

Fr. Dave's Den: With our entire parish staff I wish you and all a very happy and blessed New Year.

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. This feast is one of the mysteries of Jesus' infancy. Article 528 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church presents an excellent description of this feast:

"The Epiphany is the manifestation of Jesus as Messiah of Israel, Son of God, and Savior of the world. The great feast of Epiphany celebrates the adoration of Jesus by the wise men (magi) from the East, together with his baptism in the Jordan and the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee. In the magi, representatives of the neighboring pagan religions, the Gospel sees the first-fruits of the nations, who welcome the good news of salvation through the Incarnation. The magi's coming to Jerusalem in order to pay homage to the king of the Jews shows that they seek in Israel, in the messianic light of the star of David, the one who will be king of the nations. Their coming means that pagans can discover Jesus and worship him as Son of God and Savior of the world only by turning toward the Jews and receiving from them the messianic promise as contained in the Old Testament. The Epiphany shows that 'The full number of the nations' now takes its 'place in the family of the patriarchs....'"

Essentially this glorious feast communicates that Jesus came for all people. Thank you, Jesus!

Have you volunteered in any capacity during the past year at St. Bart's? Are you active in a particular ministry? If so, you are invited to the Annual Appreciation Dinner which will take place on Friday evening, January 28, 2005, at 6:30 PM, in Helzlsouer Hall. Please be sure to make a reservation by calling the Rectory. There will be a dance afterwards along with some door prizes. As Pastor, I thank everyone who works so hard for our parish family.

Some time ago, as plans were being made to paint the Church, I mentioned the possibility about enhancing, at an appropriate time, both the Blessed

Sacrament altar and the Marian altar. Once again, God is so good! It just so happened that a loving couple, who desires to remain anonymous has come forward to underwrite the cost of a commissioned sculpture of the bust of Jesus Christ with his hands extended and the words, "Come to me those of you who are weary and find life burdensome." This is a substantial expenditure that this couple is embracing in memory of their son who died after five days old. This piece of art which will be mounted above the tabernacle on the wall should be completed and installed sometime in June. To make this project complete we will need to add some lighting and modify the background. If you would like to contribute to this project, please give me a call.

You might recall that I mentioned in this same space some time ago that we needed to have the monstrance refurbished and that this would cost roughly \$2,000.00. I also asked if a person and/or family might be able to underwrite this cost. Well, God is so good. I am most grateful to a beautiful family who has come forward with a donation. It is their desire to remain anonymous. In any event, I thank them for their generosity. The refurbished monstrance will not only enhance our Holy Hours, but it will also give the Eucharist the dignity it deserves.

Finally, I wish to thank everyone for their generosity to the parish. Your gifts of time, prayer, and money made this a very special Christmas.

On a personal note, I wish to thank everyone for a spectacular Christmas. Your acts of kindness to me in the form of prayers, spiritual bouquets, cookies and candy, doggie treats for Bobo, and monetary gifts made this a most memorable Christmas. It is indeed an honor every day to be your priest. I shall continue to remember you all in my prayers, particularly at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Have a blessed week!



School News with Mrs. FleetHappy New Year!

Classes will resume on Monday, January 3.

All of you are welcome to join us for liturgy on Friday, January 7. Mrs. Deet and our fourth graders will help to plan our Mass.

Please continue to save Box Tops for Education, Shop 'n Save receipts, and Campbell's product labels for us. Your support is most appreciated.

BINGO

YES, we have Bingo! Bingo will be held this Monday, January 3, at 7:00 PM in Helzlsouer Hall.

A Respect Life Meditation

(Matthew 2:16, Jeremiah 31:15) "... King Herod ordered the massacre of all the boys two years old and under in Bethlehem and its environs... that what was said by Jeremiah the prophet was then fulfilled: 'In Rama is heard the sound of moaning, of bitter weeping: Rachel mourns her children, she refuses to be consoled because her children are no more.'"

We pray that modern-day Herods in the fields of medicine, law, and government will experience a true change of heart and bring to an end the massacre of more than 4000 innocent boys and girls in our country each day.

Epiphany Reflection

Pilgrims know they are in a geographical place and have a family and friends, a job, a collection of possessions. But they do not exactly feel at home. Something is missing; an itch needs scratching. So, pilgrims set out in search of what is missing. They do not necessarily wander the earth. They do not even have to leave home, actually. But they search, and they search purposefully. They follow their lights—insight and the advice, guidance, and direction of those they trust.

The magi were pilgrims—traveling pilgrims. But another character in this story, Herod, was firmly ensconced in his home place. He liked his position of power and meant to keep it. He didn't want any usurpers. He wanted only to know what was necessary to keep that power. He was not looking for anything else.

The magi, those pilgrims and seekers, finally descended from the East into a temperate valley and to the unlikely village of Bethlehem. They found their spiritual home there. When they entered the humble home of the Holy Family, they found their gift, their reward, their souls' longing. They knew it and expressed it in their gifts befitting royalty—gold and frankincense—and the added gift that hinted at mortality, myrrh.

They quietly slipped by the boundaries of the country and returned to their homeland by a new route. And their souls also

knew a new way. Copyright © 2004, World Library Publications. All rights reserved.

Religious Education News with Arlene Golden

Mary and Joseph did what God asked them to do. They protected Jesus from harm. Families are asked to protect and care for one another in their homes and as they go about their everyday lives.

Religious Education Classes: Children in grades kindergarten through eighth meet Sunday morning from 9:00 AM to 10:15 AM, in the school. Parents/guardians are reminded to call the catechetical office if their son or daughter will be absent. Classes resume Sunday, January 9, 2005.

Christmas Celebration: Students will celebrate Christmas with cookies and punch this Sunday. Thank you to the parents/guardians who donated the treats.

Class Cancellation: In the event of inclement weather or other emergencies, parents/guardians are reminded to tune to KDKA, WPXI-TV, or WTAE-TV for class cancellation.

There will be no classes next Sunday for Christmas vacation. Classes will resume Sunday, January 9, 2005.

Life Teen - Leading Teens Closer to Christ

Life Teen will be meeting in two weeks, on January 15! We start a new semester and who knows what the Core is going to come up with next! If you have never tried Life Teen, then why not start the new year out right. Come find out what we are all about. All high school teens are welcome.

Un-Decorating

All are invited to come to take down the Christmas decorations on Sunday afternoon, January 9, 2005, at 1:00 PM.

Givers and Receivers

Today's liturgy celebrates the marvelous magnanimity of God. We hear the familiar story of the child Jesus receiving gifts, but we are the ones who are gifted. For our part, we must be like the magi and not only be open to the gift but be willing to go after it, even in the dead of winter.

The Light of Faith

The first reading today is charged with the glory of the Lord. Everyone who can come to the holy city does come—whole caravans of people of all ages on foot and on dromedaries and camels.

This description of an irresistible light-filled city prepares us for the story of the magi. They are guided by their own lights—their study of astronomy and astrology—and by the light of a peculiar star. Their study tells them that an unusual event in the heavens is a sign of an extraordinary birth on earth. They mean to find out about this, and they set out with gifts worthy of a king. They are welcomed into an insignificant house in Bethlehem, offer gifts befitting a king, and receive the gift of faith. Paul reinforces the great gift of faith available to the Gentiles, whom the magi represent. What they have seen has changed them, just as it changed Paul and all who heeded his proclamation. Like the magi and like Paul, we are invited to receive this life that is filled with the light of faith.

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Treasures from our Tradition

Life hands us many epiphanies or “wake-up calls.” A few years ago, a young couple adopted a two-year-old child amidst a morass of red-tape, complications, and court hearings. At the baby’s baptism, the priest suggested appending an “adoption blessing,” wherein the new relationship was expressed and affirmed. There is a place in that rite for the child to speak, and instead the priest said, “Can you give Daddy a kiss?” Standing in the midst of his church, the young adoptive father suddenly welled up with tears as he embraced the child. Afterward, he explained that through all the hassles and legal struggles he never until that moment in church understood that he was the parent of this child. The ritual claimed them for each other, gave expression to their relationship that the legal documents never could, and firmly cemented this child into the heart of a community as everyone erupted into heartfelt applause. This assembly witnessed in a powerful way what happens in every baptism: the mystery of adoption, the free-flow of grace, the overwhelming sense of God’s presence at the heart of our life’s journey.

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Mass Intentions



MON., January 3 - Holy Name of Jesus

10:00 A.M. Charles Kerr (A.M. DiGioia, Jr.)

TUES., January 4 - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

10:00 A.M. Teresa Pizzonia Hawkins (Family & Friends)

WED., January 5 - St. John Neumann

7:00 P.M. Holy Hour

THURS., January 6 - Weekday

10:00 A.M. Margaret M. Hornick (Friends)

FRI., January 7 - Weekday

10:00 A.M. Russell & Ley Family (Mr. & Mrs. Larry Craver)

SAT., January 8 - Weekday

10:00 A.M. Anthony Pavlovic (Margaret Morrin)

5:00 P.M. People of the Parish

SUN., January 9 - Baptism of the Lord

8:00 A.M. Gary Stephen Matts (Matts Family)

10:30 A.M. Deceased Members of Hopfer & Soisson Families (Paul & Ann Soisson)

Please remember in your prayers the sick, shut-ins, and hospitalized members of the Parish.

Prayers are also requested for the faithful departed.

Weekly offering and Scrip totals for the weekends of December 19 and 26, 2004, and January 2, 2005, will be published in the January 9 bulletin.

St. Anthony's School Programs

The Pittsburgh Diocese is home to two unique and nationally recognized educational programs for special needs children. St. Anthony's School Programs and DePaul School for Hearing and Speech, formerly the DePaul institute. A special collection will be taken up in every parish at all Masses the weekend of January 15 and 16, 2005. Your donation will help St. Anthony's support special needs children in an inclusive program within 10 parochial schools. DePaul School for Hearing and Speech teaches children who are deaf or hearing impaired how to speak clearly and understand speech with confidence in order for these children to take their full place in our hearing and speaking world. Your donation will help both of these organizations forever improve the lives of their students. For more information, please call Mark Sieg at St. Anthony School Programs at 412-882-1333, or Apryl Eshelman at DePaul School for Hearing and Speech at 412-924-1012. Thank you for your generosity!

IF YOU PARTICIPATE IN ONE OF
OUR PARISH MINISTRIES
OR VOLUNTEER YOUR SERVICES ANY TIME
DURING THE YEAR FOR
THE CHURCH, SCHOOL OR CCD,
YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN OUR PARISH
COMMUNITY

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2005
AT 7:00 PM
IN HELZLSOUER HALL
FOR AN APPRECIATION DINNER

THERE WILL BE GOOD FOOD,
DOOR PRIZES, ENTERTAINMENT AND
GOOD COMPANY

THIS DINNER IS FOR ADULTS ONLY,
NO CHILDREN PLEASE

PLEASE CALL THE RECTORY (412-242-3374)
BEFORE MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2005
AND MAKE A RESERVATION

 *Thank You* 