

‘All for Jesus’

The Launch of the Centenary of the Diocese of Blackburn Resources for use within the Eucharist

Feast of the Epiphany 2026

Guidance Notes

The following can be used either as a complete order of service once hymns have been added and local adaptations made, or sections lifted out as you see fit and inserted into your normal Order of Service.

A **sermon** will be placed on the internet nearer to the time which you are free to play, circulate, preach yourself or ignore!

Two sections are inserted as **optional extras** to be used as appropriate to context:

- **The placing of the gifts or the figures in the crib.** Either the figures of the wise men or the gifts they brought can be placed into the crib, perhaps presented by young people. The prayers are offered as the gifts or figures are out in place. This section of the service is currently placed after the Gospel but it can be done during the Opening Hymn or after communion.
- **The blessing of chalk.** This is an ancient custom that has been reintroduced to many parishes in recent years. Chalk is blessed and distributed to the people who then mark the portals of their doors with a cross, the initials of the three wise men and the year. This simple gesture physically marks out their home as a place where Christ is known and worshipped. If you decide to use this part of the service, the following instructions can be distributed to the people:

Epiphany Chalk: Please take some blessed chalk to mark the doors of your homes with the following:

20 + C + M + B + 26

Please use the following prayer as you do so:

*The Three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar
followed the star of God's Son who became human
two thousand and twenty-six years ago.
May Christ bless our home
and remain with us throughout this New Year.
Amen.*

Opening Rites

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
Amen

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Introduction to the Eucharist

Dear friends, we meet in joy to celebrate the Feast of Epiphany. As the wise men laid their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh before the Christchild, they offered their whole lives to Jesus as he acknowledged him as King, as God and as Saviour.

Today in common with churches across Lancashire, we launch the centenary celebrations of the Diocese of Blackburn. As we do so, we look back in thanksgiving for one hundred years of faithful service. And we look forward, imitating the wise men as we offer our whole lives afresh to Jesus and give our all to him.

But first, as we prepare ourselves to meet the Lord who reveals himself to us in word and sacrament, let us call to mind our sins.

Confession

Either:

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.**

Or:

God be gracious to us and bless us,
and make your face shine upon us:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May your ways be known on the earth,

your saving power among the nations:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

You, Lord, have made known your salvation,
and reveal your justice in the sight of the nations:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Absolution

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
✠ pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Gloria

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

Collect

Either:

O God, who by the leading of a star
manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:
mercifully grant that we,
who know you now by faith,

may at last behold your glory face to face;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Or:

Creator of the heavens,
who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child:
guide and sustain us,
that we may find our journey's end
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 60.1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the Lord will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,*
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Second Reading

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for* Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— for surely you have already heard of the commission of God’s grace that was given to me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery* was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God’s grace that was given to me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see* what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in* God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Gospel

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Hear the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew
Glory to You, O Lord

Matthew 2.1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men* from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising,* and have come to pay him homage.’ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah* was to be born. They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

“And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd* my people Israel.” ’

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men* and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising,* until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped,* they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to You, O Christ

Placing of gifts/figures of the Magi at the Crib *(See note at the top)*

Melchior/Gold

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe:
to you be praise and glory for ever.
As gold in the furnace is tried
and purified seven times in the fire,
so purify our hearts and minds
that we may be a royal priesthood acceptable in the service of your kingdom.
Blessed be God for ever.

Caspar/Frankincense

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe:
to you be praise and glory for ever.
As our prayer rises up before you as incense,
so may we be presented before you
with penitent hearts and uplifted hands
to offer ourselves in your priestly service.
Blessed be God for ever.

Balthasar/Myrrh

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe:
to you be praise and glory for ever.
As you give medicine to heal our sickness
and the leaves of the tree of life
for the healing of the nations,
so anoint us with your healing power
that we may be the first-fruits of your new creation.
Blessed be God for ever.

Sermon

Act of Dedication and Commitment

My brothers and sisters, today we launch the celebrations of the centenary of the Diocese of Blackburn. As we do so I invite you now with joy in your heart to declare your faith and trust in the God who reveals himself to us in Jesus.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?
I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?
I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?
I believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.
This is our faith.
We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

In this year of centenary and through the Spirit's power, will you give your all for Jesus,
seeking to know him and love him ever more deeply through worship, study and prayer?
With the help of God I will

Will you love your neighbour and serve all people with devotion and generosity?
With the help of God I will

Will you share your faith with others, rejoicing to give reason for the hope that is within you?
With the help of God I will

Heavenly Father
as the wise men offered gold, frankincense and myrrh,
so we make to you the gift of our lives
at the start of this Centenary year.
Through your spirit at work within us,
may many come to know you in your Son
and kneel to do him homage.
For you live and reign ever one God,
world without end.
Amen.

Intercessions

Introduction

Today the wise men knelt before our Saviour.
As we celebrate one hundred years of our Diocese,
let us also worship the Lord with great joy,
and make our prayer to his heavenly Father.

Reader

Father we thank you that as the wise men knelt to worship, they offered their whole lives to you. We pray for the churches, chaplaincies and schools of our Diocese, that as we celebrate this centenary year we may rejoice to dedicate our whole lives anew to Jesus. We pray for our Bishops Philip, Jill and Joe and for all who have been called to lead us. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Father we thank you that in their gift of gold the wise men revealed your son as King. We pray for those who lead and rule, for His Majesty King Charles and for the government of our nation. May all in power act with wisdom and be open to the cry of the poor. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Father we thank you that in their gift of incense the wise men revealed your son as God. We pray for our world: for places where there is conflict, injustice and violence, for war torn nations and for all who long for peace. May all people learn the sovereignty of your Son and so seek peace and justice in him. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Father we thank you that in their gift of myrrh the wise men revealed your son as Saviour. We pray for all those who are seeking hope and comfort, for the sick, the grief-stricken and the dying. May they find comfort and healing in the sure salvation you give us in your Son. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Father we thank you that as the wise men travelled from the east, they demonstrated that your Son is the light for all the world. We pray that as we keep our centenary, the Christians of our Diocese of Blackburn may be bold in sharing their faith and bring people of all ages and backgrounds to saving faith in Jesus. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Father we thank you that the wise men returned home changed for ever. We pray for ourselves at the start of this centenary year. Reveal your Son to us afresh and fill our hearts with joy. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

We pray in the silence, offering to the Lord the prayers of our hearts.

Concluding prayer. Either:

Rejoicing in the fellowship of wise men, shepherds and angels,

and of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph,
we commend ourselves and all Christian people
to your unfailing love, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Or:

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Peace

Our Saviour Christ is the Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there shall be no end.

The peace of the Lord be always with you
And also with you

Prayer at the Preparation of the Table

Gracious God,
accept the offering of your Church,
the hearts of your people
joined in praise and thanksgiving,
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Lift up your hearts
We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
It is right to give thanks and praise

All honour and praise be yours always and everywhere,
mighty creator, ever-living God,
through Jesus Christ your only Son our Lord:
for at this time we celebrate your glory
made present in our midst.
In the coming of the Magi
the King of all the world was revealed to the nations.
In the waters of baptism
Jesus was revealed as the Christ,

the Saviour sent to redeem us.
In the water made wine
the new creation was revealed at the wedding feast.
Poverty was turned to riches, sorrow into joy.
Therefore with all the angels of heaven
we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name
and sing our joyful hymn of praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.
On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.
When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.
So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:
**Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again**

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes

and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with [*N and*] all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.
Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Communion Rite

Either:

Rejoicing in the presence in our midst of the Christ whom the wise men worshipped
let us pray with confidence as he taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Or:

Rejoicing in the presence in our midst of the Christ whom the wise men worshipped
let us pray as he taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**

Amen.

We break this bread
to share in the body of Christ.
**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Giving of Communion

Either:

Draw near with faith.
Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.
Eat and drink
in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

Or:

Jesus is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.
**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

Communion Antiphon

We have seen his star in the east,
and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.

Prayer after Communion

Lord God,
the bright splendour whom the nations seek:

may we who with the wise men have been drawn by your light
discern the glory of your presence in your Son,
the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Diocesan Centenary Prayer

Heavenly Father,
in our Centenary year
we rededicate ourselves and our Diocese to you.
Send the Holy Spirit to give us
confidence in our witness,
generosity in our service,
and love for our neighbours,
that your Church may be renewed
and many come home to you,
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Blessing of Chalk *(See note at the top)*

May God,
who provided a safe dwelling place
for the eternal Word,
bless ✠ this chalk,
the homes of the faithful,
and the people who live there.
As you keep this centenary year,
may your home be a place of Christian welcome.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Blessing

Either:

Christ our Lord,
to whom kings bowed down in worship and offered gifts,
reveal to you his glory
and pour upon you the riches of his grace;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the ✠ Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Or Solemn Blessing:

Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing

May God the Father,
who led the wise men by the shining of a star

to find the Christ, the Light from light,
lead you in your pilgrimage to find the Lord.
Amen.

May God, who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness,
give us a place with the saints in light
in the kingdom of his beloved Son.
Amen.

May the light of the glorious gospel of Christ
shine in your hearts and fill our lives
with his joy and peace.
Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the ✠ Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Dismissal

We have seen his glory,
the glory revealed to all the nations.
Go in the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God