



St Vedast-alias-Foster

Peace and Contemplation in the City

NEWS FROM FOSTER LANE

Newsletter 1, 2021

A message from Fr Paul

Inspired by a mixture of Michael's retreat in daily life (see an earlier newsletter), the disciplined priests of my early Christian formation and being locked down, I decided to take up something new, celebrating Mass every day of the Twelve Days of Christmas. No longer the prelude of dry January, this was to be a proper Christmastide celebration.

I have not tried this before, both because of family commitments and an inability to gather a congregation between Christmas and New Year. Streaming to YouTube has given a virtual gathering and family commitments are curtailed. So, what has this series of celebrations offered?

There is wisdom in our post Christmas calendar. No sooner do we celebrate a birth on Christmas Day, than we commemorate a martyr's death on Boxing Day. St. Stephen, the first Christian to die for his faith, prefigures the violence of Christ's suffering. Then we recall the philosophical underpinning of the nativity scenes, not shepherds or kings but the extraordinary insights of St. John; "and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us". Then once more plunged into violence as we recall how Herod killed the children around Bethlehem while trying to extinguish a King, whose kingdom would be so different to his own.

Then the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas a Becket, murdered in his own cathedral in a struggle between church and state. A reminder that the babe laying in a manger calls his followers to speak truth to power. A day with no saints is followed by John Wycliffe, a Catholic priest who translated the Bible into English as a forerunner to the reformation. The English Bible was thought so dangerous that, following his death, his bones were exhumed and burnt. A reminder, perhaps, of what we now take for granted but which did arouse such passions.

I'm looking forward to the remaining twelve days with the Naming and Circumcision of Jesus on New Year's Day, firmly showing his Jewish inheritance and traditionally starting his earthly life bleeding for his inherited law, to end it bleeding for the new law of love. The mystical writers Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus are commemorated on 2 January while Epiphany completes the Twelve Days with the symbolic journey of the

wise men foretelling, through their gifts, Christ as King, Priest and Sacrifice; celebration and desolation combined.

It's a roller coaster of joy and grief, mystery and politics, philosophy and faith; echoing the roller coaster this year of isolation and spending, fear and hope, vaccines and variants. We have seen heroic responses and panic buying, experienced both new friendships and loneliness. 2021 will be better but for now we both mourn and look forward.

With love and prayers for 2021

Paul

Service information

You can join us for live weekday masses & our Sunday Service

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCq5Plrgy_zMhluHu-ZePfRQ?view_as=subscriber

After the Sunday Service

Paul Kennedy is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Post Eucharist coffee

Time: This is a recurring meeting each Sunday after Mass

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89210467362>

Meeting ID: 892 1046 7362



You can still make your Sunday offering online by clicking on this 'give a little' logo which can also be used for all donations

As with most charities the lockdown has stretched our finances.

There will be no pew sheets during lockdown. Readings for this Sunday printed below.

Sunday 3 January, Epiphany of The Lord

Isaiah 60. 1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the

nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

Matthew 2. 1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judah; for so it has been written by the prophet: "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

News of Winnie's Adventures From Doris Barrera

Doris is a parishioner at St Vedast



Dear Friends

You may be wondering "What Winnie, Fr Paul's beloved Spring Spaniel, does during the day?", well.... I can tell you that "I do" many different and exciting things.

My Monday to Friday mornings begin at 5:45 am, Yes!! You are reading correctly!!! Saturday and Sunday are a little different, we don't need to wake up so early, but still, we go for exercise. During our morning runs, my daddy Paul and I go around The City pounding his feet and my paws for over 10 miles.

Sometimes, during our runs, we meet our friend Doris. She often gives me a chicken stick and takes me for a Puppuccino after training. It is also very usual to stop by the greens at the Tate Modern where I can meet other early morning four legged friends, catching up with them and discuss the best smell of the morning.

Once we get home, my daddy Paul gets a shower and breakfast - I get breakfast too. Then I go straight to my favourite sofa and sometimes sleep for a couple of hours.

During Lockdown, I had the chance to have the Church Courtyard all to myself. It was so cool as I could chase squirrels, pigeons and run around everywhere! I was a very lucky dog indeed, so instead of my morning sofa sleep, I preferred to spend more time in the outside.

Friends, I must tell you that now I have a new doggy friend, he is called St Augustine Emmanuel Slater-Carr (Gus for the general public). Gus is a one year old Cockerpoo and his daddy is also a Priest – like my daddy Paul! He lives next door to Doris, she takes him for a walk every day and gives him lots of nice treats and cuddles. Doris gives me treats and cuddles too, and she says that I am the prettiest dog in the world, so if she says so it must be true.

Gus has becoming an exceptionally good friend of mine, and our encounters have turned into a very regular affair. My daddy Paul, Doris, Gus and I usually meet by the Tate Modern during our afternoons. We run around in the park and have lots of fun and we meet lots of other doggies too.

If the river tide is low, we visit the beach. This is an amazing place to puddle away. I love playing in the water, running after my ball and meeting new doggies and human friends. Later in the evening, I spend relaxing and cuddling with my mummy and daddy.

Well friends, this is more or less what my day can look like. However, for me every day is an adventure. I feel so happy for having such a caring daddy Paul and mummy Paula, and for having all of you loving me too.