

# ST. AMBROSE PARISH

## St. Augustine Church

30 Caputo Rd.  
North Branford, CT 06471



## St. Monica Church

1321 Middletown Ave.  
Northford, CT 06472

## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother.

They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. - Mt 2:10-11



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DUE TO PANDEMIC BUILDING RESTRICTIONS,  
ALL MASSES WILL TEMPORARILY BE CELEBRATED AT ST. AUGUSTINE

### Daily Mass

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 9:00 AM

### Sunday Masses

Saturday Vigil 5:00 PM English Ordinary, No Incense  
Sunday 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM Latin Ordinary with use of Incense

Confessions will be heard 30 minutes prior to daily Masses.

### Parish Office

Open Monday - Friday 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM • 203-484-0403

# SUNDAY'S READINGS

## FIRST READING:

Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come,  
the glory of the Lord shines upon you. (Is 60:1)

## PSALM:

Lord, every nation on earth will adore you. (Ps 72)

## SECOND READING:

It was not made known to people in other generation  
as it has now been revealed  
to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit:  
that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body,  
and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through  
the gospel. (Eph 2:5-6)

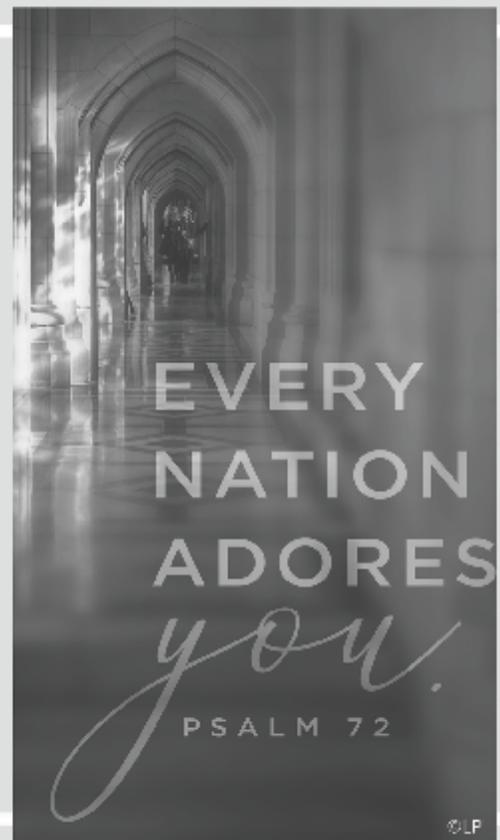
## GOSPEL:

They were overjoyed at seeing the star,  
and on entering the house  
they saw the child with Mary his mother.  
They prostrated themselves and did him homage. (Mt 2:10-11)

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## OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 3, 2021

Sunday: The Epiphany of the Lord; National Migration Week  
Monday: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious  
Tuesday: St. John Neumann, Bishop  
Wednesday: St. André Bessette, Religious  
Thursday: St. Raymond of Penyafort, Priest  
Next Sunday: The Baptism of the Lord



## REFLECT

### FIRST READING

In late 6th century BC, the prophet Isaiah proclaimed an unimaginable future of glory for Israel in the wake of their return from seventy years of captivity in Babylon. What message of hope does our nation need today?

### SECOND READING

Paul speaks of God's "revelation" to include Gentiles as "coheirs" and "copartners" with Jews in the divine promise fulfilled in Christ Jesus. How welcoming are you to those you consider outsiders?

### GOSPEL READING

The magi's visit to discover the "newborn king of the Jews" caused great anxiety for the religious leaders of Jerusalem, including King Herod. Why do you think some people are not open to the good news of Jesus Christ?

## WISE MEN SEE GOD IN THE SIMPLE THINGS

If you're on social media, you have probably seen a meme going around that features this quote: "God has a plan for your life. The enemy has a plan for your life. Be ready for both. Just be wise enough to know which one to battle and which one to embrace."

There were certainly two competing plans for the Magi: God's and Herod's. And, wise as they supposedly were, it wasn't entirely easy for the Magi to discern which was which.

After all, Herod posed as a friend. He offered the Magi hospitality and kindness. Though the Gospel doesn't say so, he probably flattered them and appealed to every moral weakness he could observe in them. In his palace, they must have felt great physical comfort — rest

and tables of plenty on what was an otherwise long and treacherous journey.

But if the Magi were honest with themselves, I'll bet they would have admitted that, regardless of Herod's charm, they felt a gnawing sense of doubt while in his presence. When they looked upon the Christ Child, born in a stable without any of the comforts of the world or protections of wealth, they probably felt the opposite. They probably felt safe.

The Magi were lucky enough to have the right plan spelled out for them in a dream, but for the rest of us, it's enough to remember this: God's plan is often the one that leads us to places of great simplicity, great humility and great love. Let's have the wisdom to view power with suspicion, and innocence with admiration.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CHASTISEMENT AND A PUNISHMENT?

The distinction between chastisement and punishment is, in many ways, a subtle one, but which is still relevant in our Catholic tradition.

First, chastisement is a concept that is grounded in Sacred Scripture. Here, we see chastisement as a response by God to people's actions that is intended to teach a lesson. As St. John Paul II observed, "chastisement appears to be ... a kind of divine pedagogy, in which the last word is reserved to mercy: He scourges and then shows mercy, casts down to the depths of the nether world, and he brings up from the great abyss" (Tobit 13:2). The idea here is that in order to capture our attention or to highlight how we have not lived out our covenant-relationship with God as we should, there are times when God uses events in life to

draw us back to the quality of relationship or faith that we should have.

The concept of punishment, however, has a different sense. The Catechism of the Church observes that punishment is the consequence of a damaging action that "has the primary aim of redressing the disorder" and to protect the community and the

common good from further damage or harm (see no. 2266). Although we always hope that someone who is being punished for a crime or some other harmful action will learn from their actions, punishment isn't necessarily intended to teach a lesson in the same way that a chastisement is.

Ultimately, how we make the distinction between chastisement and punishment is a matter of discernment. As with almost everything in life, our experiences can be an

opportunity for grace — or for something less — depending on how open we are to recognizing the movement of God's Spirit within them.



## LIVE THE LITURGY

INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

Even the slightest flicker of a light helps to properly orient us when we find ourselves in total darkness. Being in darkness can be unsettling and even a bit unnerving. We lose our focus and struggle to find our bearings and achieve balance. On life's journey we may think we are walking in the light but are really lingering in darkness. We do not see the full picture, either because we are distracted, disinterested, or even apprehensive. 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?

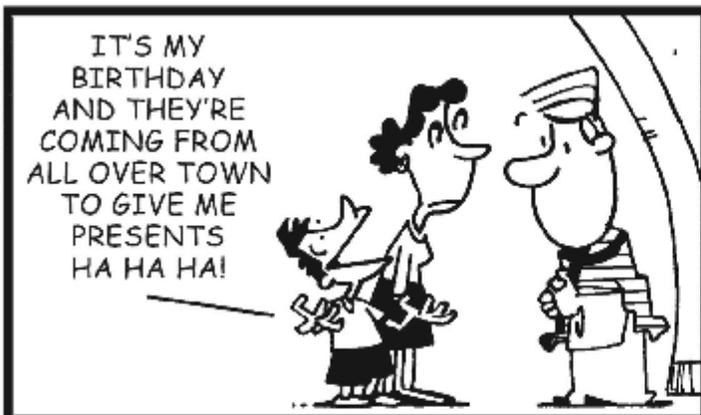


### PLEASE CONSIDER ONLINE GIVING

Our parish is grateful for your continued support at this time. Thank you!



### EPIPHANY



## GOSPEL MEDITATION

### ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

"Where is that thing?" mumbled Bob as he searched frantically on his dimly lit desk for the current electric bill. "I know I put it right on top of these papers this morning!" Growing in frustration and bordering on anger, he flies stuff around, moves books and opines why simple tasks need to be so hard. Enter his wife, who calmly says, "Maybe it would help if you put the light on, dear." The desk light goes on and lo and behold, there is the electric bill right where Bob left it earlier. All it took was a little light!

We stubbornly refuse to turn on the lights! Either we are distracted, determined, disinterested, preoccupied, stubborn, apprehensive, or all of the above. Or perhaps, we fail to do the obvious. We would rather live our lives with the dimmest of lights or even in total darkness. Why are we afraid to do something so that we can actually see? It might help us to find quicker and better answers to problems, the meaning of life, relationships, happiness, and what is ultimate truth. Yet, we stumble along, moving things from one side to the other, getting angry, feeling cheated, being unsettled,

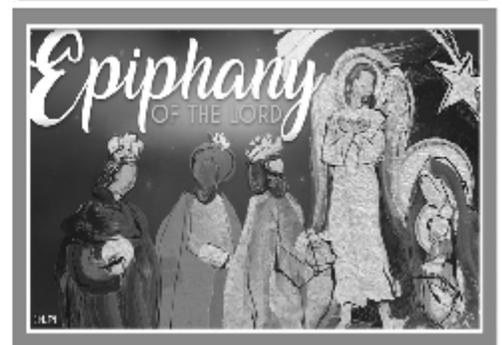


resigning ourselves to the agony of defeat once again.

"And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was." The light has come into the world in the person of Jesus Christ! We no longer have to fumble in the darkness. We have been gifted with the illumination we need to see our way through things and find what we really are looking for. All these years later, however, so many are still reluctant to accept him. Perhaps they are unconvinced, disinterested, preoccupied, stubborn, apprehensive, or all of the above. Everyone has their own reason for not wanting to turn on the switch.

But there are so many answers to so many of our problems in this humble Child of Nazareth. A simple birth teaches us about God's tender wedded relationship with humanity. It speaks to the expanse of God's salvation across the globe, and the incarnate Divine wonders and blessings that are a part of our life moment to moment. It calls us to understand the design of world order God intended as found in the Beatitudes, the sacredness of every human life and all of creation and the meaning of things we struggle with most, like suffering and death. We have a lot of Good News to share, not just with a privileged few but with all the world. All races and creeds can receive God's healing word. God continues to manifest himself even now! Use the light to find what you are really looking for!

*They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. - Mt 2:10-11*



DATE	CHURCH	MASS TIME	INTENTION	REQUESTED BY
<b>MONDAY</b> 1/4	St. Augustine	9:00 AM	† Dr. John Christoforo	Laura Mangino
<b>TUESDAY</b> 1/5	St. Augustine	9:00 AM	† Kenneth Hennessey	Family
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> 1/6	St. Augustine	9:00 AM	† Frank Rossetti † Stephen Mirabella † Mario Sacamore	The Marena Family The Derbacher Family The Proto Family
<b>THURSDAY</b> 1/7		No Mass		
<b>FRIDAY</b> 1/8	St. Augustine	9:00 AM	† Robert Pouliot	Christine Pouliot
<b>SATURDAY</b> 1/9	St. Augustine	9:00 AM	No intention	
	St. Augustine	5:00 PM	Parishioners of St. Ambrose	
<b>SUNDAY</b> 1/10	St. Augustine	9:00 AM	† Peter & Amy Bova † Frank Ahern, Sr. † Thomas & Mary Keegan	Daughter, Julie Vicky Ahern & Family Mary Keegan
	S. Augustine	11:00 AM	† Antonio Grandetti	Pete & Beth Yacono

MAY YOU  
TRUST GOD  
THAT YOU  
ARE EXACTLY  
WHERE YOU  
ARE MEANT  
TO BE.  
—ST. THERESE  
OF LISIEUX

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