

January 4, 2009

The Epiphany of the Lord



Familiarity can make us overlook the details in a Scripture passage.

We bring familiar imagery to our reading of the Bible, imagery that hooks into our childhood, our celebration of favorite seasons. The Christmas season, for example. In our Christmas cards and art, pictures and pageants and hymns, we bring Christ and his humble revelation into our cultures, homes, and hearts.

Along with our songs about wise men, however, we have Matthew's Gospel account to wake us into a serious realization: King Herod attempted to manipulate the Magi into telling him where the child was. With *our* Christmas-season eyes, these three ride into Bethlehem led by the star. A crisp, blue sky frames the star, their gaze, and the awe we too find in the stable. But their story has more than a calm, clear night and a sense of peace. They did bring their treasures, but their biggest gift was leaving Herod behind.

We are invited to link Christ to another passage. Watch carefully the *timing* in Isaiah's greeting (60:1-2). First, he calls: *Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.* Next, he warns: *Darkness shall cover the earth.* Then, right away again: *The Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.*

The darkness part we know all too well. Yet the first word of the prophet is to remind us of Light. We are told to rise out of it. How could that happen? It is because the Lord will rise. And so we will rise too.

Traditionally, the twelve days of Christmas are over on Epiphany. Something is new now. *Everything* is new now. The men Herod tried to use in his twisted plan took a different way back.

Their passage by another road was anything but familiar. Yet still they followed the Light.



Today's Readings

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

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DAN FINUCANE

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St. Stephen Catholic Church

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Office Hours – Monday through Friday
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Rectory – 1904 Bethel Road
817-596-9586

Web Page – www.ss-cc.org

Gift Shop – Saturday 5:30 to 6 PM
Sunday 9:45 to 11:00 AM
Noon to 12:30 PM

Club House—817-599-8423
Pro Shop—817-599-8431

MASS SCHEDULE

All Masses are held at the Church on Bethel Road unless otherwise noted

Saturday 6:00 PM ♦ Confessions Saturday 5:00 PM

Sunday 8:00 AM & 10:45 AM (English) ♦ 12:30 PM (Spanish)

Holy Days 7:00 AM & 7:00 PM

Daily Mass 8:45 AM

WELCOME NEW FAMILIES AND VISITORS

Please complete a registration card at the Welcome Table in the church foyer and return it at your earliest convenience. Thank You!

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday	January 3	6:00 PM	Our Community	<i>Memorial of the Most Holy Name of Jesus</i>
Sunday	January 4	8:00 AM	Our Youth	<i>The Epiphany of the Lord</i>
		10:45 AM	Faithful Departed	<i>The Epiphany of the Lord</i>
		12:30 PM	Manuel & Martha Granado, RIP	<i>La Epifanía del Señor</i>
Monday	January 5	8:45 AM	Faithful Departed	<i>Memorial of St. John Neumann, bishop</i>
Tuesday	January 6	8:45 AM	Communion Service	<i>Memorial of Bl. André Bessette, religious</i>
Wednesday	January 7	8:45 AM	Our Youth	<i>Memorial of St. Raymond of Peñafort, priest</i>
Thursday	January 8	8:45 AM	Peace	<i>Weekday</i>
Friday	January 9	8:45 AM	Fr. Bob Wilson	<i>Weekday</i>
Saturday	January 10	6:00 PM	Our Community	<i>Weekday</i>
Sunday	January 11	8:00 AM	In Thanksgiving	<i>The Baptism of the Lord</i>
		10:45 AM	Peace	<i>The Baptism of the Lord</i>
		12:30 PM	La Comunidad	<i>El Bautismo del Señor</i>

Marriage – six months notice required – please see Fr. Casey. **Aviso para el Matrimonio** – seis meses es necesaria
Baptism Instruction—English (1st Thursday of each month); Spanish (1st Monday of each month)
Quinceañera – three month notice required – girl must be attending CCD and Mass *regularly* – please see Fr. Casey
Prayer Chain Coordinators—Ann Allen (817-594-8637) Bette Binzer (817-599-0454) LaVerne Cardwell (817-594-3805)
Weekly Visitation of the Sick & Shut-Ins. Contact the church office to be on the schedule.
Census Information—Please notify the church office if you are new to our Parish, have a change of address or phone number, or move to another Parish.
Bulletin Notices are to be written or typed and in the office at least one week prior to event – notices may be e-mailed – deadline for bulletin is Noon on Tuesday – your cooperation is greatly appreciated – Thank You!

**REGULAR
COLLECTION
December 27-28
\$8,382.00**

**CHRISTMAS
COLLECTION
\$12,268.44**

REVISING OUR PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL with guidelines from the Diocese of Fort Worth. Please take time to read the special booklet in this week's bulletin. It explains the **WHY, WHAT, HOW, AND WHO of a Parish Council.** Parish councils can act as the "wisdom community" of the parish where people learn to be stewards of the gifts of God and to listen to the needs of all. Through the process of consultation, the parish council contributes to the building up of the faith community and can be an adventure in shared responsibility, like the communities of the first Christians that took action as a body. The above process requires prayer, study, dialogue, discipline, determination and time. We, the church, have the opportunities to share our wisdom in order that the best decisions are reached. *(Watch the bulletin next weekend for the Spanish Translation.)*



Epiphany

God's glory continues to shine in our world. Where do you need to carry the light of Christ? Consider being a light for the world as a Church minister.

(Isaiah 60:1-6)

Epifanía

Los Reyes Magos trajeron oro, incienso y mirra. ¿Qué regalos tienes para dar? Te está llamando Dios a ser sacerdote, hermano o hermana religiosa?

(Mateo 2:1-12)

*Flowers for the Altar this Weekend
Are in Appreciation
of the Generosity of Parish Members to the Needy
During this Christmas Season.*

SECOND COLLECTIONS FOR JANUARY
January 3-4—Land Purchase
January 17-18—
Catholic Charities, USA Office in Puerto Rico
January 24-25—Church in Latin America

PROPERTY PURCHASE INFORMATION
 Cost of New Property—\$1,631,842.00
 Monthly Interest Payment—\$9,700.00
 Total Contributions to Date—\$65,806.59
 Interest Paid to Date—\$59,219.31

2009 COLLECTION ENVELOPES. Please pick up your envelopes in the Church Foyer. If you do not have envelopes and would like a box for 2009, please contact the church office at 817-596-9585.

2009 KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FREE-THROW CHAMPIONSHIP. Girls and Boys Ages 10-14. Proof of age and written parental consent required. **Saturday, January 10.** Poolville Jr. High Gym, 16025 FM 920, Poolville. Contact Jesse Chavez 817-269 4865 or Chuck Schabow 817-597-6120.

ST. STEPHEN HOLY SPIRIT COUNCIL 7264 OF THE KNIGHT'S OF COLUMBUS has made a \$1,500.00 contribution to the St. Stephen land purchase in appreciation for the support shown our council by the parish. If you are interested in joining this great organization, contact a brother Knight for an application at our next breakfast or ask a brother in a red jacket. Thank you St. Stephen Parish, and may God Bless You in the coming year.

COME AND SEE WEEKEND— Learn what it means to be a prophet in our time. January 16-18, 2009 (5 PM on Friday until noon on Sunday); Holy Spirit Convent, 301 Yucca Street, San Antonio, TX 78203. Any woman (between ages 18 and 45) who feels God is inviting her to be a Sister of the Holy Spirit! For more information contact Sister Gabriel Hession at 210-533-5149, sghession@hotmail.com or call Sr. Mildred at 817-596-9587. Pick up flyer to register in the church office— deadline to register January 11.

BLOOD DRIVE. The next blood drive is **Monday, January 26**, in the Holy Spirit Center from **3:30-7:30**. In the past parishioners were very generous. Donors need to bring photo ID and a list of medications. **Please note the drive starts 30 minutes earlier than last time. The sign-up sheet is in the Church Foyer behind the grocery basket. Thank you for your generosity.**

DONACION DE SANGRE - Habra una coleccion de sangre el Lunes, 26 de Enero de 2009, en el Holy Spirit Center desde las 3:30 p.m. hasta las 7:30 p.m. En el pasado, nuestra congregacion ha sido muy generosa y esperamos que nuevamente recuerden a aquellos menos afortunados. Por favor traiga un documento con su foto y la lista de medicamentos que toma. Los donantes deben ser mayores de 17 anos. Gracias nuevamente por su gran generosidad.

On **January 17 and 18** we will be taking up a second collection for the Catholic Charities USA office in Puerto Rico (Cáritas de Puerto Rico). Cáritas is a 501(c)(3) non-profit outreach of the Catholic Church, and your donations make an enormous difference in the lives of the people living there.

El **17 y 18 de enero**, llevaremos a cabo una colecta para la oficina de Catholic Charities USA en Puerto Rico (Cáritas de Puerto Rico). Cáritas es una organización sin fines de lucro 501(c)(3) de la Iglesia Católica, y sus donativos hacen una gran diferencia en las vidas de los puertorriqueños más necesitados.

Ministry Formation Day, Saturday, January 10, 2009, Nolan Catholic High School, 4501 Bridge St., Fort Worth, TX 76103, 8 AM—3 PM. To register call 817-560-3300 or call the church office at 817-596-9585.

Día de Formación. El **sábado 10 de enero 2009**, Nolan Catholic High School, 4501 Bridge St., Fort Worth TX 76103. 8 AM—3 PM. Registrar llamada 817-560-3300 o llamar la oficina de iglesia en 817-596-9585.

Respect Life Mass. Please join Most Reverend Kevin Vann, Bishop of Fort Worth, on **Friday, January 16, 2009** for the Annual **Respect Life Mass** at St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton Street, Fort Worth, TX. Mass will be at 7 PM.

Retrouvaille It is designed to heal and renew troubled or unhappy marriages. The next weekend program is **January 16-18, 2009**. For more information or registration call 1-800-470-2230 or visit www.retrouvaille.org. All names and conversation will be kept confidential.

Catholic Renewal Center. Engaged Encounter, **January 16-18**, call 817-346-9320.

TEEN CORNER

YOUTH GROUP will meet Wednesday, January 7 at 6 PM.

PURE REALITY RALLY: —STILL TIME TO REGISTER
 Youth rally for grades 8-12 presented by the Catholic Pro-Life Committee and Catholics Respect Life on **Sunday, February 8, 2009, 4-9:30 PM in Arlington**. The rally will focus on teaching teens that chastity and abstinence are the true paths to freedom. Cost is \$25.00 to include transportation, entrance, dinner, and t-shirt. Contact Susan Ourada at 817-596-3872 or Jeanette Houle at 817-613-8008 or doschicas@att.net.

WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(All activities held at Bethel Road)

Religious Education Classes, Breakfast, and other activities will resume next Sunday, January 11.

Monday, January 5

9:30 AM Parish Pantry
 6:30 PM Young Adult Bible Study
 7:00 PM Boy Scout Troop #72
 7:00 PM RCIA
 7:00 PM Grupo de Oracion
 7:00 PM Instrucción del Bautismo Española
Copia de Nacimiento Certifica Requirió

Tuesday, January 6

9:30 AM Ladies Bible Study (Rm. 1 & 2)

Wednesday, January 7

6:00 PM Youth Group
 6:30 PM Choir Practice
 6:45 PM Divine Mercy Chaplet
 7:00 PM Master Planning Meeting

Thursday, January 8

10:00 AM Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
 10:00 AM Quilting Group (Pro Shop)
 7:00 PM Grief Group
 7:00 PM English Baptism Instruction (Baptism Certificate. Required)

Saturday, January 10

7:00 PM Cursillistas Ultreya—Spanish

Dear Padre

How do I find hope in this world?



I feel so hopeless these days. The world is in a mess and so is my life. How can I have more hope?

Bill

took him to a high mountain and tempted him with a lie: *All this is mine to give you. Just worship me!* But Jesus saw that this world belongs to God and to good, not to the Evil One and to Evil. His eyes saw things with the light of hope. Ask for a share in that light.

Hope is a decision for good over evil, light over darkness, love over

hate. How do we make this decision? Benedict XVI points to three means: praying, doing, and suffering. You can always, always say a prayer. Then do the next little thing you need to do. And by praying and doing, you hang in and hang on.

Romans 12:12 says it best: "Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer."

John Hamroge, C.Ss.R.

Dear Bill,

Hope is a decision. So is despair. I once saw a bumper sticker that mocked, "I feel much better since I gave up all hope." Don't believe it! Suicide is not life.

Pope Benedict XVI, relying on Scripture, says hope is faith, which Hebrews 11:1 says is "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." It is the joyful reality you are looking for. But to see it, you need Christian hope.

Christian hope is a theological virtue. It gives you a share in God's own vision. We see what this means in the temptations of Jesus. The Evil One



SHUTTERSTOCK

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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January 5 Saint John Neumann, bishop 1 Jn 3:22—4:6 Mt 4:12—17, 23—25	January 6 Christmas Weekday 1 Jn 4:7—10 Mk 6:34—44	January 7 Christmas Weekday 1 Jn 4:11—18 Mk 6:45—52	January 8 Christmas Weekday 1 Jn 4:19—5:4 Lk 4:14—22a	January 9 Christmas Weekday 1 Jn 5:5—13 Lk 5:12—16	January 10 Christmas Weekday 1 Jn 5:14—21 Jn 3:22—30	January 11 The Baptism of the Lord Is 42:1—4, 6—7 or 55:1—11 Acts 10:34—38 or 1 Jn 5:1—9 Mk 1:7—11