

.....and on entering the house they saw  
the child with Mary his mother.  
They prostrated themselves and did him homage  
Matthew 2:11



Anastpaal



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**THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD  
 JANUARY 3, 2021**

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 2**

*Mass of Anticipation for the Epiphany of the Lord*  
 4:00PM William Hart—Memorial

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 3**

*The Epiphany of the Lord*  
 7:30 AM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy  
 9:00AM Thomas Valenti—Memorial  
 10:30AM John "Jack" Donnelly—Memorial

**MONDAY, JANUARY 4**

*St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious*  
 7:30AM Joyce Phipps—Memorial

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 5**

*St. John Neumann, Bishop*  
 7:30AM Jeanne C. Martorella—Memorial

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6**

*Christmas Weekday; St. Andre Besstte, Religious*  
 7:30AM Joe Zaino & Company B—Memorial

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 7**

*Christmas Weekday; St. Raymond of Penafort, Priest*  
 7:30AM Erica Claire Rose—Memorial

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 8**

*Christmas Weekday*  
 7:30AM Lillian E. Healey—Birthday Remembrance

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 9**

*Christmas Weekday*  
 8:30AM Fr. James J. Verdelotti—Memorial

*Mass of Anticipation for Baptism of the Lord*  
 4:00PM Rose Gnadl—Birthday Remembrance

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 10**

*The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord*  
 7:30 AM Josephine & Michael DeNittis—Memorial  
 9:00AM Louis A. Bruno—Month's Mind  
 10:30AM Ray & Edna Levesque—Memorial





Dear Parishioners:

A very Happy New Year! The 19th Century English Poet Alfred Lord Tennyson wrote: "*Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering, 'It will be happier.'*" Tennyson's words express our hope that 2021 might be a happier and better year than in 2020.

We say so long to 2020, the *Annus Horribilis*, and we hope and pray that 2021 might be a year that brings more health, less sickness, more stability, less insecurity, more community, less isolation, more joy, less sorrow.

We begin the new year with the celebration of the great Solemnity of the Epiphany. The word epiphany comes from the Greek *epiphaneia*, meaning "manifestation." An epiphany is a time when something is shown, displayed, or manifested to an audience.

It has come to refer to the feast celebrating the adoration of Jesus by the wise men (Magi) from the East. In the Magi, representatives of the neighboring pagan religions, the Gospel sees the first-fruits of the nations, who welcome the good news of salvation through the Incarnation.

The Feast of Epiphany calls us to contemplate our creation and orientation to our new creation in Christ Jesus. While at first, we are drawn to thoughts of the three gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, Epiphany's true gift is Christ's gift of Himself for our salvation.

Therefore, the three gifts offered by the Magi should only be representations of our gift of self to the Lord. The mystery that the Epiphany of God — his manifestation — is hidden

behind the tiny body of a newborn infant.

Saints and scholars have considered the richness of this mystery. Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, reflecting on this great mystery, in a sermon on the Epiphany, states:

*"What are you doing, O Magi? Do you adore a little Babe, in a wretched hovel, wrapped in miserable rags? Can this Child be truly God? Are you foolish, O Wise Men? Yes, these Wise Men have become fools that they may be wise."*

The universal call to holiness means that the mystery of Christ must become the center of our existence. Our attitude must first and foremost be that of openness to the gift of Christ, an attitude that recognizes the transcendent reality beyond us and sees the world with the eyes of faith. Let us pray for this disposition so that Jesus Christ might become an Epiphany in our own lives.

Perhaps in our prayer and reflection, we might consider what gifts we bring to Christ this coming year? Is it the gift of our time, our devotion, our talent, our treasure? Is it a renewal of faith, a more profound conversion to Christ in daily life, a steadfast commitment to our family, marriage, church, or perhaps merely more acts of charity and mercy?

May the Magi inspire us to give our gifts without counting the cost as we worship and adore Christ in word and deed.

In his annual Message for the 54th World Day of Peace on January 1, 2020, His Holiness Pope Francis reminds us:

*"At a time like this, when*

*the barque of humanity, tossed by the storm of the current crisis, struggles to advance towards a calmer and more serene horizon, the 'rudder' of human dignity and the 'compass' of fundamental social principles can enable us together to steer a sure course.*

*As Christians, we should always look to Our Lady, Star of the Sea, and Mother of Hope. May we work together to advance towards a new horizon of love and peace, fraternity and solidarity, of mutual support and acceptance.*

*May we never yield to the temptation to disregard others, especially those in greatest need, and to look the other way; instead, may we strive daily, in concrete and practical ways, 'to form a community composed of brothers and sisters who accept and care for one another.'"*

As we begin another new year, let us pray and reflect upon the Holy Father's message. May it inspire us to be people and a parish of love and peace, solidarity and fraternity, charity and mercy. May our patroness, Our Lady of Mercy, guide and protect us in 2021!

In the name of Fr. Barrow and Fr. Connors, I assure you of our prayers for a Healthy, Happy, and Holy New Year in 2021 for you and your family. We hope and pray for the end of the pandemic and the peace, health, well-being, security, and prosperity of the world.

Stay safe. Be well. Do good. God Bless 2021!

*Father Healey*

# Ask Father

## What is the Symbolism of the Three Gifts of the Magi?

The Magi were the learned men, the academics, or scientists of their day. We typically have three in our nativity scenes, but in the early Church the actual number of Magi was up for debate. Today we name three Magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar.

A work called the *Excerpta et Collectanea* attributed to St. Bede wrote: "The magi were the ones who gave gifts to the Lord. The first is said to have been Melchior, an old man with white hair and a long beard... who offered gold to the Lord as to a king. The second, Caspar by name, young and beardless and ruddy complexioned... honored Him as God by his gift of incense, an oblation worthy of divinity. The third, black-skinned and heavily bearded, named Balthasar... by his gift of myrrh testified to the Son of Man who was to die."

From St. Bede we see that the gifts are rich in biblical symbolism. "Frankincense and myrrh" are only mentioned together in the Song of Solomon, where they are nuptial perfumes used by Solomon and his bride to prepare for their marriage. Hence to give them to Christ signifies that he will be the Bridegroom King from his birth. "Gold and frankincense" are only mentioned together in the prophecy of Isaiah 60:6 which speaks of a light coming to Jerusalem.

Christ is the light which illumines the world. Taken individually each gift has a prophetic meaning. The gold is a gift for a king, frankincense is a gift for a priest, and myrrh, a burial ointment, is a gift for one who would die. St. Irenaeus in his *Adversus haereses* offered the following interpretation for the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh respectively: King, God and Suffering Redeemer as well as virtue, prayer and suffering.



## Weekly Collection

**December 21, 2020**

Weekly.....	\$6,292.00
EFT.....	\$5,273.00
	<b>Total=\$11,565.00</b>
Outreach.....	\$830.00
Annual Collection (to date).....	\$112,628 .00

**Weekly for December 22, 2019**

Weekly.....	\$15,231.00
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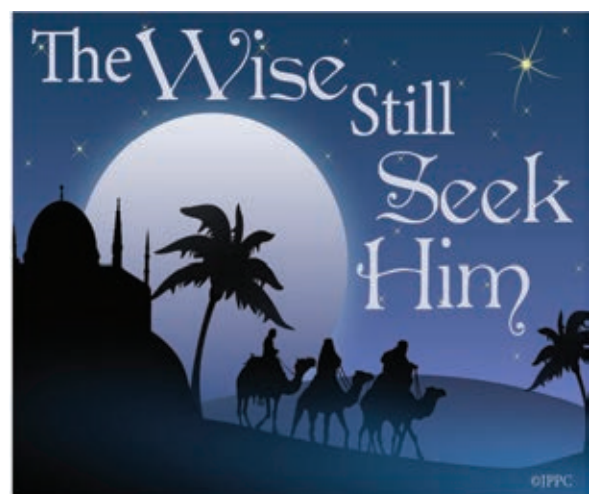
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**Please remember Our Lady of Mercy Church in your will or estate.**



In your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed especially **Dr. George Cooper, John "Jack" Quirk, Joseph Battey, Herbert Underwood, Jr. and Joseph Faherty.**





• **OLM Food Pantry** is always in need of food and paper goods for the members of our local community. Please place all donated non-perishable foods and paper goods in the box in the vestibule of Church or the box on the porch of Mercy House.

• We are always in need of Stop & Shop & Walmart Gift Cards (small denominations only: \$10, \$20 & \$25). Please drop them in the safe located in the vestibule or mail to the parish office.

*Thank you for your support!*

• For information, please contact the OLM Outreach Director, Doug Green at 401-884-4410 or via email at [outreach@olmparish.org](mailto:outreach@olmparish.org)



*Striving to be Saints & Scholars!*

• **Tuesday, January 12:** Weekly School Mass at 9:00am

*Save the Date!!*

**January 31-February 5**

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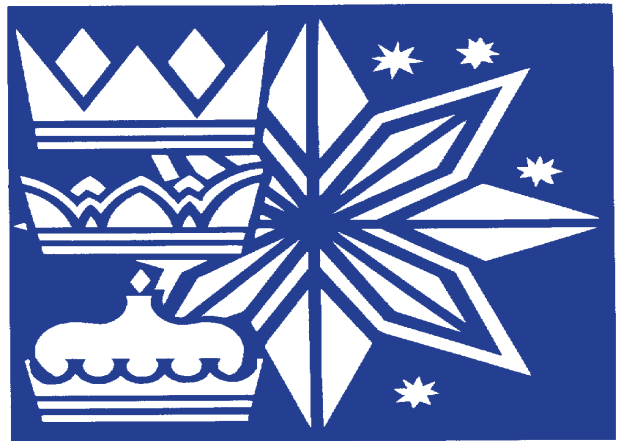


**First Communion & Confirmation Program**  
**Family Mass & Class**

**Sunday, January 17th:** Confirmation Class Mass at 5:00PM followed by Class: "Gifts of the Sacraments". Mass & Class is open only to the members of the OLM Confirmation Class & their families.

**Sunday, January 24th:** First Communion Class Mass at 5:00PM followed by Class: "Sin and Confession". Mass & Class is open only to the members of the First Communion Class & their families.

A BLESSED



EPIPHANY

## Epiphany of the Lord



**T**he solemnity of the Epiphany which celebrates the manifestation of God to humanity began in the Eastern Church in the third century.

Called *Theophany*, it was primarily a feast of the baptism of the Lord, but it also incorporated themes of his nativity, the visit of the magi, and the marriage feast at Cana.

The church of Rome adopted this celebration in the fourth century and focused it on the adoration of the magi since it already had a feast of the Lord's nativity in place.

In the United States, we observe the Epiphany on the Sunday between January 2 and 8, but there are places where it is celebrated as a holy day of obligation on the traditional date of January 6.



Congratulations  
To  
The  
Newly Baptized

Hugh Thomas Lavery,  
and his parents, Jeffrey and Kali

Elizabeth Anne & Victoria Grace Morelli,  
and their parents, Stephen and Elizabeth

*“Dear brothers and sisters: these children, reborn through Baptism, are now called the children of God, for so indeed they are. Through Confirmation they will receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit and, approaching the altar of the Lord, they will share at the table of her Sacrifice, and will call upon God as Father in the midst of the Church.”*

—The Rite of Baptism



*Our Lady of Mercy Parish invites you to join our active Prayer Chain.* The power of pray is tremendous and many successful results have been reported back. Anyone wishing to join the Prayer Chain as a caller, or simply as one who prays for others and their intentions, please call Mary Hart at 884-5629 or email directly at [2hart@cox.net](mailto:2hart@cox.net). *If you know someone in need of prayers due to illness, infirmity, surgery, hospitalization or any serious reason please call us!*

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**#WHATSMYNAME**

In Remembrance of Samantha Josephson

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