

# Week of January 7, 2018

## Monday

Is 42:1-4,6-7 \* Ps 29:1-4,9-10 \* Mk 1:7-11

**TUESDAY 8:00am Word/Com**

1 Sm 1:9-20 \* 1 Sm 2:1,4-8 \* Mk 1:21-28

**WEDNESDAY 8:00am Mass**

1 Sm 3:1-10,19-20 \* Ps 40:2-5,7-10 \* Mk 1:29-39

**THURSDAY 8:00am Mass**

1 Sm 4:1-11 \* Ps 44:10-11,14-15,25-26 \* Mk 1:40-45

**FRIDAY 9:00am School Mass**

1 Sm 8:4-7,10-22 \* Ps 89:16-19 \* Mk 2:1-12

**SATURDAY 4:30pm Mass**

1 Sm 9:1-4,17-19; 10:1 \* Ps 19:8-10,15 \* Mk 2:13-17

**SUNDAY 9:30am Mass**

Children's Liturgy of the Word & Nursery

1 Sm 3:3-10,19 \* Ps 40:2,4,7-10 \* 1 Cor 6:13-15,17-20 \* Jn 1:35-42



## Parish Activities

**Mon., Jan. 8 6:15pm Religious Education**

**6:30pm Choir Practice**

**6:30pm Bible Timeline**

**Tues., Jan. 9 10:00am Scripture Study**

**6:30pm RCIA**

**Thurs., Jan. 11 6:30pm Commission Meetings**

**7:30pm Parish Council Meeting**



**NEXT WEEK: Food Pantry**-your donations are appreciated!!!  
Also join your fellow parishioners for **Coffee & Donuts!!!**

**From the Bench** 🎵: Are you a singer? Or do you like to sing? We want you to consider joining the choir! Our practices are on Mondays 6:30-8pm in the Church. January practices will be Jan. 8 & 22, then beginning in February, practices will be weekly in preparation for Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Please consider joining choir! Your time and talent will be appreciated. Questions & answers - call the Parish Office at 662-6861 or Susan LeVasseur at 205-4322.

## Stewardship

Weekly Target: \$11,538.47 \* Offering: \$8,213.25

Christmas Offering: \$1,280.00 \* Religious Retirement: \$75.00

Annual Target: \$600,000 \* YTD July-Dec.: \$296,899.03

**Year-end Statements:** Sometime next week we should be sending out contribution statements for the 2017 year. If we have any "early birds" who are anxious to do their taxes and need the statement of church contributions, you can call Janet, the bookkeeper.

**Children's Good Deeds: My Good Deed was...**

...we donated toys to kids in need.

...helping daddy vacuum.

...I shoveled other people's driveways.

## Adult Formation

**A number of Adult Formation events** are taking place at the Diocesan Center for Ministry in Saginaw in January and February. Detailed information can be picked up at the Café kiosk:

▶ A special Gift for Michiganders: the Spirituality of Blessed Solanus Casey, Sat., Jan. 27

▶ Monthly Catholic Women's Fellowship, Thurs., Feb. 1

▶ Pre-Lenten Retreat: *Mary in the New Testament* with Fr. Bill Taylor, Feb. 9-11

▶ Exploration of the Shroud of Turin with Fr. Jose Cabrera, Sat., Feb. 17

▶ Shroud of Turin Replica Exhibit, various dates & times, Feb. 17-25

## Education/Formation

**Family Talk Time** Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families, Sara McGinnis Lee

Why did people travel from far away to see the baby Jesus?

▶ **Reflecting on the Word:** The presence of the Magi illustrates that Jesus came to heal the world, not just a select group of people. These travelers from afar show just how powerful the message of hope and forgiveness is. God reaches out with love to all people without regard to their country of origin.

▶ **Living the Word:** The Magi navigated by the light of a star - and so invite your family to be in the dark tonight. Notice what it is like to be without artificial light. After your eyes have adjusted, choose one person to be the "star" and light up the room with a single light. See how quickly you can get to them. The person to make it there first will be the next "star" and so on. Spend some time reflecting on how much longer the journey of the Magi was and how exciting it must have been to finally reach Jesus.

**Nourishing Peace in Your Family** Family Faith on the Go, Jan. 2018

**Peace.** That little word holds the key to a better world! Something so important should become part of who we are, of how we think, how we act, how we love. Yet, do we understand the many aspects of peace? One important aspect of our Catholic Social Teaching is the promotion of peace. In the words of Pope St. John Paul II: "*Peace is not just the absence of war. It involves mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations. It involves collaboration and binding agreements.*" There is a close relationship in Catholic teachings between peace and justice. Peace is the fruit of justice and is dependent upon right order among human beings.

**Becoming Peacemakers:**

"*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God*"  
(Mat 5:9)

**As a family:** Pray for peace in the world. Try not to talk negatively about others. Pray for someone who makes you angry. Welcome someone new to your community.

## Auburn Area Catholic School

▶ **We Are Blessed** to have so many thoughtful parishioners, outside organizations and families who support AACs! **THANK YOU** for your support and donations throughout the year!!

▶ **Mark Your Calendar:** AACs will have their **Open House** on Thursday, February 22. This is an opportunity for potential preschool-5<sup>th</sup> grade parents to find out about the great things happening at AACs.

## The Parish in the Community

▶ **Grief Recovery:** Help for those who are experiencing grief through the death of a loved one. A grief recovery process for healing within a safe and supportive environment. These sessions will allow you an opportunity for reflection and sharing lead by a trained facilitator. Six weekly sessions Jan. 16-Feb. 20, first session Jan. 16, 2-4pm at Blessed Sacrament, Midland. To register or for more info, call the Parish Center at 835-6777. There is no fee.

▶ **Nouvel Catholic Central:** "Information Night" for parents interested in enrolling children in Nouvel Elementary (Pre K-8<sup>th</sup>) or Nouvel High School (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>). Tues., Jan. 9, 6pm in the high school cafeteria. The presentation is 20 minutes and will provide information about the schools and our numerous faith filled offerings. We encourage anyone considering Nouvel Catholic Central Schools to attend. Please call 791-4330 or email [tsova@sacschools.org](mailto:tsova@sacschools.org) for additional information.

*May your troubles be less, may your blessing be more,  
may nothing but happiness come through your door!*

**Happy New Year in 2018!**

## Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord

Sr. Mary McGlone, [Celebration](#)

On this 12<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas, we can be challenged by the realization that one theme runs through the nativity stories: Jesus came to the lowly as one of their own. We wax romantic about the stable and swaddling clothes, easily ignoring the very real smell of the shepherds and their sheep and the shocking discomfort portrayed in the story of a homeless couple who had to beg for a safe place for their baby to be born.

Matthew's account of the Magi has much to say to First World people who want to celebrate the season of Christmas. Time and fertile imaginations have added exotic details to the saga of pagan astrologers who left their homeland to seek the newly born king of the Jews. When we get down to the bare facts, we'll find that there are not only no camels, but we don't know the names or even how many people were in the group that showed up in Jerusalem.

The story of the Magi offers a particular witness to First World people today. The Savior came as a lowly one among the lowly and the Magi were wealthy foreigners who paid attention to the signs of their times. Their reading of the heavens focused on a star that signified something important was happening beyond their borders, and they were willing to displace themselves to discover what it might be. They had enough faith to go seeking more. At the same time, they were humble enough to ask for wisdom from tradition that was not their own.

The Magi combined their traditions and Jewish wisdom which led to a deeper understanding about God's activity on Earth. Reading their own tradition led them to seek a great king, their open-mindedness allowed them to discover more. When the star led them beyond the great city to a little town, away from wealth to the bosom of a simple family, they believed in their light more than any preconceived notions about where to find God and greatness. As surprising as it must have been to them and Mary, they did homage to a child and gave their treasure to him.

The Magi remind us that the God of the poor and lowly always invites those with abundance to seek more than we have yet found. They invite us to see new things. Whether by following stars or listening to the angels, the Magi remind us to seek God beyond our own preconceptions and expectations, and to always look for God among the poor and lowly.

## Traditions Input

[Connect](#)

Artists probably have had more influence on our understanding of the story of the Magi than has Matthew the Evangelist. Painters have shown us that there were three kings, one of them often dressed like a Muslim. Many depictions include one black king and some artists have portrayed them as representing youth, adulthood and the elderly. The hymn "We Three Kings," the first widely popular Christmas carol written in the United States, has helped to cement the interpretation of the gifts they brought as gold for Christ as king, incense for his divinity and myrrh as a sign of his future suffering. The notion that their names were Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar began some 500 years or more after the birth of Jesus along with the legend that they came from Persia, India and Babylonia. All of those ideas have their place in popular piety and thus real evangelical worth even though they are not part of Matthew's story.

When we look to Matthew's text, we find none of those details fully corroborated. The assumption that there were three is based only on the fact that Matthew named three gifts – offerings which could have come from the hands of two people or a whole caravan which included

women and children. Matthew did speak of the Magi in the plural, so we know he intended us to think of more than one person, but he does not indicate what the gifts symbolized nor does he name the visitors or their places of origin except to say that they came from the east.

## Epiphanies

Rev. Lawrence Mick, [Celebration](#)

In most years, the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the Sunday after Epiphany. But when Epiphany is celebrated after January 6, as it is this year, the feast of the Baptism is observed on the Monday after Epiphany which falls on January 8.

This might be a good year to remember the Epiphany feast once celebrated three different epiphanies of Jesus Christ: The visit of the Magi, which revealed him to the nations; the baptism in the Jordan, when the Father revealed him as God's servant; and the wedding at Cana, where he performed the first of his miracles in John's Gospel.

Thinking of these three epiphanies together reminds us that the focus of the Epiphany is about much more than a thrilling tale of Magi from the east and Herod's jealousy. It is really a feast to celebrate the truth that Christ came to save the whole world. That might be an especially important reminder in this age when so many people treat immigrants and refugees as less than human. It is especially poignant when we realize that many of the world's refugees today are huddled in the same part of the world where the Magi traversed.

## The Gifts

Jim Auer, [Celebration](#)

Gold, frankincense and myrrh were not random items that the Magi happened to have in their saddlebags. In Matthew's story, they are prophetic statements. Gold, a gift given to royalty, says, "This child is a king." Incense, used in prayer, says, "This child is divine." Myrrh, a burial spice, says in the words of the old spiritual, "I wonder as I wander out under the sky, how Jesus the Savior did come for to die." At the time, Jesus certainly did not look royal, divine or on his way to death. Nor did he look that way for most of his life. We, who have heard and read the story, know with faith that he was. We're so lucky. So very lucky.

## How Wide Our View

[Celebration](#)

In this time of increased nationalism, erecting barriers, and labeling others as threats or enemies, this feast calls us to a powerful counter-message. Our field of vision and inclusion must be much larger than that of the status-quo. It must have been shocking to learn that God's love extended not only to the Gentiles, but to the whole world. It may be equally shocking to realize that our boundaries are also too narrow. This feast is an epiphany about God's will for Christ's impact and ours on the world.

**'Lord, let your light  
shine through me.'**

