

## Winter Newsletter 2018

Welcome to our latest Liturgy Office newsletter; we hope that you are finding them of interest.

As we begin a new liturgical year (Year C) and journey through Advent we look ahead in preparation, first directing our minds and hearts Christ's second coming at the end of time, and then to the anniversary of our Lord's birth at Christmas. The final days of Advent, from December 17 to December 24, focus particularly on our preparation for the celebrations of the Nativity of our Lord (Christmas).

We also begin our Year of Prayer: this year is not intended to turn us away from mission but to deepen our understanding that it is prayer which gives life and strength to our mission and it is prayer which is the source of our mission. The Year of Prayer envisions a call to a renewed personal encounter with Christ – and there are many ways to do this, personal prayer and the Liturgy being just two. To complement this Year of Prayer the Liturgy Office will host a course entitled **Understanding and Praying the Liturgy** – see below.

### **Liturgy Course:**

Throughout next year, our Diocesan Year of Prayer, the Liturgy Office will be hosting a course entitled 'Understanding and Praying the Liturgy' for all those involved/interested in preparing liturgy or exercising any liturgical ministry – or even just curious! Introduced by Bishop Declan, it will take place at the cathedral on one Wednesday evening each month. Further information will be published and posters will be sent to parishes across the Autumn, but the dates are set at 30 January, 27 February, 20 March, 3 April, 1 May, 5 June, 3 July, 4 September, 2 October, 6 November and 4 December, all in 2019, with Bishop Declan to lead us in prayer at the start of the course. Places will be limited to 50, so do watch out for details and book early to avoid disappointment. This will be a great way to journey through our Diocesan Year of Prayer.

### [Course booklet](#)

### [Poster](#)

### [Booking Form](#)

### **Sacristans and Servers:**

The proposed date for our 'Sacristans and Servers' formation has now been pushed into 2019 to coincide with our diocesan Year of Prayer. It will be held on Saturday 30 March at Prior Park College, Bath, with Paul Moynihan, Master of Ceremonies for Cardinal Vincent Nichols at Westminster Cathedral. Paul is also Secretary of the Diocese of Southwark's Liturgy, a member of the National Liturgy Office's Liturgy Committee, Westminster Cathedral's Master of Ceremonies and Archbishop Nichol's Master of Ceremonies, so he comes with excellent credentials!

### **Liturgical Diary:**

The Liturgical Diary for 2019 is now available. If you haven't bought one before, do consider getting one this year. It's a real bargain at just £6.50 per copy and contains, along with all the information about Liturgical texts for each day, a short piece about each of the saints whose lives are celebrated during the year and a host of catechetical material along with blessings and prayers for various occasions. As was said in our last newsletter, this has been produced in-house for the first time this year so, please, be patient and if you notice any errors do let us know. The Liturgy Office is always glad to be advised of corrections needed – in time for next year.

### **The Christmas Season:**

You will see [here](#) some information about the Christmas tree and the Christmas crib – both of which are a familiar part of Christmas for the secular world as well as for practicing Christians – along with information about the [Epiphany of the Lord](#) and the [Epiphany Blessing of homes](#). You will also find rites for the [Blessing of a Christmas Tree](#) and a [Nativity scene](#), along with an [Epiphany Carol Liturgy](#) and the [Epiphany Proclamation](#) which may be sung, ideally by a cantor, on the Feast Day itself (you will find the music file [here](#)). This proclamation dates back to ancient times, before calendars were common, when most people did not know the dates for the upcoming Liturgical year. On Epiphany Sunday, then, the upcoming dates would be "proclaimed" after the gospel.

The Christmas Season finishes with the **Baptism of the Lord**. – his feast was originally observed through the Epiphany, which marked three events from the Gospel. It denoted the visit of the three Magi to the baby Jesus in his crib, the baptism of Jesus by the river Jordan and the wedding at Cana where Jesus is said to have performed his first miracle, turning water to wine. The Magi became the most prominent celebration of the Epiphany, and in 1955 Pope Pius XII instituted a separate liturgical commemoration for the Baptism, on the 13th of January. This was changed by Pope John XXIII and subsequently by Pope Paul IV, to its current date of the first Sunday after 6th January (the Epiphany) or, where the Epiphany is celebrated on 7th or 8th January, the following Monday. The feast marks the end of the liturgical season of Christmastide and the beginning of [Ordinary Time](#)

The **Feast of the Presentation of the Lord**, until 1969, marked the end of the Christmas Season, forty days after the Lord's birth, when the child Jesus was presented in the Temple by Mary and Joseph, in accordance with Mosaic Law. It is sometimes referred to as Candlemas, as the liturgy of the day includes the blessing and procession of candles.

#### **important dates for your diary:**

Finally, a couple of reminders of important dates for your diary for the coming year:

**Ash Wednesday**, which is a day of fasting and abstinence, will be on **6 March** and the

**Rite of Election** and **Call to Continuing Conversion** - which is when the bishop meets with all those who will be baptised or received into full communion with the Catholic Church at Easter and their names are entered into the Book of the Elect – will be held, in the cathedral, on **Saturday 9 March** at 11am.

#### **GDPR:**

Finally, we would like to create a database of those who are interested in being Liturgy contacts or simply receiving details of what's coming up. If you would like your name to be included please do let us know by emailing [liturgy@cliftondiocese.com](mailto:liturgy@cliftondiocese.com) and, if you are happy to be a liturgy contact, please also give details of your parish or community. Any information provided will be processed in accordance with the Diocese's Privacy Notice which is available at <https://cliftondiocese.com/privacy-notice>

If there is anything you would like to see included in future newsletters, please let us know as we are always happy to receive helpful ideas.

**Wishing you all a very blessed Advent and Christmas Season.**