



# THE RIVERDALE CATHOLIC

A weekly bulletin of the  
Parish of St. Margaret of Cortona - St. Gabriel  
riverdalecatholic.org | riverdalecatholic@gmail.com | 718.549.8053



Served by: Fr. Seán Connolly, Pastor  
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Dcn. George Pitula

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA  
6000 Riverdale Avenue, Bronx, NY 10471 | 718-549-8053

#### Mass Schedule

##### **The Dies Domini, "Day of the Lord"**

Saturday: 5:15 p.m. | Sunday: 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12 noon, 5:15 p.m.

##### **Weekday**

Monday through Friday: 12 noon | Saturday: 8:30 a.m. (except for the First Saturday of the month)

#### Confessions

Saturday from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. | Upon request

#### Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Friday after the noon Mass until the recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and Benediction at 3:00 p.m.

#### Devotions Honoring the Mother of God

**The Miraculous Medal Novena** - Tuesday following 12 noon Mass

**First Saturday in Honor of the Immaculate Heart** - 11:30am Rosary followed by a Sung Latin Mass at 12 noon

#### Rectory Office

Hours: Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. | After Hours Emergency Line: 845-622-3996

# THE CHURCH OF ST. GABRIEL

3250 Arlington Avenue, Bronx, NY 10463 | 718-548-4470

#### Mass Schedule

##### **The Dies Domini, "Day of the Lord"**

Saturday: 5:00 p.m. | Sunday: 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.

##### **Weekday**

Monday through Friday: 9:00 a.m.

#### Confessions

Saturday from 4:15 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. | Upon request

#### Devotions Honoring the Mother of God

**The Miraculous Medal Novena** - Monday following the 9:00 a.m. Mass

**The Holy Rosary** - Following each weekday Mass

#### Rectory Office

Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. | After Hours Emergency Line: 845-622-3996

## FROM THE DESK OF FR. SEÁN

Dear Parishioners,

### **The Christmas Season**

Christmas is one of the most important days of the Church year, second only to Easter itself. Celebrating the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is the culmination of the mystery of the incarnation, the feast of God becoming flesh (the Latin "in carne" means "enfleshment"). It is a uniquely Christian teaching, the Divine choosing to become one of us. Because of this belief, God is not only transcendent, but also wholly immanent. As the prophet foretold, Jesus is our Emmanuel (God-with-us).

The liturgical season of Christmas begins with the vigil Masses on Christmas Eve and concludes on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord which is on 11th January this year. So, it is still Christmas. Let's keep up the tree and creche in our homes and continue to greet one another with the joyful words: "Merry Christmas!"

### **The Epiphany of the Lord**

On 6th January, the Church celebrates the manifestation (epiphany) of Christ to the nations (gentiles) in the persons of the Magi--also known as the Wise Men or Three Kings. At the very beginning of the Lord's earthly life, his plan to establish a New Covenant that would bring redemption to all nations was made evident by his epiphany to the gentile Magi. St. John Chrysostom writes: "The Magi therefore were the first from the Gentiles chosen for salvation, so that through them a door might be opened to all the Gentiles." The gifts brought to the Christ child were gold because he is a King, incense because he is God, and myrrh because he would die for our salvation. Let us give the Lord the greatest gift we can in this new year 2026 which is the holiness of our lives.



### **Epiphany Home Blessing with Water and Chalk**

Have you ever walked past a door and seen what appears to be random letters and numbers written at the top? These letters and numbers actually have a great significance. Traditionally on the feast of Epiphany, Catholics bless their homes by using water and chalk that were sanctified on the Vigil of the Epiphany.

This blessing, which is traditionally done on Epiphany or shortly after Epiphany, can be done at any time of the year to ask God's blessing of protection over your home so that all who enter and depart this year may enjoy God's blessing.

*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.*

*-Matthew: 2:9-11*

**FROM THE DESK OF FR. SEÁN (CTD.)**

The blessed chalk is used to mark the doorway of the family home. This symbol is rooted in the Old Testament. Holy Scripture reminds us that God commanded his people to mark their doors. The Israelites marked their doors with the lamb's blood on the night of the Passover (Exodus 12:7).

The inscription is made on the lintel above your front door which is the "threshold" of your home. It is recommended that it be done on the *inside* of your doorway to avoid it being washed or rubbed off from the outside. This inscription and the prayer that follow act as an invocation for the protection of God in his angels and in his saints. The letters have two meanings. They are the initials of the names of the three Magi: Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar. They also represent the first letters of the Latin blessing: "Christus Mansionem Benedicat" ("May Christ bless the house"). The crosses represent the protection of the Precious Blood of Christ, whom we invoke, and the holiness of the Magi who adored the infant Jesus.

The inscription and the prayer should be performed by the head of the household.

Holy Water is then sprinkled in every room of the house. The inscription written with blessed chalk should not be removed until the next year when a new threshold blessing is performed. If your home has never been blessed by a priest, you may also want to consider having this done as well.

When complete, the inscription should look like:

20 + C + M + B + 26

Join us for the unique ritual of the blessing of the epiphany water and chalk tomorrow afternoon, Monday 5th January at 6:00 p.m. at St. Margaret's Church. Bring your own bottles of water which can serve as your family's supply of holy water for the year. We will provide the chalk.

See the next page of this bulletin for directions on how to beseech the epiphany blessing upon your home.

In the newborn King,  
Father Seán

**THE 55<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEN'S BEEFSTEAK**

The 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Men's Beefsteak will take place on Friday, 6 February at 7:30 PM in the Msgr. Daniel A. Peake Memorial Hall in St. Margaret-St. Gabriel School. Once again, all the proceeds from the fundraiser cover the expenses for operating St. Margaret's-St. Gabriel CYO teams. It also offsets additional expenses for the intramural basketball program and awards presentation.

The Night on the Town Raffle is a way in which everyone can participate in the Beefsteak and support the athletic program for the youth of St. Margaret's. The Grand Prize is a Manhattan Hotel Reservation, Dinner for two at a Smith and Wollensky Restaurant, and two tickets to a Broadway Show. Donation for the Raffle tickets is still only \$1 each or a book of six for \$5. Members of the Beefsteak Committee and their supporters will have raffle books for sale after Masses beginning Saturday evening, 17 January. You may purchase tickets there or take them home, fill them out and return them the following week.

The Beefsteak Committee is grateful for the great support they receive for this event.

Tickets to the Beefsteak are on sale in St. Margaret's Rectory. They make great stocking stuffers! TICKETS GO VERY QUICKLY! Cost \$60 per ticket, \$25 for seniors over 65.

### How to beseech the Epiphany blessing upon your home:

Begin by having all family members gather outside the front door. All make the sign of the cross. One person will then read this prayer:

**Priest/Leader:** Peace be to this house.

**All:** And to all who dwell herein.

**Leader:** From the east came the Magi to Bethlehem to adore the Lord; and opening their treasures they offered precious gifts: gold for the great King, incense for the true God, and myrrh in symbol of his burial.

Enter your home and read the *Magnificat*, the hymn of praise sung by the Blessed Virgin Mary in Luke's Gospel after being greeted by Elizabeth. During this, sprinkle the area you are in with holy water:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever.

After that is complete recite the following:

**All:** From the east came the Magi to Bethlehem to adore the Lord; and opening their treasures they offered precious gifts: gold for the great King, incense for the true God, and myrrh in symbol of his burial.

**Leader:** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead and lead us not into temptation,

**All:** But deliver us from evil.

**Leader:** All they from Saba shall come

**All:** Bringing gold and frankincense.

**Leader:** O Lord, hear my prayer.

**All:** And let my cry come unto Thee.

**Leader:** Let us pray. O God, who by the guidance of a star didst on this day manifest Thine only-begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we who know Thee by faith may also attain the vision of Thy glorious majesty. Through Christ, Our Lord.



### St. Margaret of Cortona

MONDAY, 1/5 *St. John Neumann, Bishop*  
12 noon: **Thomas Mannion**

TUESDAY, 1/6 *St. Andre Bessette, Religious*  
12 noon.: **Elizabeth O'Connell**  
6:00 p.m.:

WEDNESDAY, 1/7 *St. Raymond of Penafort, Priest*  
12 noon: **Mary and Joseph Rudden**

THURSDAY, 1/8  
12 noon: **Mary L. and Mary Catherine Cronin**

FRIDAY, 1/9  
12 noon: **Anaisa Diaz and Ariana and Ayden Vasquez**

SATURDAY, 1/10  
8:30 a.m.: **Kitty Boyle**

SUNDAY, 1/11 *The Baptism of the Lord*  
5:15 p.m. (vigil): **Faith and Joseph Morley**  
8 a.m.: **Carol Hoogestraat**  
10 a.m.: **Richard Srlan Stitzel**  
12 p.m.: **Brian and Harry Clare and Rob Williams and Evelyn Morgenstern**  
5:15 p.m.: **George Miller and Elizabeth Prial**

### St. Gabriel

MONDAY, 1/5 *St. John Neumann, Bishop*  
9:00 a.m.: **Anne O'Connor**

TUESDAY, 1/6 *St. Andre Bessette, Religious*  
9:00 a.m.: **Betty LaMantia**

WEDNESDAY, 1/7 *St. Raymond of Penafort, Priest*  
9:00 a.m.: **Ricardo Gutierrez**

THURSDAY, 1/8  
9:00 a.m.: **Felicidad Marquez**

FRIDAY, 1/9  
9:00 a.m.: **Salvador Aguilar Zurita**

SUNDAY, 1/11 *The Baptism of the Lord*  
5 p.m. (vigil): **Robert Daly**  
9:30 a.m.: **Annie Lutz**  
11:30 a.m.: **Nazarene and Bruna Griffin**

### [Continued]

Conclude the ritual by inscribing the following at the top or lintel of the front door with the blessed chalk: 20+C+M+B+26 -- The letters stand for the traditional names of the three Magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. They also represent the Latin blessing "Christus mansionem benedicat," which means "May Christ bless this house" through the intercession of the Three Kings throughout the new year 2026.

*For our parish benefactors.  
Deign, O Lord, for Thy Name's Sake, to reward with  
eternal life all those who do us good. Amen.*

**The collections for Christmas and Sunday 28th December will be available in next Sunday's bulletin.**

Find us on Facebook and Instagram:  
Riverdale Catholic



Sign up to support our parish by recurring  
donations!

Please go to our parish website homepage,  
[riverdalecatholic.org](http://riverdalecatholic.org), for a link for the  
donation page, or scan the QR code to  
donate.



### Welcome to the Parish of St Margaret-St. Gabriel!

If you are not registered as a parishioner, please fill out the form below and drop it in the collection basket or mail it to the Parish Office.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Please send me a New Parishioner's Packet

\_\_\_\_ Change of address/telephone number

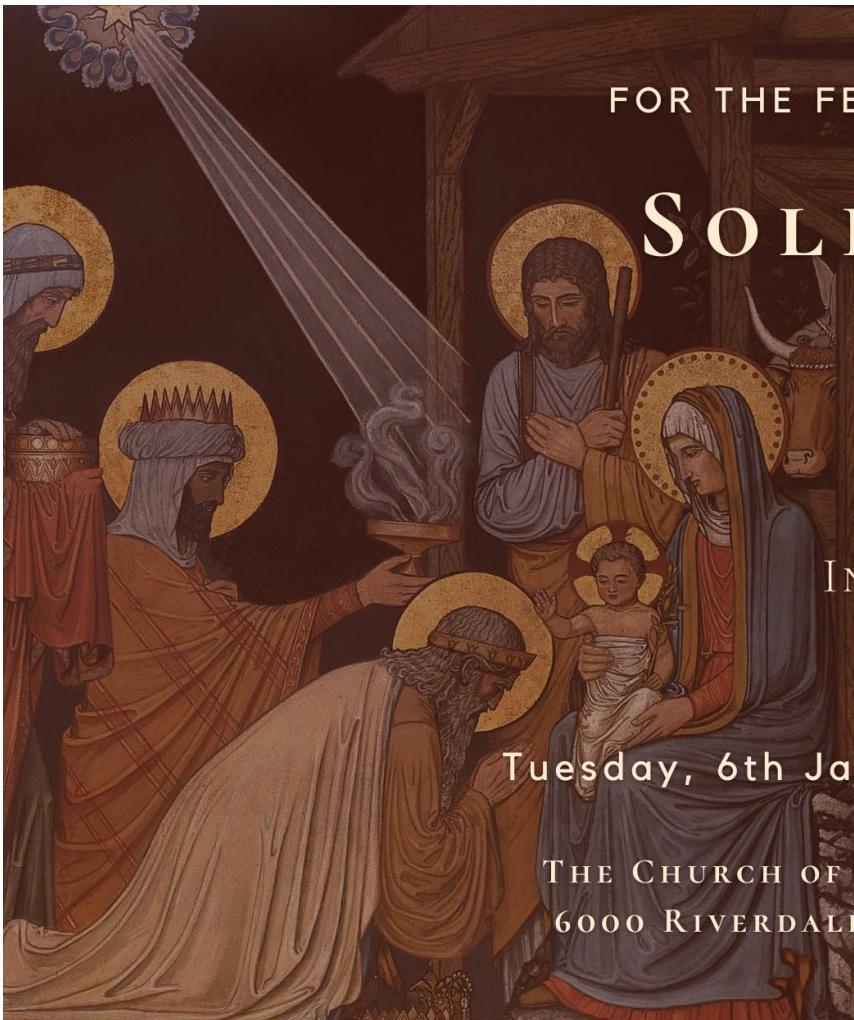
\_\_\_\_ Moving, please remove from parish list

THE VIGIL OF  
EPIPHANY  
Blessing of Epiphany  
Water

Monday, 5th January  
2026, 6:00 PM

The Church of St. Margaret of Cortona  
6000 Riverdale Avenue, Bronx, NY 10471

**N.B. Please kindly bring your  
own water. Thank you!**



FOR THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

SOLEMN HIGH  
MASS

IN THE USUS ANTIQUIOR  
OF THE ROMAN RITE

Tuesday, 6th January 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

THE CHURCH OF ST. MARGARET OF CORTONA  
6000 RIVERDALE AVENUE, BRONX, NY 10471