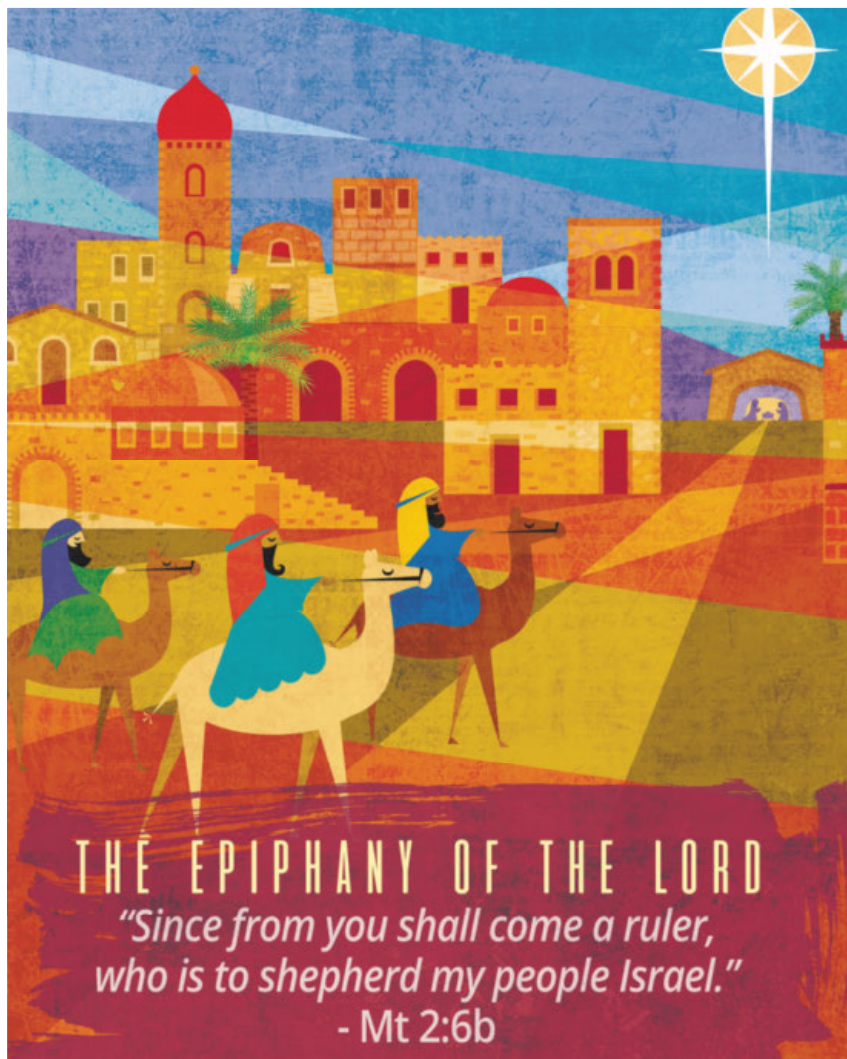




St. THOMAS the APOSTLE

2160 North Edward Decatur, IL 62526 (217) 877-4146 StThomasDecatur@gmail.com

Epiphany of the Lord • January 2, 2022



LITURGY SCHEDULE

Weekends

Sunday 10 am

Weekdays

Monday-Thursday 5:15 pm

Reconciliation

Sundays: 9:15 am - 9:45 am

Tuesdays: 4:15 pm - 5 pm

Eucharistic Adoration

First Saturday at 8:30 am

Decatur Catholic Radio

WDCR 88.9/96.5

CONTEMPLATE

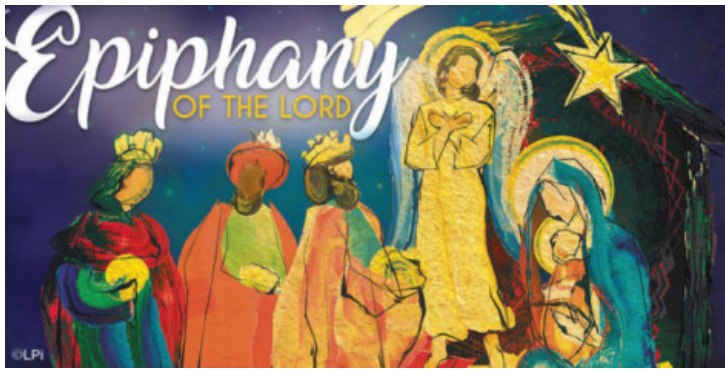
Gifts.

The Magi, these foreign interpreters of dreams, do the following: follow a star, travel a great distance, trust the words of others, bring and give gifts. In some countries, Epiphany and not Christmas is gift-giving day. This twelfth-day (when on the traditional 6th of January) brings to completion the manifestation of Christ – first to the Jews and today to everyone. No one is foreign to God's good grace.

- How will I search diligently for Jesus?
- Because God is merciful to me, what mercy work can I do for another?
- What gifts will I give to others in need?

Light — to Those Who Dwell in Darkness.

Being in darkness can be unsettling and even a bit unnerving. On life's journey we may think we are walking in the light but are really lingering in darkness. Sometimes, we even choose to close our eyes when the light is readily available to illuminate our path. Do we really desire to know the truth of who we are? In Jesus Christ, a light has been given to those who dwell in darkness. God's revelation gives us the light to see where we come from, who we are and where we are going. It also tells us that this Good News is not meant for just a privileged few but is intended to go out to all the world. Is this something we want to see?



Being a Saint This Year

Every new year is a chance for us to recommit ourselves to the Lord. It is a chance to renew our love for him. It is a chance for us to remember our call to be saints. God wants each of us to be saints, great saints. If we are called to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, then we are called to be saints. He calls us to this not out of some general sense of achieving an abstract level of holiness, but because he knows we are most fully happy and alive when we love God and our neighbor radically and totally. However, this can be an intimidating call. This call to greatness and sanctity is actually a great gift.

Although God's call for us to be great saints gives us a higher sense of dignity and purpose, there can also be this pressure and discouragement; most of the time we probably don't feel like we are living up to that call. That can make us feel like we are doing a bad job or that we need to simply exert more effort.

The image we have of God shouldn't be an impatient boss with his arms crossed waiting for us to be better. A better image for us to use would be of a child trying to learn to walk with a loving Father encouraging us onward despite our littleness and stumbling. The good news is that God knows our weaknesses and totally accepts where we are at.

This is part of the spirituality of St. Therese of Lisieux called "The Little Way." St. Therese had desires to be a great saint but saw she wasn't as great as the saints she admired. However, she knew that sanctity wasn't primarily about her natural greatness or sheer effort, but about God's love.



Fr. Trummer
Parochial Vicar

She referred to God's love as an elevator up the mountain of sanctity. Therese knew she was a little soul and put total confidence not in herself but in God's love and help to make her a great saint. The key thing was not simply she knew her weakness, but accepted herself where she was at knowing that God also accepted her and could make up for where she was lacking.

The question is, do we accept ourselves? He loves us where we are with all of our struggles. As Father Jacques Philippe puts it, "God doesn't love "ideal persons" or "virtual beings." He loves actual, real people. He is not interested in saintly figures in stained glass windows, but in us sinners... What often blocks the action of God's grace in our lives is less our sins or failings, than it is our failure to accept our own weakness ... To "set grace free" in our lives, and paving the way for deep and spectacular changes, it is sometimes would be enough to say simply yes - a yes inspired by trust in God to aspects of our lives we've been rejecting."

So perhaps after hearing about our call to sanctity or this call to love radically we feel tempted to respond, "I can't live this way. I know myself and I can't do it. I am too impatient with others, I am too attached to my time, I find prayer boring, I don't care enough, I get discouraged easily, I have already tried and I failed."

We should instead respond, "God, your grace and love is greater than my weakness. God you aren't scandalized by my apathy. Father, I know despite my addiction to x, that you can still help me be a saint." It is primarily our faith and trust that makes us a saint, not our own efforts!

Hosting the Vocations Crucifix

Please sign up today! The church needs your prayer. The signup sheet is on a table in the gathering area of church. Families and individuals are encouraged to sign up to host the Vocations Crucifix and pray for the week. God bless you!



With Heartfelt *Sympathy*

Our sympathy and prayers of comfort to the family of **Rev. David Zimmerman** who passed into eternity on Dec. 21.

May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.



St. Jude Thaddeus Novena Prayer

St. Jude Thaddeus was one of the Apostles of Jesus Christ. Pray this novena for hopeless causes, desperate situations, and grave illnesses.

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved, and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us. St. Jude Thaddeus, helper of the hopeless, pray for us.



Thank you, Jesus and St. Jude Thaddeus, for answering my prayers.

Parish Office

Rev. Michael Friedel, Pastor
mfriedel@dio.org (217) 877-4404

Rev. Michael Trummer, Parochial Vicar
mtrummer@dio.org (217) 877-4404

Rev. Richard Weltin, Pastor Emeritus

Deacon Kevin Richardson
deaconkev@gmail.com (217) 877-4146

Vern Wilson, Plant Manager (volunteer)

Parish Office

Open Mon-Thurs., 9am-noon
2160 N. Edward Street, Decatur, IL 62526
(217) 877-4146

StThomasDecatur@gmail.com
<http://www.StThomasDecatur.com>

Office Hours: 9am-noon, Monday-Thursday

Mass Intentions for the Week

Sunday, January 2 – Feast of the Holy Family
10 am – **Bernie Custin** †

Monday, January 3
5:15 pm – **Betty Harman** †

Tuesday, January 4
5:15 pm – **Eva Joanne “Happy” Luckenbill** †

Wednesday, January 5
5:15 pm – **Rev. David Zimmerman** †

Thursday, January 6
5:15 pm –

Friday, January 7
No Mass

Saturday, January 8
No Mass

Sunday, January 9
10 am – **Robert and Dolores Midden** †



Please Remember in your Prayers

**All who are Ill at Home or in the Hospital
and their Families and Caregivers**

Martha Wayne Cooper, Irene Crotser,
Kevin Henry, Polly Hensley,
Brian Hill, Sawyer Dale Hunter, Anonymous,
Don Keefner, Kelly McLean, Trey McLean,
Lucia Molloy, Christina Mooney, Lucia Mounce,
Rev. Msgr. James O’Shea, Joe Perry,
Kay Russell, Roz Sandage, Renee Saunches,
Virginia Thompson, JoAn Wayne, Shelia Wayne,
Norma Wilson, Vern Wilson, Tami Wittenauer

Please call the parish office or email
StThomasDecatur@gmail.com to add or remove a name.

A Special Thank You!

A special thank you to **Dan Ashenfelter and Sheri Holohan** for the beautiful Christmas decorations throughout the church.

Dan and Sheri spent a lot of 'self-less' hours to help enhance the beauty of the Christmas season.

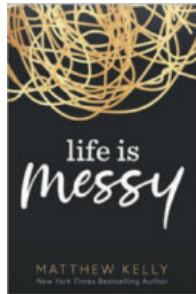


Thank you also to everyone who made a Christmas Flower Offering to provide such beautiful decorations. We truly appreciate all of your efforts.

Many thanks to all who sent cards, gifts and food for Christmas. May the Lord continue to bless all of you for your generosity throughout the year.

A Special Christmas Gift for You!

Pick up a copy of Matthew Kelly's newest book, *Life is Messy*, from the table in the back of church. It's a special Christmas gift for you from **a generous parish family**.



Based on his own heart-wrenching personal journals, in *Life is Messy* Matthew Kelly shares how the worst three years of his life affected him, by exploring this question: Can someone who has been broken be healed and become more beautiful and more lovable than ever before?

The answer will fill you with hope. There has never been a more urgent need for us to attend to what is happening within us.

Lunch Bunch

The St. Thomas Lunch Bunch will meet at the **Royal International Buffet**, 2036 Mount Zion Rd, Decatur, on **Tues, Jan. 11** at 11:15 a.m. Join us for food and conversation.



Epiphany Blessing of Our Homes

Throughout Germany at this time of year, you will find most main doorways inscribed with the following: **20+C+M+B+22**.

Children known as Sternsinger (star singers) dress up as the Magi and go door to door, requesting candy for themselves and money for the Church. As they leave, the house is blessed, and the inscription written in chalk.

The 20 and 22 refer to the year, the CMB are said to represent either:

- **Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar**—the Magi; *or*
- the Latin phrase: **Christus Mansionem Benedicat**, which means "Christ, bless this home."

Today, we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany, in which we remember the adoration of the newborn Christ by three wise men from the East.

This should leave no doubt in anyone's mind just how far and wide the promise of a Savior had spread. These representatives of religions from other lands were determined to pay their respects; it was as if they were born to do this—to acknowledge in some way the beginning of the greatest reign of the greatest king of all.

Take some blessed chalk home from Mass this weekend and mark the main doors of your home. As you are writing, pray:

May all who come to our home this year
rejoice to find Christ living among us;
and may we seek and serve,
in everyone we meet, that same Jesus
who is Lord, forever and ever. Amen.

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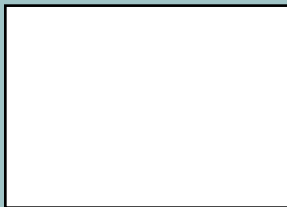
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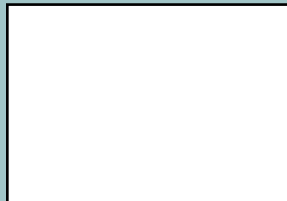


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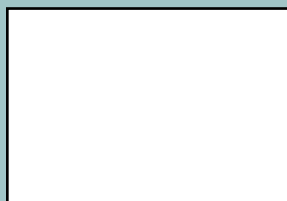
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