



CATHOLIC PARISH OF  
**ST. ELIZABETH OF PORTUGAL**  
*Newsletter*

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary  
& Joseph

Sunday 31st  
December 2017

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Mass Book: Page 105

## The Feast of the Holy Family

Thank you for joining us at Mass today as we continue our Christmas celebration by considering the Holy Family of Nazareth. It is a day on which we can pray with particular intensity for all families and especially our own. Years ago, when I was an undergraduate in Oxford, I used to help a blind Chinese student by reading aloud her economic textbooks as she recorded them on an old-fashioned tape recorder. I remember being really shocked one day to find myself recording a Marxist attack on the family unit. The argument was that families ties undermined the revolution so children must be taken away from their parents so that they could be indoctrinated into the principles of the revolution and both parents freed for work.

For a Christian the family is the fundamental unity of society. The state exists to serve its members not the other way round. Economic, social and education policies should therefore support rather than undermine family life. This is also true of businesses and corporations which should see their purpose not as maximising profit at any cost but as having a responsibility towards their employees and society in general.

I never use the automatic checkout machines in supermarkets. I avoid them not because I am a Luddite but because they were introduced by extremely profitable businesses to increase profits by reducing the workforce. People need jobs. Families need employment with a

sustainable level of income and I think we have a duty to let businesses and governments know that we expect them to support family life in that way.

For a Christian the importance of the family derives in part from the fact that it is the one place in society where the individual members are valued simply because they exist rather than for what they can do. The family is held together by an unconditional love.

The family is also a great school: it is the place where children can be taught to live virtuous lives and where they first experience love and generosity, forgiveness and reconciliation. These human lessons are also divine ones because they give children and insight into God's love.

## *Christmas Offering*

The collection on Christmas Day and Easter Sunday are your gift to the clergy of your parish. In this diocese parish clergy do not receive a wage and these two collections form the bulk of their annual income.

This year the envelopes offer those who pay U.K. income or capital gains tax to Gift Aid their offering which would allow the parish (not the priest) to claim a further 20% on top of your donation. If you wish to take advantage of that please note that any cheques must be made payable to the parish (not the priest), and we would also need the details to be filled out on the envelope.

We will let you know this year's Christmas Offering next week.

## *ConneXions*

Our group of volunteers, here to respond to the needs of fellow parishioners, is growing. We also now have a dedicated telephone number!

**0 7 9 2 5 2 8 8 6 5 1**

## *Happy New Year*

The last day of the year is traditionally a time to look back and thank God for the blessings we received over the last twelve months - even if those blessings came in the shape of a cross because we found them hard to bear.

Traditionally the Church sings the **Te Deum**, the great hymn of thanksgiving on New Year's Eve.

It is also a time to look forward. Some people are cynical about New Year's Resolutions - usually because they set the bar too high and so haven't been very good at keeping them. I think resolutions are a good thing but they need to be simply and achievable. They could also relate to three areas of our lives: our relationship with God, our relationship with our neighbour, and our relationship with ourselves.

For those who don't pray, for example, the resolution to say an Our Father and a Hail Mary each night before going to bed might be an ideal one. How about a resolution to return to Confession in 2018?

For spouses and parents a good resolution might be to get home ten minutes earlier at least once a week or, on the journey home, to think about some nice stories to share when they arrive, or to recall what the children may have been doing during the day so as to be proactive about asking how they got on and showing a genuine interest.

For ourselves there might be some resolutions that can help us brush up on things we may already be doing especially where these will help our Christian life: taking part in one of the parish courses (Alpha, Discipleship, the Bible Weekend), or listening to some of the Formed podcasts on the way to work...

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## *Parish Life & News*

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### **Parish Surgery**

The next Parish Surgery will be on 8th January 2018. Parish Surgery is the time to see the parish priest without needing to make an appointment. It is also the time to make initial enquiries about baptisms and weddings. It takes place in the parish office from 6.30pm until 8.00pm. People are asked to access the office via the Church, where they can wait as everyone is seen on a 'first come first served' basis.

### **New Year's Day**

A good way of starting the New Year is by attending Mass. In recognition of the fact that those who stayed up to see the new year in might need a little extra time in bed (!) our Mass on New Year's Day will be at midday.

### **Parish Lunch Club**

The parish lunch club will take place on Tuesday this week (the first Tuesday of the month). Holy Mass that day will therefore be at midday.

### **Coffee Bar**

The Sunday Coffee Bar team will enjoy its annual recess until Sunday, January 7th. We wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you again in the crypt in the New Year.

### **Homeless Winter Shelter**

Can you help us welcome and cater for our homeless guests who will sleep in the crypt on a Monday night from next month. Please contact the office if you would be willing to help join a rota with a commitment of just two hours.

### **Natural Fertility Matters**

Finding it hard to conceive naturally? Natural Fertility Matters uses the Creighton Model, a university-developed scientific framework for managing a couple's fertility, diagnosing and treating infertility. For more information please visit [www.naturalfertilitymatters.com](http://www.naturalfertilitymatters.com) or call Freda McMahon on 07887 676 923 for a free and confidential consultation.

### **ChurchSuite**

ChurchSuite is our parish online register which enables you to keep your own information up to date. It also lets you check the parish diary and sign up for any events or courses. There is even a version allowing you to log-in through your smart phone or tablet.

### **Save the Date**

*16th-18th March 2018*

Pope Benedict once said that "in Jesus we see the human face of God". St Jerome said "ignorance of the scriptures is ignorance of Christ". I want to give all our parishioners the chance to become familiar with the bible and to see how it can help us pray and know God better. So we will be hosting a Bible Weekend next year. I hope you will sign up for it.

### **Thank You**

A special word of thank to those who came to clean the Church on Christmas Eve and to everyone who worked to help us prepare for the Christmas festivities.

## Thank You

Thank you for your offering last week which came to:

<b>Gift Aid</b>	£61.50
<b>Not Gift Aid</b>	£374.27
<b>Total</b>	£435.77

To avoid seasonal fluctuations and to help us budget it greatly helps our parish finances if you take part in our **Planned Giving** scheme. For more information please email:

[giftaid@stelizabethschurch.org.uk](mailto:giftaid@stelizabethschurch.org.uk)

### Mass Attendance Last Week:

Sat. 5.30pm	79
Sun. 9.30am	63
Sun. 11.00am	62
Sun. 5.30pm	X
<b>Total:</b>	<b>204</b>

## Social Media



[stelizabethschurch.org.uk](http://stelizabethschurch.org.uk)



StLizRichmond/



@StLizRichmond

## Mass Intentions this Week

### This Week

#### Saturday

5.30pm

#### Sunday

9.30am

11.00am

5.30pm

#### Monday

12.00am

#### Tuesday

12.00am

#### Wednesday

9.00am

#### Thursday

7.00pm

#### Friday

10.00am

#### Saturday

5.30pm

#### Sunday

9.30am

11.00am

5.30pm

### The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Mrs Vera Gallagher RIP

Norma Augustine

*Pro Populo*

Clare Mullan RIP

### Mary, the Holy Mother of God Goodhart (Int.)

### Ss. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen

Mary Elizabeth Neale RIP

### The Most Holy Name of Jesus

Bridgette Jones (Int.)

### *Feria*

Alejendra Cordero de Solis RIP

### *Feria*

Dominak Family RIP

### Our Lady

Taina Gallagher & Family

### THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

*Pro Populo*

O'Connor Family (Int.)

Canon Eugene Dolan RIP

## Please Pray For:

Christopher Browne, Philomena Dunne, Gaye Delanghe, Raymond and Marie Toal, Ben Horgan, Ella Dale, Stella Richards, Anne Wilkinson.

### Parish Contact Details:

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**Tel.** 020 8940 2439

### Email Addresses:

#### Parish Office:

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#### Planned Giving

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