

They offered Him gifts of
gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

MATTHEW 2:11





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THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD JANUARY 5, 2019

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4

Mass of Anticipation for The Epiphany of the Lord
 4:00PM Lorraine Kane—Memorial

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5

The Epiphany of the Lord

7:30 AM Patricia Hagerty—Memorial
 9:00 AM Michelle Santagata—Memorial
 10:30AM John “Jack” Donnelly—1st Anniversary
 5:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Church

MONDAY, JANUARY 6

Christmas Weekday; St. Andre Bessette, Religious
 7:30AM Thomas Cavangah—9th Anniversary

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7

Christmas Weekday; St. Raymond of Penafort, Priest
 7:30AM Lillian E. “Dolly” Healey—Birthday Remembrance

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8

Christmas Weekday
 7:30AM Erica Claire Rose—Memorial

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9

Christmas Weekday
 7:30AM Souls in Purgatory

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10

Christmas Weekday
 7:30AM Joe Zaino & Deceased of 248th Company B-Mem.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11

Christmas Weekday
 8:30AM Special Intention
Mass of Anticipation for the Baptism of the Lord
 4:00PM Ellen Simms—Memorial

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12

The Baptism of the Lord
 7:30 AM Kevin F. Healey—Memorial
 9:00 AM Lorraine Kane—Memorial
 10:30AM John Beiermann—3rd Anniversary
 5:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Church





Dear Parishioners:

We are just a few short days into our new 2020 calendar year, and perhaps already any resolutions we might have made for the new year have already fallen by the wayside. We may have realized that it takes more than a solemn pre-midnight declaration to change the course of our lives.

Yet our desire for change and a better future as we leave one year behind and start a new one is perfectly understandable, especially if the year we have left behind has been disappointing, sorrowful, or painful in some way. And without the sense of a need for growth what would our lives be like? What would we be without goals and ambitions to pursue?

Perhaps what does seem a little worrying about our desire for change, and our pursuit of new goals is that so often what we pursue, and the way in which we pursue what we want, very seldom speaks of the faith that we proclaim.

What does it say to others if all we want is materialistic, or vain glory, or if our change is fueled by only greed or avarice? And what does it say to others if our way of reaching our goals is self-satisfaction, egoism and self-centeredness? Anyone can have such goals and ambitions, but surely as Christians we should be pursuing more than simply a self-directed attempt at self-improvement.

We celebrate the great Solemnity of the Epiphany today. The story of the Magi, the wise men, is truly a story of a life changing revelation and encounter with the Word Incarnate, the Christ child.

The Epiphany was the most significant encounter in the lives of the wise men. They lived their lives as men who sought the truth, and they find the very source of that truth in the Christ child. And having paid him homage, and offered him gifts they return to their place of origin by another route, transformed and changed by what they have encountered, taking the message of salvation with them.

The story of the Magi remains an important message for our times. The need to set a different course in our life which so clearly manifests itself at this time of year is an expression of a deeply rooted desire to find fulfilment and meaning. Yet in that search for fulfilment so many things are sought which simply cannot satisfy. And some of the goals and targets can even be damaging to the individual and to others.

Truth seekers will always be restless in their hearts unless they allow themselves to be drawn into an encounter, and then a living relationship, with Christ and his Church. As St. Augustine said: *“Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.”*

If we truly change and redirect our lives then life should no longer simply be a self-directed search for self-improvement, because our encounter with Jesus Christ and our relationship with him and his Church must be the defining influence of lives as Catholic disciples. It is through this encounter, and relationship, with Christ, nurtured by prayer and nourished and sustained by the

Sacraments of the Church, that our quest for happiness, meaning and fulfilment is shaped and guided. And it is by the grace of God that we can be shaped towards the ultimate goal of every human life, which is God himself.

As we celebrate the Epiphany we must pursue an encounter with the Child in the Crib as we turn back to the object of our faith. And having encountered Christ again, and worshipped and adored him, as the wise men did, we should go on our way by a different path, with lives lived in, and through, a growing relationship with the Lord.

The invitation for us on the Epiphany is to reflect on the full meaning of the Christmas Mystery in our lives. And also for us to recognize who it is who has been born for us and to offer a prayer of thanks and adoration for the gift of this newborn King. St. Bruno offers a good way to do this in an Epiphany Sermon from the 11th Century. He writes:

“We offer the Lord gold when we shine in his sight with the light of heavenly wisdom. We offer him frankincense when we send up pure prayer before him, and myrrh when, mortifying our flesh with its vices and passions by self-control, we carry the cross behind Jesus.”

Let 2020 be a year to renew our faith and commit more fully to Christ and His Church. God Bless. Go Pats!

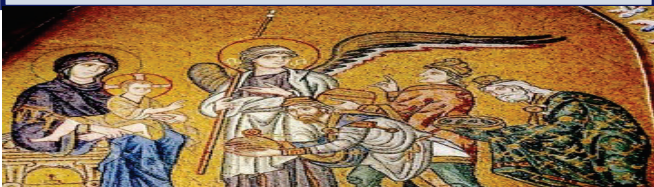
Father Healey



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. Hence 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 22, 2019

Weekly.....	\$12,684.00
EFT.....	\$1,783.00
	Total=\$14,467.00
Outreach.....	\$618.00
Annual (Final).....	\$104,037.00

If you have been away on vacation or visiting another parish, we kindly ask you to please make up your missed budget envelopes. We depend solely upon your weekly support to meet our weekly parish expenses.

**Thank You for Your Support!
May God Bless Your Generosity!**

Please remember Our Lady of Mercy Church in your will or estate.



Second Collections
This Week: Building & Grounds
Next Week: The Church in Latin America



Our Faith, Our Future Goal=\$2,000,000
Pledged To Date=\$1,140,907
Total Number of OLM Parishioners=2,120
Total Number of Pledges=262
Average Pledge=\$4,356





Religious Education
NEWS

•All RE Classes resume this weekend, January 5, 2020! Grades 1-5: 10:00am-11:00am
Grades 6-8: 6:00pm-7:00pm!

Wise Men
Still Seek Him




Outreach
Update

- **OLM Bereavement Group** meets Thursday, January 16, 2020 at 4:00PM in Mercy House. All those experiencing grief or loss are welcome to join us for prayer, discussion and support.
- For more information about OLM Outreach, please contact OLM Outreach Director, Doug Green at 884-4410 or by email at outreach@olmparish.org

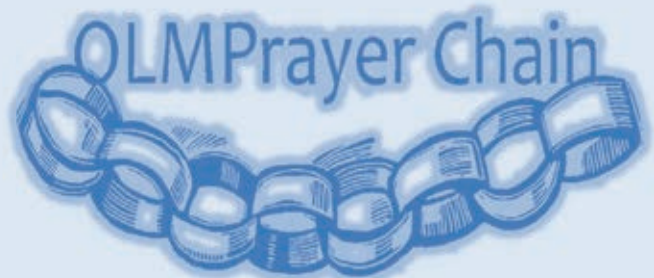


Upcoming Dates To Remember:

- Tuesday, January 7 2020: Weekly OLM School Mass at 8:15am
- Our OLM School Sky Makers Robotics Team will compete in the state championship this Saturday, January 11 at Roger Williams University! *Please pray for their success!*

www.olmschool.org

Striving to be Saints & Scholars!



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.

If you know someone in need of prayers due to illness, infirmity, surgery, hospitalization or any serious reason please call us!

The power of prayer at work!

Epiphany of the Lord



The 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.



This bulletin insert was written by Marion Eagen, a liturgist and musician in the diocese of Scranton, Pa. © 2002 Resource Publications, Inc., 160 E. Virginia St. #290, San Jose, CA 95112, (408) 286-8505. All rights reserved.

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We have partnered with Parish Giving to offer this program to all of our parishioners.

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Parish benefits: Stable monthly contributions and significant reduction of parish administrative costs. **To get started log on to:** <http://www.olmparish.org> and click on the Parish Giving Logo and follow the easy registration steps.

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OLM Rosary Makers Monthly Workshop



**Tuesday, January 14th
9:30 - 11:30 AM
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