



JANUARY 7, 2024 | THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

HOLY FAMILY PARISH

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Tazewell, VA 24651

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Pocahontas, VA 24635

ST. MARY'S

1122 Farmer Street
Richlands, VA 24641

ST. JOSEPH'S

1007 Independence Rd.
Grundy, VA 24614

The Epiphany of the Lord



The Liturgy of the Word

The Bible does not simply talk about God, it is God's own speech. In the Liturgy of the Word, we encounter the words of God Himself, spoken personally to each one of us. The Lector is not simply a public reader of the Bible. At Mass, the Lord uses the Lector as the instrument through whom He proclaims His word to the people. Think of this as the Lector lending God his human voice so that God's voice can be spoken to us at Mass! The Word of God is to be proclaimed to us at Mass—not read on our own out of the missal.



Fr. Renier Supranes

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord Jesus. The word epiphany means to reveal, to manifest, to disclose or to unveil. The phenomenon of Epiphany is associated with the reality and the presence of light. Think of the lightning in the night skies. When it flashes, the light reveals things in their hiddenness.

In the First Reading, the prophet Isaiah proclaimed: “Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you. See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; but upon you the Lord shines, and over you appears His glory. Nations shall walk by your light, and kings by your shining radiance.” In the Gospel, the three magi saw Christ’s star at its rising.

The deeper meaning of Epiphany is the disclosure of a secret. When something, for instance a secret, is revealed or disclosed, it is like a light has been thrown onto it. It is as if it is uncovered or brought from the darkness into the light. In the Second Reading, Saint Paul talks about the “secret” (the mystery) that has been made known to him through God’s revelation. The mystery was unveiled and brought to light. And what is the mystery or secret that has been disclosed? It is the secret that, according to Saint Paul, “the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and co-partners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel.” What this means is that all nations and all peoples are called to be members of God’s family. No longer is the light of salvation exclusive to the Jews. It now shines on all men and women, on every people and nation.

Jesus as the light of the world is for all peoples, just as the sun casts its light on all of us. Sometimes it is difficult for us to accept that Jesus also calls and loves those who are different from us: people from other cultures, people who come from different races and political persuasions, people of a different color, and even people whom we do not like. But the universality of Jesus includes the notion that everyone is invited to receive His light and grace. This is what the celebration of Epiphany is about—God’s offer of salvation is for all.

Mt 2:1–12

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews?

We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.”

When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, He inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet:

And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star’s appearance.

He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search diligently for the child.

When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage.”

After their audience with the king they set out.

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.

They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house

they saw the child with Mary his mother.

They prostrated themselves and did him homage.

Then they opened their treasures

and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

PRIEST ADMINISTRATOR

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OFFICE MANAGER/ BOOKKEEPER

Lydia St. Peter

OFFICE HOURS

Mon–Fri 9:30AM – 2:30PM

Please call the parish office to make arrangements for the **Sacraments of Baptism, Anointing of the Sick or Holy Matrimony** as well as funerals. **Reconciliation** is available from 30 minutes before a scheduled Mass.

MASS TIMES

SATURDAY

4PM – St. Joseph’s
6PM – St. Mary’s

SUNDAY

9AM – St. Elizabeth’s
11:30AM – St. Theresa’s

TUESDAY & FRIDAY

10AM – St. Theresa’s

Cover image:

Bartolomé Esteban Murillo,
Adoration of the Magi, 1655–60



Busyness and Christian Living

David G Bonagura, Jr., *thecatholicthing.com*

We are all busy these days, and both before and after Christmas, it seems, even more so. We each have lengthy lists of things to accomplish, and we spend the bulk of our time trying to complete one task to move to the next. Exhortations to “simplify” or “slow down” are, frankly, not helpful: the many things we have to do still need to get done.

So we have to find a way to fit God into this busyness routine. How so? We all know the common refrain, and perhaps have used it ourselves more than once: “I’m too busy to pray.” “I’m too busy to go to Mass on Sunday.” “There’s not enough time in the day to spend time with God.”

But let’s probe deeper: Are we really too busy for God, for Mass, for prayer?

Let’s first look at our list of quotidian things to do: Rise, tidy, prepare what we need for the day (lunch, briefings, tools, homework), go to work or school, return home to child and adult activities that require shuttling around, making dinner, eating, cleaning up, paying bills, perhaps exercise or watching television, catching up on the news and websites we follow, checking emails, sending texts, checking in with family and friends, preparing what is necessary for the next day, sleep. Then rise the next day and repeat.

Within this list lies a hierarchy of tasks: some things are more important than others. Importance follows from the value we put on the item. Exercise, for example, may be a necessity for one person, an occasional pleasantry for a second, or completely irrelevant for a third. Eating is a necessity, but how one eats, whether at table with one’s family or on the go to save time, reflects the importance we assign to other tasks and obligations.

“I’m too busy for God,” then, really means that God—and we can include Mass and prayer here—is not important enough for me: I value these other worldly things more than Him.

If God really mattered to me, the way work and health and family do, I would find time to spend with Him, no matter how difficult it may be to do so. In fact, where I place God and prayer time on my daily “to do” list plainly indicates how vibrant—or not—my faith is.

When it comes to ranking our priorities, Jesus did not mince words: He must be at the top of the list:

“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:26)

“If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” (Matt 19:21)

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6)

Following Christ in this radical manner is the goal—and challenge—of lives. Doing so is not a once and done accomplishment, but a daily battle with which we all struggle, and for which we need God’s grace.

If we are to be Christians worthy of the name, therefore, our busyness has to include regular time for God. This, of course, is not to reduce God or prayer to a “thing to do,” though, on our more frazzled days, we may feel that way. It is, rather, to drive home the fact that we must “seek first [God’s] kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.” (Matthew 6:33)

How exactly we include God in our daily schedules is up to each one of us depending on our state in life: scheduling prayer time for police, fire, or medical personnel working a twenty-four-hour shift, say, requires more ingenuity than for students or 9-5 workers. And what exactly we do with God and for how long may change over the years as our circumstances change (birth of a child, new job, caring for an aging parent) or as we change.

There is a minimum standard though: attendance at Mass each Sunday and daily time set aside for personal prayer, that is, for personal “face time” with God.

Personal prayer can take many forms: quiet conversation with God in our hearts, the rosary, divine mercy chaplet, the Liturgy of the Hours, reading the Bible, praying the psalms and readings of the day in the “Magnificat.”

If even this seems logistically impossible, we may have to sacrifice some “less important” thing on our “to do” list—perhaps a bit of sleep, or time checking the news and the phone. A vibrant relationship with God requires us to sacrifice, as He repeatedly told us: “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24)

If there is a “maximum standard,” St. Paul expressed it: “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” (Galatians 2:20) That is, Christ is not only the most important item on my “to do” list, but also, He permeates it and gives it meaning, day after day, by permeating my very being.

Even when making this maximum effort, the earthly things we have to do will inevitably distract us. Too often prayer is little more than a battle to keep our minds on God and not the “to do” list. But if we make the effort to fight, and ask God for help, we claim that list for Christ, however dissatisfying our prayer may feel in the moment.

Busyness, in a way, then, is a blessing: it forces us to make the choice, each day, of the God who chose us first.

mass intentions

Date	Intention
1/6 SATURDAY	
4PM	
6PM	
1/7 SUNDAY	
9AM	
11:30AM	

stewardship of treasure

Donations Received as of December 31 (Week 27)		
CHURCH	ATTENDANCE	OFFERINGS
St. Joseph's	10	\$175
St. Elizabeth's	15	\$260
St. Mary's	13	\$1,385
St. Theresa's	55	\$755
Total	93	\$2,575
Outside Donations		\$2,800
Year to Date Received		\$86,167
Goal		\$76,329
Ahead/Behind Goal		+ \$9,838

OUTSIDE DONATIONS—**THANK YOU!**

Charlottesville, VA donor for St. Elizabeth's: \$2,500
Midlotian, VA donor: \$300

ADDITIONAL COLLECTIONS:

Christmas: \$89

Catholic Charities: \$30

Holy Land Appeal: \$329

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God: \$129

please pray for

Louise Serreno*
Gerry Hankins
Clarence Moore
Lexi Cox
Sarah Wall
Tammy Bennett
Margaret Wasilewski
Nick Ulate
Frannie & Rayburn Minton
Sue Bailey
Christian Lambert
Shane Neal
Pete Belcher
Lucas Boyd
Ralph Heldreth
Chris Jessie
Leo Brown
Carolina Ferrare
Junior Aiken
Jeanne Hash
Lara Marshall
Carol & Jim Shumate
Andrew Satmary
Christian Marshall
Alice Godin
Bryan Gunter
Michael Beavers
Natalie Dodge
Roger Empson
Dreama Ritter
Chris Lambert
Mary Muncy
Cindy Lambert
Helen Petro

Clinard Coleman
Joan Harrison
Joe & Yvonne Blevins
Kyle Brown
Sarah Walters
Amelia Proffit
Maurice Law
Dennis & Frances Savage
Nancy Jo Testerman
Josh Cornwell
John Shumate
Doug Vance
Russ Hatfield
Connie Pace
Jody Hamilton
Jeanne Ameli
Annette Pike
Sharon Mullady
Veronica Ross
Skip Reynolds
Danny McNamara
Louie Negroni
Mary Gobble
Karen Hart
The Dalton family
Allen & Melody James
Betty Tabor
Joseph Romeo
Denise Campbell
Joelle Bolling
Sara Griffith
Chuck Blevins
Tom Farrell

council members

PARISH COUNCIL:

Tonya Hylton, Frannie Minton, Ralph Shawver, Barbara Jones, Donna Lambert, Maria Farris, Zach Hash

FINANCE COUNCIL:

Kathy & Bob Buchanan, Randy Bolling, Doug Vance, Anne Danko, Jim Talbert, Jackie Shawver, Lydia St. Peter

parish news & events

No parish news or events this week!

birthdays & anniversaries:

JANUARY 7: Alvin Angcanan, Della Sarver | 9: Ellen Guanlao, Steven & Sheila Ryan (anniversary), Joe & Daisy Claustro (anniversary) | 11: Gerri Hankins, Louella Motos | 12: Cindy Lambert

13: Derek & Maria White (anniversary)

"We saw his star at its rising
and have come to do him homage."
-Mt 2:2



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