St. Agnes & St. Brendan

The Epiphany of the Lord —"Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you." ~The Prophet Isaiah.

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EPIPHANY

January 3, 2021

Inspired by our Gospel Reading this week:

Look!
Look up!
O Jerusalem,
here comes the world
running to walk in your light.

We are the sparkling and the dim,
the black, brown and white,
the kings and beggars,
the undocumented
and the border
agents.

Lord,
shine your light on us all.
May your star chase away every darkness
and fill us with your radiant light.
Make us your epiphanies
overflowing with love
and wonderful
care for
each
other.

READINGS FOR JANUARY 10

Reading I: Is 55:1-11
Responsorial Psalm: Ps 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10
Reading II: 1 Jn 5:1-9
Gospel: Mk 1:7-11

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GATHERING SONG:

We Three Kings

We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

PSALM REFRAIN

Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

RECESSIONAL

The First Nowell

The first Nowell, the angel did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds
in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain: Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

This star drew nigh to the northwest,
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay. *Refrain*

Then entered in those wise men three,
Full rev'rently upon the knee,
And offered there, in his presence,
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense. *Refrain*

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord;
Who with the Father we adore
And Spirit blest for evermore. *Refrain*

EPIPHANY

The Rhythm of Prayer

Do we ever really understand or master prayer? Yes and no. When we try to pray, sometimes we walk on water and sometimes we sink like a stone. Sometimes we have a deep sense of God's reality and sometimes we can't even imagine that God exists. Sometimes we have deep feelings about God's goodness and love and sometimes we feel only boredom and distraction. Sometimes our eyes fill with tears and sometimes they wander furtively to our wrist-watches to see how much time we still need to spend in prayer. Sometimes we would like to stay in our prayer-place forever and sometimes we wonder we even showed up. Prayer has a huge ebb and flow.

We nurse a naïve fantasy both about what constitutes prayer and how we might sustain ourselves in it. And what often lies at the center of this misguided notion is the belief that prayer is always meant to be full of fervor, interesting, warm, carrying spiritual insight, and carrying the sense that we are actually praying. Coupled with this notion is the equally misguided notion that the way to sustain feeling and fervor in prayer is through constant novelty and variety or through dogged concentration. Classical writers in spirituality assure us that, while this is often true during the early stages of our prayer lives, when we are neophytes at prayer and in the honeymoon stage of our spiritual lives, it is becomes less and less true the deeper we advance in prayer and spirituality.

Much to the relief and consolation of anyone who has tried to sustain a prayer life over a long period of time, the great mystics tell us that once we are beyond the early, honeymoon, stage of prayer, the single greatest obstacle to sustaining a life of prayer is simple boredom and the sense that nothing meaningful is happening. But that doesn't mean that we are regressing in prayer. It often means the opposite.

Here's a canopy under which to pray even as we struggle with boredom and the sense that nothing meaningful is happening: Imagine you have an aged mother who is confined to a retirement home. You're the dutiful daughter or son and, every night after work, for one hour, you stop and spend time with her, helping her with her evening meal, sharing the events of the day, and simply being with her as her daughter or son. I doubt that, save for a rare occasion, you will have many deeply emotive or even interesting conversations with her. On the surface your visits will seem mostly routine, dry, and dutiful. Most days you will be talking about trivial, everyday, things and you will be sneaking the occasional glance at the clock to see when your hour with her will be over. However, if you persevere in these regular visits with her, month after month, year after year, among everyone in the whole world you will grow to know your mother the most deeply and she will grow to you know you most deeply because, as the mystics affirm, at a certain deep level of relationship the real connection between us takes place below the surface of our conversations. We begin to know each other through simple presence.

You can recognize this in its opposite: Notice how your mother relates to your siblings who visit her only very occasionally. During those rare, occasional visits there will be emotions, tears, and conversations beyond the weather and the trivia of everyday life. But that's because your mother sees these others so rarely.

Prayer is the same. If we pray only occasionally, we might well experience some pretty deep emotions in our prayer. However, if we pray faithfully every day, year in and year out, we can expect little excitement, lots of boredom, regular temptations to look at the clock during prayer … but, a very deep, growing bond with our God.

Fr. Ron Rolheiser, *A Canopy Under Which to Pray*, August 2011

January 3, 2021

SB: Saint Brendan's in Keene; All other Masses at St. Agnes Church.

Saturday, January 2nd Saints Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors of the Church
4:00PM (SB) Michael Wall, Sr. by the Bramich family
5:30PM Special Intentions of the Walsh family on their second anniversary by the family

Sunday, January 3rd The Epiphany of the Lord
8:00AM Johanna M. Sherman by Ted & Katie Volz
10:00AM Betty Columbe by the Drohan family

Monday, January 4th Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious
8:30AM Marie Landisio by Pat & Roger Loud & family

Tuesday, January 5th Saint John Neumann, Bishop
4:30PM Adoration — Holy Hour —Confession
5:30PM Jim Carlson by Olaf & Christina Carlson

Wednesday, January 6th
8:30AM Peter Kunkel by his sister, Mom, & family

Thursday, January 7th
8:30AM Joseph Clarke by Mary Merrill
7:00PM: Rosary

Friday, January 8th
10:00AM Souls in Purgatory by Robert & Marcia Bugbee

Saturday, January 9th
4:00PM (SB) Gail Reed Farley by Paula McDonough
5:30PM The McCarthy and Lennon families by Ted & Katie Volz

Sunday, January 10th The Baptism of the Lord
8:00AM Margaret Blazer by Denis & Brita Chagnon
10:00AM Kay Sullivan by Bill & Nancy Lenny & family

ADORATION

Eucharistic Adoration at St. Agnes Church: Tuesday 4:30 PM followed by the 5:30 pm Mass. Confession will be available during Adoration, 4:35 pm to 5:25 pm. Please maintain social distancing and mask protocols. Come and spend some time with the Lord and receive His mercy in the confessional.

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We have Church-approved low-gluten hosts that have 0.01% gluten and should be safe for most people with this intolerance. For a low-gluten host, receive from Fr. John and raise your hand to indicate your desire.

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Sacraments of Baptism and Matrimony
Please call the Parish Office – 518-523-2200

Sacrament of Reconciliation
St. Brendan, Saturday 3:30 p.m.
St. Agnes, Saturday after 5:30 p.m. Mass

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
And the Sacrament of Reconciliation every Tuesday from 4:30 p.m. to 5:25 p.m. Come and spend time with the Lord!

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