

# THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



St. James the Greater  
Montague, New Jersey

St. Thomas the Apostle  
Sandyston, New Jersey

# Wandering Through Life or Following a Star ?

*The star ... stopped over the place where the child was.*

Matthew 2: 9



Imagine how difficult the Magi's journey was. If they came from Persia, as most scholars believe, they would have had to travel nearly one thousand miles. That's four months on the road. Traveling all that time with treasures like gold, frankincense and myrrh would have made them ripe targets for brigands and highway robbers. And then there were the general conditions, "the ways deep and the weather sharp," as the poet T.S. Eliot put it. How many times do you think they were tempted to just turn around and go home ?

To add insult to injury, when they came to Jerusalem, they discovered there was no "newborn king of the Jews" to be found. (Matthew 2: 2) They had to go on to Bethlehem and "search diligently" for him there. (Mt. 2: 8)

What a model of faithfulness and perseverance ! And these were pagans who didn't even worship the God of Israel ! On this day, when we celebrate the first Gentiles to worship the Lord Jesus, let us follow their example on our own journey toward Jesus.

When the way of discipleship seems too deep and the weather too sharp, picture the Magi trudging over miles and miles, determined to get to Jesus.

When the lies of the devil or the allure of the world tries to rob you of your faith, picture the Magi guarding their treasures.

When the road to holiness turns out to be longer that you thought it would be, or when it takes an unexpected turn, picture the Magi pressing on to Bethlehem to seek the Christ child.

The Magi were "overjoyed" when they found the Lord. (Mt. 2: 10) Similarly, your perseverance will be rewarded with the deep-down joy that comes from knowing the overflowing love of Jesus. Surely this is a journey worth taking !

**Jesus, help me to persevere so that I can behold Your glory !**

--from: *The Word Among Us*  
Archives

**THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**  
**January 7, 2024**

**St. James the Greater**

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in  
Memory of Marjorie Worden at the  
Request of Bill, Valerie, Kate & Emilia

**St. Thomas the Apostle**

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns for the  
Birthday Intentions of Michael F. Dunn at the  
Request of his sister, Rose

**SATURDAY, January 13**

8:00AM – Rosemarie Bastian  
req. by her husband, Andy

**SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**January 14**

8:00AM – Barbara R. Austen  
req. by Diane & Harry Cole

11:30AM – Pat Follette  
req. by her Family

**MONDAY, THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD**

**January 8**

9:00AM – Father James Gacquin  
req. by Mary Flexer

**TUESDAY, January 9**

9:00AM – Barbara & Charles Kientzler  
req. by their son, Charles

**WEDNESDAY, January 10**

9:00AM – Peg & Mike McCully  
req. by Jim & Diane Campbell

**THURSDAY, January 11**

No Mass

**FRIDAY, January 12**

9:00AM – Ronald H. Wildrick, Jr.  
req. by his Family  
-Birthday Intentions of Ralph Gioielli  
req. by his cousin, Rose

**SATURDAY, Vigil, January 13**

4:30PM – Walter & Genevieve Stoklasa  
req. by Charles & Julia Jensen

**SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**January 14**

9:30AM – Timothy Davis  
req. by the Territo Family

**ST. JAMES THE GREATER**

**\$1,667.00 – Regular Collection – December 24, 2023**

**\$ 496.00 – Online Giving**

**\$2,934.00 – Christmas Collection – December 25, 2023**

**\$2,477.00 – Weekly Budget Need**

*Consider a gift to St. James Parish in your will.*

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**For On-Line Giving: log onto our website:**

**[saintjamesthomas.org](http://saintjamesthomas.org) Then go to On-Line Giving Link.**

**St. James Altar & Floral Society** If any ladies in the parish are interested in joining, please call Joan Henn at 973-293-3690 or Linda Spinapolice at 973-293-7031.



**Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima Statue/Legion of Mary**

This beautifully adorned statue is a visible reminder of the love God has shown in the Blessed Mother. Placing such a beautiful image in your home turns hearts to prayer and brings grace to those who open their hearts to any image of God's love. If you would like to have the statue of Our Lady of Fatima in your home, or need any further information about the Legion of Mary in our parishes, please contact the parish office.  
*Pray the Family Rosary*

**TO CHRIST THE DIVINE HEALER WE PRAY FOR:**

T.J. Albert, Phyllis Coneys, John Conrad, Sr., Melissa Cunningham, Geraldine Dayko, Audrey DeMarco, Terri Eaton, Marge Erickson, Peggy Gray, Patricia Harrington, Tracy Harriott, Patricia Hassan, Erin Hockenberry, Diane Hoos, Gene Hudson, T. J. Huffman, Charles Jensen, L. Lawson, Fred & Pat Leute, Nancy Lodema, Gerry Mahon, Sara Mahon, Teresa Mantani, Gen Miller, Richard Nowicki, Kim Osonitsch, Deacon Joe Roder, Ginny Sabia, Frances Sangiorgi, Joan Sangiorgi, Brian Scarpone, Kathleen Sibbio, Cecelia Smith, Yvonne Summers, Pastor Mike Sweeney, Walter Winkler, Ricky Wunder

**ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE**

**\$1,629.00 – Regular Collection – December 24, 2023**

**\$ 867.00 – Online Giving**

**\$8,207.00 – Christmas Collection – December 25, 2023**

**\$4,410.00 – Weekly Budget Need**

*Consider a gift to St. Thomas Parish in your will.*

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**For On-Line Giving: log onto our website:**

**[saintjamesthomas.org](http://saintjamesthomas.org) Then go to On-Line Giving link.**



We ask your continued prayers for the following men and women of our parish who are serving our country in the Armed Forces: George Abboud, Bryce Brigham, Saige Bruzard, Brandon Heimall, Mikey Heimall, Nicholas and Karissa Kealy, Ryan Kowal, Colton Lawrence, Joseph Mannion, Luke McDermott, Hunter Olenick, Christopher & Ana Sarao, Nicole Sarao, Marissa Snook, Peter Spinks and James Orr



### Religious Education Classes for January

Grades 5 & 6 and Conf. I & II – Sunday, Jan. 7 & 21 – 9:30am Mass at STC until 12:30pm at REC

Grades 1 – 4 – Tuesday, Jan. 9, 16, 23 & 30 – 4:00pm until 5:30pm at REC

***Wishing all of our Catechists, Aides and Religious Education Families a Beautiful, Blessed and Joyous Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Holy New Year!***



### Reverse Advent Calendar Thank You

Thank you so very much to all the Religious Education Families, who throughout the Advent season placed small gifts and goodies into a bag each day. These bags were returned at the end of Advent and with the assistance of our Confirmation Candidates, provided for 18 Gift Baskets for our homebound senior parishioners. They were overjoyed with this gift of love from each of you and were so very happy to be remembered by their parish family at Christmas! May Our Lord continue to bless your families for your generosity.



### Christmas Thank You

Thank you to all who gave of their time, talent and treasure to others during the Advent and Christmas Seasons: The Children of the Parish and their Parents for their participation and support of our Christmas Pageant, and to the Knights of Columbus for the Parish Tree Lighting and Cookie Challenge, Families who participated in our collection for our Food Pantry and to our very generous Benefactors, who always provided assistance to many of the families of our parishes.

Also, special thanks to our selfless Catechists for all they do throughout the year to encourage and share their faith with the children and teens of our parishes and to Father Wayne and Deacon Wayne for their unending support and prayers for all of us. May Our Lord continue to bless and guide each of you as you bring the kingdom of heaven to so many on earth!

### Celebrate January – Making A Fresh Start

Many people make promises and resolutions to improve their lives or to make a fresh start. During this time of Eucharistic revival, we are called to renew our lives in Christ.

**Jan. 7 ~ The Feast of Epiphany** Remember to bless your home today!

**Jan. 8 ~ The Baptism of the Lord** ~ Spend some time today remembering your children's baptism day. Show them pictures, their baptismal garment and candle. Remember to pray for your Godparents today!

**Jan. 12 ~ St. Marguerite Bourgeoys**

**Jan. 13 ~ St. Hilary**

**The Sacramental Sign-In Book** for our children and teens who are preparing for the Sacraments of First Eucharist (**grades 1 & 2**) and Confirmation (**grades 7 & 8**) These Binders (**Red – Conf. Class/White – FE Class**) will be kept in the back of BOTH churches and **must be signed each week**. Joyful participation in the weekly Celebration of the Eucharist as well as on Holydays of Obligation is a requirement for the reception of these sacraments. It is also expected of all faithful Catholics!!!



### Our Lady of Fatima Pilgrim Statue

The beautiful statue of Our Lady of Fatima in the Sanctuary of St. Thomas is waiting to visit your home!

The purpose of the statue is a way the message of Fatima is spread throughout the world. It brings the graces of Fatima along with Our Lady's message of hope, peace and salvation. Each week, a family or a parishioner will receive this image at the end of Mass. You will be provided with a safe way for it to travel to and from your home. You may keep her in your home for the week and then return her back to church the following week before the start of Mass. Included in the box will be rosaries, prayer cards, books and holy water to help you in your prayer time. These things must be returned when you bring the statue back.

**We encourage all of our Religious Education families and all parishioners to take part in this beautiful and holy experience! There is a sign-up sheet in the Gathering Space at St. Thomas Church on the old altar near a picture of Our Lady of Fatima. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call Mary at 862-268-1876.**

**Please note that the St. Thomas Coffee Hour will take place on Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>. Pot Luck has been changed to Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>.**



A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON THE SUNDAY READINGS

**HIS WORD TODAY** by Rev. William J. Reilly

Most Holy Name Catholic Church, Garfield, NJ

**The Epiphany of the Lord**

**January 7, 2024**

**"You have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for your benefit. It was not made known to people of other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."**

On this day when we commemorate the coming of the Magi, the Wise Men, with three gifts, and their discovery of Mary with the child, we ask what that means for me today. Saint Paul speaks of three things. We are coheirs' of the gift of grace and redemption. We are, as he states in his letters, 'members of the body of Christ', and copartners.

We have been gifted, but also become responsible to bring what has been given to others. This responsibility is an awesome task for which we are held accountable. We learned the three kings returned home, and have heard nothing more about their experience. That cannot be what is expected of us, who discover the presence of the Lord and the protection of His Mother.



# This Week in Our Parishes

STC – St. Thomas Church or Fr. Lewis Center

SJC – St. James Church or Church Hall

REC – Fr. Gacquin Religious Ed Center

**Sunday, January 7, 2024**

***The Epiphany of the Lord***

***Feast of three Kings***

9:30 a.m. STC Mass & Class Gr. 5—6  
and Conf. I and II

**Monday, Jan. 8**

***The Baptism of the Lord***

**Tuesday, Jan. 9**

1:00 p.m. STC Bible Study

4:00 p.m. REC Rel. Ed. Gr. 1 – 4

6:30 p.m. STC K of C Adoration and B-diction

7:00 p.m. STC K of C Monthly Meeting

**Wednesday, Jan. 10**

**Thursday, Jan. 11**

**Friday, Jan. 12**

**Saturday, Jan. 13**

**Sunday, January 14, 2024**

***2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time***

\* \* \* \* \*

**Next Sunday's Readings: *Holy Family***

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: *1 Samuel 3: 3b—10, 19*

Resp. Psalm: *Psalm 40*

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: *Corinthians 6: 13-15, 17-20*

Gospel: *John 1: 35—42*

\* \* \* \* \*

**Soup on a Saturday.** Orders are now being taken for our ***Soup Day at St. James***, on **Sat. Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>**. Soups are by the quart. Cost is: \$ 9.00 each. Choose from: **1. Chili, 2. Manhattan Clam Chowder, 3. Pasta e Fagioli and 4. Italian Wedding Soup.** Or choose them all ! Simply fill out the form you'll find in church, along with the cost, and drop it in the collection basket next time. Any questions, reach Bill Ricciardi at [wjr218@optonline.net](mailto:wjr218@optonline.net) or 845-341-3686. Perfect for a cold winter's night !

**New Year's Resolutions** provoke different reactions in people. Some are "gung-ho" with plans to make great changes in their lives (and we hope they follow through.) Some, from sad experience, pass up the attempt (in order to avoid frustration and disappointing results.) Some can't remember what their resolutions were (from just last week !)

Here is a resolution that can make a big difference in your relationship with the Lord:

**Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament** is held **every Friday, from 10 a.m. till 12 Noon at St. Thomas Church.** It is a chance to come before the Lord in reflection and silence. It allows you to experience inner peace, and enables God to speak to you from His very Presence on the altar. You can stay for 15 minutes or for two hours. A visit with the Lord can bring new hope and deeper trust into your life of faith. Give it a try. The Lord is waiting.

**Thank You to All Our Parishioners** for your generous gifts to both our Churches during the Christmas Season. Your donations will help our parishes to get through the bills of the winter months. We really appreciate your great support.

**And Thank you also** for your very generous and thoughtful gifts to me, Father Wayne, at Christmas time. They are very much appreciated.

I hope that everyone has enjoyed a happy and holy Christmas Season. And that you will find many blessings from the Lord in this New Year we have entered into.

**FORMED.org** Simply go to our parish website: **[saintjamesthomas.org](http://saintjamesthomas.org)**. At the home page, scroll down to the FORMED banner to register (first time) or login (each time after).

Recommended by FORMED:

Watch: *Formed Now: Who Are the Magi ?*

Dr. Michael Barber sits down to reflect on the Magi from the Gospel accounts, and to discover what spiritual lessons can be learned from this historical event recorded in the Scriptures.

**St John Chrysostom** (347-407) on the Three Kings:

*For by gold the power of a king is signified, by frankincense the honor of God, by myrrh the burial of the body; and accordingly they offer Him gold as King, frankincense as God, myrrh as Man.*

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