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**Christmas Prayer Tree**

There are still a few tags left. Write an intention and tie it to the tree. Any donations will go to the Sisters charity in the Philippines.

**Christmas Offerings**

Envelopes available in the church porch for the traditional offering for the priests.

**Share our love: give them hope**

Please take time to visit our nativity over the Christmas period. The collection will be donated to the Catholic Children’s Society as it works across our diocese spreading God’s love and giving families hope in times of crisis. Please give what you can afford, it is greatly appreciated by so many children. Thank you.

**Holy Hour**

Sunday 31 December at 7.00pm in church

**livesimply**

As the year draws to a close, let us reflect on how we can incorporate living simply into our plans for the New Year – whether it is in our individual lives or as part of the parish community. In 2018, we will continue to collect ideas for *live*simply in the parish. It is not too late to get involved. The next *livesimply* meeting will be held on Saturday 27 January 10.00am in the St Richard Reynolds Centre. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Kathrin at livesimplyexeter@gmail.com or 01392 662870. Have a happy Christmas!

**Diocesan Yearbook 2018**

Now available. Price **£4.00**. A great source of diocesan information and news. Please put payment in wall box marked ‘Books’.

**Syro Malabar Women’s Forum**

Will be celebrating Mass with Fr Sunny at Blessed Sacrament on Saturday 5 January followed by a meeting.

**Charismatic prayer group**

The group meets in the St Richard Reynolds Centre from 7.15 to 9.00pm on the second and fourth Thursday of the month. The next meeting will be on Thursday 11 January. For more info call Chris and Sue Lee on 01392 432929.

**Christmas Cards**

Remember to look to see if any cards have been left in the box in the porch for you!

**New Year’s Day 1 January**

Mass at 12.00 noon followed by Cheese & Crackers & Wine/ shared lunch in the St Richard Reynolds Centre. All welcome.

**Epiphany Praise**

On Sunday 7 January at 3.00pm followed by refreshments in the St Richard Reynolds Centre.

**Weekly Giving Envelopes**

The weekly gift aid and planned giving envelopes are available for collection. Please let us know if there are any changes in your circumstances. Are you still paying income tax for instance? Also check we have the right address details for you. If you are new to the Parish or perhaps not considered gift aiding your donations there is opportunity also to consider it. You can always call the Parish office for more information. Thank you. *Anne Burdon Parish Treasurer*

**Preparing for Baptism**

Next preparation course for parents is on Saturday 3 February at 10.30 am in the Richard Reynolds Centre. Please book your place with the Parish Office.

**Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve**

Christmas Eve falls on the Fourth Sunday of Advent this year, you cannot fulfil both the Sunday and Christmas obligations in just one Mass. So, if you attend an evening Mass for Christmas on the Sunday, you will need to go to a different Mass earlier in the day, or on Saturday evening for the fourth Sunday of Advent Mass!

**Welcome**

Christmas is a time when we visit friends and family, when we gather as a parish to celebrate and give thanks. If you are home from university or college, home to visit parents, grandparents and family, visiting Exeter because it’s such a lovely place or here because at Christmas you want to be part of a community celebrating the greatest gift we have ever received, Jesus Christ our Saviour, you are WELCOME.

**Masses in Thanksgiving**

As a way of saying thank you to the many people who have helped in the parish in various ministries this year, we will be celebrating Mass for your intentions during the next couple of weeks. The list is in the porch. If you can come along that would be wonderful, but if you can’t be there, be assured that you are being prayed for.

**St Vincent de Paul Society**

Would like to say a very big thank you to all who have contributed so generously to our Christmas parcel appeal. Your gifts of food and money from the Exeter parishes and St Nicholas School will give real comfort this Christmas to the residents of the homeless shelters in Exeter. Thank you so much. Best wishes for a very happy Christmas from all in SVP.

**The World Meeting of Families**

Dublin 21- 26 August 2018.  Pope Francis intends to be present for the last part of the gathering including the Final Mass on 26 August.  This is a wonderful opportunity to attend a global Church event. For info see:

www.worldmeeting2018.ie/en/

**Concert in January**

The Clifton String Trio with guest speaker Jilly Spencer, will present a programme of music and words at Blessed Sacrament Church on Sunday 28 January 2018 at 3pm. You pay what you decide.

**The Word**

**This Sunday 24Dec**

**First Reading** *Samuel 7:1-5.8-12.14.16*

**Psalm Response**

*I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.*

**Second Reading** *Romans 16:25-27*

**Gospel** *Luke 1:26-38*

**Next Sunday 31 Dec**

**First Reading** *Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3*

**Psalm Response**

*He, the Lord, is our God.*

*He remembers his covenant for ever.*

**Second Reading** *Hebrews 11:8.11-12.17-19*

**Gospel** *Luke 2:22-40*

**Thank you**

Collection Sunday

17 December **£1,004.84**

Christmas flowers collection **£195.01**

**Getting married?**

Congratulations! Please give us at least six months’ notice if you are planning to marry in the Church.

**The parish office**

will close on Friday 22 December and reopen on Tuesday 2 January 2018.

**Christ in the Crib**

The incarnation, the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem as a helpless baby, was a source of great joy to St Francis of Assisi. He was astounded that God was so humble that he came from heaven to live on earth, sharing the life of the creation, becoming our brother. Francis wanted to make this self-giving of God vivid and real, and so he created the first Christmas crib. At a small town called Greccio, in December 1223, he asked a man named John to prepare a manger, with hay, an ox and an ass. Then Francis came with his brothers and the local people to celebrate Christmas with great rejoicing, and Francis sang the gospel and preached powerfully ‘on the nativity of the poor King’.

**Masses**

**until the Feast of the Epiphany 7 Jan.**

**Sunday 24 December**

**4th Sunday of Advent**

***Expectant Mothers***

**9.00am** *People of the Parish*

**10.30am**

**Sunday 24 December**

**The Nativity of the Lord**

**6.00pm** *Families of the Parish*

**11.30pm Carols & Readings**

**Midnight Mass**

*People of the Parish*

**Monday 25 December**

**Christmas Day**

**9.00am** *The sick and housebound of the Parish*

**10.30am** *The young people of our Parish*

**NO evening Mass**

**Tuesday 26 December**

**St Stephen**

**9.30am** *Altar servers*

*New altar servers will be enrolled into the Guild of St Stephen and receive medals.*

**Wednesday 27 December**

**St John**

**9.30am**

**4.00pm** RD&E Hospital

**Thursday 28 December**

**The Holy Innocents**

**9.30am**

*Thursday Lunch Club helpers*

**Friday 29 December**

**St Thomas Beckett**

**7.30am No Convent Mass**

**9.30am** *Church cleaners*

**Saturday 30 December**

**9.30am** *Clare Leonard RIP*

**Sunday 31 December**

**Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph**

**9.00am** *Parish Cafod Group*

**10.30am** *Andre Raymond & Marie Therese Mein RIP*

**6.00pm** *People of the Parish*

**Monday 1 January**

**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**

**12.00 Noon** *followed by Cheese & Wine in the St Richard Reynolds Centre*

**Tuesday 2 January**

**St Basil the Great**

**7.00pm** *All parish catechists*

**Wednesday 3 January**

**9.30am** *Flower arrangers*

**4.00pm** RD&E Hospital

**Thursday 4 January**

**The Holy Innocents**

**9.30am** *Catholic Women’s League members*

**Friday 5 January**

**7.30am** Convent

**9.30am**

**Saturday 6 January**

**9.30am** *Olive Morgan RIP*

**Sunday 7 January**

**The Epiphany of the Lord**

**9.00am**

*Pat & George Stewart RIP*

**10.30am**

*Children’s Liturgy catechists*

**6.00pm** *People of the parish*

**Confessions**

After 9.30am Mass on Saturday morning and by appointment.

**Contact us**

**Parish Priest**

Fr Jonathan Stewart

**Priest in retirement**

Fr John Watkins

**PARISH OFFICE**

The Presbytery,

29 Fore Street, Heavitree

Exeter EX1 2QJ

**Telephone**

01392 274724

**Email** exeter-heavitree

@prcdtr.org.uk

**Parish Office hours**

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10.00am–4.00pm

**Parish Secretary**

Lesley Hooper

**Safeguarding Reps**

Vince Clark &

Lesley Hooper

**PARISH SCHOOL**

**St Nicholas Catholic Primary School**

Ringswell Avenue,

Exeter EX1 3EG

**Telephone**

01392 445403

**Email** admin@stncs.uk

**Website**

www.st-nicholas-exeter.devon.sch.uk

**Head Teacher**

Angela Folland

**CONVENT**

**Mount St Mary Convent**, Wonford Road,

Exeter EX2 4PF

**Telephone** 01392 433301

*Blessed Sacrament Parish is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth.*