

# Our Lady Chapel



*Our Lady Chapel is a Roman Catholic community founded in the love of the Father, centered in Christ, and rooted in the Holy Cross tenets of building family and embracing diversity. We are united in our journey of faith through prayer and sacrament, and we seek growth through the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in liturgy and outreach, while responding to the needs of humanity.*

# Epiphany

## FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY:

The Feast of the Epiphany is one of the oldest Christian feasts, though throughout the centuries it has celebrated a variety of things. The word “Epiphany” comes from a Greek verb meaning “to reveal”, and all of the various events celebrated by the Feast of the Epiphany are revelations of Christ to humankind.

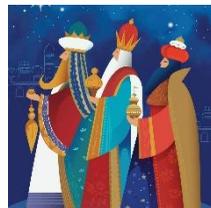
Like many of the most ancient Christian feasts, Epiphany was first celebrated in the East, where it has been held from the beginning almost universally on January 6th. Among Eastern Catholics [both Roman and Orthodox], the feast is known as “Theophany” — which means “the revelation of God”.

The Feast of the Epiphany originally celebrated four different events — The birth of Jesus, the visitation of the Magi, the Baptism of Jesus, and the changing of water into wine at the wedding in Cana. Each of these is a revelation of God to humankind — at Christ’s Baptism, the Holy Spirit descends and the voice of God the Father is heard declaring that Jesus is His Son; at the wedding in Cana, the miracle reveals that God transforms ordinary things into divine experiences; at the Nativity, the angels bear witness to Christ, and the shepherds — representing the people of Israel — bow down before Him; and at the visitation of the Magi, Christ’s divinity is revealed to the Gentiles — the other nations of the earth.

Eventually, the celebration of the Nativity [Christmas] became separate among Western Christians, but the Feast of the Epiphany still commemorated the Baptism, the first miracle, and the visit from the Wise Men. Thus, The Feast of the Epiphany came to mark the end of Christmastide — or the Twelve Days of Christmas.

Over the centuries, the various celebrations were further separated in the West, and now the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the weekend following the Feast of the Epiphany, and the wedding at Cana is commemorated on the weekend after the Baptism of the Lord.

In many parts of the world [outside the West], the celebration of Epiphany is even more important than the celebration of Christmas. In many places in the world, Christians still exchange gifts on the Epiphany — the day on which the Wise Men brought their gifts to the Christ Child.



## FAITH EDUCATION -- JANUARY DATES:

**Faith Education is on Christmas Break, and will resume Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>. Class dates for January will be January 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.** Faith Education is an important part of every young person’s religious formation. Please make sure that you have not forgotten this important responsibility for your children. **Our Sessions go from 8:45—9:45 AM, on Sunday mornings, with the hope that our children would then participate in our 10:00 AM Family Mass.** Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility. **Please contact Patty or Father John in the Chapel Office for more information.**

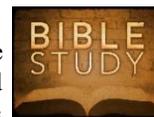


## CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS:

Again this year we will accept memorial donations to help defray the cost of flowers and decorations which we use in our Chapel for the Christmas season. If you are interested in making a donation **in memory of loved ones**, please put the names of the loved ones along with your donation in an envelope, mark it “**Christmas Flowers**,” and either give it to Father John or drop it in the offering box at the Chapel entrance. We will publish the names of your loved ones in the Bulletin as a memorial throughout the Christmas season. Please keep the following people in your prayers: **In memory of Toni Burke, Mike Heryak, Eleanor DeMarco, the Blazek, DiSalvatore, Heryak, Orehek, Tran, and Rezabek Family.**



**NEXT BIBLE STUDY — THURSDAY, JANUARY 8<sup>th</sup>:**



**Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Thursday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM.** Bible Study usually meets bi-weekly. The Bible Study is open to everyone — all middle and high school students, college students, young adults, and all adults. We will all come together to be enriched by God’s word. It’s a great time, and a good witness of our faith to others. If you can’t come at 6:30, come when you can. Gather your favorite snack and/or drink, but be prepared to be nourished on God’s word.

**Our topic: The Meaning of the Epiphany of Jesus**

Mark your calendars and be part of this wonderful activity that will deepen your spiritual journey. **We usually will meet every other week — topic to be decided at the end of the previous meeting.** Join us. You’ll have a blast, and celebrate your faith along the way.

Sunday, January 4: <b>Epiphany</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b> In-Person & Live Stream
Monday, January 5: <b>St. John Neumann</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>
Tuesday, January 6: <b>St. Andre Bessette, C.S.C.</b>	<b>NO MASS</b>
Wednesday, January 7:	<b>NO MASS</b>
Thursday, January 8:	<b>NO MASS</b>
Friday, January 9:	<b>NO MASS</b>
Saturday, January 10: <b>Baptism of Jesus</b>	<b>5:00 PM</b> In-Person only
Sunday, January 11: <b>Baptism of Jesus</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b> In-Person & Live Stream

**CHAPEL GAME NIGHT – SATURDAY, JAN. 10<sup>th</sup>:**



On **Saturday, January 10<sup>th</sup>** Our Lady Chapel is bringing back our **Game Night!** Our **Young Adult Group, as well as all adult members of our community — are invited to attend.** Bring your family and your friends. Bring your favorite game. Bring your favorite snack or treat. **Game night goes from 6:15 PM until 8:30 PM** in the **Lennon Board Room.** Please call the Chapel office 440-473-3560 or sign up on the **“sign-up sheet”** on the **Chapel** easel to let us know that you will be joining us. Please feel free to join us for this wonderfully fun time.

**OUR CALLING:**

God is calling us all to holiness. No matter where we are in life, no matter what we’ve done, God is showing us the way even if it twists and turns in seeming darkness. Christ will never abandon us.

## REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

One of the biggest challenges of working with Scripture is to open our hearts to its core message. Many people understand and see in this marvelous compilation of many stories a single story — a core story about how we have developed and how we learn what we need to know in order to enter fully into life. No one player in this wonderful drama called Scripture is more important than Jesus. He carries the heart of the message in his very person. It seems very important that those of us who bear the name Christian open ourselves to the heart of what Jesus has come to reveal. So many times, though, people use Christ's words and teachings to convince themselves of what they need to be convinced of. Many times Christians end up being the kind of person Christ came to free us from. They become narrow, judgmental, angry, somehow demanding of people things that are not essential. The hope we find in this figure of Jesus lies at the heart of his message of life. It's about entering into life, being connected, being an instrument of grace. We are to be life-givers to one another — that's the heart of the message.

On the feast of the Epiphany we celebrate the fact that Christ is the light. He is the one peace that if we drink it in and feel it in our bones, then somehow all the other pieces of life fit together. In the early Church, this God who revealed himself to the world did it through one community — the Israelites. He started the story by telling them how much he loved them, how special they were to him. Somehow this unique relationship that God wants to have with everyone — and that was so beautifully played out with the Israelite people — became something only for a “chosen people.” Those outside of the Israelite community were not the people God was interested in. And yet, God wants a relationship with each one of us. God is so faithful and trusting. He wants so much to be in relationship with us. St. Paul [Ephesians 3:2-6] calls it the mystery which is revealed. It has always existed, but we have not always recognized this fact — God is there for everyone. He's not just there for a few. This doesn't diminish his love or care for the individual; but that same care and love is offered to everyone.

The only prerequisite for those who would be in touch with the gifts of love, affection and connection that God wants to have with us is simply that we remain open. We have to be attentive. We have to listen. We all desire and long for this love. Every human being longs for connection with God. So often that longing gets misplaced, and we try to fulfill it with things that can't possibly be as fulfilling as our God. We try to fill it with things that can't possibly be as capable as our God is at revealing the mysteries of life to us as he is.

We are called to be aware of this great light. We must seek it first. One of the prerequisites for seeking this light is knowing that it's there. It's amazing how often the church, no matter what denomination, can often be seen not as a source of life, but rather as something that demands things of us that we don't understand or agree with. This is not to say that Scripture can be tailored to what each of us wants it to say; it has an objective truth that is separate from how we feel about it. But at the same time, it's so classic to listen to people talking about their lack of interest in God or the church, and then you begin to listen to their life. You begin to hear in their lives all the things that God or a church community could bring to them. You begin to hear the longings for the very gifts that God and those who believe in him are seeking to offer.

Isaiah [60:1-6] speaks of the interesting way God offers the gift of his wisdom and knowledge. It's very paradoxical. It says we are to rise up and become alert to this great light within our midst. But we see this light while we are still covered with thick clouds, while “darkness covers the earth”. That means that there are so many ways that the light being manifested around us is somewhat hidden amid



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all the events of our lives. The light is what we need to be in touch with, so that everything around us can and will be enlightened. It's almost as if we have to see the light within the darkness, we have to see the hope in the hopelessness, we have to find life in situations that are literally lifeless or even seemingly life-destroying. That's why the challenge is to see, to trust, and to know that this light is present even though it may not have impacted those situations around us.

Matthew's gospel [2:1-12] presents us with two main characters. One is Herod, who is the ruler; and the other is a group of priests who belong to a strange religion called the Zoroastrian religion. This religion had a long history of reading the stars and dreams. Obviously, they were people who took all of this seriously, but if we were to hear people at a dinner party talking this way, we would sort of roll our eyes and go: "Sure." The point is that they were people who were eager to read the signs, and they were finding signs all around them.

One of the great traditions of the time was that for everyone born, a star appeared in the sky. If a person ever disconnected from their star, an image of their destiny, they would be completely separated from their life's goal. The word used for this is "disaster," meaning that to separate from your star or your destiny would be a truly calamitous event. Jesus, who came into the world with a great destiny and calling, must have had a star much brighter than all of the others. The astrologers — these readers of the heavens — were aware that this figure was coming into the world. They saw his star and they came seeking more information. As they sought this information, they began to get more and more excited. In the prophetic word of Isaiah, when we see this truth, this life, that God has come to share with us, we become radiant: "Your heart shall throb and overflow". There is something about the message — when we sense it and hear it — that if we are the least bit connected to our soul and the deepest part of us, we become excited. We begin to feel life throbbing inside us.

These astrologers are on a quest to see this figure. They want to know more about him. They move ever closer. One of the best parts of the story is found in the fact that as they seek these strange signs, they draw ever closer to the reality. Even though Jesus is only a child they know intuitively that this is the one. They pay him homage. One of the most exciting ways that we honor this God of ours is by listening to what he is trying to say to us. We need to read the signs.

This is all contrasted with the figure of Herod. He is the one who represents that part of us that isn't so interested in looking for signs outside of ourselves. We are more interested in looking for signs inside, here, falling into the trap of, "I am the one who is going to decide what I am going to do." It's ironic that we often look for ways to solve situations by only looking inside. We rely on logic. We make things play out so they work out the way we logically think they should. We get into that disposition of being in charge and being in control. Once that enters in as a way of being, there are lots of enemies out there. There are lots of people who get in our way. Herod had a reputation for wanting to be the absolute ruler. He had already killed two of his sons who were potential heirs. Maybe he viewed them as potential threats to his throne so he had them killed. Herod was about to kill his oldest son. Then he receives word that there may be a new king and he becomes terrified. Herod's response to the signs all around him is to make sure that nobody sees them. He's not interested in seeing them himself, and he wants to make sure nobody else sees them.

This child is the sign of what God is going to do for his people — he is the bearer of all the wisdom that will bring life to situations where there is emptiness. Herod is probably aware on some level of the emptiness of his own life, and he goes out to destroy this child. The astrologers who are reading the



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signs in the heavens are also reading the signs that come to them at night in their dreams. They become aware that Herod is not interested in the same things they are interested in. Herod is not interested in receiving the message, so they ignore him and return by another route. They don't go back to Herod and tell him what they have found. When we are not in the disposition of longing and hungering for the signs, we often fake it, saying: "Oh, I'm very interested. Why don't you tell me what's out there."

This great feast of the Epiphany gives us much to reflect upon. We have celebrated Christ's birth, the Incarnation. We have celebrated the fact that as Christ entered the world he entered into a community and a family. Now we have the sense that the world recognizes what Jesus will bring to it. The world has been longing for his gift. As our Christmas season concludes next week with the celebration of the Baptism of Jesus, he will fully manifest himself as a literal light to a waiting world. This feast of the Epiphany marks a moment where we ask ourselves about our own longing. We long to be connected to our spirit, to our nature. We need to seek the signs. We need to look for the signs. It's wonderful to be able to recognize what the priest-astrologers understood: There is a God who communicates. There is a way in which he is sending signs. If we simply pause and reflect with an open heart, we can hear so many things that are speaking to us and leading us into this place of greater awareness. Mostly this awareness is about a God who is with us. He longs to work with us, to show us things, to help us work with other people to show them what they need to see. This awareness adds a marvelous dimension to a life that can sometimes become, in the words of Isaiah, surrounded by a "cloudy" disposition and kept from really seeing the fullness of what is around us.

—the writings of Don Fischer appear on the internet.

## **EPIPHANY and EMMANUEL:**

The Feast of the Epiphany was celebrated in Eastern Churches long before being observed in Rome. It seems originally to have been a feast of the birth of our Lord — our equivalent of December 25<sup>th</sup>. Also, the feast was originally celebrated on January 6<sup>th</sup>, but was recently moved to a Sunday so that all could enter into the feast.

The Epiphany celebrates the manifestation of our Lord to the whole world — the shining forth of the Light of the World, the manifestation of the Incarnation to the entire world beyond the Jewish world. The three kings symbolize the coming of God to the Gentiles — the entrance of God into all of the world in all of its history. The Liturgy for this day is surrounded with other epiphanies which still remain on the liturgical calendar — the manifestation of God's marriage to us, symbolized in the wedding feast at Cana; the manifestation of Christ's Sonship in His baptism by John the Baptist in the River Jordan; and finally His Presentation in the Temple, otherwise known as Candlemas Day, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. This latter celebration marks the closing of the various manifestations of God's incarnation for us in our world, beginning with Christmas and ending with His presentation in the Temple.

The essential reality of the Christian religion is that God reveals Himself to us. God comes to us; He makes Himself known to us at our own level, in our humanity. It is fundamental to Christian belief that God entered our human condition in order to enter into communion and close communication with us. From Adam and Eve until now, it is God who comes to search us out; it is not we who search God out.

Materiality carries within it spirituality. The meaning of having a body is to allow for communion of spirits. This fact flies in the face of any sort of "other world" spirituality. It undercuts the spiritualities that tell us flesh is evil, that the world is totally corrupt, that materiality is a bad thing because it imprisons the human spirit. Catholicism celebrates the holiness of material things in order to show the sacredness of things created by God. The Catholic vision is to see what is inside, to manifest the Spirit Who moves within them because God has entered into our material world. Hence

bread, wine, fire, incense, water, oil, candles, and all of the other things we find in Catholic churches, are seen to be conveyors of God's Holy Spirit. Gold, frankincense, and myrrh are therefore apt symbols to be presented to the God Incarnate now manifesting Himself to us in His creations, particularly His crowning creation, the humanity of men and women.

The Star over Bethlehem is a light that recalls the lights, the fire, and the warmth of God's love. The star points backward through history to the God who revealed Himself to Moses in a burning bush, the God who manifested Himself in the fire and lightning that surrounded Mt. Sinai, the pillar of fire that lead the Jews through the desert to the Promised Land, and the Star of David, their greatest king. That same Bethlehem star points ahead to the tongues of fire that will come on Pentecost which the Jews observed on the fiftieth day after Passover and which also commemorated the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai.

Epiphany tells us that God has decided to come to us where we are. In amazement St. John writes his first Letter — "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands was made manifest. And we saw it" [1 John 1:1]. This is the permanent amazement, the awe, the wonder, and the mystery the Church celebrates continually in the epiphanies of her Sacraments.

What we are therefore concerned with today as we celebrate this Feast is our vision. What the Church wants us to do is to see the Light of the World, to see things in God's Light as He presents Himself to us in our lives. That Light has come into our world and the darkness will not overcome it [see John 1:5]. Christ's cure of the man born blind is our own cure [see John 9]. It is the call of God to us. It is His urging to see things as He sees them.

God continues to reveal Himself to us. God's Light comes to us in the beautiful insights of people we meet who give us a way of seeing things in truly striking ways. You and I have all met such people. They move us to feel that God is near. Those are grace-filled moments in our lives. God continues to give us epiphanies in those moments.

Or perhaps God's Light comes to us in moments of silence and reflection when we are trying to pray. Perhaps we feel dry — that the words just do not come. Yet there are moments when God will come to us in our attempts at prayer — when He is very near, when He is trying to manifest Himself to us, when His Spirit is moving within us.

Or it may come in a particularly beautiful or moving celebration of the Mass, or in a reading from an Epistle or Gospel account. These, too, are epiphanies of God. These, too, are moments when we can bring our own personal gifts to Him, the gold that is the richness of our lives, the frankincense of our love for Him, the myrrh of the bitterness and suffering we carry within us. These are moments when God looks upon us as kings and queens — not as cringing and bootlicking slaves — but as beloved friends. Didn't He tell us that when He declared: "I no longer call you slaves, but I call you friends"? [see John 15:15]. That was truly an amazing statement by God. He calls you and me His friends! Truly we are kings and queens.

And so let me here resolve with you once again to renew my vision. May you and I try harder to push the darkness of our vision aside. Are we bitter and resentful like Herod was? Do we feel upset with the Catholic Church? With having to go to Mass? Are we upset with priests, with the bishop, with the pope? Do we carry animosities in our hearts toward those with whom we live? Toward our



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associates or our neighbors? Let us therefore cast aside the darkness that keeps us from seeing each other as God sees us. Let us try once more during this coming year to see the epiphanies of God in our lives — especially those manifestations of Him that come to us through other persons. Let us turn our hearts to renewed prayer, to thought-filled contemplation of our lives, to meditation on the meanings that we find in our selves. Let us become the Kings who followed Bethlehem’ star to the birthplace of the Son of David. Let us renew once again our commitment to see God’s Light in our lives. For He comes — He comes to tell you and me that He loves us, that He loves us as a lover loves his beloved, that He wants to share His very self with us, that He wants to have a total communion — a whole communion — a Holy Communion with you and with me. Together in His beloved Son born as one of us, He becomes one with us and we with Him.

—taken from the writings for Father Charles Irvin, which appear on the internet

## REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

It is important for us to know our “story”, that is, how the events of our lives fit in with the bigger story — God’s story. We saw the example of the flight into Egypt and how what happened to the Holy Family relates to the history of Israel. Matthew makes the connection explicit: “Out of Egypt I called my son” [Matthew 2:13-23]. On this Feast of Epiphany, we see some men from the east — non-Israelites — whose lives connect with the story of Israel [Matthew 2:1-12]. These men study the stars and find meaning in them. They know about the cosmic story — the story of the universe.

The cosmic story has two versions. The first says that the stars control us — that we are simply products of a cosmic process, and, therefore, the stars determine our lives. The second view perceives a power behind the cosmic process. The Magi start out with the first theory — they study the night sky and try to figure out how the stars influence things here on earth. But when they come to Jerusalem and Bethlehem, things change. The Magi acknowledge a power greater than the stars — the cosmos. After they meet the Christ child, they have a direct form of guidance. These men — great astronomers of their day — become part of the story of Israel.



These two big theories or “stories” about the universe continue today. On one side, you have people saying the cosmos is like an acorn — it starts small, but develops into something vast and complex, and that humans are one more part of that complexity. On the other side are people who say: “Yes, the universe began small like an acorn and evolved into something large and varied.” But this side asks where the acorn came from and posits that it dropped from some kind of “oak.” Everything that exists has codes — a kind of DNA — that points back to the original Oak — God.

Some people think that one view is primitive and the other, modern. But they are wrong. Both views have existed since humans started thinking about it. The earliest Greek philosophers — call the “pre-socratic” — had the “acorn alone” view. After them came Plato and Aristotle who challenged the “acorn alone” view — they developed an “acorn and oak” view that addresses more questions than the earlier view.

The Magi made a similar journey. They went from focusing on cosmic forces to meeting the God behind them. The Magi discovered the great story of Israel — and it made sense out of what they were experiencing in their lives.

Like the Magi we need to discover the big story — the one that makes sense of our lives and the universe we are part of. What Isaiah says is true — “darkness covers the earth and thick clouds cover the people.” But when we turn to the Lord as the Magi did, we discover something else — “upon you the Lord shines, and over you appears his glory.”

—taken from the writings of Father Phil Bloom which appear on the internet.

## **MAKING SENSE OF THE VISIT OF THE MAGI:**

A mosaic of the Three Kings on the facade of the Church of the Nativity saved the site of Christ's birth from destruction. In 664, Persian invaders were amazed to see the Three Kings dressed as they themselves were. They decided not to burn the Church.

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, the work of Christmas begins — to find the lost, heal the broken, feed the hungry, rebuild the nations, bring peace among people, make music in the heart [Howard Thurman].

Jesus was getting painful splinters from His tight cradle. The people had been counted by the census takers like cattle. The crowds had withdrawn. Bethlehem became a sleepy town again. Joseph took his wife and Child out of the damp hillside cave above Bethlehem. He rented a one bedroom house at off season rates on Main Street. Given his credit ratings, not even a loan-shark would give him the dollars to buy a house.

The Holy Family remained in Bethlehem for about two years. Life settled into routine. They didn't have to celebrate Christmas the way we do. They were free of our physical and emotional exhaustion. Joseph free-lanced as a carpenter. But the comfortable living was ending. Soon they would have to throw a few things into cardboard boxes. They would flee as displaced persons into Africa to save the Child's life.

Their anonymity was blown by the gentlemen we salute today as wise. Inadvertently the magi had set Jesus up. The wise men were not wise. Matthew, who owns the copyright on this tale, knew that. There was a two year interval between the Boy's birth and the unannounced arrival in Bethlehem of the magi. We conclude this by wrestling with Gospel clues — the travelers came breathlessly not to that famous cave now empty, but to the rented ranch house. The greeting card people notwithstanding, Jesus was already walking and saying excitedly "Mama" and "Papa." He was in the terrible twos.

We do not know that the men were kings. All Matthew tells us is "magi from the east arrived one day in Jerusalem" [Matthew 2:1-12]. If they had been of the blood royal, Matthew would have so written. After all, his former profession as tax collector had trained him to be precise. Had they been his peers, King Herod because of noblesse oblige would have fussed about them more than he did. Their kingship and blue blood began only in the sixth century. Their names as Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar originated in the ninth.

Tradition has us speak of the magi as three. Yet Matthew does not use a number. We say three since he speaks of three gifts. Happily Matthew specifies the gifts for us — gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> century, Venerable Bede, the Benedictine historian writing in England, gave us the traditional interpretation of their symbolism. The gold paid homage to the Child's royal line. The incense saluted His divinity. The myrrh forewarned of the passion. However, there is a more charming explanation attributed to the 13<sup>th</sup> century Frenchman, Bernard of Clairvaux — the gold was to pay off the bills at the supermarket, the incense was to fumigate the house, and the myrrh was intended to be a herbal medicine against worms in the Child.

Matthew does not tell us how long the magi remained — it could have been but a long weekend, or an extended stay. But fearful of assassination by King Herod, they rode off into history more quietly than they came. A centuries old tradition says Mary gifted them with the swaddling clothes of the Infant. Matthew does not speak of them again. We do not know whether Herod pursued them. We can only hope they got home safely for a deserved rest. A late 20<sup>th</sup> century Japanese artist pictures them traveling home by ship.

—taken from the writings of Father James Gilhooly which appear on the internet

## WE ARE THE MAGI:

The story of the magi presents us with two truths that will need to be part of all of our lives —the truth of universality and the importance of action.

The story of the Magi proclaims that the good news of Christ is for all people —for the entire world. We do not know too much about the Magi themselves, but one thing is clear from the gospel [Matthew 2:1-12] — they were not Jewish. They came from another country, from the east — they were foreigners. This dimension of the story makes it clear that the good news of Christ’s salvation is not to be limited to any one nation, people, culture or race. Christ comes to every person. Christ comes to the entire world. This truth is so central to the story that, as history continued, the Christian imagination filled in the details. As representations of the Magi began to be created, it became customary to assign a continent to each of the three Magi, corresponding to the three continents of the world that were known at that time. So there was a black Magi representing Africa, a yellow Magi representing Asia, and a white Magi representing Europe. The clear message of this decision was that all people are connected to Christ and thereby all people are connected to one another. God’s love is universal, and our responsibility to others is universal as well. The universality of connectedness between all people is central to the Magi story.

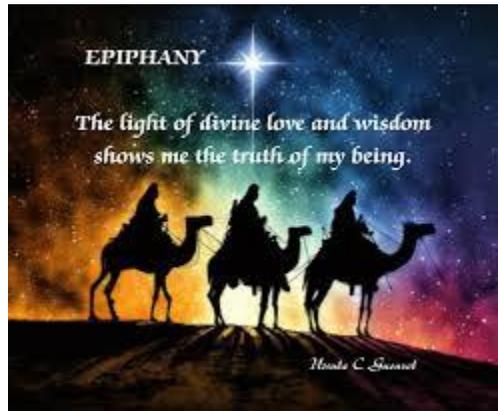
But there is another truth to that story that is equally important, and that is the necessity of action. The Magi in the story not only saw the star and realized its significance, they followed it. They chose to act. They left their comfortable homes, undertook an arduous journey, and came to pay homage to the Christ Child. In the same way, we are called to act. How easy it would be for us, having heard the news of this disaster, to turn back to our secure lives, to our holiday celebrations. The story of the Magi says we must not simply know and understand. We must act.

But what are we to do? The answer is clear: we are to give out of our abundance to those who are in need. We do not need to give a huge amount, but the gospel calls us to act, to offer something. Years ago, Regina Brett in her column in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* shared a beautiful story about a woman who was standing on the beach in the midst of hundreds of starfish, which were dying because they had been washed out of the sea to the shore. She was picking them up and throwing them back into the sea. A man came by and shook his head and said: “You’ll never save all of them. What difference will it make?” She picked up another starfish, threw it into the sea, and said: “It just made a difference for that starfish.”

We don’t need to meet every need, but even a small gift out of our abundance might make the difference for one person. Moreover, this time of year provides so many opportunities. Return a Christmas gift that you don’t want, and contribute the money to a charity of your choice. Take some of the money you were going to use for post-Christmas sales and divert that to those who are in need.

The story of the Magi emphasizes the universality of our connectedness with people throughout the world and the necessity for us to translate our faith into action. God loves all people, and therefore our love must strive to be that universal. Any person in need has a claim on us. So let us resolve to act, to show our connectedness to others.

—taken from the writings of Father George Smiga, which appears on the internet



**“THANK YOU” FROM FATHER JOHN:**

A very special “thanks” to all who sent cards, gifts, remembrances and “goodies” during this Christmas season. Your prayers, kindness and special messages were truly appreciated. Also, a big thank you to all who contributed their time and talents to make our Christmas liturgies so special — All those who helped to decorate the chapel last weekend; our Council Members, Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Andy, and all the musicians and cantors; Ushers and Greeters; Patty Szaniszlo, and all our student and adult helpers — and especially each of you. Your presence brought a rich treasure to our lives. Thank you so much for your goodness. I continue to keep all of you in my prayers and Masses.



**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**

We list the Scripture readings for the week, with the hope that you will take some time in your busy day to reflect on God’s word in your homes. We hope you can make good use of it.

- Monday:** 1 John 3:22-4:6; Matthew 4:12-25
- Tuesday:** 1 John 4:7-10; Mark 6:34-44
- Wednesday:** 1 John 4:11-18; Mark 6:45-52
- Thursday:** 1 John 4:19-5:4; Luke 4:14-22
- Friday:** 1 John 5:5-13; Luke 5:12-16
- Saturday:** 1 John 5:14-21; John 3:22-20
- Baptism of Jesus:** Isaiah 42:1-7; Acts 10:34-38; Luke 3:15-22

**SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — SAT. JAN. 17<sup>th</sup>:**

Our Savior Lutheran Church — across the street from the Chapel — has a Food Pantry which distributes food to the community on **the third Saturday of each month**. They welcome volunteers. **On Saturday morning at 9 AM, they need help unloading the trailers and setting up items for distribution and preparing for the food pantry to open. It serves around 150 clients each time. The food pantry serves clients from 9:30 AM—1:30 PM on Saturday.**



Our Savior Lutheran’s Food Pantry was formed to serve those in emergency situations and/or with on-going need in the cities of Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, Highland Heights and Gates Mills. The Food Pantry respects social and cultural diversity and upholds the worth and dignity of those it serves. All those in the area with need will be served equally, as supplies allow. The food pantry is a member of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. **Please let us know in the Chapel office [440-473-3560] if you would like more information or if you would like to help.** This is a wonderful way to serve others. Please consider this opportunity.

**BECOMING:**

We continually aspire to something “more” that no created reality can give us; we feel a deep and burning thirst that no drink in this world can satisfy. Knowing this, let us not deceive our hearts by trying to satisfy them with cheap imitations! Let us rather listen to them! Let us turn this thirst into a step stool — like children who stand on tiptoe — in order to peer through the window of encounter with God.

—Pope Leo XIV

## CELEBRATING THE ONE BODY OF CHRIST:

The great British educator, Sir Ken Robinson, tells the story of three little boys — five and six year olds — who played the role of the three King’s at their Kindergarten Nativity Play. They came marching in before the manger with paper hats — each carrying a box. The first boy laid his box before the baby Jesus and announced: “I have brought you gold.” The second laid his box down and announced: “I have brought you myrrh.” Now the third boy came down with sudden stage fright, but he plowed through it, remembering he had to put his box down, but he forgot his line. So he announced: “Frank sent this.”

There are very many Epiphany stories revolving around the three Kings and their mission to seek, worship, and give gifts to the King of Kings. Probably the most well-known ones are Henry Van Dyke’s story about the *Fourth Wise Man*, O Henry’s, *The Gift of the Magi*, and G. K. Chesterton’s story entitled simply: *The Wise Men*.

These and many other Epiphany stories are wonderful, but there is message that is fundamental to the Feast of the Epiphany that we might not reflect on as thoroughly as we should — it is the “message of mystery.” In his letter to the Church at Ephesus [3:2-6], St. Paul speaks about a great mystery that has been revealed. The mystery is simply this: “the Gentiles are coheirs with the Jews, members of the same body, and copartners of the promise of Christ in the gospel.”

The wise men came from the East; they were pagan astrologers called to the manger — called to faith. Their journey is our journey — the journey of people throughout the world and throughout history being called to the manger — being called to faith. The Epiphany is the celebration of our being included in the Mystery of Jesus Christ; not just included — more than included. It is the celebration of our being equal to the very people chosen to be the physical ancestors of the human nature of our Lord.

This was certainly difficult for the Jewish people of the first century to understand. They normally referred to those who were not Jews — the Gentiles — as dogs [see Matthew 15:22-28]. It was mind boggling for them to think that God would consider the Gentiles their equals. The Jews were the chosen people. Would God include others in His Plan for their salvation? The Epiphany tells us that “not only would God want it” — it was always God’s plan. He never intended to be the God for only one portion of mankind. Even more, all people would be coheirs of the Grace of Christ.

It was difficult for Jewish Christians to buy into the message of the Epiphany — it is also difficult for many of us. We tend to see life through our own limited frames of reference. For example, when someone asks us for directions on going from one place to another, we tend to consider how we get to that place from our own homes. And so, when we envision the birth of the Lord, we tend to see him in the viewpoint of our own frame of reference. Therefore, most of the pictures of Mary and Jesus are of a fair skinned girl and a bouncing, blue eyed baby. But Jesus and Mary were not Europeans, as hard as that is to believe. And even though Jesus was 33, single and living with his mother, he was not Irish. Mary and Jesus were Semitic — people of that area of the world where the three races merge. I often think that God placed the Chosen people there as reminders to us that all the people whom God created were to be the Chosen people.



Sadly, this is a message that is still secret. There is a certain arrogance that many Catholics have that is evident when they look down on people who are not from their culture. The Epiphany tells us that African Catholics are as Catholic as Asian Catholics and all Catholics. It also tells our brothers and sisters across the ocean that American Catholics are as Catholic as European Catholics.

We Catholics do not have the right to assume a spiritual superiority over any members of our faith whose background may be different than ours, or whose history in the Church might be shorter than ours. Once a person has professed the faith, that person is an equal in the faith. We need to apply this same way of thinking to those from different continents. We have to recognize that whether the faith is relatively new to an area, or has been there for over fifteen hundred years, we are all one body — equal before the Lord.

St. Paul says that this was a secret hidden for all ages — the Lord came for everyone. And it is up to us to reveal the secret. We do this by treating others with respect — particularly those who are different from us in externals, but the same as us in what matters — their union with Jesus Christ.

The word Epiphany means a showing or manifestation of the Lord. He was first shown to the wise men — astrologers — whose faith guided them to Bethlehem. We need to show Him to all people seeking the spiritual body where they can be one with God.

—taken from the writings for Monsignor Joseph Pellegrino, which appear on the internet.

**ATTENDANCE:**

If you attend Mass regularly here at Our Lady Chapel, it would be helpful if you filled out a Registration Form [name, address, phone number, children, etc.] indicating this fact, if you have not already done so. Such information not only helps us to know who is attending Our Lady Chapel; it also is of great assistance to us in record keeping [for our friend, the IRS] of any contributions which you may make.

**ENVELOPES:**

- When you need a **new supply** of envelopes, please feel free to take a supply of them from the table in the vestibule, or call Father John at the Campus Ministry Office [473-3560].
- When you **use** your envelope, please make sure that **your number** is on it. If you need to know your number, please call the Campus Ministry Office. Thanks.

**WEEKLY OFFERING:**

A collection box is located just inside the center door when you enter the chapel. Please place your offering in the collection box. Baskets will not be passed during the offertory time. Your offering will help offset chapel daily operating expenses. When you choose to use the envelopes, you can request a printout of your offerings for the year to submit to the IRS. God bless you.

<b>Total Offerings: Saturday [12/27/25]</b>	-----	<b>\$ 55.00</b>
<b>Total Offerings: Sunday [12/28/25]</b>	-----	<b>\$ 726.00</b>
<b>Total Offerings: Wednesday [12/31/25]</b>	-----	<b>\$ 820.00</b>

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:**

Father John is available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with you. Please call him [440-473-3560] to arrange for this experience. Always remember the Lord’s invitation: “I will give them a heart with which to understand that I am the Lord. They shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart” [Jeremiah 24:7].



## THE JOURNEY BY A STAR:

The Feast of the Epiphany is the oldest in the Liturgical Calendar. Only Easter and Pentecost are older. The Feast of the Epiphany was celebrated long before Christmas. The word Epiphany literally means “manifestation” — referring to the appearance or making known of Christ. Of course, in the beginning the feast was about the several manifestations of Christ — his first coming into the world, his being made known to the Shepherds, his manifestation to the Wise Men from the East, and it included even the Father announcing who he was at his Baptism by John, as well as the demonstration of his power in his First Miracle at the Marriage Feast of Cana. As the Feast of Christmas and the other feasts gradually came to be separated over time, the Epiphany centered on the manifestation of Christ to the Magi — in other words to the Gentiles.

The first sections of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke about the early life of Christ are known as the Infancy Narratives; they have been the subjects of a lot of scholarship over the last thirty years. One of the results of all this research is that we now realize that these stories can be seen as “Gospels in Miniature” because they contain the most important elements of what comes after. They are like the overture to a great musical piece in which the various motifs are brought to our attention.

For example, in this story of the coming of the Wise Men [Matthew 2:1-12], we see clearly a very important element of Christ’s Mission coming in right from the start — namely, his mission to the Gentiles.

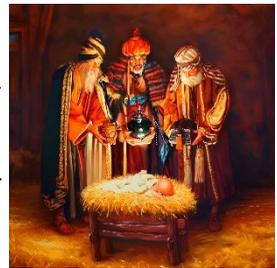
The People of Israel were rightly known as the Chosen People because they were the group to whom God chose to gradually reveal himself in various ways over the centuries. The history of their relationship with God is one of a gradual education — a slow revelation of God’s true nature over the centuries, and a growing understanding by the people of God’s expectations for them. For Israel was the race among whom Christ was born — even if only to be ultimately rejected.

This rejection is, of course, turned to the greatest possible advantage for the whole of humankind through the great act of salvation. The rejection of Christ by Israel becomes the opportunity for Christ to be revealed to all the nations — ultimately to us today.

All this is prefigured by the visit of the Wise Men who themselves are in a sense foretold in the Old Testament scriptures. Isaiah is quite clear when he says: “The nations come to your light and kings to your dawning brightness” [Isaiah 60:1-6]. It was always in the understanding of the People of Israel that God had chosen them to receive his special revelation, but that in due time all nations would bow down before the one true God. But this was not understood as happening right away; it was rather something that would occur when the Messiah ultimately came into his Kingdom.

They were right, of course, but their timing was wrong, and they didn’t anticipate that that they as a people would reject Christ. We say this, and yet we must acknowledge that very many individual Jews did come to believe in Christ — and not only those who were poor; for some notable religious leaders also accepted Jesus. But institutionally speaking, the People of Israel rejected Jesus.

The Feast of the Epiphany has great importance in the history of the Church because many converts from paganism saw in the story of the wise men their own story. These wise men were guided by a star — they were led by God to the stable in Bethlehem where they offered the Christ Child their gifts and paid him homage. The early converts to Christianity — like any convert today — realized that they too were guided by God; they have been led on a journey of faith and brought to belief in Christ. When they finally encounter him, they place all they have at his disposal and worship him as



the Son of God — the one true Savior of the World. They may not be rich like the Magi, but they know that they have found the greatest treasure anyone could possess —belief in Jesus Christ.

St Paul is reflecting on the same thing in his Letter to the Church at Ephesus when he alludes to the well-known story of his own conversion and says that this special revelation is what led him to preach the Good News to them [Ephesians 3:2-6].

But don't think it is just converts who have been chosen by God; don't think that it is just those who in adult life feel drawn to the Church who are singled out by him. Each one of us has been led by a star. Each one of us has been brought by God to the assent of faith. It may have been because we searched as adults and gradually found faith, but it could also be because we were brought up as Christians by our parents — that in our earliest childhood we came to a knowledge and love of God.

Make no mistake about it, we were all converts once. The gradual realization by a child of what faith in Christ actually means is no less of a conversion than that of an adult in the prime of life. It is just as genuine, just as deep, just as life changing.

Sometimes it is in our childhood that we see things most clearly. As we grow older, we do not always grow wiser; quite often the preoccupations of raising children, maintaining our relationships and paying a mortgage get in the way and cloud our vision. What started off as certainly and firmness of faith can with the vicissitudes of life easily fade away into disinterest and laxity. What we need then is re-conversion — what we need to do is to look for that star once more.

We all need to think about those Wise Men, and about how wise they were. They let God lead them, and their journey was not merely a journey by land — but it was also a journey of faith. And God revealed himself to them in the person of the Child Jesus. In one way or another, the same thing has happened to each one of us. God leads us on a journey of faith and he reveals himself to us in the person of Jesus Christ.

But this doesn't just happen once. It happens again and again in our lives. There are a whole series of Epiphanies awaiting us if we only co-operate with God and let him lead us. Hidden under one form or another there is always a star glittering out there in the darkness. If we constantly look for that star and follow where God leads us again and again, we will encounter Christ in all sorts of different disguises until one day we meet him face to face, and the door is ultimately opened for us to live with him forever.

—taken from the writings of Father Alex McAllister, S.D.S., which appear on the internet

## **THE CHOSEN – SUNDAY, JANUARY 4<sup>th</sup>:**

We had a wonderful group of people join us for our last episode of *The Chosen* in November. The viewing was followed by a very inspiring sharing among those present. **Our NEXT gathering will take place on Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm. We will continue to gather once monthly, viewing a new episode each month, followed by discussion.**



*The Chosen* is an American Christian historical drama television series. Created, directed, and co-written by filmmaker Dallas Jenkins, it is the first multi-season series about the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. Primarily set in Judaea and Galilee in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, the series depicts the life of Jesus through the eyes of the people who interacted with him, including the apostles and disciples of Jesus, Jewish religious leaders, Roman government and military officials, and ordinary people. In contrast with typical Bible-focused productions, Jenkins has given more depth to his scripts by adding backstories to various characters from the gospels without contradicting the material of the gospel. **Join us for this life-giving experience. If you have any questions, please contact Father John or the chapel office [440-473-3560].**

## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD:

“Rise in splendor, your light has come!” [Isaiah 60:1-6]. “When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled” [Matthew 2:1-12]. Isaiah and Matthew spoke about the same reality and opposing reactions from people who heard of it. St. Ignatius of Loyola would explain that when good people hear the Gospel, the “good spirit” gives them peace and consolation; the “evil spirit” causes the same news to bring dreadful consternation to those whose purposes run counter to God's designs.

First, let's look at the evil side. According to Matthew's narrative, the news of a newborn king so disturbed King Herod that he ordered a massacre of all boy children born around the time of the Magi's travels. This story is probably less factual than symbolic — it creates a parallel between Jesus and Moses who was saved from Pharaoh's slaughter of the Hebrews [see [Exodus 1:15-22](#)]. Yet even if Herod didn't order the massacre, he was cruel enough to order the death of his own sons, whom he saw as rivals. Typical of Jesus' enemies, Herod couldn't tolerate the danger Jesus posed to the evil powers that propped him up. To Herod, as to the pharaoh, the good news posed a lethal threat.

Now to the good spirits. Isaiah proclaims that the very glory of God will shine on and through the people. The darkness they experienced stood in stark contrast to what God was working among them. Isaiah teaches that knowing God's glory causes people's hearts to throb and overflow such that their very faces reflect divine glory. According to Isaiah, knowing God's glory makes people so attractive that the whole world will be drawn to them.

In Matthew's narrative, the Magi symbolize all people who seek the glory of God and who, when they see signs of it, are willing to journey beyond their own horizons, seeking God's yet-unknown grace and wonders. Paul, in his own way, reflects the Magi's spirit through his life-changing discovery of the mystery of Christ's love. In contrast to the murdering Herod, when Paul encountered Christ, he became the apostle who proclaimed the good news to Gentiles, insisting that Christ came for all Earth's people.

This year, we will hear the Gospel of Matthew. The story of the Magi introduces two of his key themes. First, Matthew highlights Christ as our Emmanuel, God with us. The angel who appeared to reassure Joseph called Mary's unborn child Emmanuel, indicating who Jesus would be [see [Matthew 1:23](#)]. In the last words of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus commissions his disciples with the promise: “Behold, I am with you — Emmanuel — until the end of the age” [[Matthew 28:20](#)].

The second theme the Magi introduce is Emmanuel's presence for the whole world. Just as Isaiah proclaimed that nations would walk by the light of Israel, Matthew speaks of foreigners who sought the one heralded by their star. They trekked long and far to the insignificant town of Bethlehem to find that light. This theme, too, finds its counterpart at the end of the Gospel when Jesus commissions the disciples to “Go and make disciples of all nations” [see [Matthew 28:19](#)]. In the presence of Emmanuel, there are no foreigners.

Matthew's Gospel invites us all to contemplate the reality of Emmanuel — God with us here and now. We are setting off into a year of paying particular attention to recognizing Emmanuel in our midst. The feast of the Epiphany reminds us that the good news is for everyone of every age. Its proclamation can bring great joy or cause terrible consternation, depending on what each person or society values.

The feast of the Epiphany invites us to enter deeply into the Scripture Readings for this Feast. With Isaiah, we can meditate on what truly makes our hearts throb and grow. Paul's words to the Church at Rome, we can recall ways in which we have felt God's invitation into mystery and newness. We can discern about the signs of our times and ask what things we have heard that were “not made known to people in other generations”. Then we ask ourselves what we are capable of as people made “coheirs, members of the same body and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus” [see [Romans 8:17](#)].

If we are adventurous enough, we might ask the Magi what would draw them forth today. What is happening that would echo in their hearts? Who would they invite to journey with them seeking God's newness? The Magi would then ask us: "What do you long for so much that you would search heaven and Earth to find it?"

Epiphany urges us to decide what will orient us in this coming year and to set off toward it with the bold and adventurous hope that can only spring from faith — a wonderful way to begin a year of concentration on the Gospel of Matthew.

—taken from the writings of Sister Mary McGlone, C.S.J., which appears on the internet

## **WELCOME TO THE COMMUNITY:**

If you hit the road to visit family or friends over the past few weeks, you had plenty of company. AAA estimated that about ninety-five million Americans — roughly a third of us — would be traveling over Christmas and New Year's. It has become a tradition during this time to gather with those we love — sometimes at great expense and across great distances — to share this moment of seasonal joy. It's a time when we just naturally want to congregate, too — churches are packed, as more people fill the pews. We crave, for this moment, togetherness.



This is the message of this Feast of the Epiphany. The word epiphany means “manifestation.” History is silent about just who or what the Magi in the Gospels really were. In some translations, they are astrologers, in others they are kings, and finally some say they are Wise Men. In addition, we don't know exactly how many of them there were, but because they brought three gifts — gold, frankincense, and myrrh — tradition has held that there were three of them.

The number three is significant — three is the number of the Trinity; it is the number of days Christ spent in the tomb. But there is another more important thing that the number 3 signifies — it represents community.

Again and again, when Jesus was first revealed to the world, it didn't happen just one person at a time. Think of Christmas night, when the news was announced to shepherds — another group, another kind of community. With the three Magi, the Incarnation is announced to this distinct “community” of people — strangers from the East.

Next weekend, we are going to observe Jesus' baptism, as well as his preaching to multitudes. When Jesus performed his first miracle, it was at a public gathering — a wedding. When he reappeared after his resurrection, it was to a roomful of believers. Even on the road to Emmaus, he presented himself not to one person, but to two.

Community is an important part of the great message of Christianity. We are meant to receive the good news together — to live it together, to celebrate it, and share it with one another. The simple fact remains — Christianity is not a solitary experience.

As we begin a New Year, this is a good opportunity to reflect on what that means, and on how we can better live this shared adventure of faith that is Catholic Christianity. Like the Magi — and like ninety-five million Americans right now — we are on a journey. But it's good to remember — it's never one that we make alone.

## **TIME:**

Time is the only irreplaceable commodity in life. Money can be replaced; jobs can be replaced; material possessions can be replaced. Time is slippery, uncontrollable, a treasure not to be wasted. —Mark Hart

## EPIPHANY — A CALL TO MORE:

There's a good reason the story of the magi's unexpected visit to Bethlehem is told only in Matthew's gospel [12:1-12] — he's the one evangelist who writes for Jewish Christians. Matthew's community had problems with non-Jews becoming Christians. Though there were three basic changes in the first 100 years of Christianity, the one which created the most practical problems for followers of Jesus revolved around the "Gentile/Jew question" — is it essential for imitators of Jesus to be Jewish? Or can non-Jews also become other Christs?

Paul of Tarsus had concluded at least 20 years before Matthew wrote that since we follow the risen Jesus — not the historical Jesus — Gentiles and Jews are on the same level when it comes to Christian faith. He clearly states that the risen Christ isn't a slave or free person, Jew or Gentile, male or female [Galatians 3:28]. Once risen from the dead, Jesus is a "new creation" [2 Corinthians 5:17].

Yet it is clear that Matthew's Jewish Christian community still had reservations about Gentiles entering the church without first converting to Judaism. Unlike themselves, these "Johnnies-come-lately" weren't obligated to keep the 613 Laws of Moses — regulations to which not only they, but also the historical Jesus adhered.

And so, Matthew's community's hesitation in welcoming Gentiles as full-fledged imitators of Jesus seems to be one of the reasons that he includes the visit of the magi in his Infancy Narrative. We not only hear about non-Jews discovering and worshiping Jesus, but they're non-Jews engaged in an occupation totally forbidden in the Hebrew Scriptures — astrology. Those who "followed stars" were subject to the death penalty.

Matthew can't help but remind his original Jewish readers that Herod's Jewish Scripture experts knew exactly where the Messiah was to be born, but he and they were obviously too busy to travel the few miles to Bethlehem and venerate him. Sinful Gentiles did what many law-abiding Jews refused to do.

Matthew was simply joining with the Pauline disciple responsible for the letter to the Ephesians and asking his church to also rejoice that God had "revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and co-partners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" [Ephesians 3:2-6]. Both sacred authors presume that God's revelation isn't something static — given in its entirety once upon a time, never changing, never evolving. As the Ephesians author puts it: "This mystery was not made known to people in other generations" — there's always deeper dimensions of God's revelation for us to discover.

Five hundred years before Jesus' birth, Isaiah was convinced of the evolutionary process of God's revelation. Like his prophetic predecessors, he constantly tries to take his people beyond their comfort zone. Long before Paul's mind-expanding insights about the implications of the risen Jesus' new personality, Isaiah also looks forward to a day when Gentiles will benefit from the faith of Jews — "Nations [Gentiles] shall walk by your light, and kings by your shining radiance" [Isaiah 60:1-6]. Isaiah is certain that the faith of his people will eventually affect the faith of all people.

One last point. The gold and incense that the magi give to the child make sense when you're dealing with royalty. On the other hand, myrrh is normally used to anoint dead bodies. Even at Jesus' birth, Matthew insists on bringing up his death — a death that all his followers are expected to imitate. One way in which we certainly die with him is constantly to see and accept the new in God's revelation — especially at the point in which we've just become comfortable with the old in that revelation.



—taken from the writings of Father Roger Karban, which appear on the internet

## PRAYER REQUESTS:

Jesus calls us to pray for one another. Please keep all these people in your prayers.

### PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Andre Polsinelli, who is undergoing treatment for Parkinson’s Disease.
- For Denise Linkov, cousin of Anna Akkus, who is a civilian war prisoner, and who is ill.
- For Veronica Pauer, sister of Brother Charles Smith, C.S.C., who is under the care of hospice.
- For Brother Roy Smith, C.S.C., who is recovering from surgery.



### PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Charles Schenkelberg, husband of Susan, father of Katherine Huftalen [‘89], Elizabeth Barry [‘92], Ellen Loughan [‘95], brother of Richard [‘69] and John [71] Schenkelberg, uncle of Lisa [‘98], Richard [‘02], Collen [‘13] and Craig [‘16] Schenkelberg, Samuel Sullivan [‘19]
- For Jerry Hottrey.
- For Sister Miriam Erb, C.S.A.
- For Father Robert Burge, chaplain at Jennings.
- For Sandy Rubenstein, grandmother of Eli Swirsky [‘23]
- For MaryAnn Stein, mother of Gilmour Trustee, Kevin Stein, grandmother of Ryan [‘16] and Trey [‘19] Stein.
- For Sister Jean Menk, S.N.D.
- For Father Tom McNally, C.S.C.
- For Brother Carlos Parrilla, C.S.C.
- For Jack Grdina, father of John [‘98] and Nick [‘08] Grdina.

### PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For a greater openness to the needs of others, especially during this time.
- For the victims of the flooding and mudslides in California.
- For an end to the war between Russia and Ukraine, and the political issues in Palestine and Iran.
- For a greater respect for human life, from the moment of conception until natural death.
- For all caregivers.
- For an end to violence in our society in all its forms.
- For all service men and women serving our country, and for their families.

## DID YOU KNOW?

European Christians have the custom of inscribing the initials of the Three Kings plus the year — **C+M+B+2026** [Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar] — in chalk over doorways in their home on the eve of January 6 to ask God’s blessings upon their home. However, what very few people are aware of



is the fact that the three letters really come from the Latin phrase for **Christ bless this house** — “Christus mansionem benedicat.” This little ritual was originally celebrated as the concluding rite to mark the end of the “Twelve Days of Christmas” — the number of days between the Feast of Christmas and the Feast of the Epiphany. During this time gifts were exchanged and articles of faith [corresponding to the number of a particular day] were remembered.

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

**~ A Prayer for the Epiphany ~**

**O God  
Maker of all,  
and lover of what you have made,  
you have sent Jesus  
into my life,  
born of Mary,  
to share my humanity.  
And you send his spirit  
so that I might share his divinity.  
Help me to find Jesus,  
your son.**

**I need people  
who make his presence real to me,  
through their lives.  
They are the star for me today,  
They are the light  
leading to you.  
Help me to become a sign of faith —  
one who has found the Christ.**

**I bring not the richness of the sea  
nor the wealth of nations.  
But I bring myself,  
the life that I live,  
as I stand before you this day.  
Amen.**

**CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:**

The Campus Ministry Office is located in **Our Lady Chapel**.  
phone: [440] 473-3560 [office] or 216-570-9276 [cell].  
e-mail: blazekj@gilmour.org