

**Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
And
Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord**

Readings for Mary Mother of God

Book of Numbers 6:22-27

Psalm 67

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2: 16-21

Readings for Epiphany

Isaiah 60: 1-6

Ps 72

Ephesians 3: 2-3a, 5-6

Matthew 2: 1-12

I hope you have not put your Christmas Tree out on the curb to be taken away! The Christmas Season continues. It does not end on December 25th. It is just getting started then. Prior to that was the season of Advent that prepares us for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

We speak of the Twelve Days of Christmas. They are the twelve days between Christmas Day, December 25th which is the celebration of Jesus' birth, and the Epiphany, in January, the day Christians celebrate the arrival of the Magi (Wise Men) and the revelation of Christ as the light of the world.

In between we have other feasts. There is the Feast of the Holy Family. As well on January 1st, the secular new year, we celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. That is this week.

In the Catechism (#495) we are taught Mary is the Mother of God. This is based in scripture when Mary's cousin Elizabeth who is the mother of John the Baptist acclaims Mary as "the mother of my Lord." Luke 1:43; John 2:1; 19:25 and Matthew 13:55. The Catechism goes on to say, "In fact, the One whom she conceived as man...was none other than the Father's eternal Son, the second person of the Holy Trinity. Hence the Church confesses that Mary is truly 'Mother of God' (*Theotokos*). The Church formally recognizes this teaching way back in our early days at the Council of Ephesus in the year 431.

The highest feast of the Christmas season is the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. This feast is more important than Christmas Day. Epiphany is the time when something is made known or appears or is seen. In this case Jesus Christ is made known and appears to the world. In this feast we realize God wants all his creatures to see him and moreover to live in harmony.

The passage prescribed for Epiphany from the Prophet Isaiah gives the image of all the nations coming together in harmony. They come around Jerusalem, the holy city of God, "they gather and come to you." God shines his light through Jerusalem and the radiance is attractive to all people. Psalm 72 shows unification between all nations as the leaders come to pay homage to the king (Jesus). What attracts the leaders of nations is that this king rules with justice and peace. He cares for the poor.

In his letter to the Ephesians Paul shows the king unifies all nations. People who were enemies now flow together. All become coheirs even partners in Christ. "...the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel."

In the Gospel story we see insignificant magi come to view an insignificant image of an insignificant family with their child. That is, the Holy Family. The attraction is this king serves the least of the people on earth. And by serving the least of the people on earth Jesus becomes the greatest among men and women and likewise elevates the insignificant place he comes from.

Brothers and sisters, you might view yourself as insignificant. Yet, if you give over to the lowly king, Jesus, you will rise up too. There is hope.

Our earthly lives present many challenges and even hardships. As Christians, however, we are in this world but not of it. We must cope with earthly values that may be contrary to those of the Lord. However, being brothers and sisters through Jesus and therefore being the sons and daughters of God the Father, we are raised up with Jesus. We are loved by the Father as he loves his son Jesus. Sharing in this love God has for us brings a responsibility too.

Each of us must be willing to serve. Like Jesus we who are insignificant must be ready to serve the insignificant. As Jesus' brothers and sisters, we make him visible in this age. Our solidarity in the practice of the Faith makes Jesus appear now. We who are the Church must be in service to the poor and insignificant. Such are the people of God. The "poor" must see the Church is concerned with their lowly situation. The Church must make Jesus appear to them by standing with them as workers or as people with challenges. Merely saying, "I will pray for you" is meaningless when we the Church do not work for better working conditions and pay for the least of us.

As we take steps to make the Lord appear before the world in our own small way, we help build the whole society of humankind. We must reach across racial and cultural boundaries and turn even our enemies into coheirs of the Kingdom. And on the broadest level our nation must build constructive relationships with all other nations of people.

The Solemnity of Epiphany is not merely a nostalgic look back to another age. It is a mandate to bring nations together through diplomacy and projects that make things better for all. If we want Peace in the World we must work for Justice.

So, brothers and sisters, the Christmas Season goes on. It is necessary to celebrate the several Liturgies that go with it. These weeks of celebrations bring out the depth of the relationship God seeks with us as he makes himself seen in our time. Insignificant as we each are one by one, we have the capacity to make a great difference for the good of all nations.

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Scripture Sharing will resume January 12, 2023 @ 7pm.

STEWARDSHIP

Time, Talent, Tithing

It is our way of showing gratitude to God for life itself. It is also your way of being part of the mission and participating in the challenge of spreading the Good News of Love.

Attendance last week: 414
Tithes Collected: \$5,068.00
Online Giving: \$662.00
Total: \$5,730.00
Per Capita: \$13.84

Christmas Tithes: \$12,732.00

The information for weekend of 01/01/23 & 01/08/23 will be in the January 15, 2023, bulletin.

Thank You!

Scripture Sharing will resume Thursday January 12, 2023 @ 7pm.

CALENDAR OF SOME IMPORTANT EVENTS

Stewardship Sundays

January 22, 29, February 5th

Stewardship Recognition Sunday

Someone will be recognized for his or her commitment to Stewardship

Ash Wednesday. February 22nd. Liturgy will be at 7:00pm.

Reconciliation Thursday. February 23rd. A special prayer service and the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be at 7:00pm.

Healing Friday. February 24th. A special prayer service will be held with the Anointing of the Sick at 7:00pm.

Holy Week Begins

Passion Sunday, April 2nd (Usual Weekend Schedule)

Holy Thursday, April 6th at 7pm

Good Friday, April 7th at 7pm

Easter Vigil, April 8th at 8pm

Easter Sunday, April 9th

Masses at 9am and 10:45am

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is the care we take of the gifts we have been given. The primary gifts are those of Time, Talent and Treasure. Within these are found all the other attributes you may find in yourself.

I think of the talents I have been given by God. They are many. I could not decide what course in life I should take. I wanted to do all the things I ever dreamed of. Yet, in the practical sense I could only pick one way in life, one vocation.

However, once I said yes to God all the things, I thought of doing in my lifetime slowly began to unfold for me. By saying yes to God and accepting His call to the priesthood all my talents were put to good use.

Take a good look at yourself. What talents do you have? What gifts stand out to you? How might you put them to use for the glory of God and His people?

You are gifted. You are a unique creation of God. Take care of all that you are and take care of all that is around you. Be a good steward.

Stewardship Days begin January 22nd. Everyone will have the chance to contribute his and her Time, Talent, and Treasure.

Let us join together and make the Lord appear in our world by supporting this parish and beyond

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 31

4:00 p.m. † Djalma Pereira by Family
† Marie Maloku by Rick Simoneau

Sunday, January 1

9:00 a.m. † Daniel Blaha, Jr. by Bill & Chris
Crepage
10:45 a.m. Blessed Sacrament Parish

Monday, January 2

8:00 a.m. NO MASS/OFFICE CLOSED

Tuesday, January 3

8:00 a.m. † Margaret Ritchie by Tom Villano

Wednesday, January 4

8:00 a.m. † Fr. Tom Honold by Parish

Thursday, January 5

8:00 a.m. † Frank Tywoniak by Parish

Friday, January 6

8:00 a.m. Clients of St. Vincent de Paul
Society

Saturday, January 7

4:00 p.m. † Daniel Blaha, Jr. by Barb,
Margot, & Maria
Dave Zury by Joanie

Sunday, January 8

9:00 a.m. † Irene Jordan Kaval by Chris &
Jim Jordan
10:45 a.m. Lacey & Linda Johnson by Joe
& Alora

Monday, January 9

8:00 a.m. NO MASS

Tuesday, January 10

8:00 a.m. † Fr. Tom Honold by Parish

Wednesday, January 11

8:00 a.m. Past & Present Members &
Benefactors of St Vincent de
Paul Society

Thursday, January 12

8:00 a.m. Theresa Symonette by Parish

Friday, January 13

8:00 a.m. Fr. Dennis by Parish

Saturday, January 14

4:00 p.m. The People of the Parish

Sunday, January 15

9:00 a.m. Blessed Sacrament Parish
10:45 a.m. † Frank & Ida Polumbo by Fr. Bob