

JANUARY 3, 2016 – THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

PARISH STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Simone Volavola, M.S.C.

Parochial Vicar: Rev. Tony Ripp, M.S.C.

Deacon: Ernest D'Angelo

Dir. of Religious Education: Donna Sciacca

Parish Secretary: Rebecca Tirpock

PARISH SPIRITUALITY

Saturday Vigil Mass: 5:00pm

Sunday: 8:00am & 10:30am

Mon - Thurs: 8:35am / **Friday** 9:00am

Holy Days: 9:00am & 7:30pm

CONFESSION

Saturdays 4:15pm - 4:45pm or anytime by appointment.

REGISTER: Please register when you move into the parish. This is an opportunity to become acquainted with our faith community and to experience the joy of being part of the Church. Only registered parishioners, in good standing, can receive a Certificate of Eligibility to act as a Godparent or sponsor.



BAPTISMS: The Sacrament of Baptism is administered on the fourth Sunday of every month at 11:30 a.m. Parents are encouraged to invite family members to the 10:30 Mass as the Sacrament of Baptism takes place immediately following the Mass. Parents and Godparents meet for an enrichment class prior to the Baptism. You will need to call the Parish Office to register for this class. A Godparent must be a committed, practicing Catholic, and if from another parish, must have a certificate of eligibility from his/her pastor. This certificate should be brought to the enrichment class. A Christian of other denominations may serve as a Godparent along with a practicing Catholic.



MARRIAGE: Couples planning marriage are expected to attend Pre-Cana Conferences and to meet with the parish priest several times leading up to the marriage. The period of preparation time required is six months unless approved otherwise by our Pastor.



ANOINTING OF THE SICK: Please call the rectory at any time for the Sacrament of the Sick. Also the Holy Eucharist will be brought to the sick and shut-ins upon request to the Parish Office. We celebrate a Communal Anointing of the Sick in June, near the *Feast of St. John the Baptist*.

Masses for the Week of January 4 - 10, 2016

Morning Prayer in St. Joseph Chapel, Mon – Fri at 8:15am

Monday, Jan. 4

8:35am (chapel) Ellen Wiberly (The Rogers Family)

6:30pm (church) PREP Mass

Tuesday, Jan. 5

8:35am (chapel) Francis Ivicic (Pyatt Family)

6:30pm (church) PREP Mass

Wednesday, Jan. 6

8:35am (chapel) Arlene Mancharik (Loving Family)

Thursday, Jan. 7

8:35am (chapel) Fran Torgerson (Mike & Collette Kirk)

Friday, Jan. 8

9:00am (church) Joe Scullin (Kaucher Family)

Saturday, Jan. 9

5:00pm (church) Joseph Heron (The Ott Family)

Sunday, Jan. 10

8:00am (church) Parishioners' Intentions

10:30am (church) Bob Pio (Schmerbeck Family)

Meetings for the week of Jan. 4th – 10th

Mon. Jan 4: PREP Classes resume, 6:15pm – School

Conquest, 6:45pm – School

Knights of Columbus, 7:30pm – Marian Room

Tues. Jan. 5: PREP Classes resume, 6:15pm - School

Thurs. Jan. 7: Baptism Enrichment Class, 6:30pm–Parish Office

Sat. Jan. 9: Men of Faith, 8am – Marian Room

Sun. Jan. 10: Teen RCIA, 11:45am – Marian Room

Mass Collection

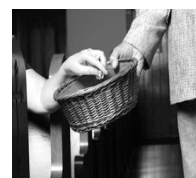
Sunday, Dec. 20, 2015

\$ 6,216.00

Sunday, Dec. 27, 2015

Not Available at press time

Thank you for your generosity!



SJB Cleaning Team for the week of January 4th is Team # 2:

Joyce Melchiorre, Peg Trouts, Jean Wurster,

Terri DeVenuto

Your parish thanks you!



For those who may have difficulty hearing:

Today's READINGS may be found in section 878 of the *JourneySongs Missal* book in your pew.

Gospel Reflections

A Letter from Our Pastor, Father Simi



Dear brothers and sisters,

***They were overjoyed at seeing the star,
and on entering the house
they saw the child with Mary his mother.
(Matthew 2:10-11)***

Today we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord. On this day, we focus our attention on God's revelation of Himself to us in Jesus, Son of Mary. Jesus, Star of Bethlehem, Light to the nations.

In today's gospel, we see how all of creation come together to not only witness its Creator born to Mary in a stable, but to pay homage to Him, to worship Him, to lay down their lives for Him. The star, the prophets of the Old Testament, the magi, Satan, Herod, all align to serve the fulfillment of the promises of the Father to us.

His promises which were made from the very beginning to a fallen world, a world that has fallen to the dust to serve the will of serpent who was cursed to the dust, is now being fulfilled: I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; They will strike at your head, while you strike at their heel. (Genesis 3:15)

From the dust, our Father was going to raise us, beginning with a woman and her offspring. The woman and her offspring have come! They are in the stable. Matthew in today's gospel proclaims this truth, this good news to the whole world through this story of the magi.

The magi were non-Jews. They represent all of us. The promises made by God in the beginning were made to all of Eve's children, to the whole human race. God's promises are fulfilled for all His creation, living and dead, visible and invisible in the woman and offspring of Matthew's gospel read to us today: They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. (Matthew 2:10-11)

So today, we too rejoice at the sight of the woman and her offspring. Like the magi, we too prostrate ourselves to the ground and worship the Baby born of Mary. The little child, vulnerable and completely dependent on the woman He Himself has created and chosen, is the One for whom the Father made the promises, and through whom the Father is fulfilling the promises.

What implications does this epiphany have on our lives today? God is still fulfilling His promises for us too today. He is still restoring to us His own image and likeness, the likeness of His own eternal goodness, beauty and truth. In other words, He is still filling us with the brightness of His divine life, the life that the star of Bethlehem was a symbol of.

Yes, you and I, your spouse, your children, your relatives, strangers, and even your enemies both foreign and domestic, were meant to be stars. God promised that He will make them bright shining stars again, and He keeps His word.

God fulfills this promise in His Son. Mary is the first and brightest star whom the Son has lit the heavens and the earth with. Mary is that bright star whom the baby Jesus has first lit up the dark night of Christmas with.

Mary is the first disciple that the baby Jesus has chosen to lift Him up and present Him to the world. Mary has become to the magi and the whole world the first apostle whom the Baby Jesus chooses to proclaim Him to the world.

Jesus is the Father's eternal Star: God from God, Light from Light. This same Bright Star was promised to enter and light up each and all of our lives. Mary is that first life, that first creature in whom and from whom Jesus the Bright Star will shine.

The mystery of our salvation from Satan and his darkness; the mystery of our receiving the Light of Christ within each of our lives does not take place without Mary. Mary pray for us, that like you, and with you, we too may radiate the life of your Son in us to all the world.

Father Simi

The Season of Epiphany

Epiphany means "manifestation" or "revelation" and during this season, we see Christ as revealed to the whole world.

It is a time for rededicating ourselves to our own ministries and our missionary task – to continue the spread of Jesus' light in the world. Just as the disciples were called, we received our calling or vocation as Christians through our baptism.

At baptism, every Christian is called into ministry. Simon Peter's call is the call of every Christian: "Follow me." Christians are to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church. How do I live out my ministry?

P R E P



Chalking Our Homes on the Epiphany of Our Lord

This short liturgy is a way of marking our homes, usually at the front or main entrance, as we ask God's blessing upon those who live, work, or visit throughout the coming year. We mark our doors with chalk as a sign that we have invited God's presence and blessing into our homes. Chalk is used in this service as an ordinary substance made of common elements of the earth. As its image fades from view over time, those who participated in its original placement will remember it and the purpose for which it was intended. In doing so, they may rededicate themselves to that purpose.

Leader: Peace be to this house and to all who enter here. A reading from Proverbs: "By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures."

Let us pray: "Gracious God, as a shining star once guided the magi to the birthplace of the infant Jesus, so enable those who dwell here to be your light in the world; through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen."

Using chalk, people are invited to inscribe the lintel of the home (the horizontal frame above the door) with the inscription shown below. Each person takes a turn to make one or more of the marks:

20 + C + M + B + 16

The numbers at the beginning and end of the inscription simply refer to the current year – in the picture above, 2016. The letters C M B come from the traditional names for the three kings: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. *Some also suggest "Christus Mansionem Benedicat" which means, "May Christ bless this dwelling!"*

Leader: A reading from Isaiah: "The effect of righteousness is peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and quiet places."

Let us pray: Sovereign God, we pray that you will bless this home and all who live here with your gracious presence, that your love may be our inspiration, your wisdom our guide, your truth our light, and your peace our benediction; through Jesus Christ we pray. Lord, remember your children and teach us to pray:

All: Our Father...

Leader: May the Lord watch over us as we leave and enter from this time forth and forevermore.

All: Amen. People may make the sign of the cross in remembrance of their baptism.



The Regina Academy at
St. John the Baptist
4040 Durham Road, Ottsville, PA 18942
Ph: 610-847-5523 www.sjbottsville.org

School Resumes tomorrow, Monday, Jan. 4, 2016

School Headmaster: Mr. Michael Patterson
Dir. of Institutional Advancement: Geoff Meyer

FATIMA HOUSE RETREAT CENTER, Bedminster, PA

Join us in Praying for Vocations & World Peace

Weekly Prayers

Mondays at 7pm in Our Lady's Chapel: Adoration, Liturgy of the Hours, Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet

Wednesdays at 9:30am in Our Lady's Chapel:

Adoration, Liturgy of the Hour, Rosary, Divine Mercy Hours, Chaplet

Every 3rd Sunday at 12-1pm in Our Lady's

Chapel: Adoration, Prayers for vocations to the Priesthood

For information or directions, call Joan Black at 215-795-2947.



How service fits in with our faith? Just because we do



good works, does not increase our chances of getting into heaven. Jesus has already redeemed us by his death on the cross and has given us grace for

our sins. Doing service is a way to live out our faith, help others and take care of the world that God blessed us with.

The Corporal Works of Mercy & Spiritual Works of

Mercy are great guides to teach us how to be concerned with others in need. Where in the Bible are these?

Remember one of the greatest commandments? ***"You shall love your neighbor as yourself"*** (Matthew 22:35-40), also called the Golden Rule. In addition, it coincides with the **Beatitudes in Matthew 5:7** (Blessed are...). In Matthew 25:34-46, Jesus tells us to practice the first 6 Corporal Works of Mercy: "...For I was hungry, you gave me food; I was thirsty, you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me... as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." In addition, we should instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, admonish sinners, bear wrongs patiently, forgive offences willingly, comfort the afflicted and pray for the living and the dead.

Contact Emily Litzenberger through the parish office if you would like to join our parish Youth Group.



**JANUARY 2016: Jubilee Year of Mercy
Jesus Christ, Mercy Incarnate**

What is mercy? It is “heartfelt sympathy for another’s distress.” Mercy is a generous readiness to help others even if they have brought their troubles on themselves. Even more, mercy is loving compassion that is willing to forgive insults and injury.

God is just, but we have the courage to ask him to help us in our misery and forgive us our trespasses because we know that he is “slow to anger and abounding in mercy” (Psalm 103:8).

God does not treat us as our sins deserve, but invites us to repent and assures us of his willingness to forgive.

As disciples of Jesus Christ who is “Divine Mercy incarnate,” we have confidence in God’s mercy. Jesus fed the hungry, healed the sick, drove out demons, and raised the dead. He sought out sinners, ate with them, and offered them forgiveness and new life in his kingdom. In parables, Jesus taught that the Father’s mercy exceeds all expectations and is bestowed on the most unlikely candidates. Jesus’ words were confirmed by his deeds. The Son of God assumed not only our flesh, but our burdens, our pain, and our sins. He took our part and our place, and freely laid down his life on the wood of the cross to redeem us. He displayed the astonishing mercy of God who “did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all” (Romans 8:32).

Jesus admonishes us: “Be merciful just as your heavenly Father is merciful” (Luke 6:36). -Sr. Sara Butler, MSBT

How to Live It

This month, spend time prayerfully reading the Gospel of St. Luke, placing yourself in each of the stories. Listen to what Jesus says as if spoken to you and attend to his actions as if addressed to you. Allow Christ’s presence in the Word of God to transform your thinking and acting so as to more closely imitate Christ’s merciful love.

Quote from Catholic Tradition

“In this way the cross of Christ, on which the Son, consubstantial with the Father, renders full justice to God, is also a radical revelation of mercy, or rather the love that goes against what constitutes the very root of evil in the history of man: sin and death. The cross is the most powerful condescension of God to man...The cross is like a touch of eternal love upon the most painful wounds of man’s earthly existence...” —Pope St. John Paul II, *Dives in Misericordia* 8

**5th Annual Fertility Care Appreciation
Mother-Daughter Tea**

Saturday, February 6, 2016

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Our Lady of Czestochowa

654 Ferry Rd, Doylestown, PA

Mothers of daughters from 10 to 13 years of age! Join us for this special afternoon to explore your human fertility as it is meant, a powerful and precious gift from God. The purpose of this program is to provide an atmosphere of love and learning to discuss the important topic of growing up and beginning to establish a foundation for continued communication between parents and their children, particularly mothers and their daughters. Don’t Miss our “Looks for Real Beauty” & Fashion, where your daughters can see what they wear makes a difference, mom & daughter guided discussion and a Q&A session. You and your daughters will hear from a health care professional trained in the Creighton Model FertilityCare System and an experienced, young, energetic speaker will talk about practical and empowering tips on modesty. Both emphasize respect, understanding and appreciation for God’s gift of fertility. There will be light refreshments and take home resources for mothers to share with their daughters when they believe they are ready.

Registration Special: \$15 per participant until JANUARY 23, 2016. After 1/23/16: \$20 per participant. Day of Event: \$25 per participant.

For more information, contact:

Liz Parrish, RN, CFCP (Certified FertilityCare Practitioner)
fertilitycareservices@comcast.net • 215-249-9829

Register online at: www.fertilitycarefriends.org

(Click on events).

**MARCH
FOR LIFE | 2016**

**January 22, 2016
Washington, D.C.**

It has been said — politically and culturally — that for one to be pro-woman one must be pro-choice. But nothing could be further from the truth. The truth is that life is the empowering choice for women. Abortion harms women, and affects our society as a whole, in so many ways.



The Knights of Columbus are once again sponsoring a charter bus departing directly from St. John’s. Suggested Seat Donation is \$20.00 per person to help defray some of the cost. If you are interested in reserving a seat, contact a Knight or place your name & contact info on their sign-up sheet in the Narthex at the pro-life table.

You may also leave a message for Kathy Fetter through the parish office.

JANUARY 3, 2016 – THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Please remember in your prayers our parishioners who are sick, homebound, in the hospital, under hospice or residential care.



Susan Ackerman, Rose Marie Alex, Lillian Appleman, Mary Balbirer, John & Loretta Bodisch, Emmalee Bryan, Libby Chapman, Anne Colyer, Charlene Cornell, Matthew Crance, Jim Crawford, Chrissy Davis, Joy Davis, Glenn DeKutowski, Larry & Joanne Diehl, Terry Dunn, Arlene Eichlin, Josephine Fasano, Bernice Fees, Charles Fees, Jr., John Finn, Patricia Fite, Sarah Fleck, Nancy Fratrik, Mary Gallo, Kathleen Gaughan, Dylan Geroni, Kathy Geroni, Marie & Rosalyn Giardullo, Anna Giebler, Susan Gross, Mary Halwski, Florence Hancharik, Bill Hejnor, Joyceann Heley, Charles Houston, Anna Jesiolowski, Martha Juchnowicz, Donald B. Knight, Georgine Kocher, Anthony Kondracki, Deanna Kovner, Myron Kressman, Ryan Leven, Kathy Lightkep, Charles Lutcavage, Julia Maher, Loretta Malloy, Adelaide McElderry, Bridget Julia McHugh, Michelle McNevin, Anne McNichol, Emma Michael, Joseph Moore, Jennie Moreno, Nancy Moreno, Lorraine Mosolgo, Wanda Muth, Frances Nowicki, James O'Hanlon, Gary Palmer, Nicholas Powell, Gladys

Proca, Marianne Przyuski, Don Raman, Mike Ramos, Rachael Rice, Gregory Rickert, Valerie Roberts, Sandy Romaszewski, Sam Rothman, Frederick R. Rude, Kelsey Russell, Dolly Rutherford, Zina Sauerwine, Lana Schell, Andrew & Florence Schroker, Joe Shuman, Mary Jane Shuman, Gail Silveira, Joseph Simkanin, Baby Ella Stack, Carolyn Stahley, Shane Stroup, Michael Suder, Sean Thatcher, Baby William Patrick Thomas, Maddie Tomaszewski, Douglas & Frank Toner, Barbara Vogan, Diane Wesoski, Tamara Widmer, Betty Wismer, Edward Wismer, Baby Logan Yoder.

Fionna M. Boyle, Derek Brosius, Christopher Brune, Kyle



Crossland, Casey de Lauretis, Steehly de Lauretis, Michael Froeder, A.J. Giovino, Aaron Given, Bob Hankinson, Victor Hormilla, Stephen Lindmeier, Jason Litschauer, Cory Litzenberger, Dan O'Connor, Jonathan Pucci, Dusty Rhodes, Craig Russell, Don Valdez, Justin Walsh.

Thank you for serving & protecting our freedoms.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE 2016

January 9th & 10th – The Baptism of the Lord

	Extraordinary Minister	Lector	Altar Server	Music
Saturday, 5:00pm Jan. 9, 2016	Joe Cegielski Dorothy Cegielski Lynn Gammello Marion Wolf	Melissa Johnson	James Gammello Mead Grindrod Luke Grindrod	Susan Middleton Karen Parash
Sunday, 8:00am Jan. 10, 2016	Mark Fetter Kevin Murphy Weez Roney Joel Roney	John Zdanowicz	Grace McArdle Maggie McArdle Violet Williams	Denny L/Tom H Sue Rogers
Sunday, 10:30am Jan. 10, 2016	Joan Black Phil Donahue Patricia Ott Donna Sciacca	Jonathan Ott	Aiden Blaikie Kaelin Costello Maria Middleton	Choir Sue Rogers