

Reflection for Sunday December 31st
Holy Family

Christmas Ornaments by Wendy Cope

The mice attacked the Holy Family –
The one I bought in Prague, made out of
straw.
By Christmas, Joseph was an amputee
And Mary and the baby were no more.
But I have other treasures to display –
Two perching birds, a Santa Claus, a clown,
A rooster from the church in Santa Fé,
A little harp and drum, a shoe, a crown –
Collected in the years I've lived with you,
The years of warmth and love and Christmas
trees,
And someone to come home to, someone
who
Can share what I bring back from overseas
And sometimes travel with me. Darling, look
–
Our moon from Paris, glittering on its hook.

***Blessings for Christmastide and the New
Year***

Fr David



NEXT SUNDAY 07 01.2024 Epiphany

10.30am in the Hall

READINGS: OT Isaiah 60: 1-6

NT Ephesians 3: 1-12

GOSPEL Matthew 2: 1-12



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St Thomas, Exeter
31st December 2023
Holy Family

10.30am in Hall

Today

10.30am in the Hall

*Hymn Numbers from the Bethlehem Carol
Sheet*

24 The Virgin Mary had a baby boy

6 Away in a manger

11 Joy to the world

Wednesday 3rd January

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

Thursday 4th January

9.30—11am St Thomas Tots

3-5pm Warm Space in the Hall

Friday 5th January

9.30am Morning Prayer

10am Staff Meeting



Collect

Almighty God, who wonderfully created us in your own image and yet more wonderfully restored us through your Son Jesus Christ: grant that, as he came to share in our humanity, so we may share the life of his divinity; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Isaiah 61: 10-62: 3

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Galatians 4: 4-7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Luke 2: 15-21

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Post Communion

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son shared at Nazareth the life of an earthly home: help your Church to live as one family, united in love and obedience, and bring us all at last to our home in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

NOTICES

Community Larder There will be a collection box in church on Sundays for food donations. The need remains great so please be mindful of our wider community.

Pioneering Parishes:

What: A series of four fortnightly webinars to help parishes start to move their energy outwards

and become more pioneering.

When: Tuesday 9th January, Tuesday 23rd January, Tuesday 6 & Tuesday 20th February.

Time: 14.00-15.30.

Please refer to weekly email and/or speak to Fr David or Revd Sarah.

Knit & Natter will meet again after Christmas on Thursday 11th January 2024. Details from Jenny on 01392 498725

