

# Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Sunday, January 7, 2024  
The Epiphany of the Lord



## PARISH STAFF

Father Abuchi F. Nwosu..... Pastor  
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Deacon Edward Muller (retired)

Dan Salvatore..... Coordinator of Religious Education

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## YOUTH MINISTER

Aneesha Begraft ..... [mtcarmelyouths@gmail.com](mailto:mtcarmelyouths@gmail.com)

## WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday .....5:00 pm

Sunday..... 7:30, 9:00 & 11:00 am

## DAILY MASSES

Monday-Saturday..... 8:30 am (except Wednesday)

Wednesday .....7:00 pm

Holy Days ..... 8:30 am & 7:00 pm

## EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Monday ..... 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday ..... 4:15 - 4:45 pm

## SACRAMENTS OF BAPTISM, MARRIAGE & ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please contact the office to arrange.



**Saturday, January 6**

1 JN 5:5-13 / MK 1:7-11

8:30 am Ely Sagun

by La Pieta Prayer Group

5:00 pm Shirlee Feder

by The Autorino Family

**Sunday, January 7 – The Epiphany of the Lord**

IS 60:1-6 / EPH 3:2-3A, 5-6 / MT 2:1-12

7:30 am Doris Gurda

by Liz & Joe Ryan

9:00 am Intentions of Reverend Damian Breen

by Patricia Cholasta

11:00 am Anna Lukasiuk

by Knas Family

**Monday, January 8 – The Baptism of the Lord**

IS 42:1-4, 6-7 / MK 1:7-11

9:00am Thomas Salvatore

by Dan & Dina Salvatore

**Tuesday, January 9**

1 SM 1:9-20 / MK 1:21-28

8:30 am Intentions of Deacon Ed Muller

by Family

Intentions & Blessings for Caroline Mazzola

on her birthday

by Parish Staff

**Wednesday, January 10**

1 SM 3:1-10, 19-20 / MK 1:29-39

7:00 pm Intentions of Ron Johnson

by Johnson Family

**Thursday, January 11**

1 SM 4:1-11 / MK 1:40-45

8:30 am Richard Fletcher

by Judy Fletcher

In Memory of Justina Muller

by Dcn. Ed & Mary Lou Muller

**Friday, January 12**

1 SM 8:4-7, 10-22A / MK 2:1-12

8:30 am Rich Sinski

by Parish Staff

**Saturday, January 13**

1 SM 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1 / MK 2:13-17

8:30 am Health & Blessings for Josephine Greshko

by Parish Staff

5:00 pm Doug Ernst

by Parish Staff

**Sunday, January 14**

1 SM 3:3B-10, 19 / 1 COR 6:13C-15A, 17-20 / JN 1:35-42

7:30 am Deceased Members of the Muller and

Weisser Families

by Dcn. Ed & Mary Lou Muller

9:00 am Steven Modzel

by Calascibetta Family

11:00 am Nancy Ledbetter

by Patricia Cholasta

**Please Remember To Pray For The Following:**



Elsie Allen, Colleen Apter, Ellen Burroughs, Diane Butterly, Ted Cassera, Matt Chapkosky, Stephanie Cuomo, John, Heather Drew, Ryan Earley, Marion F. Ferrari, Ralph Ferrari, Kerry

Fleet, Judy Fletcher, Angelo Furmato, Rebecca Haze Kemp, Denise Holloway, Jason, Robert Jardine, Jere Johnson, Patricia Johnson, Bruce Konar, Mike Maldonado, Ellen Mathesen, Susanne Martone, Deacon Ed Muller, Yvette Murphy, Fr. Peter Oddo, Madelyn Patton, Birute Rusinko, George Shammas, Stephanie, Andrew Sorce, Aleksandr Stolyarov, Charles Sullivan, Nannette Tabak, Thomas Trogani, Constance Van Hoven, James Welden



***This Week the  
Sanctuary Lamp Burns  
In Memory of August Silbernagel***

**A GOOD STEWARD**

December 31 ----- \$2,650.54

Online ----- \$520.00

Solemnity of Mary ----- \$691.00

Christmas ----- \$475.00

***Thank you for your generosity!***

***\*This week's second collection is for  
St. Vincent de Paul***

**WOMEN AND MEN OF THE ARMED FORCES**

We ask God the Father, through the intercession of St. Michael the Archangel, to protect all the men and women in our Armed Forces. May they be brought back safely to those whom they love.



**Sponsor Certificates/Letter of Eligibility:**

Letters of recommendation for sponsors of the Sacraments can be issued only to active registered members of the parish who are receiving the Sacraments on a regular basis but also who have completed their Sacrament of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation).

**Solemnity of the Epiphany – January 7**

The visit of the Magi occurs directly before the story of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. Matthew's Gospel tells a version of Jesus' birth that is different than the one in Luke. Of the actual birth of Jesus, Matthew tells us little more than, "When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod . . ." The story of the census is found only in Luke's Gospel, but we hear about the visit of the Magi only in Matthew's Gospel.

We know little about the Magi. They come from the East and journey to Bethlehem, following an astrological sign, so we believe them to be astrologers. We assume that there were three Magi based upon the naming of their three gifts. The Gospel does not say how many Magi paid homage to Jesus. In Matthew's Gospel, they represent the Gentiles' search for a savior. Because the Magi represent the entire world, they also represent our search for Jesus.

We have come to consider the gifts they bring as a foreshadowing of Jesus' role in salvation. We believe the meaning of the gifts to be Christological. Gold is presented as representative of Jesus' kingship. Frankincense is a symbol of his divinity because priests burned the substance in the Temple. Myrrh, which was used to prepare the dead for burial, is offered in anticipation of Jesus' death. The word Epiphany means "manifestation" or "showing forth." Historically several moments in Christ's early life and ministry have been celebrated as "epiphanies," including his birth in Bethlehem, the visit of the Magi, his baptism by John, and his first miracle at Cana.

***"Seek the LORD while he may be found,  
call him while he is near." – Isaiah 55:6***

At the beginning of every year here at OLMC we start off by offering to every parishioner the name of a saint to pray to for the new year. We have a bag filled with the names of saints by the back doors of the Church. Please grab one from the bag and pray to that saint for the year. What better way to start off the New Year by asking the saints to help us by praying to God on our behalf—just like we ask our friends and family to do so—and thanking the saints for having already done so.

**Knights of Columbus Pizza Saturday**  
**The next Pizza Saturday is January 20<sup>th</sup>.**

The Knights of Columbus will be selling pizza after the 5pm Mass. Come on over to the Community Center for a delicious slice or 2 or for a whole pie from Cescio's. **\$15 for a large cheese pizza or \$2.50 a slice.** Come and stay or take it to go! Money raised will go towards different charities including the Joseph A. Lacovara Scholarship Fund. Thank you for your support!

**\*Do to an overwhelming response to Pizza Night, we ask that if you plan on buying a whole pie(s), please text Rob (973) 919-2796 no later than Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup> to reserve your pie(s). (There will be an extra charge for toppings.)**



**Come and spend some time with me**  
**Eucharistic Adoration**  
**Every Monday 9am-12pm**

This is a personal invitation to you from Jesus. Jesus waits for us in this sacrament of love. If Jesus were actually visible in church, everyone would run to welcome Him, but He remains hidden in the Sacred Host under the appearance of bread, because He is calling us to faith, that we many come to Him in humility.

"The Blessed Sacrament is the 'Living Heart' of each of our churches and it is our very sweet duty to honor and adore the Blessed Host, which our eyes see, the Incarnate Word, whom they cannot see." (Pope Paul VI, Credo of the People of God)

Just as you can't be exposed to the sun without receiving its rays, neither can you come to Jesus exposed in the Blessed Sacrament without receiving the divine rays of His grace, His love, His peace.

**Remember Me in Your Prayers**

Have you ever thought about sending or requesting Mass for a friend, a loved one living or deceased as a gift? Why not offer such a beautiful gift to them. The reason that this tradition has been passed on for centuries is because of the many spiritual fruits that result from this form of prayer. The celebration of the Eucharist is the highest form of worship in the Catholic Church because we unite ourselves with Christ's sacrifice on the cross in worship of His Father.

**Shop Rite and Weis Gift Cards are available to purchase in the Church office and after all weekend Masses.**

## The Baptism of the Lord – January 8

Today the Church celebrates the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. "When the Solemnity of the Epiphany is transferred to Sunday, if this Sunday occurs on January 7 or 8, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the following Monday (Third Roman Missal). This feast brings to an end the season of Christmas. Ordinary Time lasts from the day after this feast to the Tuesday before Lent.



The mystery of Christ's baptism in the Jordan by St John, the Precursor, proposes the contemplation of an already adult Jesus. This mystery is infinitely linked to the Solemnities of the Lord's birth and the Epiphany that we have just celebrated, as in some ways it takes up and represents their significance to us.

At Christmas we contemplated the human birth of the Word incarnate by the Virgin Mary. In the 4th century, the Fathers of the Church deepened the understanding of the faith with regard to the Christmas mystery in the light of Jesus' Humanity. They spoke of the Incarnation of the Word already working like the 'Christification' of that humanity that he had assumed from His mother. Or put in simpler terms: Jesus is the Christ from the first instant of conception in Mary's spotless womb because He Himself, with His Divine Power, consecrated, anointed and 'Christified' that human nature with which He became incarnate.

In the mystery of the Epiphany, we then meditated on Christ's manifestation to all nations that was represented by the Magi, the wise men from the East, who came to adore the Child.

Now, in the mystery of Christ's Baptism in the Jordan River, we again encounter and represent the truth of the Lord's incarnation and His manifestation as the Christ. Jesus' Baptism is in fact His definitive manifestation as the Messiah or Christ to Israel, and as the Son of the Father to the entire world. Here we find the dimension of the Epiphany which was His manifestation to all nations. The Father's voice from heaven shows that Jesus of Nazareth is the eternal Son and the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove shows the Trinitarian nature of the Christian God. The true and unique God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, shows Himself in Christ, through Him, with Him and in Him.

The Baptism in the Jordan returns to the great

Christmas theme of 'Christification,' Jesus of Nazareth's spiritual anointing, His presentation as the Anointed One par excellence, the Messiah or the One sent by the Father for the salvation of mankind. The Spirit that descended on Jesus shows and seals in an incontrovertible way the 'Christification' of Jesus' humanity that the Word had already fulfilled from the first moment of His miraculous conception by Mary. Jesus, from the very beginning, was always the Lord's Christ, He was always God. Yet, His one, true humanity, that which is perfect in every way, as the Gospel records, constantly grew in natural and supernatural perfection. 'And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and with men' (Lk2:52). In Israel at 30 years of age, one reached full maturity and therefore could become a master. Jesus came of age and the Spirit, descending and remaining on Him, definitively consecrated His whole being as the Christ.

The same Spirit that descended on the water of the River Jordan wafted over the waters during the first creation (Gen 1:2). Therefore, the Baptism in the Jordan presents yet another truth: that Jesus has started a new creation. He is the second man (1 Cor 15:47) or the last Adam (1 Cor 15:45), who comes to repair the first Adam's guilt. He does this as the Lamb of God that takes away our sins.

*And a voice came from the heavens,  
"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well  
pleased." – Mark 1:7-11*

### Evening prayer thanking God for being alive another day

*Before going to bed, it's good to be thankful to God for  
the gift of another day.*

When we are healthy, we don't always thank God for the gift of another day. We take it for granted and simply believe that we will keep on living.

Yet, every day is a gift to us and we do not know when the Lord will call us home.

That is why we should thank God each evening for being alive, thanking him for sustaining our life on earth one more day.

Here is a prayer from the *Liturgy of the Hours* that recognizes this fact and expresses gratitude to God at the end of a day.

*We give you thanks, Lord God Almighty,  
for bringing us safely to the evening of this day;  
we humbly ask that the prayer we make with up-  
lifted hands may be an offering pleasing in your sight.  
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.*



## The circuitous route and the journey of the pagan astrologers to see and worship Jesus.

What would Christmas be without lights? Truth be told, none of us can imagine the seasons of Advent and Christmas without generous helpings of light. Candles adorn our place of worship, lights twinkle on a tree, and businesses populate their windows and displays with lights. I know one thing; the power company loves Christmas! It is the season when Christ the light came and manifested Himself to the world. So, Epiphany comes from the Greek word (ἐπιφάνεια), which means appearance or manifestation. Therefore, on this Epiphany we celebrate Jesus' first manifestation to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi. The readings speak about God's manifestation to all people and all corners of the globe. For instance, the first reading speaks about prophet Isaiah, consoling the people in exile. He speaks of the restoration of New Jerusalem from which the glory of Yahweh becomes visible even to the pagan nations. "Jerusalem," the prophet Isaiah cries out, "your light has come in the midst of darkness and thick clouds covering the earth; the glory of the Lord shines upon you." For the people of Israel, then in exile in a foreign land, Isaiah was promising redemption, renewal, and restoration — a new life, to be lived in their own land. And the promise goes beyond the Jewish people to include all peoples. Isaiah's prophecy continues, "Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn." Isaiah speaks how the Divine Light that will emanate from Jerusalem, and it pictures all the nations acknowledging and enjoying that Light and walking by It. As a sign of gratitude for the priceless lessons of Faith offered by Jerusalem, the nations will bring wealth by land and sea, especially gold for the Temple and frankincense for the sacrifice. Everyone will be drawn to Jerusalem because the radiance of God's favor rests on her. This prophecy of Isaiah is realized in Jesus Christ, God's Anointed One which was shown by the visit of the Magi.

Today's Responsorial Psalm (Ps 72) declares, "The kings of Tarshish and the Isles shall offer gifts; the Kings of Arabia and Seba shall bring tribute. All kings shall pay Him homage, all nations shall serve Him" (vv 12-13). Similarly, Saint Paul, in today's second reading, reveals God's "secret plan," that the Gentiles also have a part with the Jews in Divine blessings. Affirming the mystery of God's plan of salvation in Christ, Paul explains that the plan of God includes both Jews and Gentiles. Thus, it is not surprising how that prophecy in these readings were fulfilled with the visit of Magi who are considered gentiles. The Magi, known as Wise Men, are astrologers who interpret the star by gazing at them. Following the rise of the star, they showed up at the door of Herod the Great, king of Judah. Being from lands east of modern-day Israel, they journeyed toward the place where this star cast its light, the city of Jerusalem and its tiny suburb, Bethlehem. Bowing before Herod, the Wise Men informed the king of the magnitude of their discovery and asked him where they might find the newborn king. This news set off alarm bells for Herod. Paranoid and devious, Herod summoned his holy men who told him Bethlehem was where the promised Messiah would be born. Herod sent the eastern princes off with instructions to find the child and, when they did, to come back and let him know so that he might go and worship him as well. And so, they went and "the star they had seen at its rising preceded them" until their arrival to the place where they found our Lord and his parents. They opened their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But being warned in a dream, they returned to their home bypassing Jerusalem and the king who wanted our Lord's life.

It is important to note that there were three groups of people who reacted to the Epiphany of Christ's birth. The first group, headed by King Herod, tried to eliminate Jesus, the second group, priests, and scribes, ignored Jesus, and the third group, represented by the shepherds and the Magi, came to adore Jesus.

We are invited to belong to the third group. So let us continue to adore and worship our Lord during eucharistic celebrations and prayers. This will give a new direction to our lives. Just as the Magi chose another route to return to their homes, let us choose a better way of life, choosing another better route and direction by abstaining from proud, unjust, and impure thoughts, words, and actions, evil habits, and selfish behavior. Strive to become that star leading others to Jesus, as the star led the Magi to Jesus. Begin now to remove the darkness of the evil around you by radiating the light of Jesus' love. Like Magi who offered gifts to our Lord, continue to offer your gifts to one another, offer your talents, your time through your selfless service. Offer your unconditional forgiveness, and compassionate care to others. Christmas means many things to all of us: family, traditions, gifts and giving, music and pageantry. But at its core, at the very center of Christmas, is this One who is "the bright and morning star," the "Light of the world," the living and life-giving Lord. His is a generous light that gives life to all who come to him. In a word, Christmas is light, the manifestation of God's life in our hungry, dark world. Come to that light, live in God's light, now and always. Bring that light to others by pointing Christ to them.

— Fr. Abuchi