



The Epiphany of the Lord

January 6, 2008

They opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

- Matthew 2:11b

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Religious Education classes resume today, for all of the Religious Education classes.

We welcome all of our students and catechists for the New Year.

The 10th grade Confirmation class will have their Confirmation retreat today at the Franciscan Spiritual Center in Aston Pa. Please remember them in your prayers.

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

The date we know as January 6 was established as the solstice in Egypt in 1996 BC, but the Egyptian calendar lost a full day every 128 years. Twenty centuries later the actual solstice had migrated to December 25. People still kept January 6 for the solstice celebration, but December 25, matching nicely with the Roman pagan feast of the Unconquered Sun, launched an extended solstice holiday. By the time of the early church, the whole period of twelve days was celebrated just about everywhere.

Christians began to celebrate Christ as the true light of the world in four themes: the Nativity, the manifestation to the Gentiles, the baptism of the Lord, and the wedding feast at Cana. That was entirely too much for one day to handle. A twelve-day season was ready to be adapted, so Christians borrowed from the pagan calendar for their own season of light. Thus early Christian celebrations of the Christmas season extended from one date for the solstice, December 25, to the older date, January 6. The darkest time in the Northern Hemisphere could now be filled with the Christian observance of the arrival of the Light of the World.

TRUSTEE ELECTIONS

Election of lay trustees will take place after 10:30 today. There are 5 trustees which exercise functions required by Civil Law though the Parish Council is advisory board to the pastor by church law. Trustees are: Pastor (President & Treasurer), Bishop and Chancellor and 2 lay trustees, one of whom is secretary. Present Trustees are Honorable Justice Joseph Walsh & Jean Cates and may be re-elected. All are welcome to attend the meeting.



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PASTOR'S NOTES

Mystery Or Mastery

We live in a world where decisions are made without any reference to the divine. The great temptation is to think that we can be masters of our own lives. And, if we are masters of our own lives, there is no room for mystery, and certainly no room for God.

Our Scripture selections give us two images – one of mastery, the other of mystery. We are presented with Herod and also with the wise men. Herod was absolutely and totally consumed with controlling others. He suspected his wife of being unfaithful to him, and so without so much as a second thought, he ordered his wife Mariamne and her alleged lover to be put to death immediately. He also murdered many other relatives, including his sons Alexander and Aristobolus.

This desire to be master of other people often has its roots in an attitude to life, which says that we need to be the one in charge of everything. We want to control how fast the person in front of us is driving, how long we have to wait in the grocery line, how long we live, how long others should live, who my neighbors will be, who belongs to our clubs and so on and so forth. This desire for power and control can destroy communities, relationships, marriages, parishes – there is very little that escapes its terrible touch.

On the other end of the scale from Herod, we find the wise men. These men were filled with the spirit of wonder and mystery...they were willing to be led into new and unknown territory in their futures. They seemed to be totally free of the need to dominate others. Life was not something to be manipulated. We need mystery more than we need mastery. We are not God. It's that simple and that blatant. When we try to play God, nothing goes right. Our need is to surrender to life as it is, with all of its unknown and absolutely mysterious qualities.

Msgr. Rebman, Fr. Connell, Msgr. Barres, Deacon Lynch, and the staff thank you for the cards, gifts, and acts of kindness they received at Christmas. We wish all parishioners a blessed and healthy New Year and welcome the opportunity to serve you in 2008.

An epiphany is a manifestation. In every age God calls some people to manifest his love for humanity by serving the Body of Christ as priests, deacons, religious men and religious women. If you think God might be calling you, please call or write Father Joe Cocucci, Diocesan Director of Priestly and Religious Vocations (302-573-3113; jcocucci@cdow.org).



Ring in the New Year with Emmanuel Dining Room (EDR)

Why not make volunteering for EDR one of your New Year resolutions? We need volunteers to come to the Family Center on Friday, January 11, at 8 a.m. to help prepare the food. Won't you join us? Call Jeanne Harkin, 610-388-1845, or Ann Hapka, 610-388-1362, if you have questions. Join us and learn about the true spirit of the New Year.

Our cemeteries are beautiful with winter flowers this time of year! However, we will begin to remove holiday decorations the week of February 4th to enable spring preparations. If you'd like to retain your keepsakes, please remove them by then.



Theology on Tap is an interactive program for Catholic young adults and their friends, married or single, in their 20s and 30s. If you're interested in learning about and discussing issues concerning our faith in today's world, in a casual atmosphere, then Theology on Tap is for you! Visit www.cdow.org for an upcoming schedule.

The *Holy Father* will come to the United States with visits to Washington and New York City on a six-day trip which includes an address at the United Nations. The visit is slated for April 15-20. The diocese may be able to secure tickets for stadium masses; however, no information is available yet.

Delaware Energy Assistance Program assists low-income households that need help in meeting the cost of home energy used for heating and cooling their homes. Federal income eligibility standards apply. Both homeowners and renters may receive assistance. Households with elderly and/or handicapped persons may be eligible to submit applications by mail. Benefits are paid to vendors for all heating and cooling sources, including electricity, gas, oil, kerosene, wood, and coal. Although the program is not designed to pay for all heating costs, it does provide an important financial supplement to preserve the health of the family. Heating assistance applications are processed from October 1 to March 31. Assistance for home cooling is provided during the summer months. The Crisis Supplemental component of the program provides assistance to eligible households in an emergency situation. For more information please contact Catholic Charities' DEAP @ 655-9624.

- Saturday (Jan 5)
 - 5:00 p.m. James & Helen Grant & James S. Grant, Jr., requested by his family
- Sunday (Jan 6)
 - 7:30 a.m. Christopher Battaglia by Mom & Dad Parishioners
 - 9:00 a.m. Albert Gervais by family
- Monday (Jan 7)
 - 7:00 a.m. Open intention
 - 12:05 p.m. Gerard P. Kavanaugh, Esq. by Joe & Ann Marie Finch
- Tuesday (Jan 8)
 - 7:00 a.m. Angela Graves by Napolentano family
 - 12:05 p.m. Thomas E. Giblin by Mary & Bob Richert
- Wednesday (Jan 9)
 - 7:00 a.m. Liv. & dec. members of Laffey/McHugh families by Marie Louise McHugh
 - 12:05 p.m. Scott Casassa by M/M Stephen Shearer
- Thursday (Jan 10)
 - 7:00 a.m. M/M George H. Seitz, Jr., by Margaret Seitz
 - 12:05 p.m. Julia Butkus by Elizabeth Snell
- Friday (Jan 11)
 - 7:00 a.m. Open intention
 - 12:05 p.m. Open intention
- Saturday (Jan 12)
 - 8:00 a.m. Open intention
 - 5:00 p.m. Thomas E. Giblin by Gloria Pierce

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*A Warm Welcome
 Little Sisters of the Poor!*

The Little Sisters of the Poor will visit with us on January 13th to tell us of their work with the elderly at the Jeanne Jugan Residence on Salem Church Road in Newark. Please give the sisters your attention and also a generous donation for their work! The Friendship coffee will follow with refreshments. Come join us! Thank you

CHILDREN ARE A GIFT

