ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST
CATHOLIC CHURCH • McALESTER
EST. 1895

MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday	10:00 am
Sunday *(Spanish)*	12:00 pm
Monday	(*Private*)
Tues. & Fri.	5:30 pm
Wed. & Thurs.	8:00 am
Saturday	5:00 pm

PARISH STAFF

Very Rev. Jovita C Okonkwo,
Pastor & Vicar Forane

Debbie Osborne,
Secretary & Office Manager

John Wolf,
Director of Communications

Pam Pulchny,
Director or Religious Education

Sean Fredricks,
Maintenance

CONNECT

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THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

YEAR B, JANUARY 3RD, 2021

"When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." - Mt 2:1-2

WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

New Parishioners: Welcome! We are glad to have you. Please register in the vestibule, parish website, or at the parish office.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Offered on Saturdays 4:00 p.m. to 4:55 p.m.; Sundays 9:30 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. or by appointment.

Sacrament of Anointing: Offered during *Mass for the Sick* on 1st Tuesdays of the month. Call the office/rectory for sick visits.

CHURCH CONTRIBUTION

DECEMBER 20TH, 2020

	DEC. 20 2020	DEC. 13 2020	Total M-T-D
Main	$4,860	$2,350	$11,211
Assistance	$25	$110	$935
Bldg/Main	$595	$175	$770
Youth	$65	$0	$65

***N/B** Our budgeted **operating cost for December 2020 is $16,000**. Your generosity has brought in $**12,981.** We'll need extra **$3,019** to fully fund the parish this month. Thank you to all those giving larger donations. May God reward you tenfold!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Jan. 4—Pauline Glover, Jayden Self; Jan. 7—Larry Edwards, Elizabeth Tweedel

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Kindly let us know when your wedding anniversary falls and we'll celebrate with you and your family.

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Ada Nell Ward, Annette Davis, Bette Santine, Cheryl Horrocks, David Michael Griffin, Don Laws, Donnie Sherman, Elizabeth Tweedel, Frank Gonzales, Gary Jackson, Gil Currin, Hal Dalton, Herman Seiter, Ian Leybas, Irma Gonzalez, James Gray, Jamie Keef, Jason Wright, Jerri Marley, Jerry & Alberta Capps, Jim Kelley, Jonathan Reed, Ken Curtis, Kimberly Thomas, Lorie Davis, Maria Grace Black, Mike White, Mr. Homer Sr., Paul Zoller, Ray Sellmeyer, Sue McMullin, Sue Tillman, Tad Bowden, Tammy Gardner, Teddy & Janet Bernasky, Tony Helmert, Andrew Zdeb, SSG Ben Ales, Edward Zdeb, PVT Erick Palacios, SGT Greg Thompson, AMN James Lisle, PFC John W. Pelzel, PVT J P Dunlay, AMN Michael Kaskie, SGT Pierre Terlaje, SSG Timothy Moore, All those who suffer from the Coronavirus.

(To add or remove a name on this list, please email stjohnmcalester@yahoo.com or call 918-423-0810).

REFLECTION

We truly possess minds capable of peering into the mysteries of creation and our existence, but we're often too lazy to venture, like the Magi, into this expedition. We gloss over daily events and natural occurrences because we're so used to experiencing them. For example, we see pregnant mothers all the time but do not take the time to reflect on the variety of motions that complete the human life of each of us. One of the experiences we gloss over too easily is the appearance of the light every morning as the sun rises. Before the approach of dawn, a number of stars can be seen around the sky. Meanwhile, though you can't yet see the sun, its rays, like orange coronets, can be glimpsed on the eastern horizon. If you keep gazing, you'll find the stars disappear one after another until only one star appears to remain. Astrophysicists tell us that that's not an actual star; rather, it is the planet Venus. The sun towers over Venus to reveal the light of day. Hence, Venus is called the Morning Star, which gives way so that the bright light of the sun might illumine the day.

More than 2000 years ago, three wise men—also called Magi or astrologers set out on an expedition in which an unusual star they saw directed them. It's very puzzling to imagine how they came up with the idea that the star meant anything at all, what more, plucking them away from their homes to follow the star to travel unimaginable distances. Only that there were musings about the birth of some important king. You cannot fail to admire their faith and tenacity. Equally perplexing is the fact that rather than lead them straight to the birthplace of the king, the star led them to Herod's palace, where it took concerted research and perusal of the scripture by the scribes—at the urging of Herod—to reveal that Bethlehem was definitely the birthplace in quest. Upon leaving the king's palace the guiding star reappeared and preceded them to the precise location of the birth. The star then disappeared the moment the Magi saw the new king, just as Venus gives way to the sun upon its arrival.

Many natural phenomena lead the human mind to inquire about the mysteries of our existence. Philosophy and science, like the star that led the Magi, awaken the human mind to go in search of these mysteries. But the ultimate truth of our existence cannot be revealed by a mere star or by natural science. Often, science aligns with the powerful of the world, in palaces and studded shelters in search of relevance. ***Man who is "capax entis" (capable of being) only because he is "capax dei" (capable of God) must recognize that his search for meaning transcends the mere physical and must lead to the door of revelation, as the Magi sought the help of scribes who searched the scriptures to reveal their ultimate destiny***. Paradoxically, upon leaving the house of Herod, the star reappeared—revealing that philosophy and theology, science and revelation, faith and reason aid each other and are necessarily married to one another. It was the star, like science that led the wise men to Herod. But scripture, in turn, aided the star to discover its ultimate destination, so that the Magi could arrive Bethlehem. And just as the daylight makes all other small lights and stars fade, the moment the Radiant Sun (Jesus) was revealed, the star disappeared. Jesus is the true star of our life and our *terminus* (final goal).

The so-called war that science or reason wages against faith is absurd. ***Reason devoid of its marriage to faith would leave us still in darkness or at best delay in us the rising of the true Morning Sun.*** Scientific knowledge devoid of its relations to faith would only create anarchy, chaos, bloodshed, and lust for power and possession, which are the bequests of the house of Herod. Modern scientific knowledge divorced from faith and morality has steadily produced human carnage. Such forms of learning are truly foolish which do not lead to Christ, to the crib of Bethlehem where we experience true light. ***Epiphany or Manifestation is a call to follow the wise counsel of the Magi whose wisdom rested in knowing that they did not know everything.*** WISE MEN STILL SEEK JESUS!!!

Fr. Jo Chukwudi Okonkwo

MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, Jan. 3, The Epiphany of the Lord
10:00 a.m. † Robert Stizza // Philip & Laura Stizza

Monday, Jan. 4, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, *Religious*
Private † Reggie Turner // Dr. Bill Wynn

Tuesday, Jan. 5, Saint John Neumann, *Bishop*
5:30 p.m. † No intention

Wednesday, Jan. 6, Christmas Weekday; Saint Andre Bessette, *Religious*
8:00 a.m. † No intention

Thursday, Jan. 7, Christmas Weekday; Saint Raymond of Penyafort, *Priest*
8:00 a.m. † Reggie Turner // Woodlift Family

Friday, Jan. 8, Christmas Weekday
5:00 p.m. † No intention

Saturday, Jan. 9, Vigil of The Baptism of the Lord
5:00 p.m. † Jack & Tim Summers // Pat Summers

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

SAT. JAN. 9, 2021 5 P.M. MASS

Lector: Steve White; EMHC **(Body & Blood)** — To be announced
Servers: TBA **Music** TBA
Ushers: Bradley Bowhall, David Stizza

SUN. JAN. 10, 2021 10 A.M. MASS

Lector: Philip Stizza; EMHC (**Body & Blood**) — To be announced
Servers: TBA **Music** TBA
Ushers: Al Ross, Phillip Butler

NOTICES:

HAPPY NEW YEAR! WELCOME BACK HOME TO MASS!

We are happy to have made it through Christmas and to this very hopeful New Year. Faithful Catholics must return to Mass, and see in prayer our greatest weapon against the forces of darkness at work in our time. We must be alert to these forces that seek to exploit sickness to manipulate our way of life and living.

A PASSIONATE APPEAL

This New Year, the parish requests your support in many ways to keep our facility running. One of the sources of support is through the Building Fund Envelop, which helps with the payment of our insurance and maintenance of the facilities. Currently, that fund has dwindled to the extent that we may default in our $25,000 insurance payment. We therefore appeal for greater support with the Building Fund to enable us pay it off as soon as possible.

SECURITY ALERT!

We are at the tail end of a project to secure our church and the environs through the installation of security cameras. This project is necessitated by recent acts of vandalism inside the church, school, and parking lot. Every movement in and out of the perimeter of our parish will be under 24 hour video surveillance. We will spare no effort to ensure the safety of our children, parishioners, and guests.

FRIDAY ADORATION

Join us for Mass and Eucharistic adoration at 5:30 p.m. Respond to the love of Christ by spending an hour every week in His Living Presence.

Eastern Oklahoma CATHOLIC CHARITIES | Love Changing Lives.

ST. JUDE'S CENTER

The requested items for the St. Jude's Helping Center this week are: jelly, canned foods, and breakfast items. The center still needs some men to help with stocking items on Wednesday and Friday morning/ daytime hours. Please Contact Amelia London at 918-424-8833 to volunteer.

DONATE ONLINE

Visit our website or Facebook page to learn how you can safely and conveniently make a one-time or recurring contribution online. To give online, kindly visit: https://stjohnmcalester.weshareonline.org/

TIPS FOR SURVIVING THE PANDEMIC

Make sure you test positive for Faith; Keep your distance from Doubt; Isolate yourself from Fear; And Trust God through it all. (*Anonymous*)

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