

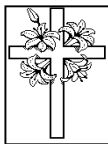
## DIARY for WEEK BEGINNING 27th DECEMBER 2009

### ✧ The HOLY FAMILY (C) ✧

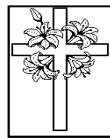
<b>Sun 27</b>	Saturday	6.30pm	✧ Vigil Mass: Eileen Kiernan
	Sunday	9.30am	✧ Mass: Pro Populo
		11.00am	✧ Mass: Eugenio Grosso RIP
<b>Mon 28</b>	Holy Innocents	10.00am	✧ Mass: Franco Verdolini RIP
<b>Tue 29</b>	St Thomas of Canterbury	10.00am	✧ Mass: Intention of Weller Family
<b>Wed 30</b>	Of the Christmas Octave	10.00am	✧ Mass: Mary Mahoney RIP
		1.30pm	✧ Requiem Mass: Arthur Ryan
<b>Thu 31</b>	Of the Octave	10.00am	✧ Mass: Nicola di Lisio RIP
<b>Fri 1st Jan.</b>	The Blessed Virgin Mary	10.00am	✧ Mass: Joseph Mackenzie RIP
<b>Sat 2</b>	SS Basil & Gregory Nazianzen	10.00am	✧ Mass: Sean Kavanagh RIP
		10.30am	<i>Confessions and Exposition</i>
<b>✧ The EPIPHANY of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ✧</b>			
<b>Sun 3</b>	Saturday	6.30pm	✧ Vigil Mass: Marie & Michael Keating RIP
	Sunday	9.30am	✧ Mass: Tino Mosca RIP
		11.00am	✧ Mass: Pro Populo
		4.00pm	<i>Benediction</i>

## A very Happy New Year!

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Arthur Ryan and James Fitzgerald, recently dead, and for the following, whose anniversaries occur this week:



Catherine Jenkins, Josephine Fuchter, Ivy Janzak, Antonietta Zeuli, Tessie Bergin, Christopher Newman, Fausto Cutone, Cornelius Rowland, Lucia Swan, Patricia Milton, Patrick O'Connell, Mary Murphy, Daniel O'Driscoll and Sarah Gilder.



*May their souls and the souls of all the ✧ faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.*

## OUR LADY of GILLINGHAM



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 Parish Priest Fr Geoffrey Pointer  
 Parish Deacon Rev Michael Knight [574404]  
 Hospital Chaplain Fr James Clark [830000]

—Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark - Registered Charity 235468—

27th December 2009

### ✧ THE HOLY FAMILY (C) ✧

#### WORD of GOD

My child, why have you done this to us?

See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.

(Luke 2:48)

#### WORD for TODAY

The old proverb "Charity begins at home" doesn't mean that we shouldn't bother about people far away. Rather, it's a reminder that



the acid test of our willingness to be Godlike is how we behave at home, to our family and friends. The feast of the Holy Family challenges us in the most obvious way to serve God

#### MARY MOTHER of GOD (1st January)

The feast of Mary Mother of God rings out clearly as the eight-day echo of Christmas, recalling as it does that God chose the young virgin of Nazareth to make the dwelling of his only Son.

There are many prayers and songs which speak of the motherhood of Mary. Here's just part of one, in translation by James Quinn SJ, which is sung at the end of the day in chapels and monasteries throughout the world: Alma Redemptoris Mater.

Virgin, in you God made his dwelling place; Mother of all the living, full of grace, Blessed are you: God's word you did believe," Yes" on your lips undid the "No" of Eve.

Daughter of God, who bore his holy One, Dearest of all to Christ, your loving Son, Show us his face, O Mother, as on earth, Loving us all, you gave our Saviour birth.



## AROUND the PARISH

**PARISH CHRISTMAS LUNCH** This was a really enjoyable occasion and an excellent Christmas meal. The ladies of our parish really surpassed themselves and as they are too numerous to mention we can only say a hearty 'Thank you' to everyone who helped with the cooking, serving and clearing up.

**HAMPER RAFFLE** was won by ticket holders: white 261-265 and pink 836-840.

**CRIB** All offerings collected at the crib during the Christmas season will be forwarded to the Cabrini (formerly Catholic) Children's Society. Parishioners are reassured that these collections will only be used for activities other than adoption, for example, residential care and support for children with special needs. The Society helps children and families in need regardless of their faith or background.

**CHRISTMAS GIFTS** If you have received gifts which you are unable to use, please bring them along to the church as we can hold a table sale in the new year to augment the building fund. Some items may be held as raffle prizes as we hope to have plenty of parish functions during 2010!

**PAPER** Please don't forget that all that used wrapping paper and empty cardboard containers can be put in our skip in the car park. This contributes towards parish funds.

**SOUTHWARK DIRECTORIES** are also now available from the repository: just a few, containing all you ever wanted to know about the Diocese and Catholic life such as *Communion more than once a day, the Eucharistic Fast, Holy Communion under both kinds* (p

148) and the new arrangements for *Holydays of Obligation* (p 150). £3.00: essential for those who celebrate Morning Prayer in common in church since it indicates which week of the four-week cycle the Church is following.

**YEAR of PRIESTHOOD** For the remainder of this year for priests (which concludes on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, 11th June 2010) we shall be exposing the Blessed Sacrament on most Saturdays after the morning Mass for the duration of Confessions. There are prayer lists for priests on the windowsills in the porch. Please take one, and also a list of the priests in the Diocese.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS** The next session will be on Saturday 9th January at 5.30pm in the McMahon Hall.

**COMING UP** On Saturday 16th January we are holding a tea party in our hall for the ladies from the Ammadiya Mosque in Medway Road and the ladies from some other local churches. All of our ladies are welcome (we hope to run from 2 – 4pm) but we would ask that anyone attending please bring some small item of refreshments: cake, crisps, sandwiches etc. On this occasion we would ask that we have no meat of any variety (no sausage rolls, ham sandwiches etc.) as the Muslim religion has very strict food laws and we would not want to embarrass our guests. If in any doubt, please ring Maureen on 303498 and she will be able to let you know what is, or is not, acceptable.

## AROUND the DIOCESE and BEYOND

**FAITH IN FOCUS: GROWING UP**

Most parents can sympathise with Joseph and Mary's frustration when they found Jesus in the Temple. He couldn't see what all the fuss was about and his answer to them was infuriating. Mind you, they had let their son get lost in a major capital city for three days! On this feast of the Holy Family we are told that Jesus went back to live with them in Nazareth. St Luke packs years into one concise sentence: Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature and in favour with God and men. And it's the role of any family to promote this sort of growth for their children. He grew in wisdom. Sounds a bit pompous, don't you think? But it points to the fact that Jesus grew mentally. When he was found in the Temple he was listening to the doctors (teachers of the law). He was putting himself in a position where he could learn; he was having his mind stretched and was asking questions. How much do we encourage our own children to grow mentally, or are we content for them to be seen and not heard? He grew in stature. This seems absolutely obvious, doesn't it? But maybe it points to something that our society has lost sight of in a culture of couch potatoes and obesity. Do our family lifestyles encourage physical growth or are we content to be ruled by those who make their money out of fast food and computer games? He grew in favour with God. Jesus still needed to grow spiritually. It seems clear that he had to take responsibility for his mission and his decisions at various crucial points in his life, and he had to keep his relationship with the Father alive. How would we gauge the spiritual climate of our family? He grew in favour with men. Social skills are

among the most important things we learn. Jesus appears to have been at ease in anyone's company and proved himself accessible to people of all sorts. Is conversation and sociability a hallmark of our family life? It's not easy being part of a family. It wasn't for Jesus, Mary and Joseph. But their child grew in wisdom, stature and favour with God and men. What about yours?

**ATTENDANCE** Last week a total of **267** people managed to get to Mass in spite of the bad weather conditions. The collection came to **£504.58** whilst the Parish Christmas Lunch raided the magnificent sum of **£1,345.00** (including the raffle) towards our building fund. We are also grateful for a donation of **£1,000** towards this fund along with other donations amounting to **£80**. Last week we had emergency repairs carried out to the roof of the McMahon Hall to stop the leaks into the toilet block; this cost **£380** for the roofing work and we still have to have repairs made to the electrics. It is expected that this will cost something like **£800** but work cannot start till the new year, so apologies that the gents' facilities are still out of action. Additional thanks to Cllr Cathy Sutton who has very kindly donated **£1,000** from her ward funds towards the cost of our dishwasher in the Hall. This was a very much needed facility to help with the dinners and functions. ♦ Thank you for all the gifts which were delivered to Fr Geoffrey, Deacon Michal and Fr James. Attendance at all the Masses at Christmas was high (double the usual Sunday attendance at 608 worshippers) and Fr Geoffrey wishes to thank you for your generous offerings at those Masses.