

Weekly Message from Fr William for Second Sunday of Christmas 2020-2021

Dear People of St Mary's

The birth we celebrate at Christmas is a truly wonderful moment. This is the One we have been waiting for; the Prince of Peace; the Saviour of the world; the one Isaiah called 'Emmanuel' – 'God-with-us'. The whole world has been waiting for the birth of this child, ever since humankind walked this earth, ever since human beings emerged into consciousness in the dawn of human history. And now he is born for us, and given to us.

Christmas breaks upon the world and into a new situation every year. In the last century it broke upon a world at war. In recent years it has broken upon a world of terrible civil conflict in Syria and Yemen and countries far from our own. This time it has broken upon the world at a time of global pandemic that has affected us all, some tragically including in our own parish. Christmas continues to break upon the world without fail every year, bringing light in our darkness.

I hope it's been a blessing to celebrate the whole Octave of Christmas this year, taking the lead from Bishop Marcus. Thank you to our St Mary's Singers / Music Group for putting all the Christmas Carols together for us, and leading us in our celebrations of Mass during the Octave, and in our Candlelit Carol Service on Christmas Eve just before Midnight Mass.

In case you missed the carol service on Christmas Eve there will be another on the Eve of the Epiphany, that's Tuesday this week at 6.30pm, leading into our first Epiphany Mass at 7.00pm also with carols. Epiphany Carols and Mass both livestreamed from the parish website as usual. Our second Epiphany Mass will be an in-church mass at 10am on Wednesday 6th (no singing; you'll need to register online as usual from the parish website or phone me). It's all laid out on the bulletin.

May the joy of his birth that filled the hearts of humble shepherds and wise men from the East continue to fill your hearts and your homes this day and through this final week of the Christmas Season.

God bless you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William', is centered on the page.