

# St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Community

Madison Heights, MI www.stvincentferrer.net

JANUARY 5, 2025 † THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

#### From The Pastor

For some reason, I was struck by the fact that the Epiphany of the Lord celebrated today is a Solemnity. A Solemnity is a liturgical celebration of the highest importance in proclaiming the mysteries of Christ. There are about twenty Solemnities in the Church year that honor the work of Creation, Incarnation, Redemption, the roles and titles of Mary, as well as other titles and works of God in Christ.

Why is the Epiphany of the Lord a Solemnity? Epiphany honors the revelation of the Divinity of the Child Jesus. Christmas is a magnanimous feast. Too much to pack into one day. Christmas day celebrates God becoming man through the womb of the Virgin Mary as proclaimed in John's gospel "And the Word became Flesh." The impact of this mystery deserves a day to itself. God comes to earth as a human being, sharing our nature in all things but sin.

Inclusively within Christmas the feast, Epiphany celebrates the Divinity of Jesus conveyed through the experience of the Magi. Remaining fully Divine, becoming fully human, God humbles the Divine nature to share our experience and to redeem all humanity. The day is celebrated as a Solemnity because this doctrine of our faith is of the highest importance as we come to realize the identity and mission of this newborn child as Lord and Redeemer.

The revelation of Jesus is further revealed at his Baptism and through the Wedding feast at Cana. Each of these events have their own expression. Epiphany acclaims the Divinity of Jesus through the Magi who symbolize the universal nature of redemption. Non-Jews, astrologers from a foreign land represent peoples of all nations. They bow low before Jesus in homage and adoration offering gifts that reveal his identity and nature as healer and King.

The Baptism of Jesus further expresses the identity of Jesus through the sighting of a dove representing the Holy Spirit, and the voice of the Father acclaiming: "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased." God himself tells us who Jesus is, then commissions him in the Holy Spirit to go forth to fulfill his mission. All of this is in anticipation of the Lord's Passion.

Lastly, the power of Jesus confirms his identity as the Divine Son in the works he accomplishes. The works are never for their own sake. The Wedding at Cana in Galilee symbolized the marriage of God and humanity; heaven united to earth in the person of Jesus whose life is given to set us free. The abundant multiplication of wine, foreshadowing the blood of Jesus shed to forgive sin, symbolizes Jesus taking our human nature into himself as he journeys to the Cross.

Inclusive of each of these encounters, it is obvious why this feast is celebrated as a Solemnity. How can we make this more human and relatable in our lives? It may seem these Divine encounters are miles away and seemingly unrelated to our daily experience of faith. I suggest otherwise.

The Magi were seekers, Jesus is called the Beloved One, and Jesus goes to a wedding to reveal a love beyond the newlyweds. How might we recognize similar events in our lives? Do not leave your faith on the pages of the bible or in a back corner of your head. Bring them into your life experience.

As an animated, engaged human being, what are you looking for, what do you seek, and most deeply desire? Love, goodness, peace, understanding, deeper meaning or purpose in life? Is there a hidden Magi in you who seeks a larger truth that reveals and satisfies your deeper longings? Ponder this. I bet this is true.

Jesus was baptized. You are baptized. Jesus was filled and directed by the Holy Spirit. You have the same Holy Spirit. In your prayer, can you hear or imagine the words of the Father spoken to you? This was the intention. As for Jesus, so for all of us. You are a beloved of God with whom God is well pleased. Can you ponder this as Mary pondered the message of the Angel at the Annunciation? Claim it. God sees you as a beloved one.

Lastly, we have all been to weddings. We all have had a little wine, or more than a little as we honor and celebrate the new couple. Haven't you felt a warmth in your heart, a stirred moment of beauty and love as you gazed at the couple and resonated with the commitment of their wedding vows? I bet you have. Jesus did the same. He laughed, loved, and shared his human life with others around him. Through his sharing, others came to see his Divine nature and the power of its truth. Through your baptism you share the Divine nature. How do you reveal the light, love, and goodness of Jesus to those around you?

This is not only possible, it is our call and our joy. Your life can be a solemnity of great importance as you witness to the presence of Christ for the good of others. In doing so, your deepest desires will be satisfied.

# LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

#### DAILY MASS

8:00am Monday thru Thursday

### WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday - 4:00pm

Sunday - 9:00am

### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm in Chapel



Live Streaming of Mass Monday thru Thursday 8:00am and Sunday 9:00am

> Adoration on Tuesdays 8:45am to 10:00am

Livestream of Rosary on Thursdays following Mass

Search for St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church (in Madison Heights) on youtube to find our channel or connect via our APP or website

# CONTACT INFORMATION

#### ST VINCENT FERRER PARISH OFFICE

28353 Herbert St., Madison Heights, MI 48071 248-542-8720 Fax 248-542-8721 Website: www.stvincentferrer.net

#### **PARISH OFFICE HOURS**

Monday through Thursday 9am to Noon - 1:00pm to 4:30pm, Friday 9am to Noon, Closed Saturday & Sunday

#### Parish Office Staff

Reverend John C. Esper, Priest in Solidum
Deborah Tourville, Bus. Mgr/Adult Faith Formation
Sheryl Brown, Parish Secretary/Bulletin
Jim Balistreri, Music Coordinator
Mary Ann Przybysz, Evangelical Charity Coordinator/
Order of Christian Initiation of Adults(OCIA) Coordinator
Carl Copen, Facilities Supervisor
Alex Mototolea, Maintenance

# FAITH FORMATION OFFICE 248-398-1743 – call for appointment

Matthew Zinser, Childhood Faith Formation Coordinator

For information on Baptisms, OCIA and Funerals contact the Parish Office 248-542-8720



#### MONDAY, January 6, 2025

8:00am Mass: Christopher Hudy (Special Intention) req.

by Mom

TUESDAY, January 7, 2025

8:00am Mass: Cathy McCarthy† (4th R.A.) req. by

Corrine McCarthy

WEDNESDAY, January 8, 2025

8:00am Mass: Deceased Morning Mass Attendees

THURSDAY, January 9, 2025

8:00am Mass: Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family

SATURDAY, January 11, 2025

4:00pm Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer

Deanna (Special Intention) req. by Family

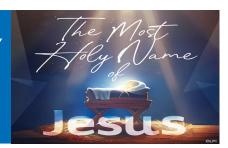
SUNDAY, January 12, 2025

9:00am Mass: Parishioners of St. Vincent Ferrer

Joseph Dong Kim Pham† req. by Family Deanna (Special Intention) req. by Family

Diane Seavitt-Conway† req. by Corrine McCarthy

JANUARY THE MONTH OF



# READINGS FOR THE WEEK

# **January 5, 2025**

Sunday: Is 60:1-6/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13

(see 11)/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12 1 Jn 3:22—4:6/Ps 2:7bc-8, 10-12a/

Monday: 1 Jn 3:22—4:6/Ps 2:7bc-8, 10-12a/

Mt 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday: 1 Jn 4:7-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4, 7-8/Mk

6:34-44

Wednesday: 1 Jn 4:11-18/Ps 72:1-2, 10, 12-13/

Mk 6:45-52

Thursday: 1 Jn 4:19—5:4/Ps72:1-2, 14 and

15bc, 17/Lk 4:14-22a

Friday: 1 Jn 5:5-13/Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-

20/Lk 5:12-16

Saturday: 1 Jn 5:14-21/Ps 149:1-2, 3-4, 5 and

6a and 9b/Jn 3:22-30

Next Sunday: Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 104:1b-2, 3-4, 24

-25, 27-28, 29-30 (1)/Ti 2:11-14; 3:4

-7/Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

The Epiphany of the Lord Matthew 2:1-12

Have you ever wondered why the magi had gold, frankincense, and myrrh? Matthew's Gospel tells us, "Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt. 2:11). Why are these things their "treasures"? One possible answer is they were magicians and astrologers, and these three items were the tools of their questionable trade. In

offering them to Christ, they demonstrate that they will cease using such items to predict or control life. They place this baby-king, the God of Israel, at the center of their lives, and not their own devices of control, manipulation and prediction.

Isn't that what we need to do, too? Consider, for example, the magical power of money, symbolized by the magi's gold. Seemingly whatever we ask of money, it does. It wields a god-like power over the world. It can predict the future by guaranteeing better outcomes for us — which is why it is such a tempting alternative to trusting in God. The problem is such absolute trust in money enslaves us to the economic forces that make money so powerful. In paying homage to Jesus with "gold" (i.e., tithing), we participate in his authority over (and therefore freedom from) the magical sway of money.

What things in your life do you use to predict or control your future? What in your life seems to give you power over the world? Those are your treasures. Are you tired of feeling enslaved to them? Find a way to open them and give them to Christ, and you will be freer.

Father John Muir



#### Additional Christmas Flower Donations

### In Memory/Honor of

Dolores Eslava, Tranquilino, Rodrigo & Crispulo Rudy Bince Bene Anderson John & Janina Andrzejczak Their Parents & Family Mike Kapulka Russell & June Thering Ben & Jane Malski Karen Rauch Maryann Rowley

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Anna Jaskulka Anna Jaskulka Helen Kapulka M/M Brian Malski M/M Brian Malski M/M Jeffrey Swanson M/M Jeffrey Swanson

# "WE THREE KINGS"

The song "We Three Kings" details the gifts of the Magi, but do you know what you're singing? "Born a king on Bethlehem's plan, gold I bring to crown Him again." This one is the most straightforward - gold symbolizes the Kingship of Christ. "Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom." Myrrh is an embalming spice. Already at Christ's birth, we have the symbolic reminder of his death. "Frankincense to offer have I. Incense owns

a deity nigh." In many religious traditions, incense symbolizes prayers rising to heaven. In some pagan traditions, it is thought to help "call down" the deity. The gift of frankincense symbolizes Jesus' role as the Great High Priest, sanctifying the world through his sacrifice. ©LPi



# **Epiphany Blessing** *Explained*

The Epiphany household blessing is a centuriesold tradition that invokes God's blessing on all who enter one's home.

All you need for an Epiphany blessing is chalk. There are a few different formulas for blessings out there, but the essence of the ritual is always the same: a priest or the head of the household calls down God's blessing on the house and everyone who comes into it, and an inscription is made above the door in chalk.

The inscription reads: the first two digits of the year + C + M + B + the last two digits of the year. The initials C, M and B represent the names of the magi - Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar — and also signify the Latin phrase *Christus mansionem benedicat*: "May Christ bless the house." ©LPi

# ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT REQUEST

We **WILL NOT** do a parish wide mailing of contribution statements. If you would like a copy of your 2024 contributions for income tax purposes, please fill out a request form found at the church entrance and drop it in the collection basket. Or call the parish office at 248-542-8720 after January 2, 2025.

Please make request by January 17, 2025.

# RDFAKFAST BOOK STUDY

### **WEDNESDAYS 9:00AM** Beginning JANUARY 15, 2025

# **Desiring God's Will**By David G. Benner

"Most people think of God's will as something to be found or as the receiving of guidance from God when making decisions. Too often, however, the problem is not that we don't know what God desires for our lives, but rather that we just don't want to do what we already know he wants. How might our wills be changed so that we become both willing and able to do what God asks of us? In Desiring God's Will psychologist and spiritual director David G. Benner explores the transformation of the will in Christian spirituality. He examines why our desires are disordered and how our human volition can be brought into alignment with God's intentions so that we willingly choose that which God wants for us. In so doing, Benner shows us that cultivating discernment and being attuned to God's desires is the path to true life, spiritual health and freedom. God wants to change our choosing, not just our choices."

Amazon.com

Sign up in back of church January 4/5 or January 11/12 or call the parish office to register.





# RESCHEDULED TO SUNDAY, JANUARY 19

St. Mary Parish will be using our facilities next weekend.

Our monthly coffee and donut hospitality and blood pressure checks is moving to Sunday, January 19th.



## **CCSEM SENIOR MONTHLY** FOOD COLLECTION January 11/12

#### Items requested:

Individual lunchbox sized and packaged snacks like: Crackers, Granola bars, Cereal bars and Fruit snacks

#### Canned Foods including:

Soups, Stews, Chili, Ravioli, Spaghettios, Vegetables

Gift cards in any amount are especially appreciated and used to buy perishable foods from:

Kroger, Meijer, Walmart or Target



...all government leaders to seek wisdom in finding peaceful solutions to world wars and tensions.

...medical and humanitarian aid for those suffering from

hardship due to catastrophic weather, fires, wars, floods, earthquakes and disasters.

...the safety of men and women dedicated to protecting lives and freedom.

...the homeless, the addicted and all who are suffering physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.

...the respect for life from conception to natural death ...all who are sick, homebound, undergoing or recovering from surgery, medical procedures, treatments or testing, and those who have made specific prayer requests.

#### Lord Jesus.

You are the Divine Physician and Healer. To You, we lift up in prayer all who are lonely, homeless, sick or addicted; all who are unemployed or underemployed; all who are anxious or depressed and all who are suffering in any way spiritually, physically or emotionally. In their pain and brokenness, we ask that you bring them the comfort of your loving presence. In You, may they find strength for the day and hope for the journey. Amen

# Women's Sacred Journey

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 11TH 9:00AM

# FAITH FORMATION OFFICE SVF School Bldg.

All women are invited to join other women to pray and reflect on Scripture passages. The gathering is every other Saturday. No registration or fee required.

## WHY DO WE DO THAT? CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED

#### WEDDING FEAST & EPIPHANY

**Question:** How are the feasts of the baptism of Jesus and the account of the wedding feast of Cana related to the Epiphany celebration?

Answer: The Epiphany season focuses on revealing Jesus to the world. Following the Christmas celebration, the liturgical year lays out a series of manifestation points in which Jesus is made publicly known. From its very beginning, the Christian community highlighted three events in the life of Jesus. These are the Epiphany, the Baptism of the Lord and the wedding feast at Cana.

The Epiphany discloses Jesus to the world of the Gentiles, represented by the magi from the East. The accounts of Jesus' baptism reveal his identity and mission, along with exposing him to those to whom he was sent to minister. The miracle of turning water to wine at the wedding feast of Cana, unique to John's Gospel, is the first public sign that Jesus performs, thus manifesting his public identity and his powers. Today in the Roman Church, these are usually

Today in the Roman Church, these are usually celebrated on three successive Sundays: Epiphany, the Baptism of the Lord which is usually the next Sunday, and the wedding feast of Cana, which is proclaimed on the 2nd Sunday of Ordinary Time in lectionary year C.

These feasts connect around the concept of epiphany, public manifestation of Jesus to the world. They help us get to know more intimately who Jesus is and what he is about. Spend some time delving more deeply into your understanding of who Jesus is. Continue to cultivate these "epiphany" moments in your life.

# OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK

Sunday: The Epiphany of the Lord Monday: St. André Bessette, Religious Tuesday: St. Raymond of Penyafort, Priest Next Sunday: The Baptism of the Lord

### GRIEF SUPPORT

Our parish may again offer a grief support series for those seeking a way to work through the grief experienced at the loss of a loved one. We will provide a series if there are enough people who are interested in participating. The series would take place one day a week for six weeks sometime in late winter. If you want to participate, please call Mary Ann Przybysz at the parish office (248)542-8720 by Monday, January 6, 2025.

# QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK FOR REFLECTION

1<sup>st</sup> Reading Question: Is 60:1-6

Isaiah foresees a time when the people of Jerusalem will be overwhelmed with happiness and prosperity. What gift could you receive that would bring you great joy?

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Question: Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6 Paul informs the Ephesians that he received a revelation of God's plan to save all people through Christ Jesus. What do you think makes your friends or relatives open to this idea?

Gospel Question: Mt 2:1-12

The visit of the magi teaches us about God's desire for the whole world know about his Son, Jesus. When do you first recall hearing about Jesus? ©LP!

### THE 2025 JUBILEE LOGO



©LPi

The theme for the 2025 Jubilee Year is "Pilgrims of Hope". It is the 2,025th anniversary of the Incarnation of our Lord."

The logo colors each have special significance.

Red symbolizes love, passion, self-sacrifice, and the fire of the Holy Spirit.

Orange expresses joy, vitality, enthusiasm, and the light that illuminates the path of faith.

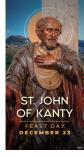
Green is the color of hope, growth, and rebirth.

Blue represents faith, peace, tranquility, and spirituality.

The figures represent humanity from the four corners of the earth, embracing each other in solidarity and brotherhood. The figure at the front holds onto the cross, above waves showing that the pilgrimage through life is not always smooth. The cross elongates into an anchor of hope, which dominates the waves.

For more information visit: aod.org/jubilee, usccb.org or vatican.va

### GETTING TO KNOW OUR SAINTS



ST. THOMAS

BECKET

### SAINT JOHN OF KANTY | 1390-1473

Saint John, sometimes called John Cantius, was born in the Polish town of Kanty in 1390. Not much is recorded about his early life, however, he was a bright young man who did well in his studies at the university in Krakow. He earned his doctorate in philosophy and went on to be ordained and earn a doctorate in theology as well.

He began teaching at the university immediately following the conferring of his doctorate in philosophy. Unfortunately, his popularity worked against him, and he was dismissed from his post on false charges. Saint John was reassigned to a post as a parish priest in the town of Olkusz, Bohemia. His parishioners did not receive him with open arms, and he was unsettled in his new position. But John did not give up, his honest care for the people of his parish eventually endeared him to them.

After a time, he was invited back to the university and he returned to teaching, filling leadership roles in the philosophy and theological areas until the end of his long life. Saint John deeply cared for the poor, giving everything but only what he needed to survive away. He lived an aesthetic life but was such an engaging man that he often dined with nobility.

Saint John of Kanty died on December 24, 1473. He was canonized in 1767, by Pope Clement XIII. In 1998, a new religious community chose the saint for their patron and the Canons Regular of Saint John Cantius, was formed in Chicago, Illinois.

### ST. THOMAS BECKET 1118-1170

Not many saints can be relatable to our times, but St. Thomas Becket is one of the few. King Henry II, a good friend, made him chancellor of England at the age of 36. Then, despite St. Thomas Becket warning the king that he would not blindly follow his wishes, he was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1162.

Soon after, King Henry insisted upon seizing Church rights. In the name of peace, St. Thomas Becket came close to a compromise, and momentarily approved the Constitutions of Clarendon, which would have denied the clergy the right of trial by a Church court. But he later rejected this, and for his safety fled to France where he remained in exile for seven years.

Although returning to England meant almost certain death, St. Thomas Becket came back. According to historical accounts, King Henry implored, "Who will free me from this troublesome priest!" St. Thomas Becket was later murdered by four knights in his Canterbury Cathedral as he was praying. For his part in the murder, King Henry performed public penance after St. Thomas Becket's canonization in 1173.

#### Mini Reflection:

The journey of the magi would have been treacherous and uncomfortable. Imagine the peace in their hearts as they approached the young Messiah and fell to their knees. The new, vibrant awareness of what their own purpose was. It was an epiphany for them. It can be the same for us.

©LPi



# The Answer

by Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Have you ever had an epiphany?

I'll confess that I've never spent much time reflecting on the term "epiphany." In my head, there has always been a strict separation of church and state when it comes to this word. I think of the religious feast of the Epiphany, when we celebrate the magi's encounter with the Christ Child, as totally distinct from our modern understanding of the ancient Greek word which means "manifestation" epipháneia, "appearance."

"I've had an epiphany," I have said many times before, and what I mean is that I have come to a longawaited realization. I have received the answer to a question which has perplexed me, perhaps troubled me. I now know what course of action I must take.

"Today is the Epiphany," I say to my children when we make a king cake and bring the little magi figures to our Nativity beneath the Christmas tree (which will, after today, be put back into storage, for the Christmas season has come to its fulfillment).

And I've always thought I meant I was saying two very different things.

But today, I ponder the journey of the magi, one that must have often been treacherous and uncomfortable. I think about their meeting with Herod, a situation that certainly was fraught with tension and fear. And I imagine the feeling in their hearts as they approached the young Messiah and fell to their knees. I think of the peace they must have felt. The new, vibrant awareness of what their own purpose was.

It was an epiphany for them — a discovery of truth. An answer.

It should be the same for us.

©LPi

INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

The news of the Magnish Herod. We see his anxiety clearly in today's Gospel. This is what Christ has come to do, after all. He has come to shake things up. Are we ready to be unsettled?

## **Ministry Schedule** January 11/12, 2025 Mass 4:00pm 9:00am

D Tourville C McCarthy Sacristan T Riley J Kosnak Reader #1 Reader #2 D Tourville C McCarthy EME J McCown N Virga M Kairis M Black T Riley T Karolski

B Gutowski

R Juska-Svoba

T Oparka

M Oparka

Traveling Chalice Host beginning week of January 11/12 Robin Silverest

R Bertolini L Collins

R Pasiak

T Pasiak

Greeters



# MASS SCHEDULES

# National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica

2100 W. 12 Mile, Royal Oak, 48073

SATURDAY-8:30am and 4:30pm (livestreamed) SUNDAY-7:30am, 9:30am, 11:30am 3:30pm (Spanish), and 6:00pm WEEKDAYS (Monday thru Friday)

# 6:30am (livestreamed), 8:30am St. Justin, St. Mary Magdalen

1631 E. Elza Hazel Park, 48030 (St J) 50 E Annabelle Ave. Hazel Park, 48030 (St MM) SATURDAY - 4:00pm - St. Justin SUNDAY - 10:00am - St. Mary Magdalen

# St. Mary

730 S. Lafayette, Royal Oak, 48067 SATURDAY - 4:30pm SUNDAY - 9:00am, 11 am MON, TUES, THURS, FRI - 7:30am WED - 12:10pm

### CATHOLIC TRIVIA – JUST FOR FUN

Question: What is Christ often depicted pointing to when portrayed in Christian artwork?

Answer: The Sacred Heart of Jesus.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP GIVING - WEEK ENDING DEC. 21/22, 2024				
Fiscal Year 7-1-24 to 6-30-25	Budgeted	Actual	Over/Under	YTD
Offertory Env. Used & e-fund participants	243	85		
Offertory	\$ 5,185.00	\$ 4,671.72	(513.28)	10,238.66
Energy, Coffee/Donuts, Flowers/Trees, Candles, Mass Intentions	472.00	109.00	(363.00)	(40.55)
Fundraising: includes Budget Deficit envelope, CSA returned	1,673.00	12.00	(1,661.00)	(2,970.21)
Bequests		67.00		982.00
Priest Retirement Fund		5.00		1,162.63
AOD Collections: Retirement Fund for Religious		110.00		1,172.00
Holy Days: Immaculate Conception		25.00		4,222.00
Christmas		1,030.00		4,358.00
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