



Eglwys Gadeiriol Tyddewi St Davids Cathedral



From Canon Leigh

7th January 2021

Dear faithful!

I hope that you are all keeping as well as possible and as safe as you can be in this time of increased risk and contagion. Christmas was strangely quiet given the announcement of the lockdown and the withdrawal of the many Christmas services that had been planned earlier in the month – indeed it is the first time ever that I have not attended or led Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. We all hope that you managed to tune in to some of our YouTube offerings, not to mention our Radio 4 exploits as well as our hosting of Dechrau Canu's Christmas extravaganza, with a few familiar cathedral faces.

Our present situation with the latest Welsh Government announcement means that we have had to rethink our current provision of services as well as how staff are deployed. Some staff are returning to furlough and the choirs are not meeting this month in order to protect our choristers. This means that our Sunday 11.15am service will not be choral for the time being, and there will be no weekday choral evensongs. The **Sunday 11.15am Eucharist will be said and live-streamed** to Facebook and later uploaded to our YouTube channel. The weekday morning services will revert to the Daily Office rather than the Eucharist. We will continue to hold the Sunday 8.30am Eucharist in the Lady Chapel for those locals who would like to continue to meet together in person, but I must tell you that **the risk in the St. Davids area is now high**. The new variant strain of COVID-19 has been detected here according to the latest government statistics, and so you are safer staying at home at the moment.

You might think that I'm now going to spout some religious platitude about how the Epiphany defines our faith and our waiting and this interminable season of lockdown but I'm not. The Epiphany comes as a sort of antidote to Christmas as we move towards the fulcrum of Candlemas, tipping us towards Lent and the beginning of our journey towards Good Friday, the Cross and Easter. The real images of the Epiphany are those echoed in TS Eliot's *The Journey of the Magi*, which is a tough portrayal of their journey and what they found. Frances Chesterton's famous poem, *Here is the Little Door* gives us a verse of the sweet baby Jesus and the wonderful gifts, but they are brutally handed back in the second verse – the gold becomes a two edged sword, the frankincense the smoke of battle and the myrrh the foreshadowing of death.

The Epiphany moves us on, it picks us up and shakes us down to see reality – the Magi's journeying enables our own momentum, a bit like the wheels between the rails on the ascent of a rollercoaster – the Magi propel us forward, with all the hardships, frustrations and difficulties that life will throw at us again this year. The difference though, is that they saw Jesus and worshipped him. And that's our challenge – first to have the eyes to see and then to have the heart to believe. Here's to a radically different 2021!

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NOTES

Foodbank – we're still collecting in the cathedral, but we can arrange to collect from your doorstep if you have non-perishables – please box them and give any of the parish clergy a call and we'll pick them up from you and make sure they get to the Foodbank collection point.

Live streaming and YouTube – during this period of lockdown, please subscribe to our YouTube Channel [youtube.com/stdavidscathedral1181](https://www.youtube.com/stdavidscathedral1181) and our Facebook page can be found at [facebook.com/stdavidscathedral](https://www.facebook.com/stdavidscathedral)

Annual Vestry – Having only just managed to hold our Annual Vestry meeting, we're now due our next to ratify 2020's accounts. The date is now fixed at 7 pm on Thursday 4th March.