



MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

Sunday, January 2, 2022

The Epiphany of the Lord

4:00 PM
8:00 AM
10:00 AM

Gathering: The First Nowell BB 108

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 98)

All the ends of the earth have seen the power of God. (2x)

Preparation What Child Is This BB 94

Mass Parts Heritage Mass
(Begins at # 891 in 2022 Missalette)

Communion It Came Upon The Midnight Clear
BB 96
Bread For The World BB 342

Recessional: Songs Of Thankfulness And Praise
BB 106

FOR OUR RECORDS

We need your help to keep our records current. If there are any births, deaths, marriages, moves, or address changes in your family, please notify the Parish Office at 603-382-8324 or by email at jtremlay@stluketheevangelist.net. If you're new to our parish, registration forms are available at the entrances of both churches. Registration forms can also be found on our website at <http://stlukenh.org>.

RESTROOM BREAKS DURING MASS

Attention Parents

Please be sure to accompany your young children when they need to use the restroom during Mass. This is for their safety and your peace of mind!



Out of respect for the Lord and in consideration of fellow parishioners, please remember to silence or turn off your cell phones during Mass. Thank you!

✠ PARISH TITHING ✠

Our Parish needs to take in \$9700.00 each week in order to make ends meet. This amount represents an adjusted budget offertory of \$8500.00 per week plus the combination of budgeted Property and Fuel second collections (\$4800.00 per month divided into 4 weeks or \$1200.00 weekly). Your weekly contribution helps ensure that the Parish remains a vibrant community. Please remember to submit your weekly gift even if you will be away. Consider signing up for electronic giving (see below). Especially in these trying times, your Parish depends on your responsible stewardship and support!

December 19, 2021

Offertory	\$6,428.69
Fuel	\$1,931.65



Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish uses **Parish Giving** to provide parishioners with an opportunity to make your offertory and other contributions through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Parish Giving is a simple, secure, and convenient way to manage your stewardship without weekly envelopes and without worries. This program is available to parishioners at no cost. Log on to the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish website at <http://stlukenh.org>, click on the Parish Giving logo, and follow the easy registration instructions.

UPCOMING SECOND & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

January 2	Property Management
January 9	No Second Collection
January 16	Seminarian Fund
January 23	Fuel
January 30	No Second Collection

Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on Income

Annual Income	5% Commitment annually/ weekly	3% Commitment annually/ weekly
\$100,000	\$5,000/\$100	\$3,000/\$60
\$75,000	\$3,750/\$75	\$2,250/\$45
\$60,000	\$3,000/\$60	\$1,800/\$36
\$50,000	\$2,500/\$50	\$1,500/\$30
\$40,000	\$2,000/\$40	\$1,200/\$24
\$30,000	\$1,500/\$30	\$900/\$18
\$25,000	\$1,250/\$25	\$750/\$15
\$15,000	\$750/\$15	\$450/\$9

Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on a Percentage Increase

Your Current Offertory Contribution	25% Increase	30% Increase	40% Increase
\$75.00	\$93.75	\$97.50	\$105.00
\$50.00	\$62.50	\$65.00	\$70.00
\$40.00	\$50.00	\$52.00	\$56.00
\$35.00	\$43.75	\$45.50	\$49.00
\$30.00	\$37.50	\$39.00	\$42.00
\$25.00	\$31.25	\$32.50	\$35.00
\$20.00	\$25.00	\$26.00	\$28.00
\$15.00	\$18.75	\$19.50	\$21.00
\$10.00	\$12.50	\$13.00	\$14.00
\$5.00	\$6.25	\$6.50	\$7.00

✠ PARISH NEWS ✠

COVID UPDATE

By mandate of the Bishop of Manchester on June 6, all restrictions and procedures put in place during the pandemic are no longer in effect.

The choice to wear or to not wear a mask is left up to individuals and their discretion. Those persons who have not been vaccinated should be especially mindful of their own safety and the safety of others, especially those vulnerable to communicable disease.

A hand sanitizer station will remain at the main entrances of the church doors for the time being for parishioners' convenience.

Anyone who has been recently exposed to COVID 19 or any other communicable disease should not attend public services of any kind. Those sick should remain at home until such time as they are healthy.

Liturgy online or on TV...

Boston Catholic Television catholic.tv
Sunday Mass from Notre Dame
catholic.tv/masses/notre-dame-mass
Salt & Light TV saltandlighttv.org
Eternal Word Television ewtn.com

CEMETERY PLOT

Holy Angels Cemetery (Plaistow) plot for sale. It is one plot (one casket and one cremains, or two cremains). Original price was \$700.00 and now will sell for \$600.00. If interested, contact the Parish Office.

GIVING TREES



Thanks to all who took ornaments from the Giving Tree this year. You have helped to make the Christmas season brighter for children of the community and for many people who are struggling to make ends meet. Your generosity is truly appreciated!

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

If you would like an "end of year" financial statement of your contributions to the Parish for 2021, **please call Jackie** at the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**



VIGIL LIGHT

The Vigil Light in front of the Blessed Mother Icon at Mary Mother of the Church will burn in loving memory of **Deceased Knights** by a fellow Knight

The Sanctuary Candle in Holy Angels Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Paul Antkowiak** by his family



SANCTUARY CANDLES

The Sanctuary Candles in both Newton and Plaistow may be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00. Please call the Parish Office at 382-8324.

VIGIL LIGHT

The Vigil Light in front of the Blessed Mother Icon in Newton may be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00.

PLEASE HELP US!

As you leave church, kindly take your Bulletin with you - or return it to the basket at the entrance of the Church, return your music book and Mass card to their proper place, and pick up after yourself as you leave. Our Ushers are wonderful and diligent, but they should not have to face a Foxboro aftermath as each Mass ends! Thanks for being attentive and respectful! F. Albert.

WHILE AWAY THIS WINTER...

We appreciate all of you who remember to send in your Parish Offertory during the Winter even when on vacation or visiting other parishes. Thank you for remembering that our expenses also continue through the Winter months. We invite others to consider doing the same before or even after you return home.

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Sunday, January 2

10:00 AM Religious Ed – PreK to 8 *Plaistow*
6:00 PM Vespers *Newton*

Monday, January 3

7:00 PM Knights of Columbus *Plaistow*

Wednesday, January 5

Holy Angels Church
Open All Day For Prayer

Thursday, January 6

8:30 AM – 8:30 PM Eucharistic Adoration *Newton*
10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting *Plaistow*

Saturday, January 8

12:00 to 4:00 PM – CLOTHING DRIVE – PARISH HALL
3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*

Sunday, January 9

12:00 to 4:00 PM – CLOTHING DRIVE – PARISH HALL
10:00 AM Religious Ed – PreK to 8 *Plaistow*
11:00 AM Gr. 2 Reconciliation Retreat
And Sacrament *Plaistow*
6:00 PM Vespers *Newton*

PRAYER LINE

St. Luke's offers a prayer line as a resource for those seeking prayer assistance. To submit your prayer request please call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 314 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.



St. Luke the Evangelist is now on Facebook! Go to www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/ or **St. Luke the Evangelist Parish – Newton/Plaistow** and give us a Like! Please invite fellow parishioners & friends to do the same.

From the Pastor's Desk



HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSED

Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is closed from December 1, 2021 until Spring 2022. This decision comes as result of the real dangers of snow and ice in the Cemetery and the costs to Parishioners to inter during the winter months. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions.

✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

Saturday, January 1 ~ Vigil of the Epiphany of the Lord

Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12 (Vigil)

4:00 PM Lena Dionne (2nd Anniversary) by her family
Newton

Sunday, January 2 ~ The Epiphany of the Lord

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

8:00 AM Marie Lessard
by Janice and Joseph Bettencourt
Newton

10:00 AM Joseph Fitzpatrick by his family
Plaistow

Monday, January 3 ~ Holy Name of Jesus

1 Jn 3:22–4:6; Mt 4:12-17, 23-25

8:00 AM Arthur Hawxhurst by his family
Newton

Tuesday, January 4 ~ Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious

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

8:00 AM Richard Sullivan by Bonnie Lajoie
Plaistow

Wednesday, January 5 ~ John Neumann, Bishop

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

6:30 PM Arthur Hawxhurst by Gayle and Ed Wencis
Plaistow

Thursday, January 6 ~ Andre Bessette, Religious

1 Jn 4:19–5:4; Lk 4:14-22

8:00 AM Arthur Fairbrother by Grace Bukowski
Newton

Friday, January 7 ~ Raymond of Penafort, Priest

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

No Mass

Saturday, January 8 ~ Christmas Weekday

1 Jn 5:14-21; Jn 3:22-30 (Day)

Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ti 2:11-14, 3:4-7; Lk 3:15-16, 21-22 (Vigil)

4:00 PM Jake Collins by Ray and Beverley Viglione
Plaistow

Sunday, January 9 ~ Epiphany of the Lord

Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ti 2:11-14, 3:4-7; Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

8:00 AM Alfred Bencivenga by Barbara and Jack Brotz
Newton

10:00 AM Bill Lueders (18th Anniversary)
by Carol Lueders
Plaistow



CLOTHING DRIVE

KIMBERLY'S 16th ANNUAL HOLIDAY GIVE AWAY!!!

We are back and better than ever!!! Not to mention the addition of my little princess Rayna (who will be cheering Mommy and Daddy on from the safety of our home)!

This year's clothing drive will be back to our pre-COVID ways. We will be collecting clothing on **January 8th and 9th** at Holy Angels Church (downstairs in the back of the church) from **12:00 to 4:00 PM** each day.

We will be accepting donations for Catie's Closet, Ruth's House, Emmaus House, Epilepsy Foundation, and Wish Project. We are accepting CLEAN clothing of any size, any season, any decade. Any donations of underwear must be new and packaged.

We will also be accepting non-perishable food items for St. Luke's Food Pantry.

If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to volunteer, please contact me at: kimberly-andrade@comcast.net.

Thank you so much for your continued support throughout the years! May God continue to bless you all, and I wish you and your families a safe and healthy holiday season!

Kimberly Clenord

MEN OF SAINT JOSEPH

Saint Luke Parish invites interested men to step forward to become leaders in a newly formed Men of Saint Joseph Group meeting here in Newton-Plaistow. If you are interested, please contact Father Albert at fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net or call the Parish Office.

AMAZONSMILE FOUNDATION

AmazonSmile.com is the same market platform as Amazon.com, but with the added benefit of allowing customers to donate 0.5% of the price of items purchased to a charitable organization. Please register today to start shopping and donating at www.amazonsmile.com. For questions, please call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. Be sure to choose:

St Luke the Evangelist Parish, Plaistow.

The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. Be a good agent of welcome and evangelization! If you or someone you know is interested in inquiring about becoming a member of the Roman Catholic Church, contact Cathy Smith in the Parish Office.

ADULT CONFIRMATION

Are you an adult who has been Baptized and received Eucharist, but has not celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation? The adult Confirmation process is an opportunity to complete the Sacraments of Initiation. If you would like to prepare for Confirmation, or if you have questions, call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

YOUTH CONFIRMATION

Students in Junior High or High School who have not celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation and would like to prepare to receive the sacrament, contact Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305, or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

We are truly blessed to have times for Adoration of Our Lord in our Parish. This time of prayer and intercession is not only a source of great grace for the individual, but it is a great source of grace for us as a parish family, as well.

We have many who have made the commitment to spend an hour each week with our Eucharistic Lord, **but** we need more people so there will be at least two people at each hour. We are also looking for people who would be able to substitute.

**Newton – Thursday
8:30 AM – 8:30 PM**

If you can commit to one hour a week in Adoration of our Lord, or if you can be a substitute, please contact Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

**The Church in Plaistow is open all day on
Wednesdays for people to stop by and pray
before the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.**

✠ PARISH DIRECTORY ✠

Parish Office	603-382-8324
Parish Prayer Line	603-382-8324 x 314
St. Vincent de Paul Society	603-382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry	603-819-4949
Preschool	603-382-9783
Presentation of Mary Convent	603-382-2744

Fr. Albert Tremblay	fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net
Cathy Smith	csmith@stluketheevangelist.net
Joyce Szczapa	jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
Jackie Tremblay	jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
Val Barczak	mvmbarczak@comcast.net
Parish Council	parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net

❖ Community News ❖



ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST FOOD PANTRY

Thank you for your generosity towards the hungry of our area!

Non-perishable food or personal care items are always needed – donations can be dropped off at Church or are welcome at the Parish Office during regular business hours.

Cash donations for food are always welcome – make checks payable to **St. Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry**. All donations to the Food Pantry go toward helping the needy of our communities. **Call the Pantry at 819-4949 for more information.**

Thank you so much for your continued support of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. We've had a busy Autumn, and Winter shows no sign of slowing down our effort to help our neighbors and friends in need.

If you are interested in learning more about this great group of volunteers, contact our Secretary, Jim Edwards, at jimmy69180@hotmail.com or 603-642-5236. Meetings are both live and virtual.

If you seek assistance or need information about the Society, call (603) 382-8324, ext.315.



WINTER WEATHER CLOSINGS

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Office, Holy Angels Cemetery Office, Saint Luke Food Pantry and the Parish Liturgical schedule complies with the longstanding inclement weather policy of Saint Luke Religious Education Program and Holy Angels Pre-School-Kindergarten: **If the Timberlane and/or Sanborn regional school districts close because of inclement weather, ALL Parish Offices and Parish programs will be closed or suspended. All activities by any Parish or non-Parish groups will be cancelled for that day/evening on both campuses.** In the event of a weather related closing, the scheduled weekday Liturgy will not be held and the intention (if any) will be moved to a conveniently available date.

Sunday (or Saturday evening) liturgies can never be cancelled, but all are advised to use prudence when deciding to travel to Church during winter storms.



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

A Men's AA Step Meeting is being held on Sunday mornings from 7:00 to 8:00 AM at the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish Hall (Holy Angels.) Masks are required. Bring your own coffee. For more information, call Joe at 617-921-9899.

2022

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

The Knights of Columbus, St. Jude Council #6617 would like to wish you and your families a **HAPPY AND BLESSED 2022.**

The Knights' New Year's Resolution will continue to focus on assisting those in need, through donations, volunteerism, and faith.

If you are looking to do something life changing in the new year, consider joining us.

**THE KNIGHTS OF
COLUMBUS
ST. JUDE COUNCIL #6617**
www.kofc6617.org



Communion Call



As early as the year 150, the martyr Justin, in writing an explanation of Christian worship to the Roman authorities, described the Sunday Eucharist pretty much as we celebrate it today. At the end of the description, he notes that ministers take the eucharist from the Sunday assembly to those who were unable to be present.

Perhaps these included people who were in prison for living according to the Gospel, and those whose work (Sunday was a work day back then) kept them

away. But almost certainly he meant the sick and the infirm, and those who were otherwise homebound. This is our ancient tradition: to love and cherish and to keep connected with those members of this community who cannot be with us on Sunday.

When illness or infirmity keeps you from the Sunday assembly, Special Ministers of Communion will bring a word of scripture and the body of Christ to you. The best time for this is Sunday, when the minister can come straight from the celebration of Mass. But other times can be arranged. Don't worry about fasting before receiving communion: If you are able to, that's fine. But because of your condition, you are not obligated.

The rite of communion for the sick is simple. It can be very brief if you are not feeling up to more. But normally, it consists of some opening prayers and readings (similar to those at Mass). If you are able, you then offer some prayers for the world and the church. Your family, friends and caregivers can (and should!) participate in the rite. If they would normally receive communion at Mass, then they can share in communion at this time, too. Before and after this simple, powerful rite of communion, you can visit with the minister or not, depending on how you feel.

Sick or infirm, homebound or hospitalized, each baptized person is nonetheless part of this parish, a member of the body of Christ. So don't be afraid that you're being a burden, and don't think that we're so busy we wouldn't have time for you. Regularly sharing in communion is an important part of our life together as the church.

Call the Parish Office at 603 382 8324 for more information.

The Gospel at Home

This Week's Gospels: Luke 2:1-14 and Matthew 2:1-12

Christmas celebrates God's becoming one of us and one with us. Jesus comes as an infant, placed in the care of a struggling but loving family. The Feast of the Epiphany, a word that means "manifestation," celebrates how Jesus was revealed as far more than the king of the Jews. He is revealed as God's Son. Matthew's story of the visit of the Magi from the East makes it clear that Jesus came to all people who seek God.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): Your young child is happy because Christmas is finally here. The cover of their lesson for the week is a picture of the whole Nativity story. Display the picture where everyone can see it. Take time to let your young child tell the story to the whole family.

Promise (Grades K-1): Christmas has arrived. Use this week's lesson booklet to connect the classroom with your home. Have your child show you the picture drawn of baby Jesus in the manger on page 1. Your youngster also learned about the Magi and helped them find their way through a maze puzzle. Ask your child what message can we all share at Christmas. Sing "Silent Night" together—or some other familiar carol.

Good News (Grades 2-3): The lesson booklet your child brings home this week contains a simple and beautiful rendering of the Christmas story. Before one of the family meals during the Christmas feast, take time as a family to share the story together. Talk together about why the incarnation is so important to Christians and how your family can honor Jesus as the Magi did.

Venture (Grades 4-6): Because Christmas can be busy and even a bit stressful, it may be difficult to find time to share as a family. Make an extra effort to talk about the Christmas story as a family. Your youngster also spent some time in class looking ahead to 2022. How can your family make the new year one filled with little "epiphanies" that help you learn more about your faith and help you share your faith with others?

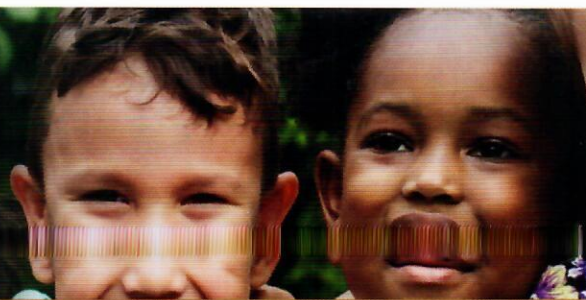
Visions (Grades 7-8): This week in class, your son or daughter studied all the feasts that are part of the celebration of Christmas. Ask him or her to share with the family what these feasts are. The Epiphany feast celebrates Jesus' revealing himself to all nations as a Savior for all people. Talk together about the journey of the Magi, and why it is such an important part of the Christmas narrative. Ask your young person to share the picture of the Magi by the Chinese artist He Qi (Woo Chee). Talk about how the artist gives a clear vision of the event.

Pray Together

Pick one of the feast days during the season to attend Mass together as a family. Use the opportunity to pay a visit to the manger scene at your parish church and pray together in your own words that God will help you always trust in his promises and care for those in need. In that way your family will keep the Christmas spirit alive all year long.



Diocese of
MANCHESTER



Restoring Trust and Protecting God's Children:

20 Years of Child Protection Measures in the Catholic Church of New Hampshire



Since 2001, the Diocese of Manchester has tirelessly committed to ongoing training, prevention programs, and transparency efforts to keep children and teens safe in our parishes, schools, and camps. Child abuse prevention programs and policies have become an integral facet of Church life today as the Diocese of Manchester strives to provide a safe environment to keep all God's children safe.

Diocese of Manchester | Timeline of Child Safety Measures

1993

First diocesan Policy on Sexual Misconduct is promulgated by the bishop.

2001

- **Training** of all clergy and adults who work with minors begins. Diocese of Manchester is a pilot diocese for Protecting God's Children, a live training program for adults that covers how to prevent abuse and recognize, report suspicions.
- **Delegate for Ministerial Conduct** position is established to oversee safe environment policies, ensure that allegations are reported to the civil authorities.
- **Victim Assistance Coordinator** position is established to provide pastoral care of victim-survivors and their families.
- Formal process for **financial settlements with victims** of abuse is established.

2002

- Diocese publishes list of 20 priests credibly accused of sexual abuse.
- **Diocesan Review Board** convenes to advise the bishop on matters relating to the sexual abuse of minors. The DRB is composed of primarily lay persons who are experts in their fields.
- US Bishops sign the **Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People**.
- Bishop of Manchester enters into a **settlement with Attorney General's Office**; agrees to allow the office to audit the diocese.

2003

Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People and *Serving Christ, Serving Others* Code of Conduct are promulgated by the bishop.

2004

- **Safe Environment Coordinators** are appointed at all parishes, schools, and diocesan camps.
- **Background checks** begin to be conducted on all clergy and adults who work with minors.
- **Safe Environment Council** is established.



"My work as an SEC is a very tangible way I can help protect the future of the faith I love."

- Jennifer Campbell (Safe Environment Coordinator)

Diocese of Manchester | Timeline of Child Safety Measures *(continued)*

2005	Safe environment training for children and teens begins. Programs used through the years include Safe and Sound All Around, Circles of Care, and Netsmartz.
2006	Safe Environment Office of the diocese is established to assist parishes and schools in implementing safe environment policies and procedures.
2011	Training of adults moves to an online format. Programs used through the years include Not on My Watch, Shield the Vulnerable, and Safe Haven by Catholic Mutual Group.
2015	Diocese begins to emphasize appropriate boundaries as a means of prevention. Develops lessons, workshops, and materials for parents and adults in ministry.
2017	Diocese becomes an alpha site for the USCCB's High Reliability Organization initiative.
2019	Diocese publishes <i>Restoring Trust</i> website which lists the names, assignments, and status of clergy accused of sexual abuse of a minor since 1950.

Today by the Numbers: Working Together

It takes many people working together to maintain strong safe environment programs. At any given time, there are more than 4,000 employees and volunteers working with minors in our parishes, schools, and camps. In addition to our pastors, principals, and camp directors, the following people are instrumental in working to ensure the safety of children and youth in our diocese:

- More than 100 Safe Environment Coordinators
- 7 Diocesan Review Board members
- 2 trained investigators
- 1 Victim Assistance & Pastoral Care Coordinator
- 1 Delegate for Ministerial Conduct
- 3 Safe Environment Office Staff

Safety by the Numbers



38,700

adults trained in safe environment measures.



35,600

background checks completed on employees, clergy, or volunteers.



16,900

students per year have been taught personal safety lessons, since 2006.



35 VISITS/YR.

Site visits are conducted at all parishes, schools and camps to check compliance. All sites are visited at least once every four years with an average of 35 visits per year.



\$370,000

provided in counseling services for victim survivors, families, and others affected by abuse.



\$29 MILLION

provided in financial compensation to victims. These financial settlements were paid from insurance policies, a specific non-restricted insurance fund, diocesan savings, and diocesan investment income. No parish or school funds were used in these settlements.

Lessons Learned

1. Victims of abuse often take years to come forward
2. Training everyone who works around minors helps to prevent abuse
3. Conducting initial screening serves as a deterrent to those who wish to harm minors
4. One of the most helpful things we can do for victims is to listen
5. Healthy relationships are fostered when adults model good boundaries
6. Working together we can prevent abuse from happening
7. Healing is possible



Bringing Home the Word

The Epiphany of the Lord (C)

January 2, 2022

Herod Was Correct

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

King Herod, the most powerful man in the region, was greatly troubled to hear about the birth of a king. Why would a reigning king fear a little child? Perhaps because he believed if word spread that a future messiah had been born, the Jews would be harder to control. They were easier to dominate when they were without hope, without a leader.

Herod was correct. Wise men from the East looking for the King of the Jews fulfilled prophecies that foretold all nations would come to Israel looking for a messianic leader.

Herod was also troubled because, if indeed this newborn was a king, he had a pretender and a competitor right under his royal nose. King Herod was correct again.

Although Jesus did not pretend to overthrow the Romans, he did come with authority and would upend the existing order. Jesus would preach to the heart and demand that no one sit on that throne except God his Father.

The painter, Pseudo Domenico di Michelino, in *Adoration of the Kings*, presents the arrival of the Magi as a procession of vassals showing homage to their king. Kneeling, bowing, and standing erect with gifts in hand, authorities from far away are reverencing the newborn royalty who sits on Mother Mary's lap. His royal hall is the hillside, his scepter a baby finger, his royal family is Joseph and Mary.

These Gentile kings were the first to do what all of creation and all of history have been doing since then—bending their knee to the King of the Universe. Herod was right to worry. +

Jesus would preach to the heart and demand that no one sit on that throne except God his Father.

A Word from Pope Francis

[The Lord] is our light: a light that does not dazzle but accompanies and bestows a unique joy. This light is for everyone, and it calls each one of us....At the beginning of each day we can welcome this invitation: arise, shine, and follow today—among the many shooting stars in the world—the bright star of Jesus!

—Angelus on Epiphany Sunday, January 6, 2017



Sunday Readings

Isaiah 60:1–6

Arise! Shine, for your light has come, the glory of the LORD has dawned upon you.

Ephesians 3:2–3a, 5–6

The Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 2:1–12

When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Does Jesus' authority and care give me security?
- Do I seek earthly securities aside from what treasures he offers me: his will, protection, and grace?

The Richness of God's Vision

By Kathleen M. Basi

As a child, my sisters and I used to pray this prayer every night: "I love you, Jesus, Infant Jesus, meek and mild; make me a good, obedient child."

The word *obedience* rubs most modern audiences the wrong way. We tend to associate it with a lack of critical thinking—with the creation of blind, unquestioning automatons. If we don't understand why we believe what we believe, our faith has no foundation. We risk being derailed by the slightest challenge.

It's true that an unquestioned faith is an immature faith. On the other hand, not everything can be understood. What are the words "thy will be done" if not an acknowledgment that forces are at work beyond our comprehension? "Thy will be done" is our assent—our prayer of obedience. By living through the things we don't understand, we often gain wisdom and insight illuminating what once seemed incomprehensible.

I think about myself during the first few years of my marriage. We had followed the rules and never questioned the Church's teachings on sexuality. We were doing everything "right," and yet we could not conceive. Yes, there were medical issues, but they weren't severe enough to explain why God "allowed" the frustration of the desire he had placed within us to continue. Obedience left a bad taste in our mouths.

We spent several thousand dollars to adopt, only to be further delayed by



international politics. We prayed, we grieved, we wrestled with the words "thy will be done." Only when we reached the top of the waiting list did we conceive at last.

It didn't make sense. Why would God put us through so much if he intended all along to give us biological children?

When our second child was born, finally, everything fell into place. She has Down syndrome. And the reality is that no matter what we said in public, neither of us were truly open to parenting a child with a disability. But we had spent seven years learning to accept God's will for us. We had continued to be faithful and, yes, obedient, even when it didn't make sense. All that suffering prepared

us to accept and even embrace a different future than we had envisioned for our family. That vision, it turns out, is richer than ours ever was. We understand God and Christian discipleship in a way we never would have otherwise.

Obedience shouldn't be blind. We can and should wrestle with difficult questions, just as Jacob wrestled with the angel. Still, not everything has to make sense. Our job is to follow, even though we can't always see where we're going... yet. +

*By living through the things
we don't understand,
we often gain wisdom
and insight.*


PRAYER

*Lord, your light gives us strength
and shows us the way to God.*

*Remove my blindness that I may
see the light of goodness, peace,
and love within myself and others.*

—From *Joyful Meditations for Every Day
of Advent and the 12 Days of Christmas*,
Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

January 3–8

Monday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 3:22–4:6 / Mt 4:12–17, 23–25


Tuesday, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton:
1 Jn 4:7–10 / Mk 6:34–44

Wednesday, St. John Neumann:
1 Jn 4:11–18 / Mk 6:45–52

Thursday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 4:19–5:4 / Lk 4:14–22a

Friday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 5:5–13 / Lk 5:12–16

Saturday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 5:14–21 / Jn 3:22–30

Bringing Home
the **Word** 
January 2, 2022

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