chores, earn a living, put food on the table, attend gatherings of family and friends and the like. They would have lived normal family life in every way.

This is significant because it reveals God's love for family life. The Father allowed His Divine Son to live this life and, as a result, elevated family life to a place within the Trinity. The holiness of the Holy Family reveals to us that every family is invited to share in God's divine life and to encounter ordinary daily life with grace and virtue. Reflect, today, upon your own family life. Some families are strong in virtue, some struggle with basic communication. Some are faithful day in and day out, some are broken and deeply wounded. No matter the case, know that God wants to enter more deeply into your family life just as it is right now. He desires to give you strength and virtue to live as the Holy Family. Surrender yourself and your family, this day, and invite the Triune God to make your family a holy family.

## ***THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH***

**SATURDAY 28<sup>th</sup> December, Vigil Mass 4 pm**

**SUNDAY 29<sup>th</sup> December, Mass 9.30 am**

Saturday	28th	<b>Feast of the Holy Family Vigil Mass 4 pm</b>	Nash & Clarke families RIP
Sunday	29th	<b>Feast of the Holy Family</b>	<b>Mass 9.30 am</b> Get well int for Lynn Childs
Monday	30th	Sixth Day in the Octave of Christmas	<b>NO MASS</b>
Tuesday	31st	Seventh day in the Octave of Christmas	<b>Mass 10 am</b> Doran family RIP
Wednesday	1st	<b>Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God</b>	<b>Mass 10 am</b> Nash & Morris families RIP
Thursday	2nd	St Basil the great & St Gregory Nazianzen	<b>Mass 10 am</b> Gerry Ward RIP
Friday	3rd	The Most Holy Name of Jesus	<b>Mass 10 am</b> Wynn & Terry Furlong RIP
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>4th</b>	<b>Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord</b>	<b>Vigil Mass 4 pm</b>

Diedre Moore, Lily Gallagher & Anne McNaught RIP



**Next Week : THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD: Saturday 4th January 2020**

**Vigil Mass 4 pm and Sunday 5th January Mass at 9.30am**

**ST. BENEDICT'S CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
Owen Street, Atherstone  
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**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION :**

Fr. Paul will be in the confessional on Saturday 4th January 11.30-12noon and **between 3.30 and 3.50pm** before the Vigil Mass. **OTHER TIMES BY APPOINTMENT.**

**NEXT PARISH MEETING IN HALL  
ON SUNDAY 12TH. JANUARY  
AFTER THE MASS. WHY NOT JOIN  
IN WITH THE  
ORGANISATION OF YOUR PARISH?**



**EXPOSITION & BENEDICTION ON  
FRIDAYS EACH WEEK.**

After Mass on Friday morning the Blessed Sacrament will be Exposed on the Altar for adoration, prayer & reflection. Benediction at 11.15am

It was well supported in Advent we will see if people wish to continue.

Take this time to be before the Lord in his Blessed Sacrament.



The Guild of St. Stephen was founded in 1904 by Father Hamilton McDonald when he formed a society of altar servers at the Convent of the Sacred Heart (now Woldingham School) in London. In 1905, Pope Pius X, gave his approbation to the canonical establishment of the Guild at Westminster Cathedral. In 1906, the Sacred Congregation of Rites made the guild an Archconfraternity, enabling all the parish branches to be linked with it. In 1934, the Guild spread, leading to Pope Pius XI's enabling of all Guilds throughout the British Commonwealth to be affiliated with the Archconfraternity at Westminster. The Guild is primarily under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as well as that of St. Stephen (the Protomartyr, after whom the Guild was named), St. Thomas More, and St. Pius X..

The purpose of the Guild of St. Stephen is to encourage, positively and practically, the highest standards of serving at the Church's liturgy and so contribute to the whole community's participation in a more fruitful worship of God, to provide altar servers with a greater understanding of what they are doing so that they may serve with increasing reverence and prayerfulness and thereby be led to a deepening response to their vocation in life, and to unite servers of different parishes and dioceses for their mutual support and encouragement.

On the feast of St. Stephen we enrolled **William Baines** into the Confraternity. He was well supported by the other servers at the Mass. Congratulations. It was also very pleasing to have John Prowse present at the Mass as he has worked tirelessly to encourage the young servers.



The beauty of our Church shows what we are capable of together. We all played our part in making St. Benedict's look ready to welcome our Lord at his Nativity. The Church was deep cleaned the week before, the tree and church were decorated ready for Christmas Eve, The flowers were festive and colourful. The crib was erected and decorated and looked splendid. The readers, servers and Eucharistic Ministers all played their part in making our Christmas Celebrations special. This is what we can achieve when we all play our part and work together. Many thanks to all who did take part. Together we can make 2020 a wonderful year. May we all have 2020 Vision as we begin another year together .

John and Maureen Prowse would like to thank everyone for their prayers, and good wishes for John. As most of you have seen, John is making good progress on his road to recovery and hopefully with the support of your prayers and his determination will continue to do so.

**PRAYER FOR THE SICK & HOUSEBOUND**

May the Communion we share today with the members of our parish family who are at home or in hospital, remind us to live for one another and give them a sense of belonging to our family and to this celebration.

**Fr. Paul and Andrea wish to take this opportunity to thank you for all the wonderful cards and gifts that arrived at the presbytery.**

**Also to pray for you, that you all have most wonderful 2020.**

May your **year** be filled with peace, prosperity and love. May God's blessings shower upon you and bestow upon each of you a bright, healthy and peaceful new **year**. ... May we welcome your lavish love. In this new **year**, may the grace and peace of Christ bless us now and in the days ahead. Amen

**Please don't forget to hand in your Mass requests in an envelope with the name and date on with donation inside. Fr. Paul has no outstanding Masses.**