

# STAR OF WONDER

## THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

JANUARY 2/3 2021

***Epiphany: A sudden manifestation, insight, revelation, or understanding***

The Feast of the Epiphany is one of the most fascinating parts of the Christian narrative for a number of reasons. Put this in perspective:

The Jews have waited thousands of years in their little pocket of the world for their promised Messiah. Once he finally arrives, however, the only Jewish people he is revealed to are the Holy Family and some low-rent shepherds.

Shockingly, he is then sought out by and manifested to gentiles (non-Jews). Think about that: The long-awaited Jewish savior is presented to people that aren't even Jewish. That's **HUGE!**

This very act actually foreshadows Pentecost, when the apostles are told to go out to all the world to proclaim the Good News. Not just to other Jews. Not just in the confines of Judea. But to **EVERYONE** throughout the entire **WORLD**.

Obviously, God is pretty inclusive. But are we, as God's children, the same? Do we shun people that look different, talk different, or have a different belief than us? The feast of the Epiphany is a celebration that God became man to save **everyone** in the world. Everyone. We may have borders, languages, customs, and traditions that divide us, but in the end, we're really all in it together... With each person having their own special gifts to give.

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# FROM FATHER MARTIN

This weekend, we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany, also known as Little Christmas. This feast has a number of traditional features and is, in many ways, older than Christmas Day itself. This day also was always held on the calendar day of January 6th. So, why are we celebrating it on January 2nd and 3rd? Well, there are a couple of points to help explain.

First, January 6th always ended the period known as the 12 Days of Christmas, as we usually sing in the Christmas carol. The 12 days were a time of great feasting, parties, games, drinking, and everything else we do as humans to have a good time! It was a prolonged period of celebration because that's what Christmas is supposed to be. This is a period to reflect, meditate upon, and appreciate the great gift of Jesus as the Infant King.

According to the Code of Canon Law (canon 1246, 1 & 2), the Feast of the Epiphany is a Holy Day of Obligation, in which Masses ought to be offered for the people of God. In this same canon however, the bishop's conferences of the world may move that holy day to a Sunday instead of holding the holy day obligation on a weekday. In the United States, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has decided that Epiphany will be moved to a weekend, Sunday celebration rather than keeping it on the actual calendar day of January 6th. In my not so humble opinion, this was a very poor decision on the part of the bishops. Separating the Feast of the Epiphany from the rest of the Christmas mystery only contributes to Christmas being commercialized and downplayed by Catholics. If Epiphany is no big deal, then why shouldn't I take down the Christmas decorations and stop wishing people, "Merry Christmas," on December 26th?

Back in December of 2017, with the First Sunday of Advent, the bishops of England and Wales made the truly excellent decision to make January 6th the Feast of the Epiphany and declared it a Holy Day of Obligation, no matter what day of the week it fell on. This decision, I think, correctly united the mystery of Christ's incarnation on December 25th with His revelation to all the world, especially to the gentiles (which is what the 3 magi from the east represents) on the Feast of the Epiphany.

As stated above, Epiphany is known by a few different names, including Little Christmas. This is traditionally the day we celebrate the arrival of the 3 magi from the east, who presented to the Infant King the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Some people also call this day, "Three Kings Day." However, there are 2 other events in the life of Jesus and recorded in the gospels that Epiphany also commemorates. The other 2 events are the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, and the wedding feast at Cana, in which Christ manifested himself by the changing of water into wine. That might be a little confusing, right? Why would the Church liturgically commemorate 3 different events in the life of our Lord on one day?

Something always to keep in mind is the sense of mystery; the mystery of the church's calendar, Mass prayers, liturgical texts, and biblical texts all woven together into one tapestry, and the fact that all of this has great antiquity behind it. When we, as Catholics, celebrate an event in the life of our Lord, our Blessed Mother, or one of the saints, it's not the same as looking through the photos on your phone from the year before. Today it is very common for people to create a video on Facebook or some other social media platform to show the passage of time. Something like, "Look how big the kids got and all they accomplished this year!" The earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ does not work like that! The events of His holy life are wrapped in sacred mystery; mystery which seeks to enlighten the darkness of our own times and even in our own individual lives. This is why there is nothing wrong with commemorating 3 different events on the Feast of the Epiphany (the 3 kings, the baptism in the Jordan, the wedding at Cana). This mystery is necessary, especially if we are to successfully convince the rest of our society that Christmas is indeed more than just one day. The Epiphany, celebrated properly on January 6th, would be a great help in reclaiming the joy of the Christmas season for us, our loved ones, and the entire world.

-Fr. Martin

# THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

## First Reading

Is 60:1-6

Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you. See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; but upon you the LORD shines, and over you appears his glory. Nations shall walk by your light, and kings by your shining radiance. Raise your eyes and look about; they all gather and come to you: your sons come from afar, and your daughters in the arms of their nurses. Then you shall be radiant at what you see, your heart shall throb and overflow, for the riches of the sea shall be emptied out before you, the wealth of nations shall be brought to you. Caravans of camels shall fill you, dromedaries from Midian and Ephah; all from Sheba shall come bearing gold and frankincense, and proclaiming the praises of the LORD.

The word of the Lord.

**R/. Thanks be to God.**

## Responsorial Psalm

Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13

**R/. Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.**

O God, with your judgment endow the king, and with your justice, the king's son; He shall govern your people with justice and your afflicted ones with judgment. **R/.**

Justice shall flower in his days, and profound peace, till the moon be no more.

May he rule from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. **R/.**

The kings of Tarshish and the Isles shall offer gifts; the kings of Arabia and Seba shall bring tribute.

All kings shall pay him homage, all nations shall serve him. **R/.**

## Second Reading

Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6

Brothers and sisters: You have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for your benefit, namely, that the mystery was made known to me by revelation. It was not made known to people in other generations 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.

The word of the Lord.

**R/. Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel

Mt 2:1-12

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." When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, He inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet: And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel." Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage." After their audience with the king they set out. 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. 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**R/. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

# DISCIPLES STAY IN THE KNOW

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## WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE

### Saturday

4:00pm (St. Ambrose Site)

### Sunday

8:30am (Holy Family Site)  
10:00am (St. Ambrose Site)  
11:30am (Holy Family Site)

## OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday, 8:30am - 4:30pm  
**Currently by appointment only.**

*(Office will be closed 12:00pm - 12:30pm for lunch)*

Friday, closed

**(716) 822-5962**

Please consider remembering our parish  
community in your will.

# DISCIPLES STAY ACTIVE

## COMMUNITY DINNERS

If you are interested or would like some more information please contact the parish office at 822-5962 or Mary Anne at 822-1837. Thank you!

Sponsors for the coming weeks include:

- January 8: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
- January 15: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
- January 22: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
- January 29: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

## WEATHER UPDATE

Please note: If Buffalo Public Schools are closed due to hazardous winter weather, there will be NO Daily Mass that day. Please stay safe.

## MISSING KEYS

To all our amazing volunteers...We are missing keys for Holy family and St. Ambrose Worship Sites. If you could all please check if you may have one (or two) laying around and turn them in at the Parish Office.

## A HUGE THANK YOU

We would like to give a HUGE thank you to the Hodgson Russ Charitable Foundation for making a SUBSTANTIAL financial donation to our Community Dinner program. Their generosity and charity helps make it possible to feed the families of our community with dignity, compassion, and love. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

## DEACON ANTHONY BONACCI'S NEW BOOK

'Faith, Family, and Formation' is the title of the new book by the son of the parish, now available online at Amazon and Barnes & Nobles. It is the story of Deacon Anthony Bonacci's physical and spiritual journey from the age of four to his present age of 77. It includes his years at Holy Family School and Bishop Timon High School. The cost is \$12.95, with all net proceeds being donated to local charities.

## NEW PARISH ENVELOPES

Our new church envelopes have arrived! Just like last year, they will not be mailed to your homes any longer. They are available to pick up at the Parish Office (260 Okell St.) during business hours. If you are unable to pick them up during this time, simply call the office and we will leave them in the unlocked vestibule for you to pick up at your convenience. Thank you for your understanding.

## A NEW YEAR PRAYER

Let us live each day in the most loving ways, the God-conscious way. Let us serve all who are in need, regardless of race, color or creed. ... May our year be filled with peace, prosperity and love. May God's blessings shower upon us and bestow upon each of us a bright, healthy and peaceful new year. Amen.

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

From all of our clergy and parish staff, have a safe, joyous, and happy New Year! Even though we can't all be together how we'd like, you and yours are always in our prayers throughout all of 2021. Our Lady of Charity, pray for us!



## SAVE THE DATES



- Un-Decorating our Worship Sites •  
Many hands make light work! All are welcome!  
Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm - Holy Family Site  
Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm - St. Ambrose Site

### • Pot o' Gold •

New this year.....drawing will be at Summerfest this year. Stay tuned for more details!

Don't forget to check out our iconic AM&A's Christmas window display in the center window of the Parish Center. This antique display will be illuminated each night starting at dusk, and will be up until January 10<sup>th</sup>.

# DISCIPLES PRAY TOGETHER

## PRE-BAPTISM SESSION

Before your child's Baptism, parents must virtually attend a Pre-Baptismal instruction class. The next session will be on **Tuesday, January 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm** via Zoom. Please call the office (822-5962) to register. **Parents, remember you must have letters of recommendation from the godparents before the Baptism date can be set.**

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT NDA

Did you know that once your child is registered at Notre Dame Academy you are automatically a member of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)? We have been meeting via Zoom this year. Watch the Notre Dame Academy Facebook page for the link.

Christmas break for NDA begins on Monday, December 21<sup>st</sup> and runs through Friday, January 1<sup>st</sup>. We are back in school on Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>! Be safe!

Do you know anyone looking for a great Catholic School? Please tell them about Notre Dame Academy. Please call 716-824-0726 today. For more information on South Buffalo Catholic School Notre Dame Academy please visit [www.notredamebuffalo.org](http://www.notredamebuffalo.org)

## PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR DEAD

Let us remember all those who have gone before us. May they rest in peace.

## PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK

"MASTER, THE ONE YOU LOVE IS ILL." (JOHN 11:1-2)

Irene Andrzejewski, Irene Barrett, Louise Beamish, Teresa Beamish, Ann Alvira-Buchnowski, Patricia Cajak, Maureen Canney, Cheryl Clontz, Patricia Colern, Caroline Dominesey, Brigid Evans, Vara Jones, Linda Kurcz, Madisyn Ledder, Janet Murray, Karen O'Neill, Maryann Rigby, Sandy Riley, Jane Rozek, Mary Sands, June Stebbins, Ruth White

Daniel Barry, Michael Beyers, Leon Bolick, Owen Chase, Eric Crawford, Vincent Crawford, Frank Czapezyk, Francis Davis, Larry Deskiewicz, Richard Dinnocenzo, Paul Fitzpatrick, Jason Florea, John Godwin, Eric G., Trooper Joseph Gallagher, Emmett Jakubowski, Rob Karr, Pat Kuhn, Robert Maggio, George Rodriguez, The family of Coach Frank Rossi, Jeremiah Smith, Jim Sweeney

**If you have anyone you would like added to the sick list, please contact the Parish Office.**

## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF WORSHIP...

THANK YOU all for your wonderful Christmas cards and gifts! I am so blessed to have you all in my life and please know you are always in my prayers. -Bri

## MASS INTENTIONS

### Sat. / Sun., Jan. 2/3 - Epiphany of our Lord

- SA • 4:00pm  
**Mary & Dave Gattie** (req. by their son, Joe)  
**Robert Strianese, Sr.** (req. by his family)
- HF • 8:30am  
**Kathleen Waterhouse** (req. by her family)
- SA • 10:00am  
**Rosemary Reichmuth** (Birth. Rem., req. by her family)
- HF • 11:30am  
**Thomas Brinkworth** (req. by Dave Corbett & family)

### Mon., Jan. 4 - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

- SA • 8:00am - **Kathleen "Kay" Hillery** (req. by Herbert Hillery & family)

### Tues., Jan. 5 - St. John Neumann

- SA • 8:00am - **Joseph J. Kurcz** (req. by his sister)

### Wed., Jan. 6 - Christmas Weekday

- SA • 8:00am - **Paul Eckert** (Birth. Rem., req. by brother & family)

### Thurs., Jan. 7 - Christmas Weekday

- SA • 8:00am - **In Thanksgiving for a Favor Received** (req. by Priscilla Szczepankiewicz)

### Fri., Jan. 8 - Christmas Weekday

- SA • 8:00am - **Living and Deceased Members of the Driscoll Family** (req. by Jack Driscoll)

### Sat. / Sun., Jan. 9/10 - Baptism of our Lord

- SA • 4:00pm  
**John Verrastro** (Birth. Rem., req. by his family)
- HF • 8:30am  
**The People of the Parish** (req. by Fr. Mock)
- SA • 10:00am  
**Robert Strianese, Sr.** (Birth. Rem., req. by his family)
- HF • 11:30am  
**Carmella Rossi** (req. by Yoga Class)

## SANCTUARY LAMPS

### St. Ambrose Site (January 3 - January 9)

- Robert Strianese, Sr.** (Birth. Rem., req. by his family)

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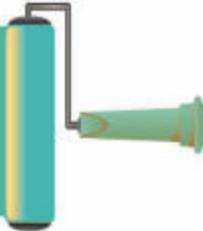
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