

January 2, 2022

# **St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Church**

*1511 Hwy 90 South  
Anderson, TX 77830*

*936-873-2291*

*Established 1866*

*Archdiocese of  
Galveston-Houston*

## ***Mass Schedule***

***Wednesday Noon***

***Friday Noon***

***Saturday 4:15 pm***

***Sunday 10:00 am***

**Office hours**

**Tuesday - Friday 8:00 to 4:00**

## **Pastoral Staff**

***Pastor Rev. Elias Lopez***

### ***Permanent Deacons***

Grant Holt

Russell Pasket

Garry Janota

### ***Secretary / Bookkeeper***

Carol Serres

### ***Altar Society President***

Delores Posinski

### ***Baptism Classes***

Thomas Sechelski, Crocket Womack

Chad & Theresa Guidry

### ***Coordinator of Religious Education***

Kirby Borski

### ***Finance Council***

David Borski President, Russell Pasket

Susan Wisnoski, Susie Homeyer,

Ben Leman, Larry Sechelski Jr.

### ***Music Coordinator***

Leo Hock

### ***RCIA***

Kim Ritchie

### ***RCIC***

Dana Wagner

### ***Pastoral Leadership Team***

Jerome Klawinsky, Daniel Otto,

Russell Pasket, Marcus Reaves,

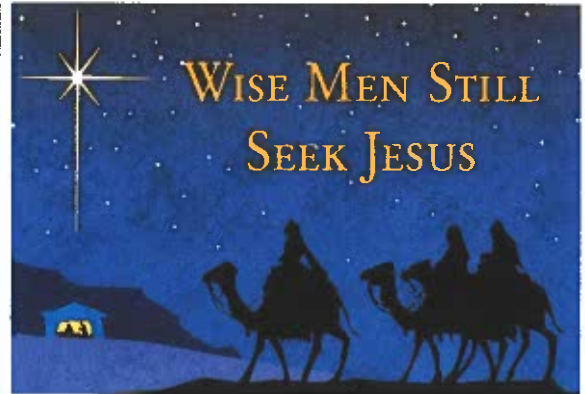
Thomas Sechelski, Gail Sowell

Linda Toler, Dana Wagner

**January 2, 2022**

*"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood  
remains in me and I in him, says the Lord." John 6:56*

**Lord, every nation on  
earth will adore you.**



Today's feast celebrates the revelation of the Messiah to those outside the Jewish covenant. The three Magi were among the first to recognize Jesus as King, and Tradition holds that their encounter transformed them from outsiders (Gentiles) to faithful believers who proclaimed this Good News. God desires salvation for the whole world, and we are commissioned by our baptism to bring others to encounter Christ, so that they, too, might be transformed.

**Mass Intentions**

**Wednesday January 5th noon**

Living & deceased members of the  
Larry Sechelski family

**Friday January 7th noon**

Sammy Sopchak, Leon & Ophelia Ketkoski

**Saturday January 8th 4:15**

Adam & Margaret Szymczak

**Sunday January 9th 10:00**

Floyd & James Pasket

John & Maggie Pasket

Willie, Christine & Frank Sechelski

*Building  
on  
our past,  
Securing  
our  
future!*

**Father Eli**

lopez.eli68@gmail.com

<><>

[www.FORMED.org](http://www.FORMED.org)

Enter Parish code:

MVMZKF to register

<><>

[Ststanskoka.flocknote.com/](http://Ststanskoka.flocknote.com/)

or

Text STSTANS to 84576

<><>

Web: [www.saintstans.org](http://www.saintstans.org)

Email:

[ststan@embarqmail.com](mailto:ststan@embarqmail.com)



**Liturgical Ministers Schedule**



**Saturday January 8th 4:15 pm**

**Lectors:** Delores Posinski and Joan Pushee

**Rosary:** Delores Posinski

**Altar Servers:** Kyle Buenger, Ryan Buenger, Jonathon Ritchie

**Ushers:** Danny Pasket, Darrell Wagner, Johnny Pasket Jr., Michael Wisnoski

**Sunday January 9th 10:00 am**

**Lectors:** Marion Szymczak & Larry Sechelski Jr.

**Rosary:** Linda LaSalle

**Altar Servers:** Jacob Borski, Evan Borski, Claire Borski

**Ushers:** Ed Marek, Gary Klodzinski, Daniel Klawinsky, Don Sowell

**If you cannot be present, please find a replacement**

January 2, 2022

*The Epiphany of the Lord (C)*

Is 60:1–6

Eph 3:2–3a, 5–6

Mt 2:1–12

And behold, the star that  
they had seen at its rising  
preceded them, until it came  
and stopped over the place  
where the child was.

MATTHEW 2:9



ANTON JANKOVY / SHUTTERSTOCK

## Your Light has Come!

**M**any traditional religions have in some way ascribed divinity to light—either they claim that light emanates from a god or that light itself is divine. This is probably because light is a primal necessity, essential for life. We find such thinking in today's readings.

"Your light has come" (Isaiah 60:1) says today's Old Testament reading. This is Isaiah's glorious message for the people of Jerusalem. The city had been destroyed; the people scattered; the future looked bleak. This message must have filled the people with hope. Not only does light bring them hope, but the light actually streams from their God. It is the Lord who shines, bestowing his radiance upon them. This light is filled with promise.

The story of the Magi is not meant primarily for children who delight in moving figurines of the three kings a bit closer to the stable every day. This is an adult story about inner darkness and enlightenment. The strangers, ignorant of ancient Israel's traditions, were able to read the signs of the times. Because of their openness, they found the Light of the World. The learned men of Jerusalem were well-schooled in the ancient promises, for they knew where to send the strangers. However, they felt threatened by these signs. They closed their minds and hearts to any omens that might imperil their positions of privilege. They had a chance to benefit from this new light, but they turned their backs on it.

*Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA*

### FOR Reflection

- ✧ *What is your attitude toward new ways of understanding your faith?*
- ✧ *Pray that all people will be open to read the signs of the times.*



# Dear Padre,

## How is Twelfth Night related to Christmas?

**T**welfth Night is another name for the Epiphany, which traditionally occurred on January 6, the twelfth day after Christmas. Since the 1980s, United States Catholics have celebrated the Epiphany on the first Sunday after January 1, which is why we're celebrating it today instead of Thursday.

Liturgical celebrations are distinguished as solemnities, feasts, and memorials according to their importance. The two greatest solemnities, Easter and Christmas, continue for an octave (eight days). Since the octave of Christmas runs from December 25 through January 1 (the solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God), it's not affected by the transfer of the Epiphany celebration.

Christmas is the great gift-giving day in the United States. In other cultures—for example, the Latino community—the anticipation and excitement of gift-giving is saved for Epiphany, the day the Magi brought their gifts to Jesus.

We often complain about how frenzied Christmas is—how much shopping, wrapping, and baking there is to do. But Christmas should be a time of worship and acknowledging the gift God gave us by sending his Son.

Epiphany, on the other hand, is made for celebration, gift-giving, going all out. Perhaps someday we can return to the traditions of Epiphany and restore Christmas as a day of rejoicing and worship.



*A woman holds a figurine of the Christ Child during Mass on the feast of the Epiphany.*

CNS/DAVID MERCADO/REUTERS

*The Redemptorists*  
[Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org](mailto:Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org)



### 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

## Calendar

### Monday

JANUARY 3

*Christmas Weekday*

1 Jn 3:22—4:6

Mt 4:12–17, 23–25

### Tuesday

JANUARY 4

*St. Elizabeth Ann Seton,*

*Religious*

1 Jn 4:7–10

Mk 6:34–44

### Wednesday

JANUARY 5

*St. John Neumann,*

*Bishop*

1 Jn 4:11–18

Mk 6:45–52

### Thursday

JANUARY 6

*Christmas Weekday*

1 Jn 4:19—5:4

Lk 4:14–22a

### Friday

JANUARY 7

*Christmas Weekday*

1 Jn 5:5–13

Lk 5:12–16

### Saturday

JANUARY 8

*Christmas Weekday*

1 Jn 5:14–21

Jn 3:22–30

### Sunday

JANUARY 9

*The Baptism of the Lord*

Is 42:1–4, 6–7

or Is 40:1–5, 9–11

Acts 10:34–38

or Ti 2:11–14; 3:4–7

Lk 3:15–16, 21–22

January 2, 2022

## The Epiphany of the Lord

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

### GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

My husband is a bird watcher by day and a stargazer by night. I confess it drives me a little bonkers on our evening dog walks. I tend to want to keep moving; between him and our dog (who seems to want to sniff every mailbox), it's the pedestrian equivalent of stop-and-go traffic. Hearing about the journey of the Magi, however, reminds me to pause and look, too. Just as they saw the star rising and followed it to Jesus, we, too, can seek God in our surroundings, our relationships, and the beauty of creation – the next step is to follow where God leads us. As Pope Benedict XVI wrote, the Magi represent “the journeying of humanity toward Christ.” (*Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives*) We may falter from the path from time to time, but Isaiah’s prophecy reminds us of our destination: “You shall be radiant at what you see, your heart shall throb and overflow.”

### GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

The Epiphany is early this year, falling right on the heels of New Year’s Day. If we haven’t made our New Year’s resolutions yet, now is a good time to do so. In addition to typical resolutions such as reducing clutter or getting fit, we can set some spiritual goals as well. The definition of epiphany (lower case) is “a moment in which you suddenly see or understand something in a new or very clear way.” As we reflect on today’s readings, let us ask the Holy Spirit to provide us an epiphany – into how we can grow closer to Jesus during this year ahead. Just as their encounter with the infant Jesus caused the Magi to be transformed from outsiders to faithful believers, and to take a different route home, our encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist is meant to transform all of us, and set us on a new path to light and life.

**RESOLVE** New Year’s resolutions are great! Why not add a couple of spiritual resolutions to the list – perhaps to pray the rosary more often, spend time in eucharistic adoration, or go on that retreat you have been meaning to attend. Ask the Holy Spirit for inspiration and see where it leads.





# A Stewardship Minute

Inspiring a deeper understanding of true giving  
An introduction of *Stewardship* to the congregation

January 2022

Early in the New Year is the perfect time to think about stewardship; considering what God has done for us and how we might respond to God's generosity. To illustrate this need, there is a true story about a pastor's encounter with an older member of the church.

She lived alone, had no living relatives, and the pastor went to visit her at home. While chatting with her about life and her concerns, he happened to ask her to think about remembering the church in her will. He was not pushy about it, but she responded quickly: "Why should I do that? What has the church ever done for me?" The young pastor dropped the subject, visited a little longer, then prayed with her and left. The old soul's response, however, lingered with him for a long time later. As he thought about her question as to what the church had for her, it made him think deeply about the subject: "What has the church done for anyone?" he asked himself. Here is what he concluded:

The church gives to everyone the Good News of God's love. God gave us life. God gave us the earth. God gave us salvation through Jesus Christ. God gave us the church and the fellowship of believers; the family of God. And God has enabled the church to build sanctuaries for worship, schools for learning, hospitals for healing, homes for the needy, and mission stations around the world for those who want to learn about the Savior. The church has provided ministry for the homeless, the poverty-stricken, the jobless, those in prison and so forth.

The pastor began to think of how the church he was serving ministered to the old soul. It had provided the teaching of the Bible, a helpful worship service, music that lifted her spirit, loving Christian fellowship, and comfort in difficult times. In fact, he thought, the pastor's very presence in her home offering his personal concern should have meant something to her!

**Prayer:** Loving Creator, thank you for the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ, who saved us and blessed us by founding the great Fellowship of Believers of which we all are a part. **Amen**

*A Stewardship Minute is available to subscribers of Stewardship at [www.parishpublishing.org](http://www.parishpublishing.org). Simply click on the "Parish Resource Center" and log in using with your account number (Username) and zip code (Password), both of which can be found on the invoice or mailing label.*

parish

Parish Publishing, LLC (888) 320-5576 [www.parishpublishing.org](http://www.parishpublishing.org)

# **Welcome to St. Stanislaus Kostka**

Please contact the parish office if you wish to become a member register 936-873-2291

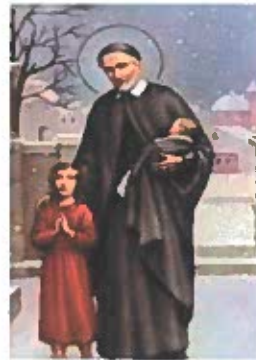
## **Our Holy Father's Prayer Intentions January**

*For true human fraternity*

We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

## **Announcements**

*Please remember our neighbors in  
need with your food  
or cash donations to our  
local St. Vincent de Paul*



"All those  
who love  
the poor  
in life,  
will have  
nothing  
to fear from  
death."

- St. Vincent de Paul

**Next blood drive January 9th with a  
pancake breakfast in the  
parish hall 8:00 to 12:30**

Today's feast celebrates the revelation of the Messiah to those outside the Jewish covenant. The three Magi were among the first to recognize Jesus as King, and Tradition holds that their encounter transformed them from outsiders (Gentiles) to faithful believers who proclaimed this Good News. God desires salvation for the whole world, and we are commissioned by our baptism to bring others to encounter Christ, so that they, too, might be transformed

**Altar Society:** Meets the first Thursday September to May. The next meeting will be Thursday January 6th at 6:00 in the rectory. All Catholic ladies are welcome.

**Baptism:** Classes are necessary for baptism. Please contact the parish office to make needed arrangements.

**Birthdays & Anniversaries:** On the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend of every month Fr. Eli will bless anyone with a birthday or wedding anniversary during that month following each Mass.

**Cemetery Guidelines:** If you have any questions or concerns pertaining to the cemetery, please contact Charles Posinski at 936-873-2113. If work needs to be done you must call Charles Posinski first.

**Choir Practice:** Choir practice is on Thursday evenings beginning at 6:15pm in the church. Contact Leo Hock at 713-435-9949 for more information.

**Counseling:** Gratia Plena is a nonprofit organization that provides mental and spiritual health services for mental illnesses, addictions, and marriage/family problems. All counselors are Catholic and provide services in a way that is faithful to the teachings, values and traditions of the Church. Their closest office is near The Woodlands, but counselors are also available by video session. For more information, see their website at [www.gratiaplenacounseling.org](http://www.gratiaplenacounseling.org) or call (832) 532-0129, or email [info@gratiaplenacounseling.org](mailto:info@gratiaplenacounseling.org)

**Divine Mercy:** Every Friday after the noon Mass . Everyone is welcome to join us.

**Gabriel Project:** Pregnant. Scared. Need to talk! Gabriel Project offer assistance to women experiencing difficult circumstances. Please call Wanda O'Brien 936-597-6328 or St. Mary's Catholic Church 936-894-2223

**Knights of Columbus:** KC Council #4054 meets at the KC Hall every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7pm. Please join us. All Catholic men are welcome. **Next blood drive January 9th with a pancake breakfast. Tamale sale on January 30th after mass**  
Contact Deen Miller 936-524-1700 for membership information.  
And James Moran 936-825-7866 for rental information .

**Marriage:** There is a required preparation process that must be completed prior to one being

**RCIA & RCIC:** Anyone seeking the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults / Children or adult confirmation. Please call the church office at 936-873-2291 RCIA classes to start in September.

**Reconciliation:** 30 Minutes before Wednesday & Friday Masses ( Please call ahead to let the Priest know) and 3:00 to 4:00 on Saturdays

**St. Vincent de Paul:** Next meeting to be announced. For Help the number is 936-873-5002

**12 Hour Adoration:** Our church is open every Monday 8 am to 8 pm. September 13th to end of May. Everyone is welcome to join in the worship with the scheduled persons.





# Prayer for the New Year

On New Year's Eve or New Year's Day, the household gathers at the table or at the Christmas tree or manger scene. Many people make New Year's Day a day of prayer for peace.

*All make the sign of the cross. The leader begins:*

Let us praise the Lord of days and seasons and years, saying:

Glory to God in the highest!

R/. And peace to his people on earth!

*The leader may use these or similar words to introduce the blessing:*

Our lives are made of days and nights, of seasons and years,

for we are part of a universe of suns and moons and planets.

We mark ends and we make beginnings and, in all, we praise God for the grace and mercy that fill our days.

*Then the Scripture is read, Book of Genesis 1:14-19:*

Listen to the words of the Book of Genesis:

God said: "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky, to separate day from night. Let them mark the fixed times, the days and the years, and serve as luminaries in the dome of the sky, to shed light upon the earth." And so it happened: God made the two great lights, the greater one to govern the day, and the lesser one to govern the night; and he made the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky, to shed light upon the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the

darkness. God saw how good it was. Evening came, and morning followed—the fourth day.

(The family's Bible may be used for an alternate reading such as Psalm 90:1-4.)

**Reader:** The Word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

*After a time of silence, members of the household offer prayers of thanksgiving for the past year, and of intercession for the year to come. On January 1, it may be appropriate to conclude these prayers with the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary (in Part VII: Litanies) since this is the solemn feast of Mary, Mother of God. In conclusion, all join hands for the Lord's Prayer. Then the leader continues:*

Let us now pray for God's blessing in the new year.

*After a short silence, parents may place their hands on their children in blessing as the leader says:*

Remember us, O God;

from age to age be our comforter.

You have given us the wonder of time,

blessings in days and nights, seasons and years.

Bless your children at the turning of the year and fill the months ahead with the bright hope that is ours in the coming of Christ.

You are our God, living and reigning, forever and ever.

R/. Amen.



## PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

*Another prayer for peace may be said:*

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.  
O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.  
R/. Amen.

—*Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi*

*The leader says:*

Let us bless the Lord.

All respond, making the sign of the cross:

Thanks be to God.

The prayer may conclude with the singing of a Christmas carol.

## Blessing of the Home and Household on Epiphany

The traditional date of Epiphany is January 6, but in the United States it is celebrated on the Sunday between January 2 and January 8.

*When all have gathered, a suitable song may be sung. The leader makes the sign of the cross, and all reply, "Amen."*

*The leader greets those present in the following words:*

Let us praise God, who fills our hearts and homes with peace.

Blessed be God forever.

R/. Blessed be God forever.

*In the following or similar words, the leader prepares those present for the blessing:*

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling place among us. It is Christ who enlightens our hearts and homes with his love. May all who enter this home find Christ's light and love.

*One of those present or the leader reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example, Luke 19:1-9:*

Listen to the words of the holy Gospel according to Luke:

Jesus came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way.> When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly,



for today I must stay at your house." And he came down quickly and received him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham."



## BLESSING OF THE HOME AND HOUSEHOLD ON EPIPHANY

*The intercessions are then said:*

Leader: The Son of God made his home among us. With thanks and praise let us call upon him. R/. Stay with us, Lord.

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, with Mary and Joseph you formed the Holy Family: remain in our home, that we may know you as our guest and honor you as our Head.

We pray:

R/. Stay with us, Lord.

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, you had no place to lay your head, but in the spirit of poverty accepted the hospitality of your friends: grant that through our help the homeless may obtain proper housing.

We pray:

R/. Stay with us, Lord.

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, the three kings presented their gifts to you in praise and adoration: grant that those living in this house may use their talents and abilities to your greater glory.

We pray:

R/. Stay with us, Lord.

*After the intercessions the leader invites all present to say the Lord's Prayer.*

The leader says the prayer of blessing with hands joined:

Lord God of heaven and earth,  
you revealed your only-begotten Son to every nation

by the guidance of a star.

Bless this house

and all who inhabit it.

Fill them (us) with the light of Christ,

that their (our) concern for others may reflect your love.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

*The leader concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:*

May Christ Jesus dwell with us,

keep us from all harm,

and make us one in mind and heart,  
now and forever.

R/. Amen.

*It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song, for example, "O Come, All Ye Faithful" or "We Three Kings."*

—From *Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers*



# Growing in FAITH™

Discovering hope and joy in the Catholic faith.

January 2022

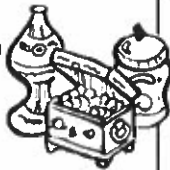
Christ Our Light Catholic Church and St. Stanislaus Church

Rev. Elias Lopez, Pastor

## One Minute Meditations

### Laying our gifts at the feet of the King

The three Wise Men gave Jesus gifts worthy of a king. We can also present Him with our own royal gifts. While ours may not be actual gold, frankincense, and myrrh, we can still give to Him the best we have. Give God the first and the best of what you have and He will give you more than you can imagine in return.



### Fall in love with God

From the moment God created you, he has been deeply in love with you. He made you deliberately so he could love you. "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you" (Jeremiah 1:5). He waits for you like a parent anticipates the return of a beloved child. Don't let Him wait long.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ" (Ephesians 2:4-5).



## Who needs Jesus?

Many today say that they don't have a need for Jesus. They go to work, have homes, put food on their tables, raise families without His help. In fact, daily activities go on but the world can't really make sense without Him.

**Truth.** The truth is in Christ, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). We cannot understand the truth without Him. To make sense of the world, we need Jesus to lead us.

**Life.** The life we have will eventually end. To keep living, we need Jesus. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father,

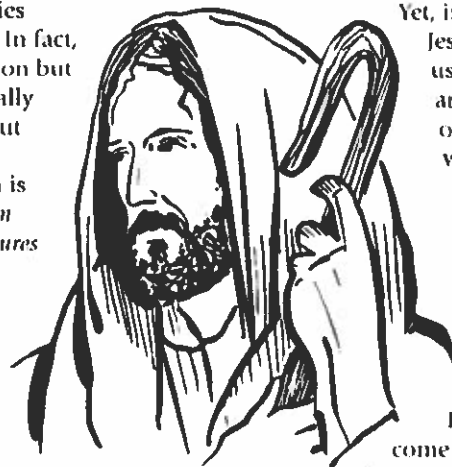
but by me" (John 14:6). Eternal life comes through Him.

**Death.** None of us escapes death.

Yet, in the Resurrection, Jesus defeated death for us. It didn't hold Him and He offers the gift of life to each of us if we live in Him.

**Sin.** Even the holiest of us sins. Without Jesus, what becomes of us? He "gave himself as a ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:6). If we don't accept His price, our sins come back to us for eternity.

**Suffering.** Modern science can alleviate but not eliminate some of the world's suffering. Jesus provides comfort and healing to those who trust Him and surrender to Him.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

### Why do Catholics pray to Mary?

Catholics don't pray to Mary, but instead ask her to pray for us. For example, the Hail Mary prayer asks the Mother of God to stay close to us in prayer.

While we don't

worship Mary, we honor her as Jesus' mother. On the Cross, Jesus gave her to us as our own mother (John 19:27). We can approach her with our needs and concerns and ask her to present them to Her Son. Mary always leads us to Him.



## Three tips to boost your prayer

Prayer fuels our spiritual life, but praying effectively can be challenging. Even the saints had dry spells. Among these was the mystic and Carmelite reformer, St. Teresa of Avila. Try these suggestions from her to enliven your prayer:

**Become aware of God's presence.** It may feel as if God is distant, but He is so close. St. Teresa began by enjoying God's nearness. Know that He is with you and wants your company.

**Bring a good book.** St. Teresa, who struggled with dryness in prayer, kept a book with her. Scripture,



Lives of the Saints, or a book about the Faith can help us focus and spark conversation with Him.

**Be honest.** It is said that St. Teresa once fell into the mud and told God bluntly, "If this is how you treat your friends, no wonder you have so few of them!" God wants to you to share all your experiences with Him – good and bad. Entrust your cares to Him and "Do whatever he tells you" (John 2:5).

### from Scripture

### Luke 4:21-30, God's will is unexpected

In this Gospel, Jesus returns to Nazareth after launching His public ministry. He announced He is the Messiah of Isaiah's prophecy. But then comes a twist: Jesus recounts a time when great prophets were sent to call Israel to repentance and were ignored and persecuted.

The response of faith God was looking for in His Chosen People was found elsewhere, in the Gentiles. Jesus' listeners doubted that He was really the Messiah and were deeply insulted at being reminded that "foreigners" had received God's favor instead of them. In anger, they threw Jesus out of the synagogue and tried to

cast Him off a cliff. He passed unharmed through their midst.

God's will can surprise us. For

example, He willed that the Messiah-King be a local carpenter.

God's favor extended beyond the Chosen People to include

Gentiles, who were

considered outsiders. Sometimes, we assume we know how God works, and lose faith when He does something that seems illogical. We can pray for the faith to see Jesus as He really is and trust Him, even if He does the unexpected.



### Q Can you suggest a & New Year's resolution A to grow in Holiness?

All Christians are called to holiness. "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). There are three tools on which every Catholic can rely to attain greater holiness.



**Daily prayer.** God meets us in a very real and present way when we come to him in prayer. Start in the morning and pray throughout the day.

**Weekly Mass.** The Mass is a sacrifice and a meal. We receive Jesus' body and blood as real food for our souls. He said, "For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him" (John 6:55-56). That's why we call it, "Communion."

**Monthly Confession.** Jesus created the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (Confession) because he knew we would stray. He also knew we would want to come back. Frequent participation in this Sacrament sharpens our sense of sin, holds us accountable for our errors, and gives us the grace to keep trying for holiness.

### Feasts & Celebrations

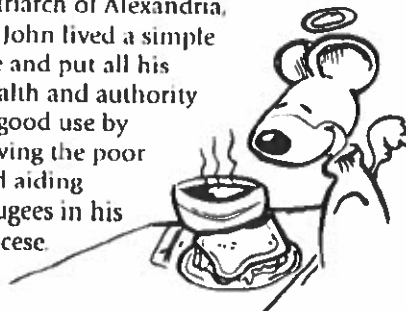
**Jan. 1 – Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God.** When we celebrate this feast, we honor Mary, and also Jesus, as true God and true Man.

**Jan. 9 – Baptism of the Lord.** Jesus began his public ministry by getting baptized by St. John the Baptist. The Heavens opened up and God the Father spoke, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).

**Jan. 14 – St. Macrina the Elder (340).** St. Macrina was related to St. Basil the Elder and St. Macrina the

Younger. She and her husband were forced to flee during the Diocletian persecutions and endured many hardships. After her return, she helped raise her grandchildren Saints Gregory of Nyssa and Basil the Great.

**Jan. 23 – St. John the Almsgiver (616).** Despite being a noble and the Patriarch of Alexandria, St. John lived a simple life and put all his wealth and authority to good use by serving the poor and aiding refugees in his diocese.



### Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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# Gracious Givers

## *Lay Reader Message*

### **Giving More than Money**

For many, giving is associated with money. Giving includes money, but, as faithful givers, we first give ourselves, and the giving of our gifts and resources will follow (2 Corinthians 8:5). We all have different gifts and blessings to share. God has blessed us with gifts of wood-working, sewing, serving, teaching, singing, gardening, leading, cleaning, etc. Whatever our skills or gifts, we can use and give them to extend the kingdom and help others. Through faith, we are compelled to give because we know that God is the source of all of our blessings (2 Corinthians 5:14). Giving expresses our gratitude to God for what he has given to us.

In the third chapter of Acts, we find a lame beggar at the temple in Jerusalem, pleading with people to give him money. Peter and John were entering the temple, and they heard the beggar's plea for help. Perhaps the beggar saw Peter with his hand in his pocket, but the hand came out empty, dashing the beggar's hopes. *"Then Peter said, 'Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk' "* (Acts 3:6). Peter's pocket was empty, but he was willing to give what he had, and he had something worth far more than a pocketful of money.

God wants us to give more than our money. He wants us to give of ourselves, our hearts and our lives, and to share our time and talents. We have been blessed to be a blessing. Thank God Peter had more to give the beggar than money. In order to use our gifts and blessings effectively in service for others, let us ask God for guidance as to how to best use and give what he has given us. Through faith, we can be confident that God will open our eyes and hearts for opportunities to give and share what he has entrusted to us.

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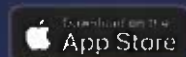
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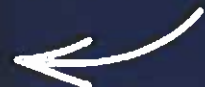
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# The Feast of the Epiphany

"THE GRACE OF GOD HAS APPEARED, BRINGING SALVATION TO ALL." —TITUS 2:12-13

As the first 11 chapters of the Book of Genesis remind us, God's plan for salvation and right relationships began much earlier and extended much wider than the Jewish covenant. It included all peoples or nations (Latin: *gentes*, thus Gentiles). The Feast of the Epiphany (from the Latin, *epiphania*, or Greek, *epiphaneia*, meaning "manifestation" or "appearance.") celebrates God's universal salvation in Christ as it was first manifested to non-Jews as described in Matthew's Gospel account of the Magi (2:1-12).

The story of the Magi (Greek: *magoi*, meaning learned scholars or wise persons, possibly Zoroastrian astrologers from Persia), which only appears in Matthew's Gospel, reads like his Gospel in miniature because its themes echo the rest of the Gospel. Jesus comes into the world—and also into each person's life—which demands a decision about how to respond to his presence and his invitation to a new relationship. Some will reject him, as do the Jewish leaders and King Herod, and some will accept him, as do Joseph and Mary and these wise foreigners

who followed a new star-sign to find the new king who would be worshiped by all people.

Matthew describes how the Magi discovered a bright new star rising in the Eastern skies. At that time it was believed that what happened in the heavens with the stars and planets influenced what would happen on earth. So they interpreted this new star as a sign that a great new king was to be born. To discover the identity of this new king, they followed the star to an obscure village in the Roman province of Judea where they found a child to whom they gave their royal gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

For the first time, Gentiles honor the Jew who was God's promised messiah and savior, who in turn offers them the gift of salvation. The Epiphany reminds us that God is still mysteriously at work, drawing all humanity into a greater realization of the divine presence and plan to reorder our world as God intended it to be through Jesus' presence with us.





## LEARNING FROM THE MAGI

The Magi's star is not just a source of wonder and illumination but it is also the guide for their journey. A journey is a good way to discover a new meaning for ourselves. As we move outwardly toward our goal, we are changed inwardly by the trip. The Magi follow their star and finally find the child in the lowliest of surroundings.

It requires "eyes of faith" to affirm that this vulnerable child in ragged swaddling clothes is really the anticipated great king whose birth will change the course of the ages. But trusting their belief and the clues from the Jewish scriptures, they are willing to acknowledge his royal status and pay him homage. Their commitment is expressed in their gifts. Having found and identified God present in their lives, they offer gifts that stand for themselves. They offer the treasures of their realms—gold, frankincense and myrrh—as signs not only of their reverence for the greatness of the royal child but also of their willingness to worship and serve him.

Once their gifts have been given, the Magi return to their land and their previous lives. But their discovery of the star and the journey it led them on would certainly change them. We too will be changed by our desire to discover the divine in our midst. Like the Magi, once we have experienced God's surprising presence in us and around us in the events of our lives, life can never be the same again. We will see the same old things, but in a brand new way. When we wonder, when we illuminate our lives by using scripture, and when we dare to follow our star to find God in our midst, we certainly will be changed forever.

## WHERE IS YOUR STAR?

*An Epiphany Household Activity*

What was true for the Magi remains true for us today as we continue to search for God and for meaning in our lives. In the darkness of our lives, we look for a star to help us discover God's presence through scripture and the sacraments, through nature, through significant experiences that draw us into the mystery of birth and death, and especially through other persons.

The Magi believed that the new star in the heavens was announcing the birth of a new "super king." So they dared to follow their star to discover his identity. But following a star is a precarious undertaking, not only because the journey is long and leads to the unknown, but also because often our friends and family do not interpret the star the same way we do.

Like these Magi, someone or something has been the star that sparked your interest in Jesus, that drew you either rapidly or reluctantly to him, and that involved you in a life and death story that demands all of your gifts and your full dedication to follow and serve him.

**Gather your household around the table and  
invite each member to share their own answers  
to the following questions:**

- In the midst of your everyday activities, what is or has been the bright "star" that has drawn your attention, that caught your eye, that caused you to stop for a moment to wonder about God's presence in yourself and in creation? Is or was it:
  - something in your situation at home or at work?
  - an accident or a diagnosis of a serious illness?
  - the face of a beloved? The antics of a child?
  - the breathtaking beauty of a sunset? or music? or the beauty of the world?
- Where do you think you are now being led by your star?



### *Epiphany Morning Prayer*

Father, you revealed your Son to the nations by the guidance of a star.  
Lead us to your glory in heaven by the light of faith.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever. Amen.  
—*The Liturgy of the Hours*

# Stewardship

## Will Our Plane Ever Land?

Imagine one day you are flying high above the clouds in a wide-body jet. It has been a pleasant and comfortable trip. Some of the people who have helped make it that way are the crew of flight attendants that we used to call stewards and stewardesses. They have done just what a steward is supposed to do: Take good care of you for a time. But now your flight is about to end. Some announcements are made; you're asked to tighten your seat belts, etc. Finally you've landed and begin to taxi to the terminal. When the plane comes to a stop, you get out of your seat, stretch, grab for your coat, reach for your traveling case and head for the exit door.

As you reach the door and prepare to exit, suddenly that familiar steward steps in front of you, blocking the door. You say, "Excuse me, please," but it doesn't help. There he stands in front of the exit door. Arms crossed tightly, body erect, face stern, and he won't budge! As you try again to get past him, he adds a stern voice to the already stern face and says, "Hold it! You're not going anywhere!" Stunned, you ask what he means. He says, "You must remain on the plane." Then he grabs your arm and with the other hand takes your coat and case. He says, "You belong to me! You are mine! So is that stuff!"

Absolutely incredible! There's no way on God's earth you belong to him. He's just a steward who was supposed to watch out for you and take care of you

for a time. Now the time is up! Imagine what your reaction would be. You would be a combination of angry, stunned, and flabbergasted. *Perhaps those are the emotions God feels when he sees what kind of stewards we are?*



Everything we have ... our lives included, and all we "own" are really just on loan from God. God has made us stewards over them. Somehow we got it all goofed up and act like we own it all. Imagine how we must look? Arms crossed, body erect, face stern, voice sterner as we say, "Sorry, Lord! It's all mine! It belongs to me." We act as if our plane is never going to land!

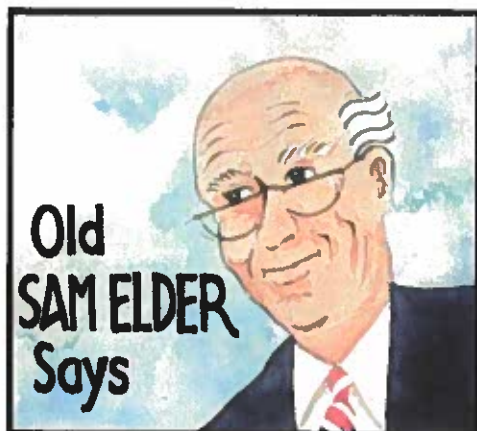
Just in case we think being stewards is all that painful, that it is bread off our table, bills going unpaid, that God really cannot provide for those who trust him to keep promises, that "no one who puts their trust in me shall be put to shame...", consider the story about the widow's mite. This story from Mark's Gospel is about a number of things, but one thing it is certainly about is money. It is about

Continued on page 4...

*The church should be supported by people who believe in the Gospel. Support of the church is a matter of Christian worship and always requires an offering, something of worth to the worshipper that is given in joy and reverence for the Kingdom.*







**P**hil Paylater had a serious question for old Sam Elder. Phil asked, "When you say that I should give to God first does that mean I should give to the church before I pay my installment?"

"Phil, the way I see it is that the money you and I give to God should be ours to give," said old Sam.

"It's my money all right! I worked hard to earn it," protested Phil.

"Let's agree that you worked hard and earned it, but when you mentioned 'installment,' that says you spent some of your money before you earned it," Sam said.

"Yes, that's true. I promised to pay a small monthly installment," Phil agreed.


"OK. Then each month, that small installment is money that belongs to your creditor; it's not yours to give. Your gift to the church must come from your remaining income," Sam counseled.

"Hey, that's not good. That way the church always gets leftovers," argued Phil.

"No! You and I must manage our money so we can give to God first from money which is ours to give. We must manage the normal events of our lives, because we are all subject to abnormal events beyond our control," old Sam

advised.

"You're saying that I should manage well enough to pay both God and the Devil," Phil summarized.

"Yes! When you do that, you can control who gets money first," Sam pointed out. 

## Catching the Rays!

**T**he well-known Bible teacher, Keith Brooks, had just finished speaking to a large class of businessmen on the Christian's responsibility to be a "light" in the world. He emphasized that believers are to reflect the Light of the World, the Lord Jesus.

After the class, one of the members related to him an experience he had in his home, which had impressed upon him this same truth.

He said that when he went into his basement he made an interesting discovery. Some potatoes had sprouted in the darkest corner of the room. At first he couldn't figure out how they had gotten enough light to grow. Then he noticed that the cook had hung a copper kettle from the ceiling near a cellar window. She kept it so brightly polished that it reflected the rays of the sun onto the potatoes. The businessman said to Brooks, "When I saw that, I thought, I may not be a preacher or a teacher with ability to expound scripture, but at least I can be a copper kettle catching the rays of the Son and reflecting His light to someone in a dark corner."

## The gift of time

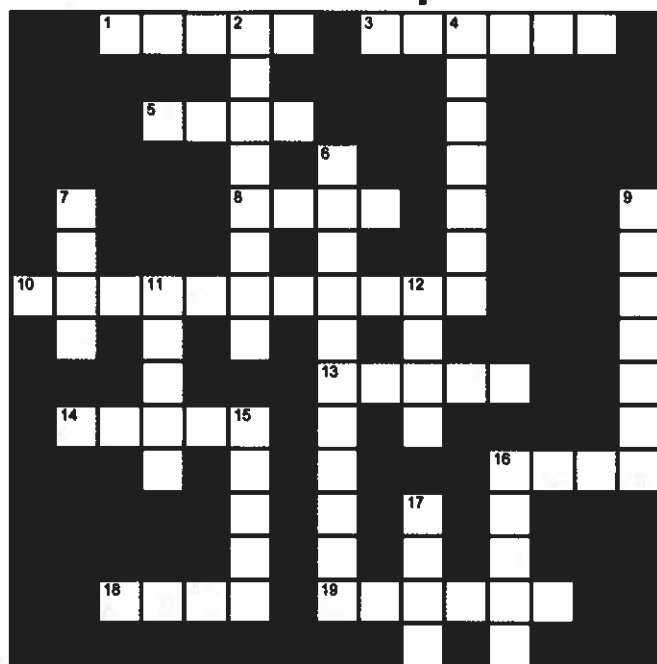
Scripture admonishes us, "choose you this day whom you will serve." We can use our gift of time in self-service. Or, we can take the higher road and use the gift of time in service to others and to our church. When we take that

Continued on page 3...

*The act of giving is an act of life. Selfish living is really an indication of the poverty of our souls. More people refuse to give because of inadequate spiritual resources than because of inadequate material resources. Your money has life in it! If you use it for God, it spreads and grows and brings dead souls to life.*



## Stewardship Crossword Puzzle



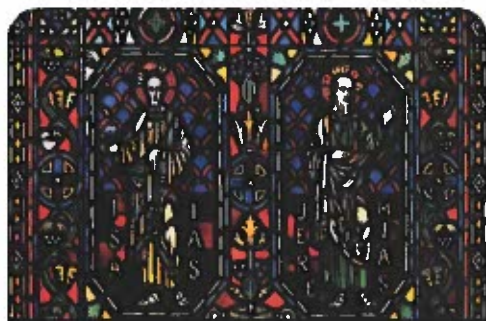
C. Sealey

### Across

1. She gave her all. *Mark 12:41-44*
3. God gives us the ability to produce. *Deuteronomy 8:18*
5. Time *Ecclesiastes 3:1*
8. Love of money is the \_\_\_\_\_ of all evil. *1 Timothy 6:10*
10. Money obtained this way displeases God. *Proverbs 13:11*
13. Being kind to others. *Hebrews 13:16*
14. Priority for God's tithe and offering.
16. God puts a faithful steward in charge of \_\_\_\_\_ things. *Mt. 25:21*
18. The widow's gift to God. *Mark 12:41-44*
19. Precious metal belonging to God. *Haggai 2:8*

### Down

2. A free will gift to God.
4. A gift from God to produce wealth. *Deuteronomy 8:18*
6. We manage, God owns.
7. Love of money is the root of all \_\_\_\_\_. *1 Timothy 6:10*
9. Not a punishment from God.
11. Every faithful steward has a pure one.
12. All we own is just on \_\_\_\_\_ from God. *Page 1*
15. 10% of our increase.
16. A tangible gift from God.
17. Very expensive metal belonging to God. *Haggai 2:8*




Through the Stained Glass...

**T**here are a number of people in every church who are in their later years of life. I'm not convinced that the Lord ever puts a terminal point on when we should quit serving God.

Sometimes, older people say, "I served all my life, let the younger ones do it."


Maybe you shouldn't be doing the things that the younger ones are doing, but somewhere there is a place for your ministry and your gifts to the Lord, no matter what your age is.

Who knows what the Lord may have in store for you!

As part of your total stewardship, you should be concerned about the dedication of your talents. God conducts a continuous talent search. In this talent search, all should be participants; no one should be merely a spectator. 

Continued from page 2...

### Catching the Rays ...

higher road, our light will shine before all people. Stay on that road, although sometimes rocky and steep. Be committed in such a way, that all who you will meet will see the glory of God reflected in your good works. 

**W**hile our daily lives may have about them a certain "sameness," in every moment of every day, God is creatively presenting us with occasions for discipleship. It is our responsibility to use our time wisely, dedicating some part of it to apostolic activity.


# Steward of the Month

## Inner Peace and Joy!

**E**mpty pews are a sad part of today's church congregations. Many things vie for our attention, money and talents. We can learn a valuable lesson from two widowed sisters Pauline (age 101!) and Ella (age 98). Although these ladies reside in a modest apartment complex and live with numerous age related aches and pains, they never neglect worship service or tithing. Not only do they attend weekly Sunday services and Bible study, but most any other church function will find them in their usual pew participating in worship. Fellow members are encouraged by their presence, their wisdom and by their example.

An inner peace and joy surrounds these ladies. They are cheerful and content in times of both celebration and adversity, as they continue their life with firm adherence to the will of God. They would not grieve the Holy Spirit by missing church unless they were ill.


Pauline and Ella serve as a reminder to cheerfully attend worship services when possible. It is written in Hebrews 10:25 "Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another all the more as you see the Day approaching."

God bless senior parishioners such as Pauline and Ella. Although their physical abilities to serve are limited, they still provide us with a beautiful example of stewardship through their dedicated church attendance and tithing. 

"Steward of the Month" is an exciting way to recognize exemplary stewards. If you are aware of someone who has exemplified Christian stewardship, please tell us about it at [stewardofthemonth.com](http://stewardofthemonth.com). Once a month, one submission will be chosen to be published in *Stewardship*. In addition, if your story is chosen, \$100 will be given to the church or organization of your choice.

Continued from page 1...

## Will Our Plane Ever Land?...

us, about our money, and about how we use it. Our Lord is using the widow as an example to teach us what is expected of us: to return to God some of what God has given us. 



**Stewardship Crossword  
Puzzle Answer**



# Graceful Generosity

Published to help you grow as a steward of God's grace.

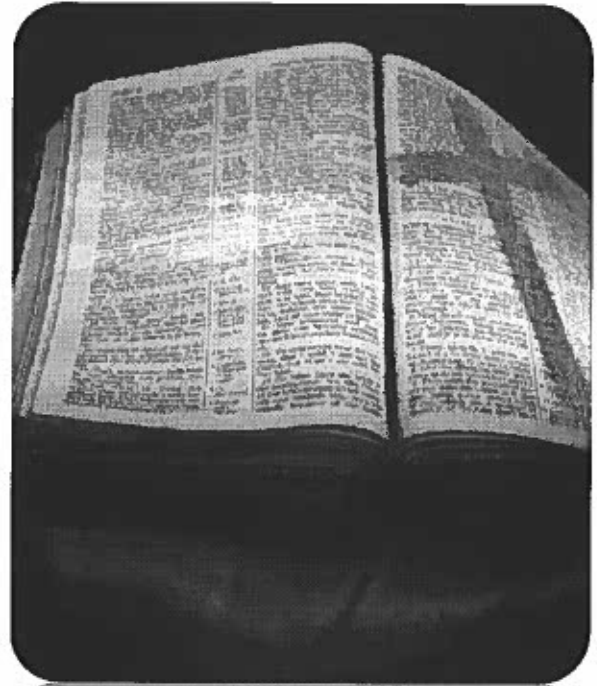
## Full-Time Stewards

God has created and designated us to be his stewards (Genesis 1:28-30). He has charged us with the care and management of his creation. Our responsibilities as his stewards are not in effect only at certain times of the day or days of the week or month. We are not stewards merely on Sundays or other special days. As stewards for Christ, we are to be devoted to full-time effort and commitment to serve the Lord with our lives and possessions. Stewardship involves our entire being, our entire time, and our entire resources. We are not passive managers but active and involved. We are to commit all that we are, all that we have, and all that we will be to God's glory. First Peter 4:10 reads, *"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."*

Stewards act as partners with God. Paul tells us, *"For we are God's fellow workers"* (1 Corinthians 3:9). As our senior partner, God provides everything we need to make our work as *"fellow workers"* possible. To further his kingdom, we are called to exercise our intelligence and resourcefulness. We are God's instruments through which he works. In essence, we are God's hands, feet, and mouth.

Not only are we God's partners, we are his children. He gives us the privileges and the duties of children. God loves, protects, and provides for us. It is the privilege and the duty of the child to be with, talk to, trust in, love, and obey his father. God has been faithful to us; shall we not be faithful as good children and stewards to him who gives our lives direction, purpose, and hope? Our heavenly Father expects us to be faithful stewards of all that he entrusts to us. *"Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful"* (1 Corinthians 4:2). In Romans 14:12 we read, *"So then, each of us will give an account of himself*

*to God."* We will be accountable for what we did with his gifts of time, talents, and treasures.



As stewards, we are shaped and transformed by the Holy Spirit. God energizes and equips us for our stewardship journey. God does all and provides all things to make our stewardship lifestyle possible. As we diligently and faithfully serve him, we will hear his words, *"Well done, good and faithful servant!"* (Matthew 25:23).

## Church signs ... LOL ...

*YOU GIVE GOD THE CREDIT.  
NOW GIVE GOD THE CASH.*

*FOR THE ROAD TO HEAVEN,  
TURN RIGHT AND GO STRAIGHT.*

*FORBIDDEN FRUIT  
MAKES MANY JAMS.*

## Are You One of the Nine?

The account in Luke 17:11-19 of Jesus' healing of the ten lepers is very familiar to us. We remember how these poor afflicted outcasts cried out to the Lord for healing and that Jesus had pity on them and healed them. After getting official clearance from the priests who verified that they were indeed cured of the dreadful disease, nine of them went their joyful way, completely forgetting about Jesus who had answered their pleas. Only one of them returned to thank Jesus.

Isn't this just like us? Aren't we so often one of the nine? We put our requests before God, and, when he answers them, we go our joyful way, forgetting to thank him for hearing us and blessing us. Still he continues to pour out his goodness on us. Take a walk on a summer morning, and you can't help but praise him for the beauty all around – for the world he has created to sustain us and for us to enjoy. Go to bed at night, safe and secure in your home, with a full stomach and an unworried mind and thank God for his benefits.

Sit down with your Bible, unconcerned that anyone might storm your door and take you off to prison for your "subversive" activities, something that happens regularly to our persecuted brothers and sisters in the faith. Gather with other believers on Sunday morning to hear and sing the Word, partake of Christ's body and blood which impart forgiveness of

sins, life, and salvation, and to pray . . . and thank God for his blessings.

Thank him with your words of thanksgiving. Thank him with deeds of service to others. Thank him with giving your money. Thank him with your life, for he gave his for you.



## The Golden Rule

Jesus said, "*So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you . . .*" (Matthew 7:12). Christ in us enables us to treat others with love and kindness. We can live the Golden Rule. Our hope and desire is that others will return that love to us, although we realize that, just as many didn't return Christ's love to him, others may not return our kindness to us. Just because we don't always receive goodness and kindness from others, we should never be deterred from expressing God's love to others.



***Blessings on Your Stewardship Journey!***



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Collections

1-9-22 St. Vincent de Paul (local)

1-23-22 Bishops' Fund for Latin  
America

## Weekly Collections

Christmas Eve \$4,213.00

Christmas Day \$2,202.00

December 26th \$2,543.74

## Please pray for those in active military duty



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Lukas Diorio, Don Fontaine, Travis Hayes,  
Cody Klawinsky, Travis Klawinsky, Stash Allen Kurten,  
Joe A. Lopez, Matthew Macejewski, John McKnight,  
Shelby Seale, Phillip Walkoviak, Travis Watson

## Please pray for our parish family who are ill and/or homebound

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*Lord - hear our prayers*

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