

Dear Padre,

On what date was Jesus born? Was it December 25 or some time between December and April, when shepherds watched over their sheep?

Due to the complexity of history's various calendars and ways of calculating time, we cannot be sure of the date. Matthew and Luke, the two Gospels that detail the birth of Jesus, do not give a date.

Early Christians observed an annual feast to remember Jesus' death and resurrection, focusing on the paschal mystery rather than on his birth. As Christianity grew and spread, however, Christians wanted to celebrate more events from Jesus' life. The celebration on December 25 has more to do with an expression of faith in Jesus as Emmanuel, "God with us," than with establishing the exact date of his birth.

December 25 is listed as the date of Jesus' birth in a fourth-century calendar of martyrs, but how this date was chosen is unclear. Some scholars believe Christians in Rome chose December 25 to counteract the celebration of the pagan sun god Emesa. Another theory follows the influences of the seasons: early Christians believed John the Baptist was conceived on the autumnal equinox and born at the summer solstice. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus' conception took place six months after John's. That time line would place Jesus' birth at the winter solstice, December 25 on the Julian calendar. A third theory says Jesus' birth would have occurred on the same date as his death, which we believe to be in the spring at Passover. Regardless of the exact date, we celebrate Jesus as the true Son of God who came to enlighten us and, by his death and resurrection, to give us life. ●



Fr. John Schmidt, CSSr / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

MONDAY

January 8
Baptism of the Lord
Is 55:1-11
1 Jn 5:1-9
Mk 1:7-11

TUESDAY

January 9
Weekday
1 Sm 1:9-20
Mk 1:21-28

WEDNESDAY

January 10
Weekday
1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20
Mk 1:29-39

THURSDAY

January 11
Weekday
1 Sm 4:1-11
Mk 1:40-45

FRIDAY

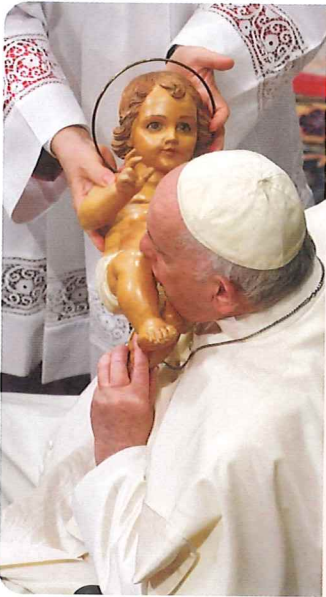
January 12
Weekday
1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a
Mk 2:1-12

SATURDAY

January 13
Weekday
1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1a
Mk 2:13-17

SUNDAY

January 14
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19
1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20
Jn 1:35-42



A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

Like a rising star
(see Numbers 24:17), Jesus comes to enlighten all peoples and to brighten the nights of humanity. Today, with the Magi, let us lift our eyes to heaven and ask: "Where is the child who has been born?" (Matthew 2:2). Where can we find and encounter our Lord?

HOMILY, ROME,
JANUARY 6, 2023

Our Parish COMMUNITY

January 7, 2024

The Epiphany of the Lord (B)

Isaiah 60:1-6 / Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6 / Matthew 2:1-12



The Seekers

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

I live at a parish in downtown Milwaukee. From my window I watch the world pass by, everyone below in search of one thing or another. Students from the local university seek an education, business folk look for a sale, street people often look for a place to spend the night, teenagers hope to find love. Yet beneath all of those longings, in each one there is a deeper hunger that wonders what life is all about and the hope that they might find it. Hidden amidst it all, the real hunger is for God, a longing sewn into our being, sometimes recognized but too often not.

The story of the *Magi* is a story of seekers making their way from afar in hopes of finding the promised one, a newborn king. Perhaps they knew of this child's divine nature, more likely not, yet it was ultimately that same hunger that exists in all of us that drove them, a deep desire to know God.

Every serious religion seeks to experience God in life and tells the stories of those who have done so. There are Christian mystics like St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Ávila, Jewish mystics of the Kabbalah tradition, the Sufis of Islam, Native Americans who go on vision quests, the Hindus who practice yoga, as well as the Buddhists and Taoists and Confucians. Like the Magi, we all seek to find God. ●

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

ISAIAH 60:1

Reflect

Does it make sense to you to say that your deepest hunger is for God?



Rectory & Parish Office
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Karen Burden, Rel.Edu. Committee 355-6388
Lisa Gannett, DRE 355-6611
Gwen Waechter, Parish C. Chair 272-1030
Tressa Powers, Finance C. Chair 355-6206
Altar S. President, Nanette Rice 355-7676
Tom Bachman, Grand Knight 640-8259
Prayer Line Starters, Allison Bushek 355-1696
& Nanette Rice 355-7676

Reconciliation: Confessions will be heard every Saturday at 3:00 p.m. and every Sunday at 8:00 a.m. or by appointment.

Baptism: Parents who have children to be baptized must be registered. Godparents must be 16 years of age or older and have received Confirmation and Eucharist. Please call the parish office for an appointment.

Marriage: Please contact parish priest at least four to six months before the wedding.

Anointing of the Sick: Celebrated anytime by calling a priest.

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

1/6/2024 - Saturday, 4: 00 p.m.

Servers: Jason Velasco, Jonathan Gannett, Nathan Gannett

Reader: Karen Burden

E.O.HC: Debbie Frederick, Gwen Waechter

1/7/2024 – Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

Servers: Cade Berning, Jace Berning, Haley Berning

Reader: Alvin Bergkamp

E.O. HC: Maria Enriquez, Rosa Cardenas

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1/13/2024 - Saturday, 4: 00 p.m.

Servers: Ryann & Brecken Bamberger, Rowen Simon

Reader: Tom Bachman

E.O.HC: Tino Rosales Jr., Karen Burden

1/14/2024 – Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

Servers: Haley Berning, Jace Berning, Luke Woodrow

Reader: Bob Woodrow

E.O. HC: Teresa Beltran, Karen Burden

COLLECTION for December 31, 2023

Envelopes: \$425; Loose: \$315; Online Giving: \$ 4592.49

Total \$5,332.49; Average Weekly Expense: \$1,761.17. Income over/under +3,571.32

CHURCH PROJECT GOAL

\$52000—Building Fund To Date: \$45307.96. *Thank you so much for your love for our parish church and your faithful stewards*

JANUARY 7, 2024

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

“Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.” (PS 72)

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Saturday, Jan. 6 4:00 p.m. People of our parishes

Sunday, Jan. 7 9:00 a.m. Karen Burden Sp. Int.

Monday, Jan. 8 9:00 a.m. Harold Smith

Tuesday, Jan. 9 9: 30 a.m. David Hoang

(Tuesday Mass at the High Plains Retirement Village)

Thursday, Jan. 11 12:10 p.m. Bryan Coulter

Friday, Jan. 12 7:30 a.m. Special Int. Powers Family

Saturday, Jan. 13 4:00 p.m. People of our parishes

Sunday, Jan. 14 9:00 a.m. Emily Hughes



Today we celebrate Epiphany, one of three great feasts of the Church in which Jesus is revealed to the world --- a manifestation of God to all peoples. How did Jesus reveal to the people? Jesus isn't "doing" anything. He's just lying there, with Mary and Joseph to care for him --- helpless, dependent, gentle, weak.

How many people probably walked past that house (stable, cave) without even batting an eyelash, without even knowing of the miracle in their midst? Why the Magi or the wise men recognized "The Baby" is the Lord? The recognized Jesus because they ...

See the good in every person.

Find hope in difficult circumstances.

Embrace the messiness of life rather than run from it.

Regard helping someone as a gift, not a burden.

Believe that tomorrow can be better than today.

In other words --- see as God sees --- see what God sees when he looks at the world, when he looks at his creation, when he looks at you and me --- with love and compassion and mercy. The Magi teach us to see God where we least expect him. May we strive to see what they see, not only in a crib, but around every corner and in every person. Magi in this time and place? Maybe that's exactly who God is calling us to be. Fr. Peter

UNDERSTANDING THE GOSPEL OF THE WEEK - (Matthew 2:1-12)

The magi In the fifth century BC the Greek historian Herodotus wrote that the magi, originally from Medes, exercised a priestly role. They also prophesied and interpreted dreams. In truth, we don't know for sure who they were. Our uncertainty about the identity of the magi enhances the wonder and drama of their visit.

The star Matthew presents the magi as being able to interpret celestial events. At the time of Jesus, many people believed that the appearance of a star, a comet, or a planet was a sign. In this case, the star signified that a future king had been born. Some biblical scholars also see a connection to the pagan prophet Balaam. He prophesied that the one who would defeat the enemies of Israel would be like a star advancing from Jacob (Numbers 24:17).

Kings As current king of the Jews, Herod is shaken by the news that a potential usurper has been born. The negative reaction of all Jerusalem (v.3) points ahead to the ultimate rejection of Jesus, as does Herod's attempt to kill the child (v.16f). The magi, meanwhile, offer gifts to the child as was customary when visiting a monarch. These gifts recall the prophecy from the first reading. Because Matthew lists three specific gifts, Christians later assumed that there were three magi.

Homage When entering the presence of a ruler, it was customary to prostrate oneself or bow down (v.11). The magi's obeisance foreshadows the worship of Jesus as Son of God (14:33, 28:17). The magi's homage also points ahead to Jesus' command to his followers to make disciples of all nations (28:19). The magi represent the Gentiles who will be receptive to the story of Jesus (oursundayreadings.wordpress.com)

UNDERSTANDING THE FIRST READING OF THE WEEK - (Isaiah 60:1-6)

The dark past The Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem by 585 BC and decimated the population. The Persians came to power about fifty years later. They permitted the Jews to rebuild their lives in Jerusalem, but few Jews had returned by the time this prophecy was spoken.

The glorious future In this passage the prophet personifies Jerusalem. He tells the city to rise up from the ashes of devastation (v.1). God's glory descends upon her alone (v.2). Her children, the descendants of Jews displaced by the Babylonians, are coming home (v.4). Gentiles, who haven't known the ways of the LORD (v.2a), are now drawn to Jerusalem by God's light. They bring wealth with which they will rebuild the city and temple (vv.5b-6, also 10f). The frankincense is for use in the temple, which indicates that everyone who once worshiped other gods will worship the LORD alone.

Everyone everywhere In the larger passage from which this reading was chosen, we hear of people coming to Jerusalem from every direction. They even cross the sea. Gentiles from all over the world will worship the LORD and honor his chosen people.

PARISH BREAKFAST— SUNDAY JANUARY 28—RIGHT AFTER MASS You are invited to join us for food & fellowship on This Sunday, January 28th served by our K of C Council. It will be a great opportunity to welcome our new Knight of Columbus members

CHRISTMAS DECCORATION We will be taking down Christmas decorations on Epiphany of the Lord Sunday, right after Holy Mass. Your help would be appreciated. If you would like to take the flower(s) home that you had in memory or in honor of ..You're welcome to do so after that Sunday Mass. Thank you.

VOCATION CORNER DIOCESE SCHEDULE VOCATIONS DINNERS God calls each man to live out his own vocation. Your own vocation maybe to the priesthood. One way to discern what that may be is by attending an Andrew Dinner with Bishop Brungardt and priests of the diocese. If interested in attending any of the following events, please let Fr. Peter know. Below please find the 2024 schedule of Andrew Dinners. **Jan.7 College –Age 6-8 pm @ St. Andrew Church, Wright; Jan.14 Post –College Age 6-8pm @ St. Andrew Church, Wright; Jan. 28 High-School Age 6-8pm @ St. Joseph Church, Scott City.**

PRO-LIFE PILGRIMAGE The Pilgrimage for Life will be held on January 27th. We will begin at the Dodge City Middle School auditorium at 10 am. It is approximately a two-mile walk to the Cathedral. You are welcome to do the entire walk, or to join part way through. Holy Mass will be celebrated at 11:30 am, and a lunch of soup and sandwiches provided by the Knights of Columbus, the Daughters of Isabella, and Dodge City Community College will be provided. Free will donation is encouraged. Please register online at <https://www.dcdiocese.org/offices/respect-life>.

MEN'S ACTS RETREAT Discover the Men's ACTS Retreat January 18-21 at the Heartland Center for Spirituality in Great Bend. An ACTS Retreat is a three-day/three-night Catholic lay retreat presented by fellow parishioners. This powerful experience will strengthen your faith, renew your spirit, deepen your prayer life, and connect you with others from the Diocese. Check out www.actsdcd.org to register or for more information. You may also contact retreat organizer Curtis Wolf at 785-623-3189 or via email at cjwolf@fhsu.edu.

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION JANUARY 7

“They fell down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” - Matthew 2:11 Notice the order of events in the Magi's visit. First, they knelt before Jesus and prayed to Him. Then they presented Him with their gifts. We, too, must take time to pray before we present our gifts to the Lord. We never know what God may be asking us to share!

“Y postrándose lo adoraron; y abriendo sus tesoros le presentaron obsequios de oro, incienso y mirra”.- Mateo 2:11 Observe el orden de los eventos en la visita de los Reyes Magos. Primero, se arrodillaron ante Jesús y lo adoraron. Luego le presentaron sus obsequios. Nosotros también debemos tomar tiempo para orar antes de presentarle nuestros obsequios al Señor. ¡No sabemos lo que Dios nos puede pedir que compartamos!

QUESTION OF THE WEEK Have I had an epiphany, a sudden insight, after an experience where I've recognized an encounter with Christ? If I cannot recall one, can I imagine how it could happen?

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (Opening Prayer for the Epiphany of the Lord) O God, who on this day revealed your only begotten Son to the nations by the guidance of a star, grant in your mercy that we, who know you already by faith, may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC REVIVAL

DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME, PART 11: GLORIA



The Mass To review what we have covered so far regarding the Mass, we have recalled our baptism with the Holy Water, genuflected to honor Jesus in the tabernacle, quietly and prayerfully prepared for Mass, sung the opening hymn, made the Sign of the Cross, and humbly called to mind our sins and praised God’s mercy in the Penitential Act. Now, it is time for

another one of my favorite parts of the Mass: The ***Gloria***.

A Song of Praise “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.*”

Many of us may recognize these words from St. Luke’s Gospel as the song the angels sing in praise announcing the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem (Luke 2:14). Each year on Christmas Eve, I recall our family traditions from when I was young, including Christmas Eve Mass together as a family. One year, we went to bed very early so that we wouldn’t be too tired for the Mass at midnight. In my memory, I still hear very clearly my grandparents singing in the choir and the bells ringing with joy as we sang together the news of Christ’s birth. As we grew older and became altar servers, my brother and I would practice so that we could ring the bells steadily throughout the *Gloria*. It took a lot of endurance!

As the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* indicates, “The *Gloria in excelsis* (*Glory to God in the highest*) is a most ancient and venerable hymn by which the Church, gathered in the Holy Spirit, glorifies and entreats God the Father and the Lamb” (*GIRM*, no. 53). The *Gloria* is full of phrases and titles from the Bible. Edward Sri explains, “one could describe this prayer, which goes back to early Christianity, as a mosaic of biblical titles for God and common biblical expressions of praise.” Sri goes on to list many Scripture references to these titles, such as “Lord Almighty” (Baruch 3:1; 2 Corinthians 6:18), “Lord God Almighty” (Revelation 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 19:6), and “King of Glory” (see *A Biblical Walk Through the Mass*, p. 43).

Three Acts From the context of the *Gloria*, we are clearly singing the first part to God the Father and then the second part to God the Son. According to Sri: “The next part of the *Gloria*, in a sense, tells a story—the story of Christ. Like a three-act play, the *Gloria* sums up the story of Christ’s saving work moving from 1) his coming, to 2) his redeeming death, to 3) his triumphant resurrection and ascension into heaven” (p. 44). Once again, Sri highlights many references to the Scriptures, including the Divine Sonship of Christ (John 5:17-18; 10:30-38; 2 Corinthians 1:19; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 1:1-2); the Lamb of God (John 1:29, Revelation 5:6-14; 12:11; 17:14, among many others); and Christ’s position at the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19) (*A Biblical Walk Through the Mass*, pp. 45-46).

Sri continues, “Notice how the whole mission of Jesus is summed up in this section of the *Gloria*. We move from the Son’s Incarnation, to his Paschal Mystery, to his enthronement in heaven. We move from praising Jesus as the ‘Only Begotten Son’ of the Father who became flesh and dwelt among us; to worshiping him as the ‘Lamb of God’ who by his sacrifice takes away the sin of the world; to praising him in his triumph over sin and death as he is ‘seated at the right hand of the Father.’ Indeed, the very climax of salvation history can be summed up in the *Gloria*” (*A Biblical Walk Through the Mass*, p. 46).

Fittingly, we probably most often think of the *Gloria* as a hymn of praise. The Mass is our participation in the one perfect Sacrifice of Christ—the act of perfect worship of the Father. That certainly does call forth praises! The *Gloria* can truly be a great model of prayer for us and hopefully strengthens our readiness for the many fruits that will continue to come in the Mass. As we sing the *Gloria* together, it is a great lead into what comes next: The Collect, which gathers our prayers and presents our focus for the celebration of each Mass.

For Reflection:

1. Pray again with Luke’s account of the angels appearing to the shepherds announcing Christ’s birth and proclaiming the first line of the *Gloria* (Luke 2:9-14). Next time you participate in Mass and sing the *Gloria*, consider yourself to be singing with the angels.
2. The Book of Daniel recounts three Jewish youths praising God from the midst of a fiery furnace King Nebuchadnezzar has ordered to punish them for their steadfast faith. Reflect on this lengthy canticle (Daniel 3:51-90) and how it relates to the *Gloria*. As the three youths invoke all creatures to “praise and exalt God above all forever,” what lines would you add from your daily life experience? (Fr. Luke Spannagel)

SOLEMNITY OF THE EPHIPHANY OF THE LORD

Is Epiphany about giving or getting gifts? “We three kings of Orient are/ bearing gifts we traverse afar.” Nowhere in the gospels does it claim there are three kings. They are magi, hereditary priests of the ancient Medes and Persians. At least the carol gets one thing right: this wise group does bear gifts. Gold symbolizes wealth and power. Frankincense, used in prayer, represents the divine Presence. Myrrh prepares bodies for burial. It’s an ominous sign that would make a startling gift. . . . But they were appropriate honors for the King of the Universe, the Divine Son, and the crucified Lord. We also bear Jesus gifts at every Eucharist: bread, wine, and our financial sacrifice. “Made by human hands,” these gifts are transformed and returned to us as the Body and Blood of Christ, and then redistributed for those in need. More gifts come to us by way of this shared Table. Grace pours out on the assembly. Grace forgives sin, and rescues us from every evil. This is one gift you don’t want to put at the bottom of a closet.

SOLEMNIDAD DE LA EPIFANÍA DEL SEÑOR

Recuerda nuestras raíces migrantes

América fue alguna vez conocida como la tierra donde la gente podía venir a respirar libremente. Las Escrituras nos recuerdan el gran talento que la gente inmigrante trae con ellos. Ya sea el rey o el plebeyo, cada persona ofrece lo que tiene para dinamizar la comunidad. (Preparetheword)