

Feast of the Epiphany Wednesday 6th January: Mass will be at 7.30pm. Places need to be booked in advance by email. Booking opens from Monday 21st December on a first come first served basis. There will also be Mass at St Ann's at 10am (no booking required at St Ann's).

Please pray for all those who are sick and all those who have died recently. We remember Ann Crombleholme, Emma Gannon, Bishop Eric Grasar, Neville Coupe, Oliver Kirk, Margaret Frith, Mary Burke, Martin Fury, Winifred Richardson, Peggy Ast, Catherine Connor, Frances Minshall, James Ollerenshaw, William Dixon, Kevin Bancroft, James Abberton, Doreen West, Desmond Ward, Mary Nicholls, Jack Calderbank, Edith Curran, Elizabeth Sutton, Arthur Hogan, Margaret Turner, George Chilton and all those who anniversaries occur at this time. May they rest in peace.

Confessions: Available on request. Please telephone the presbytery a minimum of 24 hours in advance to arrange.

Parish Safeguarding Reps: Noel Russell and Bernadette McCrory. If you have any concerns about safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, please speak to them or contact them via the presbytery, in the strictest confidence. **Address:** Stockport Road, Cheadle, SK8 2AF

Telephone / Email: 0161 428 2480 / stchadsheadle@gmail.com

Office Hours: Thursday 11am-1pm



The Catholic Parish of St Chad, Cheadle
Priest: Fr. Sean Davidson



Christmas Day 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

About a week or so before Christmas in 2003 I was sitting with a group of Catholic friends around a warm glowing fire in a country home in the northwest of Ireland. The idea of becoming a priest was still just an idea and one which I thought might never become a reality. The prospect of going to seminary and leaving everything to live for Jesus in a radical way caused a mixture of joy and trepidation in my heart at that time. Eventually the joy would overcome the trepidation and in August 2004 I made the leap of faith and never looked back. Anyway, during that fireside conversation I made the common complaint that people around town seemed to be forgetting whose birthday they were celebrating. Christmas (Christ's Mass) was becoming ever more reduced to mere celebrations and shopping for gifts, both of which are good but lacking in depth if we forget what lies behind them. We had all been guilty in the past of celebrating Christmas in that way ourselves. Then someone had what seemed at first like an outlandish idea: to get our hands on a donkey and have two people dress up as Mary and Joseph and go through the main streets and shopping area of the town on Christmas Eve. To let the Gospel become visible on the high street for those who will not read or hear it!

The wild idea became a reality just a few days later and a whole group of us ended up following the lovely donkey with a guitar while belting out Christmas carols about the birth of Jesus. We did our best to choose from among us the most beautiful Mary (audacious enough to pull off

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such a crazy stunt) and the most suitable Joseph (a strong farmer from the charismatic prayer group with a fine beard and a familiarity with donkeys). Although they were meant to be looking for a place to stay before the birth, I think the Baby Jesus ended up being there too, but He was made of plastic and well wrapped up under the cover of His swaddling clothes. It was a bit of a laugh really and we were happy to be fools for Christ, but it actually went down really well, once people had got over the shock of the bizarre sight and the irritation at the traffic slow-down it caused. It soon became an annual fixture on Christmas Eve. Last time I was there the group also handed out hundreds of rosary beads and prayer cards, using it as an opportunity to evangelise and invite people back to Church to celebrate Christ's birthday.

While I don't expect us to go out and do the same around here this year (we have Covid restrictions as an excuse I suppose:) perhaps we might take the opportunity at some point to remind others in some small way of the true meaning of Christmas. It's all about Jesus! His birth is the cause of the happiest of all the celebrations known to humanity and nothing could ever replace it. His birth is the great light that has arisen in the darkness of human history, and history will rightly be forever divided into before Christ and after Christ. As you prayerfully commemorate and joyfully celebrate this glorious event so filled with hope, may your home be bathed in the peace, love, and joy that only Jesus can bring. And may these same blessings follow you all throughout the New Year which lies before us.

Happy Christmas!

May God bless you all!
Fr. Sean



Mass Times & Intentions

Thurs 24 th	Christmas Eve	8.00pm	Maureen Mitchell
Fri 25 th	Christmas Day	9am	Enrique Jimenez RIP & Manuel Montiel RIP
Sat 26 th	Vigil	7pm	Hugh Gilronan RIP
Sun 27 th	Holy Family		Living & Deceased members of Garvin Family
Mon 28 th			
Tue 29 th	St Thomas Becket	7:30pm	Minnie & James Boylan
Wed 30 th			
Thu 31 st	Christmas Octave Day 7	9:30am	For the deceased friends of R & M Commins
Fri 1 st Jan			

Mass Intentions: Envelopes for Mass Intentions are available at the back of the church. Mass will continue to be celebrated privately every day during the week for your intentions. Please post the envelope through the presbytery door once completed.

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