

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



Nativity of Our Lord
Monroe Township, New Jersey

Epiphany of our Lord – January 5, 2025

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Monday January 6th

St. Andrew Bessette, Religious

8:30 a.m. Catherine P. Feretich by Patricia & Gregory Gercich

Tuesday January 7th

St. Raymond of Penafort

8:30 a.m. Maureen Vergano by Eileen Sullivan

Wednesday January 8th

Weekday

8:30 a.m. People of the Parish

Thursday January 9th

Weekday

8:30 a.m. John A. Manginelli by Ed & Stephanie Heuser

Friday January 10th

Weekday

8:30 a.m. Fiedencio Gaona by Richard and Victoria Giarrantano

Saturday January 11th

Weekday

4:00 p.m. Donald Silva by Father Nalaka

Sunday January 12th

Baptism of the Lord

7:30 a.m. Helen Agnew by Robb & Chris

9:00 a.m. Baldassarre Family by Margherita & Joe Caccavo

11:00 a.m. Tony & Donna Randazzo by Laura & Pat Randazzo

The Collections for the Weekend of

December 22 - \$15,413

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!



Remembering in Prayer

Kindly contact the office if you know of a parishioner who is sick, having surgery or in need of pastoral care. We would like to remember them in our prayers and care for their spiritual needs.

CANDLE OFFERING

Sanctuary: Estelle Mazzola by Christine Flynn & Virginia Petarresi

Padre Pio: Father ED by Christine Flynn



Epiphany of our Lord

Sunday: Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6, Mt 2:1-12

Monday: 1 Jn 3:22-4:6; Mt 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday: 1 Jn 4:7-10; Mk 6:34-44

Wednesday: 1 Jn 4:11-18; Mk 6:45-52

Thursday: 1 Jn 4:19-5:4; Lk 4:14-22

Friday: 1 Jn 5:5-13; Lk 5:12-16

Saturday: 1 Jn 5:14-21; Jn 3:22-30

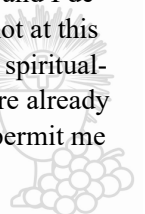
STEWARDSHIP REFLECTIONS

“...They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” - MATTHEW 2:11

What gifts do you give to the Lord? Pope St. Gregory said that these three gifts represent what we should give God every day. Gold – we should reflect Christ’s wisdom in all our relationships. Frankincense – represents our daily prayer and adoration to God. Myrrh – is a symbol of our daily sacrifices that we unite with Jesus for the sake of others.

Spiritual Communion Prayer

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this time receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.



HIS WORD TODAY

BY REV. WILLIAM J. REILLY

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON THE SUNDAY READINGS

“Raise your eyes and look about; they all gather and come to you. Your sons come from afar, and your daughters in the arms of their nurses. Then you shall be radiant in what you see, your heart shall throb and overflow. For the riches of the sea will be emptied out before you, the wealth of the nations shall be brought to you.”

We know this feast by different names, Epiphany, The Three Kings, with different gifts representing kingship, priestly sacrifice and anointing, the three roles of our Savior, priest, prophet and king. Listening to Isaiah in the passage, may we find particular and personal significance for the day we celebrate. We learn that the pagan pilgrims from the east represent all of us, called, gathered and redeemed by Jesus Christ.

We raise our eyes and look about. Our communities reflect diversity in race, ethnic origin, cultures, language, represented by those who followed the star which led them to Jesus. We are led by God’s grace discovering the greatest gift ever, the incarnation, the birth and abiding presence of Jesus. Traditions continue and today may we add one more gift to the Lord, the gift of ourselves. Like the magi may we pray, reflect and adore the Christ, Emmanuel, God with us.



New Homeschool Ministry

All parents of Homeschool Families are cordially invited to attend the inaugural meeting for the new Diocesan Homeschool Ministry.

The event will take place on January 14, 2025 from 6:30 -8:30 pm at St. Theodore RC Church at 855 Route 57, Port Murray, NJ.

Please come to hear about the ministry vision and a presentation on “Franciscan at Home” which is a free catechetical resource.

For more information about this event contact **Fr. Gilbert Starcher** at gstarcher@diometuchen.org

Parish Calendar

Jan. 5 (Sun)	Catechumenate and/or Mystagogy and/or Adult Confirmation C. 1 & 11
	Choir’s New Year’s Epiphany Party 1:00pm Hall
	Hospitality Sunday After all Masses
	Children Liturgy 11:00am RR
Jan. 6 (Mon)	K of C Meeting 6:30pm Hall
	Inquiry or Adult Confirmation 6:00pm—7:30pm RR
Jan. 8 (Wed)	St. VdeP Meeting 9:00am - 10:00am Cl#11
Jan. 9 (Thu)	Choir Practice 7:30pm Church
	Catechist Training/Dio 5:00pm Hall
Jan. 12 (Sun)	Catechumenate and/or Mystagogy and/or Adult Confirmation C. 1 & 11
Jan. 13 (Mon)	Inquiry or Adult Confirmation 6:00pm—7:30pm RR
Jan. 14 (Tue)	Prayer Shawl 1:30pm Hall
Jan. 16 (Thu)	Adult Faith Formation/Bible Study 9am-11:30am & 7pm-9pm Hall
	Choir Practice 7:30pm Church
Jan. 19 (Sun)	Catechumenate and/or Mystagogy and/or Adult Confirmation C. 1 & 11
Jan. 20 (Mon)	MLK Parish Office Closed
	Inquiry or Adult Confirmation 6:00pm—7:30pm RR
Jan. 23 (Thu)	Adult Faith Formation/Bible Study 9am-11:30am & 7pm-9pm Hall
	Choir Practice 7:30pm Church

Ministries

St. Vincent DePaul – If you are experiencing financial hardship due to a temporary loss of employment, illness, or disability, the St. Vincent de Paul Society is available to aid with your everyday needs such as food, utility assistance, or agency referrals. Please dial the parish number 609-371-0499, then press 4, and leave a message with your name and phone number. Someone will return your call. All calls are handled in strict confidence.

Homebound Ministries - Eucharist Ministers bring communion to the homes of those who are unable to attend Mass due to illness or other circumstances. Please call **Marge Nadolny** at **609-409-6164** or email **margen21@comcast.net**.

Helping Hands: We help parishioners with small household tasks such as changing smoke detector batteries, lightbulbs, opening & closing vents, etc. If you need assistance, please call Esther Wolff at 732-521-6019 for more information

Giving Tree: Thank you for your amazing generosity! Thank you to all those who adopted families and those who contributed gift cards and money. We were able to help over 20 local families with over 60 children, a group home and poinsettias to our homebound parishioners. We are still busy packing and will be delivering gifts this week.

Thanksgiving Food Collection: Thank you so much for your generosity! We provided overflowing bags to our local families in need complete with turkeys and a pie. Thank you also to the religious education families for their generosity and the Companions of Pauline for their help preparing the bags. Thank you also to Bill Tronolone for his help moving all the food. We also were able to bring a large carload of food and turkeys to a local church where they were making baskets for 500 families.



PRAYER SHAWL

Our next Prayer shawl meeting will be January 14, 2025. We meet the second and fourth Tuesday of the month. We have knitters and ladies who crochet. Our door is always open for new crafters. Anyone interested or in need of a shawl for friend or neighbor is welcome to call **Liz Coulston 732-561-4139**.

Initiation Ministry



How interesting that today's Gospel gives us wisdom – but puts it in the mouth of the vile King Herod. “Go and search diligently for the child.” The wise men – magi – who followed a star until it came to rest over the place where Jesus was, did just that – searched diligently. And they were rewarded for their journey. They came face to face with the Child and His mother Mary. Can you imagine their joy? We can't help but wonder if they stayed a while and came to truly know this Child – or did they immediately return to their country, telling the wondrous tale of a journey and an encounter. We, too, are invited to search diligently for the Child – and then to spend time with the Holy Family and to come to know the Lord intimately. We are invited individually – but like the magi – we travel together. Are there others who might join us on the journey? Share your faith with someone who might benefit from the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA). For information contact **JoLynn Krempecki at 732-690-2610**



Happy
Epiphany

Rosary for Life – January 24, 2025

Come Pray a Rosary for Life (in solidarity with those at the March for Life in Washington, DC and across the country). Bishop Checchio is scheduled to attend! Friday, January 24, 2025 at 1:00 pm on Main Street in Woodbridge. Park and meet in the St. James Parish parking lot at 12:45 pm (369 Amboy Ave, Woodbridge, NJ) There is a 12:10 pm daily Mass at St. James for those who wish to attend. For more information, contact **amarshall@diometuchen.org** or call **732-562-1543**.

Highlights of Simbang Gabi at the Nativity

The Filipino-American Association at the Nativity hosted the 6th day of the traditional Simbang Gabi last December 20. It was in collaboration with the Diocese of Metuchen Filipino Apostolate. Members of different churches gathered to journey through the 9 days of Novena Masses held in different parishes in anticipation of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ!



Eucharistic Ministers Needed for The Gardens At Monroe

1) We are in need of additional Eucharistic Ministers to visit Catholic residents at the Gardens (next door to church) to distribute Holy Communion each Sunday. EMs arrive at about 10AM and visit the residents (list provided each week) in their rooms. This takes about 30-40 minutes. We have a few teams so that an EM would visit residents about every third or fourth Sunday. I will arrange for you to shadow an EM currently doing this for training.

2) We also need EMs to lead a Eucharistic Service at the Gardens about once each month. This involves bringing some materials (missal, communion, Prayer of the Faithful) and reading most of the prayers of the mass and distributing Communion to residents gathered in the Activities Room at the Gardens. Again, I will arrange for you to shadow and EM currently doing this.

3) Lastly, I need someone to replace me to do the quarterly schedule of EM assignments, recruit new EMs and be the contact person for the Gardens and EMs when needed. I have been doing this for nearly 30 years and it's time I handed this off to another parishioner.

If interested in assisting in this ministry in any of these roles, please contact **Deacon John Shelton** at email: [spmucc@aol.com](mailto:spmcucc@aol.com) and put "GARDENS" as the subject.

2025 Choices Matter Conference

The Diocese of Metuchen's Office of Human Life and Dignity presents "The 2025 Choices Matter Conference – A Critical Life Issues Conference" which will be held at the St. John Neumann Pastoral Center in Piscataway on **Saturday, March 29, 2025**. An Opening Mass will be celebrated by Bishop James Checchio at 9:00 AM and the conference will begin at 10:15 AM and end at 3:30 pm. This year's theme is "Choose Hope – A Path to Mental Wellness." The topics/expert speakers are:

- **The Pain is Real but so is Hope:** Deacon Ed Shoener
- **Mental Health as a Pro-Life Issue:** Erin McCole Cupp
- **The Light in Our Darkness:** Lisa Kratz Thomas
- **The Road to Hope – Responding to the Crisis of Addiction:** Keaton Douglas

General registration is \$35 and student registration is \$15. Fee includes lunch and handouts. To register visit: <https://www.diometuchen.org/choicesmatter>. For questions or for more information please email ammarshall@diometuchen.org or call 732-562-1543. Seating is limited.

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EPIPHANY BLESSING OF CHALK

The Feast of Epiphany commemorates the Magi who followed a star to find the Christ-child. It has been a tradition in the Catholic Church to use the chalk blessed at the Epiphany Mass for a blessing of one's home for the New Year. We invite you to adopt this custom in your family. Gather everyone to ask God's blessing on your home for those who live in or visit there. It is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest in your home and be a part of your comings and goings, your conversations, your work, and play, your joys, and sorrows.

A traditional way of doing this is to use chalk to write above the home's entrance: **20 + C + M + B + 25**. The letters C, M, B have two meanings. They are the initials of the traditional names of the three magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. They also abbreviate the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedicat* - "May Christ bless this house." The "+" sign represents the cross and 2025 is the year.

Using the blessed chalk mark the lintel of your front door (or front porch) as follows:

20 + C + M + B + 25 while saying -

"The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar followed the star of God's Son who became human two thousand and twenty-four years ago. May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout the new year. Amen."

Then offer the following prayer:

"O, blessed Lord, bless this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live or visit here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may manifest your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and forever. Amen."

"Chalking the door" is a way to celebrate and literally mark the occasion of the Epiphany and God's blessing of our lives and home. With time the chalk will fade. As it does, we let the meaning for the symbols written sink into the depths of our heart and be manifest in our words and actions the Latin words, *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless the house."

Adapted from the Carith House in Chicago



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