

SUNDAY PLUS

Jesus in our midst

The Lord Jesus is with us

By Fr Richard Reid C.Ss.R.

2021 is now unbelievably behind us and we look to a brand-new year with excitement and perhaps trepidation. 2022 is opening up to each of us. What will this year bring? How will this year change us? Where will this year lead us? These are powerful questions that are best thought about in the quietness of our minds or with our nearest and dearest. Let us never forget that we do not enter the bright new territory of this year alone. No, the Lord Jesus is with us and will accompany us every step of the way. We have so recently celebrated his birthday and the fact that by coming into the world he has made it possible that we could be called brothers and sisters of one another, only because he permits us to be his brother or sister.

Let us remember the famous poem by Minnie Louise Haskins (1875-1957), made famous by King George VI as we put out in the darkness of the year ahead: And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied:

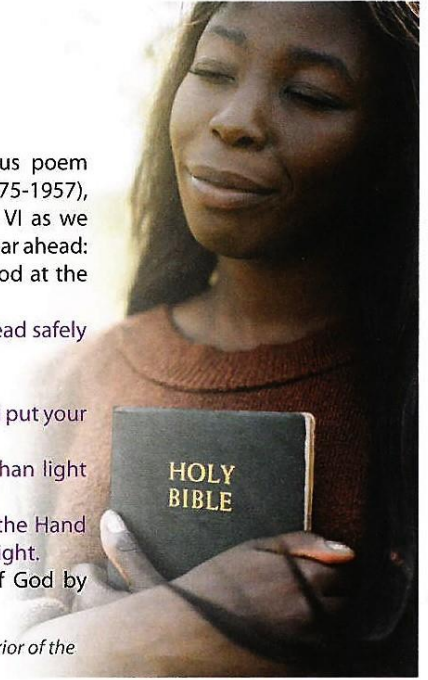
"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.

That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."

So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.

Be aware of the presence of God by your side.

Fr Richard Reid is the Provincial Superior of the Redemptorists' London Province.



Epiphany house blessing

Have you ever visited a house and seen something like 20 C+M+B 20 chalked over a door and wondered what it means?


The numbers and letters represent a time-honoured Epiphany custom celebrated in many places across the world.

C+M+B stands for the names Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, the traditional names of the Magi. It's also believed that the letters are the initials of the Latin words meaning "Christ, bless this house" (Christus mansionem benedicat)

The first 20 is the century and the second figures are the year, so, for 2022, 20 C+M+B 22 would be chalked over the door.

The Epiphany Blessing places God at the entrance to the home and the entire family under God's protection. It invites Jesus to be a daily guest in the home, the family's comings and goings, conversations, work and play, joys and sorrows.

Lord God of Heaven and earth, you revealed your only begotten Son to every nation by the guidance of a star. Bless this house and all who inhabit it.

May we be blessed with health, goodness of heart, gentleness and the keeping of your law. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our love for each other may go out to all. Father, bless all who gather here. Send your holy angel to defend us and fill with grace all who enter this door. We ask this through Christ our Lord,  Amen.

"Like the Magi, we too are called to allow ourselves to be fascinated, attracted, guided, illuminated and converted by Christ: it is the journey of faith, through prayer and the contemplation of the works of God, which continually fill us with joy and wonder, an ever new wonder. That wonder is always the first step to go forward in this light."

Pope Francis

from *The Coming of the Magi*

"A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter." ...
All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death."

T.S.Eliot

Today:
Ecclesiasticus
24:1-2, 8-12
Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-18
John 1:1-18

(S) Isaiah 60:1-6
Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6
Matthew 2:1-12

Monday:
1 John 2:29 - 3:6
John 1:29-34
(S) 1 John 3:22 - 4:6
Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday:
1 John 3:7-10
John 1:35-42
(S) 1 John 4:7-10
Mark 6:34-44

Wednesday:
1 John 3:11-21
John 1:43-51
(S) 1 John 4:11-18
Mark 6:45-52

Thursday:
Isaiah 60:1-6
Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6
Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25
(S) 1 John 4:19 - 5:4
Luke 4:14-22

Friday:
1 John 3:22 - 4:6
Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25
(S) 1 John 5:5-13
Luke 5:12-16

Saturday:
1 John 4:7-10
Mark 6:34-44
(S) 1 John 5:14-21
John 3:22-30

Next Sunday:
Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11
Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7
Luke 3:15-16, 21-22