

PARISH STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Selvaraj Lucas, M.S.C.
Parochial Vicar: Rev. Tony Ripp, M.S.C.
Finance Manager: Carolyn Marchese
Dir. of Religious Education: Donna Sciacca
Parish Office Manager: Donna Sciacca
Parish Secretary: Rebecca Tirpock
Bulletin Editor/Webmaster: Donna Sciacca

MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil Mass: 5:00pm
Sunday: 8:00am & 10:30am
Mon- Fri: 9:00am
Holy Days: 9:00am & 7:30pm

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

Register in the Parish: Please contact the parish office to register when you move into our parish.

Certificates of Eligibility: Issued to registered parishioners, 16 yrs. and older, received all of their Sacraments of Initiation, attend MASS regularly at St. John's, and receive the sacraments of Communion and Penance often.

BAPTISMS: The Sacrament of Baptism is administered on the fourth Sunday of every month. Sacrament of Baptism



takes place immediately following the 10:30am Mass. Parents and Godparents must attend 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 provide a *Certificate of Eligibility* from their pastor. A Christian of other denominations may serve as a Godparent along with a practicing Catholic.

MARRIAGE: A Saturday Mass for the Sacrament of Matrimony may be celebrated no later than



1pm. Couples planning marriage are to contact the parish office & schedule a meeting with our wedding coordinator no later than 6 months in advance of the wedding. Shorter preparation periods must be approved by our Pastor. Couples will meet several times with the Pastor throughout the preparation process. Couples are to attend a Pre-Cana program approved 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*.

Mass Intentions

Week of January 4 - 10, 2021
Daily Mass Monday – Friday at 9am

Monday: Tom High (*Lisa Simkanin*)

Tuesday: Carmen Misiti (*The McCords*)

Wednesday: Ed Pentecost (*Tim & Marie Burke*)

Thursday: Avery Hobson (*Rich & Joanne Maschi*)

Friday: Rom Maisenhalter (*Tony & Janet Souza*)

Weekend Masses

Sat. 5pm: Joseph Cassel (*Lisa Simkanin*)

Sun. 8am: Parishioners' Intentions

Sun. 10:30am: Intentions of Bill Saxton (*Jim & Joan Black*)

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

During this time of heightened caution against the spread of the virus, the Parish Office will remain **Closed to Walk-In Service**. Please call ahead to schedule an appointment.

Due to advance holiday press dates, reporting of our Mass Collections will appear at a later date.

Dec. 13th: Envelopes \$5,196.00
Parish Giving \$2,878.00

Thank you for your generosity

FATIMA RETREAT HOUSE

Bedminster, PA

"A Quiet Country Retreat"

Offering Day Retreats for groups up to 50
Overnight Retreats for groups up to 8

Monday, 7pm

Adoration & Prayers

Wednesday, 9:30am

Adoration & Prayers

3rd Sunday, 12pm

Adoration & Prayer for Vocations

1st Saturday, 10am

Rosary, Confession, Mass

Followed by Lunch



Call Joan Black for directions, reservations, or more info
at 215-795-2947.

The Visit of the Magi

In this Christmas season what might the wonders of the Epiphany event be in our lives?

What can we learn from the details of the journey of the wise men, the guidance they sought, the questions they asked, the gifts they brought to Christ and finally the decision they made to return to their home country by a different route?

The feast of the Epiphany is celebrated in the Christmas season and through Matthew's Gospel we become aware of the visit of the wise men or Magi who come in search of the Christ child so that they might present their gifts. It is interesting that in the homily of an early saint and bishop he preached that "this feast of the Epiphany manifests even more wonders than the feast of Christmas." This is a bold statement but nevertheless this event in scripture raises great curiosity about its details.

The identity of the Magi begins with the fact that they come from the East. It is not clear if they are from one location in the Orient or from several. We also see from scripture that we do not know exactly how many there were. This is where tradition begins to take over from scripture and we see them depicted as being three in number, coinciding with the gifts which they brought gold, frankincense and myrrh. They are also traditionally pictured as being black, white and brown in representation of all the peoples of the earth.

The reference to their being wise is also assumed to mean that they were astrologers and thus familiar with searching the stars of the heavens for meaning and direction in life. This also suggests that they were themselves pagan and unbelievers in the mysteries of God. Other traditions also referred to them as the "Three Kings" who were coming to give homage to the "infant King of the Jews".

In this journey they first come to King Herod with questions which he could not answer and so he turns to the chief priests and scribes to learn that scriptures had foretold of such an event and that the Christ "would be born in Bethlehem of Judea". With this new insight from scripture the wise men continued to follow the familiar sign of the star until it halts in front of the place where the child was. As their gaze comes to rest upon the child with his mother Mary they fall on their knees and give him homage. They offer gifts not to an infant king but to one who was God.

*The word **Epiphany**" and these events recorded in Matthew's Gospel have come to mean a manifestation or a showing forth of the Christ-child to*

the nations. It reveals how God enlightens the hearts of all people and how he helps them to discover his revelation, to search out this Truth and to be faithful to it. The journey of the wise men begins as a search for Truth through the simple observation of nature.

The use of our human reason in the search for Truth continually poses questions about the origins of life, the universe, the nature of the human person and the search for God or ultimate meaning. In many ways it is the journey of humanity in all of the ages. There is no doubt that our present society is a generation of seekers.

The irony is that in the shadow of this experience of searching it seems that many parts of our world desire to do this without reference to God.

The wise men are a model of humility in the face of the search for Truth. They seek the guidance of scripture and enter into dialogue with the chief priests and the scribes. It is this gift of faith and its insight into Truth which was essential for the wise men on their final leg of their journey. They did not abandon the star and the use of their reason for it also directed them to Bethlehem. At the end of their searching the gift that they received was the gift of faith in God and this was acknowledged and symbolized by the act of falling on their knees before Christ.

The gifts that the Magi present to the Christ child have also received the interpretation of tradition. St. Leo refers to them as, *symbolic gifts which bear witness to the Truth: incense for God, gold for the king, myrrh for the one who is to die. They point to the belief that the fullness of Truth is revealed in Jesus Christ. That he is the son of God, he proclaimed the fullness of God's kingdom and that he was the Savior who was to die.*

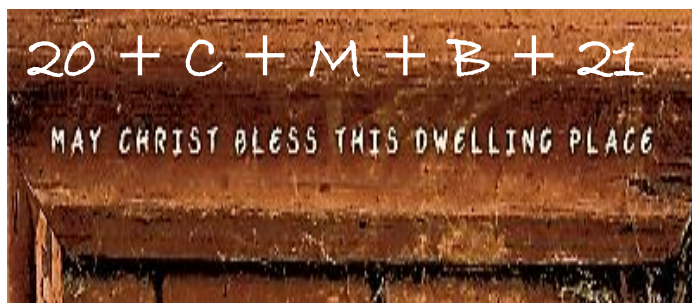
The Magi's gift of faith is also witnessed in their act of worship. In falling to their knees this not only becomes a sign of faith, but an active sign of worship and the demonstration of their faith. The Magi provide for us a reminder that our worship and belief in God is not simply a private matter but one in which we express through the act of giving of witness and of offering our gifts to God and others.

In Christmas when we see this witness of faith in others it is an opportunity for us to receive this gift through the gathering of the people of God in Church. The celebrations of the Advent and Christmas season provide for each of us opportunities to express our belief and worship of God but to experience and receive the gift of faith that we see in the lives of our brothers and sisters.

(Excerpt from a reflection by Bishop William McGrattan)



Epiphany Door Chalking Tradition Continues



The ancient Catholic Epiphany practice of “**chalking the doors**,” is a tradition that dates back centuries, signifying their homes are homes where Christ lives. Usually, families gather around the front door of the home, saying a prayer before a family member makes a mark on the lintel or doorpost of the home. The family member then passes the chalk to another member of the family to make the next mark.

The traditional markings of “CMB” refer to the names of the three Wise Men who visited the Holy Family at the Nativity **Caspar; Melchior and Balthasar** who gifted the infant Jesus with gold, frankincense and myrrh. “CMB” is also an abbreviation of the Latin phrase ***Christus mansionem benedicat***, which translates to “May Christ Bless this home.” The numbers preceding and following symbolize the year, with crosses in between.

Chalking the doors draws similarities with the celebration of the Feast of Passover. In Exodus, the Israelites marked their doors with blood so that the Lord would pass over their homes; but in this service, we mark our doors with chalk as a sign that we have invited God’s presence and blessing into our homes.

In Deuteronomy 6:9 God tells the people of Israel: *“These words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house... You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”*

Chalking the door is a tangible way to honor God in our lives.

Holy water is also used to sprinkle the house during the blessing which reminds us of our Baptismal call to live and love in witness to the Gospel.

When the blessing of a home is done, we are proclaiming Christ in the world, a sign to all who come through this door that this home is a home for Christ.

Chalking the door to our home serves as an outward sign of our faith. This beautiful ritual to share with family and friends also becomes an opportunity to speak to others about Christ and His Church.

May this inscription remind us of the brightness of our Christmas throughout the New Year and serve as an inspiration for us to create “the world that Christmas promises.”

The best day to chalk the doors is on the Feast of the Epiphany or as close to Jan. 6th as possible.



THE REGINA ACADEMY
at ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
Knowing ~ Loving ~ Serving

The Faculty, Staff and Board of Directors of the Regina Academy at St. John the Baptist look forward to welcoming back our students and families in the New Year.

May each day of this New Year draw us closer to Our Lord, Jesus Christ as we continue to praise, worship, and serve him.

Full time, in-person classes resume
Monday, January 4, 2021.

Mrs. Tami Koerber, Head of School
Mrs. Amy Mattle, Admissions Director
www.rasjb.org



Pre-rally Concert with Matthew West

Join Matthew West before the March for Life Rally for a morning of music and life!

The concert will begin on the National Mall at 11 a.m. March kicks-off at 12pm from the National Mall.

Interested in Attending? Reserve your seat now on the **Knights of Columbus Bus**, a Sign-Up Sheet is on the pro-life table in our Narthex.



ALTAR SERVER TRAINING

Due to the pandemic we have temporarily put training on hold for this ministry.

However, we are now forming

a list of names for those interested in training for this ministry as soon as we are able.

Who is Eligible?

- Boys and girls in the 4th grade and up are invited to sign up to serve in this ministry.
- Have received your Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.
- Attend Mass regularly.
- Attend Confession and receive Communion regularly.

What does an Altar Server Do?

- You assist the Priest during Mass by bringing him sacred vessels used in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. And you ring the bells during the Consecration of the Eucharist.
- You are a leader for the congregation during the Mass, they follow what you do.

Parents, if your child is eligible and interested in training for this ministry, please send an email to Donna Sciacca at prep@stjohnsottsville.org. Include your child's name, grade, school, and your contact information.



2021 PARISH SACRAMENT PARENT MEETINGS

Thurs., Jan 7th: Sacrament of 1st Reconciliation
(No children), 7pm - church
(Snow Date Jan. 14)

Thurs., March 11th: Sacrament of 1st Holy Communion
(No Children), 7pm - church
(Snow Date March 18)

Thurs., April 8th: Sacrament of Confirmation
Candidate, Sponsor, & Parent
7pm - main church.

Date to Come: Confirmation Retreat (Virtual)



UPCOMING RITE DATES:

RITE OF WELCOMING

Sunday, Jan. 24th during the 10:30am Mass

RITE OF SENDING

Sunday, Feb. 14th during the 10:30am Mass

RITE OF ELECTION

Saturday, Feb. 20th – 3pm at the Cathedral Basilica of Sts. Peter & Paul, Philadelphia

Feast Days this Week

Monday, Jan. 4th:
Memorial of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious
Tuesday, Jan. 5th:
Memorial of St. John Neumann, Bishop
Sunday, Jan. 10th:
The Baptism of Our Lord

Ministry Schedule for:

January 9th & 10th - THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

Ministry Schedule:				
	Communion Minister	Lector	Altar Server	Music Ministry
SATURDAY 5pm				Laura Fleck Karen Parash
SUNDAY 9am	<p style="color: red; text-align: center;">DUE TO ADVANCE HOLIDAY PRESS DATES, OUR MINISTRY SCHEDULE FOR THESE MASSES MAY BE ACCESSED THROUGH OUR ONLINE PORTAL.</p>			Liz Torgerson Fred Fumaniak
SUNDAY 10:30am				Ordinary Time



PLEASE PRAY FOR...

* New Name Added

NEW CYCLE: Dec. 1st – March 1st



To RENEW or to ADD a name to our prayer list, please call the parish office.

OUR SICK: Roger Bahnck Sr., John Becker, Loretta Bodisch, Katie Carty, Steve Combs, Patty Combs, Julia Ferguson, Patricia Fite, Marie & Rosalyn Giardullo, MaryAnn Hauber, Nate Leidtke, Jackie Litzenberger, Kathie Mandra, Roseann McCarty, Bridget McHugh, Anne McNichol, Nancy Moreno, Jeff Olimpo, Gerry Pacitti, Janet Reidler, Pete Shultz, Sr., Steve & Wendy Snyder, Riley Telesco, Helen Wall, Ed Wismer, Christine Zdanowicz, and all those affected by COVID-19.

OUR TROOPS: Jamie Steven Ayuso, Fionna M. Boyle, Derek Brosius, Christopher Brune, Kyle Crossland, David Fisher, Michael Froeder, A.J. Giovino, Aaron Given, Matthew Gumprecht, Bob Hankinson, Victor Hormilla, Aileen Lauer, Stephen Lindmeier, Jason Litschauer, Cory Litzenberger, Dan O'Connor, Jonathan Pucci, Dusty Rhodes, Craig Russell, Steven Salva, Kate Salva, Jack Salva, Ann Salva, and all who we have lost to the Coronavirus.