



## PARISHES OF ST PETER, AND ST FERGUS

### Bulletin

SUNDAY 4 JANUARY 2026: THE EPIPHANY OF THE  
LORD - SOLEMNITY

(Is 60: 1-6, Eph 3:2-6, Mt 2:1-12)



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### THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



Sunday Mass: St. Peter's 4.00pm (Sat) & 10.00 am, St. Fergus' 5.30pm (Sat) & 11.30 am

Weekday Mass: St Peter's – Tue, Thu, & Fri 10.00am; St Fergus – Mon, & Wed 9.30am

Confessions: St Peter's 3.15-3.50pm, St Fergus' 5.00 -5.25pm; and on request

**PRAYER REQUESTS:** We pray for all who are sick, for all who have recently died in particular Gordon McDaid, and Eleanor McNiven, and for all those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Mary McLurg, and Thomas McCarthy.

**SUNDAY COLLECTIONS (28 DEC):** St Peter's - Offertory: £410.00, B. Fund: £329.00, Christmas offering: £1095.00. St Fergus: Offertory: £238.00, Lucky Star: £34.00, Christmas offering: £490.00

**CRIB APPEAL:** Crib donations will fund St Margaret's Children and Family Care Society (Adoption Society). More details on [www.stmargaretadoption.org.uk](http://www.stmargaretadoption.org.uk)

**BAPTISM OF THE LORD:** On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> the Church celebrates 'The Baptism of the Lord.' We extend a warm welcome to those children who were baptised in the year 2025, and their parents/families on that Sunday. It would be a day of 'Thanksgiving to God' for the gift of these children. Please consider sharing this information with families you think might benefit.

**WESTERN CATHOLIC CALENDAR:** available in the stall. Price: £3.50

**DEEPEST GRATITUDE:** We are already in the New Year 2026. We began the new year with the celebration of the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> January. My prayer for you is that 'May divine grace accompany you in every step you take in this new

year, and may all your heartfelt plans succeed.' So, let us move ahead with all our plans seeking God's help and special intercessions of our Blessed Virgin Mary. Isaiah 55:8-9 reminds us to put our complete trust in God because his ways and plans are always better than our own and to trust that everything included in His plan is for a greater good. There could be a lot of curiosity in the mind of many people as to what would be the new year going to be for them. We don't wish for a year of bad experiences as perhaps some of us have had challenges/setbacks in the just gone year. We always wish for the best with hope and trust. Having New Year's resolutions or goal setting perhaps is good for a new beginning and a positive change that we wish to have this year. Studies show people who set some goals at the beginning of the year achieved a great degree of success. While some say, 'I make resolutions at the start of every year, only to find myself breaking them.'

As we reflect back, the year 2025 flew by in the blink of an eye. End-of-year reflection involves reviewing successes, challenges, and lessons learned. From a Catholic perspective, clearly the biggest news story of the year was the death of Pope Francis in April and the subsequent election of Pope Leo XIV, the first American Pope in the Church's 2,000-year history. It would be

incomplete if we don't mention the Christian persecutions in different countries. Persecutions took the lives of thousands of our brothers and sisters who share the same faith. The rapid growth of secularism has added fuel to the fire of hatred towards Christians. We need to remember that as people of hope and faith, Christians should move forward courageously, pray for their persecutors, and allow peace to reign in their hearts. The year 2025 was a 'Year of Hope.' Many people made pilgrimages to renew spiritually, revive age-old pious Catholic traditions and spread special devotions.

I am most grateful to the entire parish communities of St Peter and St Fergus for making our Christmas celebrations so beautiful and enriching. I thank our children's liturgy team (St Peter's) for their inspiring nativity play and carol singing. I sincerely appreciate the parents and their family members who cooperated, and took children to the Church for mass and practice. (Some parents and children were present all the Sundays of the year). Without their interest and participation, it would not have been possible to have a special celebration of Christmas. I extend my sincere gratitude to the Music Ministry Team for enhancing our liturgy with their God-given talents. It's St Augustine who said, 'he who sings praises twice.' The parishioners of St Fergus had a remarkably successful first attempt at singing a Christmas carol after a long period. The melodious and sweet voices assisted by the organist was amazing.

It is very important to mention the role played by the hospitality team in our parishes. Thanks to them who welcomed people as they came in. People who were greeted and received by smiling faces at the entrance of the Church felt they are special and have a distinct place in our parish. It was so inspiring and encouraging to see many families that came for the Christmas mass. I am grateful to the sacristans, readers, extraordinary ministers, volunteers, pass keepers, and altar servers. Last but not least, it is my honour to thank and appreciate every parishioner without exception who contributed through prayers and participations, made our liturgical celebrations throughout the year very meaningful and kept the church going. Without your presence, there is no parish church. Last year all of you have been very generous with your contributions. Once again, a 'Big Thank You' to all of you.

All our efforts aim at bringing glory to God and doing good to others. Yet, despite our best intentions and efforts to do good, failures and unintended negative outcomes can sometimes occur. This paradox is inherent in human action, it is natural. There could be many failures from my

side. A thousand apologies. Let us forget our past mistakes and forgive the faults of others. May the New Year be a time of peace and joy in our hearts and let us live each day by seeking God's help.

THE FEAST OF EPIPHANY: The term "Epiphany," comes from the Greek word meaning "manifestation" or "revelation." Primarily the feast of Epiphany meant the manifestation of Christ to the nations (gentiles) as the Saviour of the world, in the persons of the Magi – also known as the Wise Men or the Three Kings. In earlier times, this feast combined two other manifestations: one that took place at the Lord's Baptism and the other in Cana at the wedding feast. This is still the custom in Eastern Christianity. Each reflects a moment of divine revelation.

The Three Wise Men, often depicted as kings, witnessed the sudden appearance of a new and brilliant star and followed it in order to find the new born King. They journeyed to Jerusalem and asked Herod, "Where is the new born king?" They were told Bethlehem.

The Feast of the Epiphany is rooted in the fourth-century, instituted, in part, to emphasize the universal nature of Christ's mission. In the Catholic tradition, Epiphany was always celebrated on January 6. Beginning with the 1970 liturgical year (which commenced on November 30, 1969), the feast was moved in the United States (and elsewhere in the Latin-Rite Church) to the first Sunday following January 1 (i.e., from January 2-8 inclusive).

Although little is known about the Three Wise Men, tradition provides us with their names: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. Their journey is central to the Feast of the Three Kings, highlighting the global acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah. Tradition venerates the Three Wise Men as saints, including because they not only recognized Christ but also revealed him to the world. Their visit symbolizes the Gentiles finding Jesus (Isa. 11:10; Matt. 28:18-20) and expressing, through their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. In doing so, they show that Christ himself is the greatest gift to all humanity.

The Epiphany of the Lord calls Christians to reflect on the gifts given to Jesus: gold, symbolizing the Lord's royalty; frankincense, used in the worship of God, signifies his divinity; and, myrrh, a burial ointment, points to Jesus' redemptive Passion and death.

Note: Please do not leave the bulletin behind in the church. Take it home and perhaps pass it on to someone who cannot come to church. They'll be glad to know they're still in our thoughts.