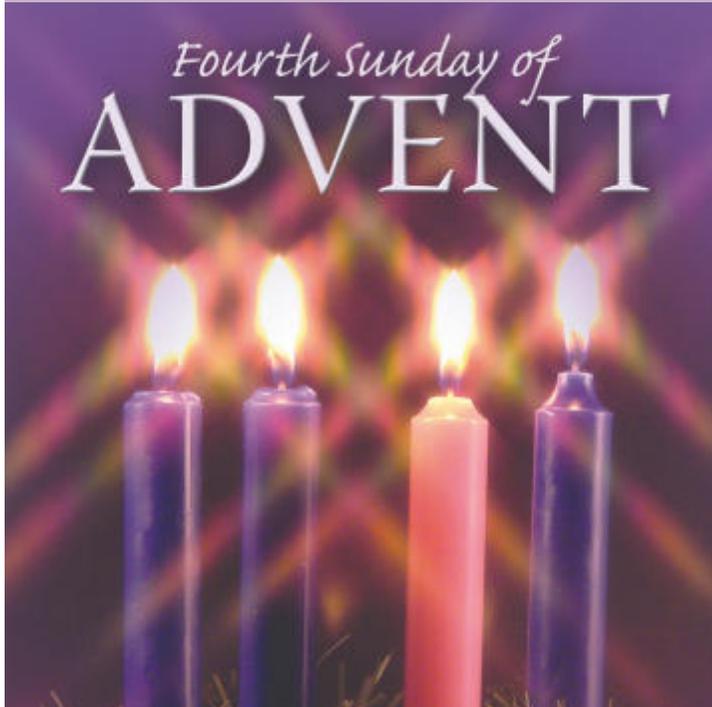


HOLY CROSS

CATHOLIC CHURCH

PARISH FOUNDED AND STAFFED BY THE CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS SINCE 1966



DECEMBER 19, 2021

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

WELCOME

Please introduce yourselves and register in order to become a member of this community of believers. We welcome your gifted presence in the life of our parish.

OUR MISSION

Holy Cross Parish, a community centered in the Eucharist, is committed in faith and love of Jesus Christ to fulfill the profoundly human and spiritual needs of its parishioners and the larger community it serves. We seek to inspire all, through deeds and by example, to do the work of Christ: to make God known, loved, and served.

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass

Monday - Friday 9:00am

Weekend Mass

Saturday Vigil 4:00pm

Sunday 8:30am, 10:00am, 5:30pm

Holy Days of Obligation

9:00am, 7pm

Confession

Saturday 3:15 - 3:45pm

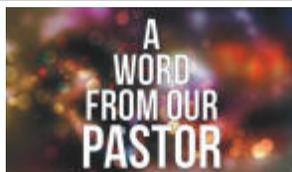
Other by Appointment

Pastoral Staff

Fr. Bradley J. Metz, C.S.C., Pastor
Fr. John M. Santone, C.S.C., Parochial Vicar
Deacon Gary Donahue, Pastoral Associate
Margaret Dwyer-Hogan, Dir. Of Faith Formation
Deborah Kelley, Finance
Christopher Iannitelli, Director Of Music
Paul Celia, Plant Manager
Lindsay Franzoni, Parish Administrative Assistant

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- ◆ info@holycrosseaston.org
- ◆ Monday - Friday 9:00am-4:00pm
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- ◆ www.holycrosseaston.org
- ◆ www.facebook.com/holycrossparisheaston.ma
- ◆ <https://giving.parishsoft.com/App/Giving/holycrosschurch>

HOLY CROSS CHURCH



Dear Parishioners:

Christmas draws near as we celebrate this Fourth Sunday of Advent. The daily Mass readings highlight the history and prophecies for the coming of the Messiah in the Books of Genesis, Judges, Song of Songs, and Samuel, and the prophecies of Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and Malachi. Throughout Advent we have also heard from the prophets Isaiah and Baruch, and from the Books of Sirach and Numbers. All pointing to this sacred time of fulfillment that was, and is, and will be forever. We have shifted from returning to Jerusalem, God's eternal city of Peace, to Bethlehem-Ephrathah, small, remote, and chosen as the birthplace for the Son of God. In these busy days we need to heed the refrain of Psalm 80: *Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.* May God always get our attention, but especially when we need it the most, so that when we greet others as Elizabeth greets Mary, our hearts, filled with the Holy Spirit, are moved with love, joy, happiness, and peace as we encounter Christ in others, and hopefully they in us.

It was uplifting to greet so many parishioners and friends of Holy Cross once again for the Holly Fair. I am deeply grateful for parishioners' generous donations, time, and support of this year's fair. I am indebted to Kerry Vieira for heeding the Spirit's call and offering to chair this year. Claire Smith supported and guided her along with other volunteers making this year's in-person experience again a time of celebration, connection, hope amid chances, fun among family and friends, joy flowing from the glow of youngsters visiting Santa, and a tangible feeling of blessing supporting our parish. It's definitely beginning to feel a lot like Christmas!

It should, I'm picking my Mom up tomorrow as she flies in from Indiana to join us for Christmas. Parishioners will be decorating the church this week inside and out. I'm guessing smells of evergreen, cookies baking in the oven, and other aromas wafting from preparations for the feasts are filling our kitchens and homes. All of the agencies you once again so generously supported have picked up our Giving Tree gifts making this Christmas merry and bright for many families. There are always a few last-minute details of choir practices and homily preparation this week, but everything is falling into place.

One of my favorite contemporary Christmas songs is "Christmas Shoes" by Bob Carlisle. This also is a difficult time of year for spouses, children, grandchildren, other family members and friends who said goodbye to a loved one in death this year and depend on God's healing and hope to experience joy this first Christmas with an empty seat at the table. Christmas has never really been the same for me these last twelve years since my Dad died in 2009. I always pray for him but especially at Christmas, now united with grandpa and many other family and friends in heaven, celebrating with Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Shepherds and Wise Men amid the choirs of Angels, all here with us whenever we are united through the Eucharist, the unique time and place heaven and earth meet through the Mass. Know that Fr. John and I are keeping you and your loved ones here and in heaven in our thoughts and prayers as we look forward to celebrating the parish Christmas Masses this year.

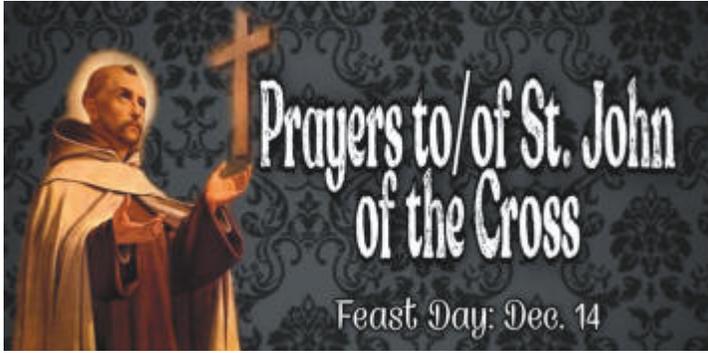
You may or may not know that there are no spacing or capacity restrictions this year. The strong encouragement, though no longer a mandate, remains to wash or sanitize your hands and wear a mask to help curb the spread of any and all germs while we are together in community. Masses remain streamed even though Bishop da Cunha reinstated the obligation to attend Mass back in June 2021. We will have a Eucharistic Minister at both the 4pm Christmas Eve and 10am Christmas Day Masses outside in front of church to distribute communion to anyone uncomfortable being among crowds, watching it streamed in their car, and desiring to receive Christmas Communion. Have a blessed week.

God Bless,
Fr. Brad

Our 2021 Christmas Mass schedule: Christmas Eve, simultaneous Masses at 4pm in church & parish center, (all the following in church) 8pm, Midnight at midnight, and Christmas Day 10am. Spread the word to family and friends.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

St. John of the Cross
14 December



St. John of the Cross was born on 24 June 1541 at Fontiveros, Old Castile, Spain. He was the youngest son of Juan de Yepes, a silk weaver, and Alvarez. John's father died soon after his birth leaving his mother to raise the children on her own. At seventeen, John began working at a hospital in Medina while also studying at the Jesuit college in the same city.

At the age of twenty-two John joined the Carmelites and took the name Juan de Santo Matía. He continued his studies and in 1567 was ordained a priest. On a visit home he met Teresa of Avila, a Carmelite nun, and told her that he was contemplating becoming a Carthusian monk to embrace a life of deeper solitude and prayer, but she persuaded him to remain a Carmelite and join her efforts in reforming the Order.

On 28 November 1568, John and four others founded the first men's house and began the Discalced Carmelites. Together they lived a contemplative life of prayer. John spent nine years working to reform the Order leading to increasing opposition, misunderstanding, great divisions, and persecution. In 1577 John was arrested and placed in a dark, damp, narrow cell. This led to his "dark night of the soul" as John was alone with only his God!

While imprisoned John wrote poetry, expressing in his prison-cross the ecstasy of mystical union with God. He wrote how the cross leads to resurrection, agony to ecstasy, darkness to light, abandonment to possession, denial of self to union with God. John died on 14 December 1591 and was canonized a saint in 1726. In 1926 Pope Pius XI proclaimed John a "Doctor of the Church."

Reflection Question: St. John of the Cross wrote, "If you want to save your life, you must lose it." In today's world happiness is measured by how much we have and how comfortable our possessions make us. We move away from words like self-denial, mortification, purification, asceticism, discipline. The message of St. John of the Cross is that if we truly want to live, we must focus not on the things of the earth but what our faith provides. What does that mean to you?

MASS INTENTIONS

✠Saturday, December 18

4:00pm Mary Rose Domingos
Requested by Her Children and Grandchildren

✠Sunday, December 19

8:30am
10:00am James Kevin Burns
Requested by Family
5:30pm Kevin J. McIntyre Birthday Remembrance
Requested by Eileen McIntyre

✠Monday, December 20

9:00am

✠Tuesday, December 21

9:00am Jim Metz
The Metz Family

✠Wednesday, December 22

9:00am Katherine Klok, Stanley & Thomas Girdvainis
Requested by Marianne and Don Klok

✠Thursday, December 23

9:00am

✠Friday, December 24

4:00pm FOR THE
8:00pm PEOPLE OF
Midnight THE PARISH

✠Saturday, December 25

4:00pm FOR THE
PEOPLE OF
THE PARISH

✠Sunday, December 26

8:30am
10:00am Jack Quinlan 1st Anniversary
Requested by Judy St. Onge

SPONSOR A DAY

Thank you to the following parishioners who sponsored a day in December:

Dan Corbett	Stephen & Kerry Pires
Dave & Jenna Nelson	Mark & Diane Jussaume
Donna Voltolini	Derek and Heather Hanson
Thomas Bono	David and Christine Blleloch
Kathleen Curtis	The Gaultier Family
Nicole Lang	Mark and Roula Lombardi
Brian and Candace Shockley	Jeff & Tracy Robarge
Joe & Muriel Studley	Sylvia Nowakowski
David and Paula Keane	Anne Tarallo
Richard and Nancy Quinn	

Thank You

HOLY CROSS CHURCH

Announcements



Hello –

Easton is updating its Housing Production Plan to help meet the needs of growing families, critical workers, people with disabilities, senior citizens, and others. This plan will also help Easton make better infrastructure investments and steer development towards areas that can best accommodate it.

Please consider encouraging anyone you know who lives in Easton to share their thoughts about housing needs in our community by completing a short 5-minute survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/eastonhousing>

This input will help Easton provide diverse housing options for people of all income levels at every stage of their lives.

Thank you very much, and as always please be in touch with any questions.

Wayne Beitler, Community Planner
508-230-0645



We are in need of adult and parent volunteers during our confirmation 2 classes. Please contact Mrs. Hogan if you are available to help. mdhogan@holycrosseaston.org



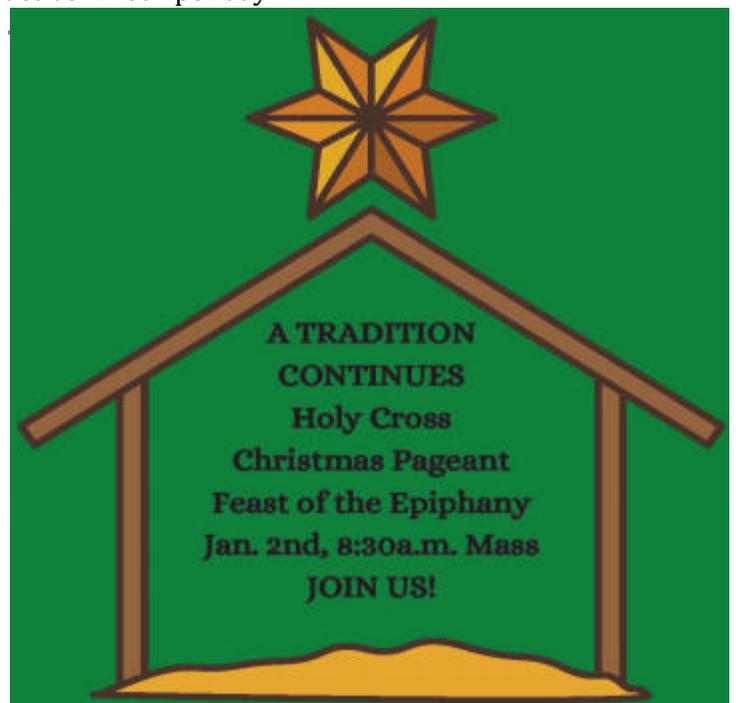
We are interested in recruiting additional hospitality ministers and ushers for all weekend Masses. If you're interested in being a part of this important parish ministry, please contact Fr. John



Abundant Hope Pregnancy Resource Center is seeking to fill 3 part-time positions in our Attleboro office. Positions include a Nurse Manager (RN), Client Services Coordinator and Administrative Liaison. We are looking for self-motivated, team-oriented individuals of high integrity who possess a great pro-life work ethic and is passionate about fulfilling Christ's work right here in our community. If you are interested in learning more, please email Director@ahprc.org. This just may be the answer to your prayers this Christmas

From the Health Ministry and Parish Nurse 12 Healthy Holiday Season Tips

1. Wash hands often for 20 seconds to prevent the spread of germs and prevent viruses.
2. Bundle up to stay dry and warm. Wear light warm layers, gloves, hats, scarves and waterproof boots.
3. Manage stress – Get plenty of sleep, give yourself a break, find support and connect socially.
4. Don't drink and drive or let others drink and drive.
5. Be smoke-free. Avoid smoking and secondhand smoke.
6. Fasten seat belts in car. Always buckle up along with passengers and children should be in proper child safety seats or booster seats.
7. Get the medical exams and screenings you need when recommended by MD.
8. Get vaccinations and booster shots. They help prevent diseases and save lives!
9. Monitor children. Protect them from drowning, burns, falls and keep potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks and household items.
10. Practice Fire Safety. Don't leave fireplaces, space heaters, food cooking on stoves or candles unattended. Have and practice an emergency plan.
11. Prepare food safely. Wash Hands and surfaces often, avoid cross contamination, cook foods to proper temperatures and refrigerate food promptly.
12. Eat healthy and stay active!!!! Eat fruits and vegetables and limit foods high in fat, salt and sugar. Be active for 2 ½ hours a week and encourage kids and teens to be active 1 hour per day.



<https://holycrossparish.flocknote.com/signup/75849>

Announcements



R.C. Bishop of Fall River Holy Cross Parish. It is with heartfelt thanks we offer all of you. Your very generous donation of money, clothes and baby items is gratefully received. Your generosity and thoughtful support is so appreciated. God Bless You All! Sincerely, Birthright of Greater Taunton

At times, the families of Holy Cross parishioners who have passed away request that gifts in their memories be made to Holy Cross Parish. These gifts are then used for special projects in the parish. This is a wonderful way to honor someone active in our parish at their passing. We invite you to consider remembering Holy Cross in this way in your funeral arrangements or at the death of a loved one who is a parishioner of Holy Cross. Your generosity and thoughtfulness will help us continue to minister to the needs of our parishioners & the wider community.

Holiday Office Hours

Table with 2 columns: Day/Date and Office Hours. Thursday 12/23 9-12, Friday 12/24 CLOSED, Saturday 12/25 CLOSED, Sunday 12/26 CLOSED, Monday 12/27 CLOSED, Tuesday 12/28 9-4, Wednesday 12/29 9-4, Thursday 12/30 9-4, Friday 12/31 CLOSED, Saturday 1/1 CLOSED

EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

Baby Jesus' Wish List

Odds are you've got a Christmas list going by now — gift ideas for everyone from your nephew to your goddaughter to your mailman. But what about the birthday boy? What's the gift Jesus gets from you this Christmas? If you've ever read the Book of Leviticus, you know all about the sacrifices God asks of the Israelites, referred to in the reading from Hebrews today. Leviticus can be a chore to read — a little repetitive, a little intimidating. There's a lot of very specific actions that God asks His Chosen People to complete to make up for whatever they have done wrong. In essence, it's a bit of a wish list for gifts.

But it's a wish list that can really confuse you. What's God going to do with a cereal offering? The kidneys of an animal? If you look closely, what God is doing here is beautiful. He's customized his wish list to only those things He knows the Israelites can give. It's God saying, in what amounts to theological baby-talk for folks who barely know of Him and His ways, exactly how they could be stewards. "Do this, but don't do that. If you do that, do this and you will find My mercy."

Our guide to stewardship — the Gospels of Christ — is less precise because by the time of Christ, God's people have grown in understanding of love and mercy and relationship with the divine. Through Christ, we find out that God's real wish list didn't really consist of cereal offerings and the kidneys of various animals. It's far simpler, but luckily, it's something we still have on-hand. All



Blood products collected at your drive have now delivered to patients in need of vital care! Distribution included, but was not limited to, the following local hospitals:

- MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL
CATHOLIC MEDICAL CENTER
GOOD SAMARITAN MEDICAL CENTER
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Each local drive is an integral piece of a puzzle to secure a healthy, readily available blood supply in your community and for every American in need. When collections exceed need for patients in local communities, we are able to expand distribution to areas with low supply due to weather, seasonal illness, and other challenges. Ensuring we don't waste a single drop of blood is our way of honoring your selfless effort and that of every generous donor.

We're so grateful for your partnership and hope you and your team feel the pride of extraordinary service to your community and beyond.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

READING I Mi 5:1-4a

Thus says the LORD:

You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah too small to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel; whose origin is from of old, from ancient times. Therefore the Lord will give them up, until the time when she who is to give birth has borne, and the rest of his kindred shall return to the children of Israel. He shall stand firm and shepherd his flock by the strength of the LORD, in the majestic name of the LORD, his God; and they shall remain, for now his greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth; he shall be peace.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.

READING II Heb 10:5-10

Brothers and sisters:

When Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; in holocausts and sin offerings you took no delight. Then I said, 'As is written of me in the scroll, behold, I come to do your will, O God.'" First he says, "Sacrifices and offerings, holocausts and sin offerings, you neither desired nor delighted in." These are offered according to the law. Then he says, "Behold, I come to do your will." He takes away the first to establish the second. By this "will," we have been consecrated through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

GOSPEL Lk 1:39-45

Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Question: Besides the Wise Men, what is significant about the Epiphany?

Answer:

Epiphany means "manifestation," or public display. The feast is usually celebrated January 6. In the US, it is celebrated on the Sunday nearest to January 6. It originates from a story unique to Matthew (2:1-12). Magi from the East come to offer homage to the newborn King, presenting him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

This part of Matthew's infancy narrative differs from Luke's account of the birth of Jesus. In Luke there are no Magi, star, nor gifts. Luke has Jesus being born in a stable after Mary and Joseph's long travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Matthew seems to have the family living in a house in Bethlehem, where the Magi find them.

Why these differences? They stem from the needs and concerns of the audience the authors were addressing, as well as the theological stance of each author. Knowing the original intention helps get at the correct interpretation of the text. Since Matthew was writing primarily to a Jewish community, his concern was to show that Jesus did not come just for Jews, but for Gentiles as well. From his very birth, Jesus not only manifests himself to Jews, but also to Gentiles, who are prominently included in the manifestation, symbolized by the Magi and their journey. This is the most significant aspect of the feast of Epiphany. How do you manifest Jesus to all with whom you come into contact?



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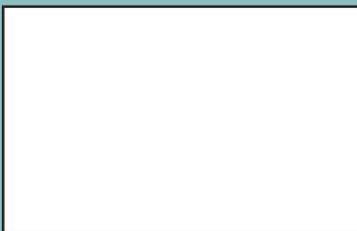


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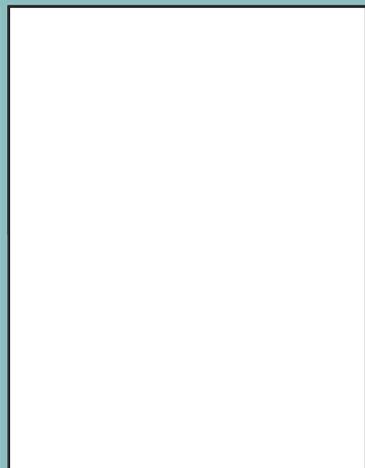
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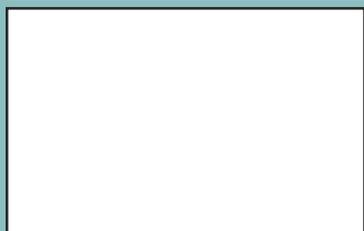
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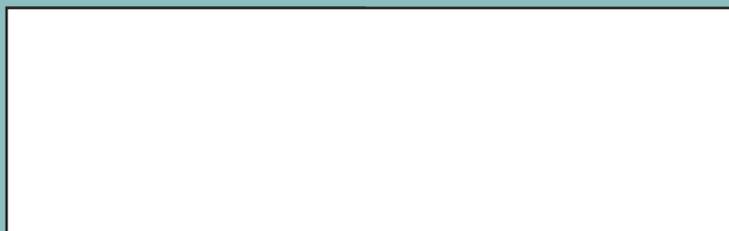
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