

ST MARY'S MENDLESHAM

www.stmarysmendlesham.org.uk

You are welcome to worship at any
of our services.

SUNDAYS:

9.30 a.m. Parish Mass &
Address

First Mass of Sunday:

Saturdays at 3.00 pm

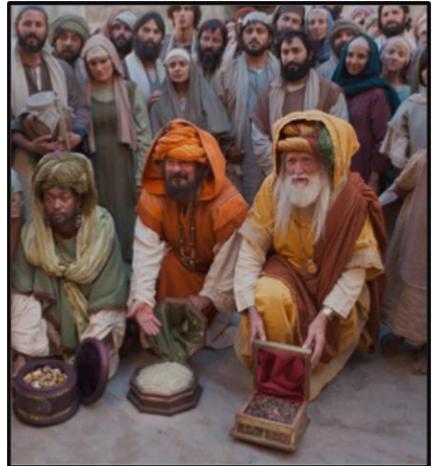
Daily Mass: *see calendar on back
page & check porch notice &
bulletin.*

Daily Morning & Evening Prayer
see porch notice.

**Baptism (Christening), Marriage,
Anointing of the Sick & Holy
Communion from the Reserved
Sacrament - contact Fr Philip**

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturdays at 2.00 pm - *or contact
Fr Philip*



Vicar:

**Fr Philip T Gray, B.A. S.S.C.
Mendlesham Vicarage**

01449 766359

Churchwardens:

Andrew Fleming
01449 711065

Chris Elstone
07530 769676

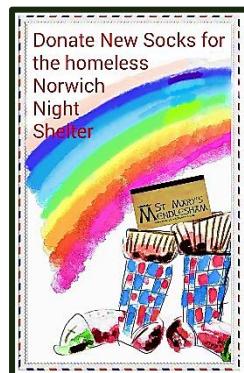
WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

Sunday worship now LIVESTREAMED every week at 9.30.
Visit <https://www.facebook.com/stmarysmendlesham/> or click
to view via the Worship page on the church website

3rd Jan	EPIPHANY 9.30: Parish Mass & blessing of Epiphany House
10th Jan	BAPTISM OF OUR LORD: end of Christmas tide 9.30: Parish Mass; crib & decorations removed after Mass
11th Jan	9.30: Monthly Requiem for January Anniversaries. Season 'throughout the year' begins
18th – 25th Jan	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Please make this your prayer during the special week: <i>"May the unity of the Church be formed by love and understanding. Gather us together through the gift of the Holy Spirit."</i>

SOCKBANK – Please donate socks for the homeless in Norwich: collecting box in church

CRIB APPEAL is for Christian Aid and St Martin's Housing Trust (for the homeless 'Norwich Night Shelter'). Please give generously. Both end on 10th Jan.



THANK YOU to ERIC – HALF A CENTURY!

Eric Bauly will have wound the clock for 50 years this month, climbing the stairway in the tower twice a week, whatever the weather. Thank you very much Eric, for your dedication for half a century and the great care you pay to keeping the clock's time accurate.

LOOKING BACK

- ❖ Thank you to Carl, the supervisor, and all members of the Community Payback for their hard work over the past few months in the churchyard. During the first lockdown it had become very overgrown, but thanks to their hard work it is now immaculate.
- ❖ Thank you to Chris, our churchwarden, for livestreaming the Sunday Mass each week since Remembrance Sunday on the newly set-up Facebook page. It is much appreciated.

Fr Philip Writes...

The Christmass season in the Church concludes on 10th January with what is called ‘Epiphany’ – the ‘showing’, ‘revealing’ or ‘manifestation’ of Christ –

first to the Wise Men. The ‘stable’ of the crib is transformed to look like a house. The visit of the wise men was some time after the birth of Jesus; certainly more than 40 days, because when Christ was presented in the Temple 40 days after his birth, Mary and Joseph gave the offering of poor people, which would not have been the case if they had received the gift of gold from the wise men. We need also to recall that Herod had all boys killed up to the age of 2 – another indication that Christ’s birth could have been as long ago as two years.



Because the Bible specifically states the wise men went to the house (not a stable), it has become a custom to bless chalk at this time and mark our own homes to help us remember to be God-bearers like Mary, to those around us. The custom is to mark with blessed chalk near the main doorway of your home with the traditional initials of the wise men, whose names were given in the 6th Century:

C for Caspar, who brought the gift of incense, a symbol of prayer and priesthood;

M for Melchior who brought gold, a symbol of kingship and

B for Balthazar who offered myrrh, a symbol of death. Those letters – CMB are also the first letters of a Latin blessing –

CHRISTUS MANSIONEM BENEDICAT

-May Christ bless this house.

Christmass and Epiphany are reminders to us that we are to show Christ to those around us.



Fr Michael Hollings writes in one of his books: *"When I worked in Southall a few years ago, there was an old lady living some distance from the church at the end of a long straight road. She was quite undistinguished except to her relatives and friends, but she was absolutely regular, winter and summer – even at the age of 80 – on Sunday morning for the 8.00 am Mass. Soon after her death I was visiting another person along her road. As I walked along I heard a loud tapping on the window. I saw an old man beckoning me. I went to the door and asked what he wanted. He said: "That old lady down there – I've not seen her! Where is she?" I told him she had died. "Oh dear!" he said, "She was my religion."*



I could not understand, so he explained. Each Sunday he watched her walk past, knowing she was going to Mass, and watched her walk back afterwards. They had never spoken, but as he said a second time, *"She was my religion"*.

Fr Hollings said he related that story because, although she did not know it, that elderly woman was a Sacrament – i.e. an outward sign of God's love to that old man and a sign to him of the presence of God.

Christmass means the **Mass of Christ**; We are all called to be signs of the presence of God. People see us come to Mass and leave again. **Do they see God's love radiate from us?** The blessing of our homes is one way we show we belong to Christ; I find several people ask me what the letters mean on my house and it gives an opportunity to explain - and hopefully show his love.

Happy Christmasstide –

Happy Epiphany – Happy New Year!