

St. Francis of Assisi, Shelfield

27, MILL ROAD, SHELFIELD, WALSALL, WS4 1RH

(The parish is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Registered Charity No. 234216)

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr. Malcolm Glaze, B.A., M.A.

School Headteacher: Miss Dawn Richards B.A. (Hons), PGCE.

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CHRISTMAS MASSES 2017

Christmas Masses

- Sunday 24th. December - Carols at 6:30 p.m. followed by
Mass during the Night at 7 p.m.
- Monday 25th. December - Christmas Day Mass at 10:00 a.m.

Feast of St. Stephen

- Tuesday 26th. December – Mass of St. Stephen at 11:00 a.m.
(Patron of Altar Servers)

Feast of the Holy Family

- Saturday 30th. December - Mass at 7 p.m.
Sunday 31st. December - Mass at 11 a.m.

Solemnity of Mary Mother of God

- Monday 1st. January - Mass at 11 a.m.

Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord

- Saturday 6th. January - Mass at 7 p.m.
Sunday 7th. January - Mass at 11 a.m.

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

- Monday 8th. January - Mass at 10 a.m.

There will be a Collection at all the Christmas Masses as your **Christmas Offering** for the personal support of your Parish Priest. Envelopes available from the Church Porch. Thank you.

Christmas Reflection

“Families belong together”

Someone reflecting on the plight of refugees in our world today ended with that phrase “Families belong together.”

Christmas is a special time of year when families do, as far as possible, come together to celebrate, to reflect on the past year and look forward with hope to the year ahead.

Through our Baptism we become a child of God and so a member of his family. Jesus was born in Bethlehem because a census had been called that required Joseph to return to his ancestral home. The story is familiar, there was no room at the Inn and so Jesus was born in a stable. Perhaps the situation in Bethlehem at that time was little different to the busyness we experience in our own time. They were not rushing to buy Christmas gifts or attend Christmas parties but our own busyness can obscure the real meaning of Christmas.

The giving and receiving of gifts does reflect human goodness and generosity. In a way it extends the goodness and generosity of God himself in sending his son into the world to be our Saviour, who although rich became poor for our sake, as many parents will become for the sake of their children.

For Christians God is love. Some children were asked -
What does love mean?

One boy answered – Love is what is in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen.

We all need time to step back and reflect on our lives and where we are going. We need to become aware of the present moment which is itself a gift in which we become aware of the presence of those we love.

That for us includes God himself and so we hope and pray that you receive this invitation to join us at our Christmas celebrations this year. To re-connect or discover for the first time the real presence of God, who never forces himself into our lives, but shows his goodness and generosity to all who welcome him with an open mind and heart.