

I am available for any parishioner who needs me. My mobile number is 07554427063. Please feel free to contact me to have a chat or to have prayers or a mass said for someone.

24th Dec 1st Jan
Sat: 26th St Stephen's Day
10am Eugene McEvoy Sr ints
Sat: 26th Holy Family
6pm
Sun: 27th Peter Boxall RIP
Sun: 27th Jack Nelson RIP
Mon: 28th
Tue: 29th
Wed: 30th Lilian Darby RIP
Thur: 31st Louisa Goddard RIP
Fri: 1st Mary the Mother of God
10am

Please remember that the Sunday after Christmas is the Feast of the Holy Family. Saturday Evening First Mass of Holy Family 6pm.
Mass on Sunday 9am and 11am
You must book ahead as usual.

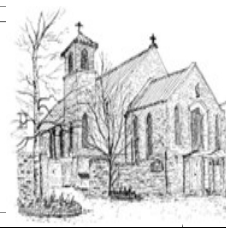
Mass on St Stephen's Day morning
(Boxing Day is only on Zoom) 10am

On New Year's Day mass is on Zoom and open to the public. Booking needed.

Check out the pre-Mass montage competition.



St John Vianney Wantage Sacred Heart Lambourn



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2020 Feast of the Holy Family—Year B



By Saturday we will have survived Christmas! All the toys that shot up in price just prior to Christmas will be all in bits under the sofa and our children playing happily with the cardboard boxes. Meanwhile we will be living on turkey leftovers and whatever else is stuck to the back of the freezer. In all truth we may be feeling a little calmer. Perhaps after the event is actually a better time to think about the Christmas meaning than Christmas day itself. With the pressure lifted, we find ourselves with a bit of time to think about the Holy Family, and our how their values impact own family values.

In today's gospel we see Mary and Joseph presenting their new baby at the temple. They both knew that their child was destined for great things. How would they prepare their child for the role he was born for? There's a famous quote by Martin Luther King Jr. It reads, "If we are to go forward, we must go back and rediscover those precious values – rediscover that all reality hinges on moral foundations, and that all reality has spiritual control" The spirituality that each of us holds today began in childhood, from a time we cannot even remember.

Mary and Joseph were simple folk who would bring up their son in exactly the same way regardless of whether he was destined to be a carpenter or the Messiah. We can all learn a valuable lesson from this about family values and parenting. We don't have to lavish expensive iPads and Xboxes on our children for them to know they are loved. Jesus was born into the poorest of circumstances but he grew up with parents who led by example in an atmosphere of love, wisdom and courage.

Whether our children are destined for greatness or not is irrelevant, today we are told to teach our children by our own good example. If we want our children to grow up in a particular way, we have to start by demonstrating it in our own lives from today.



In your prayers, please remember all who have recently died especially Jack Nelson. Also pray for all who are sick, in hospital or housebound especially Pete Gray, Sybil Murphy, Margaret Joyce, Peter Shaw, Cathy Longworth, Mary Derbyshire, Wendy Purslow, Sue Maher, Cedric Andrews, and all those suffering during this pandemic. Please contact the office if you would like someone to be added to our sick list.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING —The collection taken during Christmas Masses is traditionally your gift to your parish priest. This collection makes up a significant proportion of Fr. David's annual income. With limited ability to have collections in Church your Christmas Offering can be made directly into the parish bank account (details below) referenced "Christmas Offering" Thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity.

Collections Thank You

If you would like to continue supporting the Church through the period of close-down your weekly/ monthly offering can be made online using this name and account number: **PRCDT Wantage St John Vianney Sort Code: 30-93-04 Account Number: 01720016 Account Name: PRCDTR Wantage St. John Vianney.** Please remember that you can always drop your donation into the Presbytery letterbox. Same Account for Wantage and Lambourn

Boxing Day or St Stephen's Day 26th December

St Stephen is the first Christian martyr. The tiny babe in swaddling clothes grew up and people were willing to give their lives for him. St Stephen's defence of his faith before the court enraged the audience, and he was taken out of the city and stoned to death. His final words, a prayer of forgiveness for his attackers (Acts 7:60), echo those of Jesus on the cross.

Thank You and a Happy Christmas and Blessed New Year.

It's an understatement to say that this year has been very different. Little did we think in March as Easter approached that we would be celebrating our Vigil and Easter Day mass as we did. It was indeed strange to celebrate the Vigil in real darkness all alone. Singing the Easter Exultet to an empty church took on a real poignancy. Thank God for Zoom and for all those who participated. We did the best we could to give Glory to God in very strange circumstances. We had hoped and prayed that the Easter light would bring change. Well we have reached Christmas and so little has changed. However hope anew springs eternal. At least we will not be alone in Church for the Nativity. We won't be able to sing Christmas Carols or even give each other a Christmas hug but we will be able to gather as the Christian community to welcome the birth of our Saviour. The little bundle of joy who brought hope and salvation will once again fill our hearts with joy. Let us pray that 2021 will bring the longed for respite. As Mother Julian of Norwich once said, "All will be well, All will be well, all manner of things will be well." Thank you to all those who have continued to join us for our daily mass on Zoom and have supported the Parish through this very difficult time. Thank you for all your kindness to me. Your continued support has got me through the isolation. I will be forever grateful. So much of what we would do for Christmas has had to be abandoned or changed but let us take time to ponder the wonderful love God has for all of us. Christmas can never really be cancelled because God's plans never are. We pray that as the New Year dawns new hope will fill our hearts and pray that next Easter we can gather again. Christmas Blessings to you all. FrD



Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary January 1st 2021

The first day of the year is the day the Church sets aside for honouring Mary. Mary represents true discipleship. Mary exhibits a life of hearing, seeing, and telling of God's marvellous deeds. Mary inspires us to consider deeply the significance of events in our own lives. Do we journey through life oblivious to the world around us, or do we resolve to make some kind of impact? Maybe instead of making new year resolutions to lose weight or make more money, we should resolve this year to be more like Mary.

Have a Happy 'Peace Making' New Year

No-one can solve all the world's problems. To try would be to dissipate one's energies and achieve nothing. The best thing we can do is to focus all our efforts and attention on just one problem and hope our endeavours will make a difference to it. There's no shortage of big issues; global warming, natural disasters, international terrorism, poverty, pollution, child exploitation, and famine to name just a few. The one thing that all these problems have in common is that the more money, resources and manpower you allocate to them the greater improvement you are likely to effect as a result. Fund raising, campaigning, and awareness raising are all good starting points. Happy New 'Peace Making' Year.



Travels with my bro....

Our trip to Lisbon was as expected, wonderful. We did overindulge a little but as it hard work rowing we deserved a little treat. I now know that port is dangerous, delicious but dangerous!! Also BrM is still worried about getting home so I needed to keep him

busy. While his mouth is in gear for eating he doesn't complain. The offer of adoption still stands of course. We did find a wonderful and not too expensive restaurant, where specialties include *pastéis de bacalhau* (salt-cod fishcakes) and *amêijoas a bulhão pato* (clams in a garlicky broth), I got into the laid-back groove with a local delicious blueberry caipirosca. We did eventually get to see the lovely shrine to St Anthony. According to tradition, the church was built on the site where the saint was born, in 1195; A much needed pilgrimage to the saint of my childhood to ask him to find some peace in the world. Having left Lisbon we went to the very trendy Comporta. Br.M's search for Madonna and some shoe maker was unsuccessful so we promptly moved on. We have reached Sines, an old fishing town best known in Portugal as the birthplace of the explorer Vasco da Gama.

The town's most famous son was born here sometime in the 1460s, though nobody can agree on the exact day or where in Sines he was delivered. Vasco da Gama earned his place in history during his voyage to India between 1497 and 1499, becoming the first European to get to India by sea, expanding the Portuguese Empire, opening up world trade and ushering in the colonial era. Appropriately, Vasco da Gama's statue, with its square-like silhouette, faces the sea just next to the west tower of the castle. Br.M chuckled and said it looked more like me than the explorer. Check it out for yourself on google. He is getting too big for his boots but I need his muscle to complete our journey. I had hoped to meet up with Br. Paphnutius at Lisbon but he did not show. He must be planning something big. Lets hope he doesn't ruin Christmas. For those who wish to know we have now covered over 4,000kms since all this began. That's a lot of water under the paddle. I now realise I should have asked for sponsors. I might have out collected Joe Wicks! It's a pity it seems not to be making too much of an impression on my waist line. Perhaps a New Year's resolution of dieting might be in order. Albeit my granny always said feed a fever and starve a cold. I'm staving off the virus. Happy Christmas everyone.