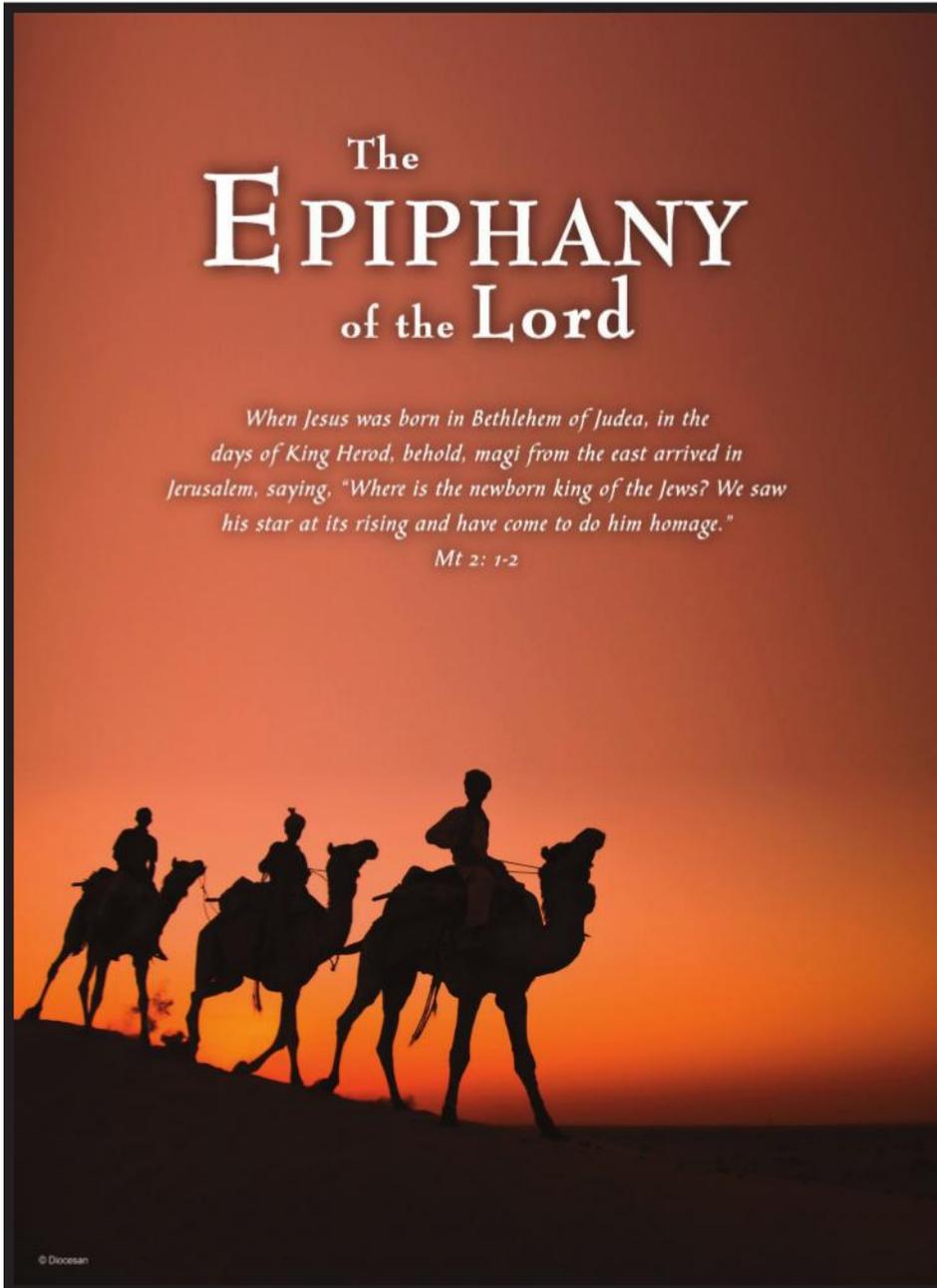


St. Thomas Aquinas Church

5376 State Street
989-799-2460

Saginaw, MI 48603
www.stasaginaw.org



January 3, 2021

Eucharistic Liturgies

Saturday 4:00 PM
Sunday 8:30 & 11:00 AM

Tuesday - Thursday 8:30 AM
First Friday 8:30 AM

In the event of a funeral on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or First Friday, morning Mass will be cancelled.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

2nd & 4th Saturday
9:00-10:00 AM or by appointment

Parish Staff

Fr. Richard Bokinskie Pastor
rickb@stasaginaw.org

Sr. Ann deGuise, OSF
Pastoral Associate
annd@stasaginaw.org

Dawn Drago Parish Secretary
dawnd@stasaginaw.org

Pat Messing Bookkeeper
patm@stasaginaw.org

Deborah Kraklow
Director of Liturgy and Music
debk@stasaginaw.org

Karen Bartels
RCIA Director
Baptism & Funeral Coordinator

Welcome to our Parish: If you are a visitor to St. Thomas Aquinas, we want you to know how welcome you are. If you wish to become a member of our parish, please call the parish office.

Parishioner Info: If you are moving, changing phone numbers or need to update family status, kindly notify the parish office.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.): Anyone seeking information about the Catholic Faith should contact the parish office for more information. Sessions meet from September through Spring.

Baptisms: Held on the first weekend of the month after the required Baptism Preparation Class. Parents are required to be practicing Catholics and attending Mass regularly. Call the parish office to register.

Marriage: Individuals must be registered in the parish at least six months before scheduling a wedding.

A wedding date can only be set after meeting with the parish priest.

Care of the Sick / Pastoral Visits: Please notify the parish office when seriously ill at home, in the hospital or a nursing/assisted facility. Also, if you or a loved one has had a hospital stay and are recovering at a rehab facility or moving into an assisted living facility and wish a pastoral visit.



Monday, January 4
Memorial of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious
 1 Jn 3:22-4:6; Ps 2:7bc-8, 10-12a; Mt 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday, January 5
Memorial of Saint John Neumann, Bishop
 1 Jn 4:7-10; Ps 72:1-2, 3-4, 7-8; Mk 6:34-44
8:30 AM Mass

Wednesday, January 6
Saint André Bessette, Religious
 1 Jn 4:11-18; Ps 72:1-2, 10, 12-13; Mk 6:45-52
8:30 AM Mass

Thursday, January 7
Saint Raymond of Penyafort, Priest
 1 Jn 4:19-5:4; Ps 72:1-2, 14 and 15bc, 17; Lk 4:14-22a

Friday, January 8
 1 Jn 5:5-13; Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20; Lk 5:12-16

Saturday, January 9
 1 Jn 5:14-21; Ps 149:1-2, 3-4, 5 and 6a and 9b; Jn 3:22-30
9:00 AM Individual Rite of Penance
4:00 PM Mass

Sunday, January 10
Feast of the Baptism of the Lord
 Is 55:1-11; Is 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6; 1 Jn 5:1-9; Mk 1:7-11
8:30 AM Mass
11:00 AM Mass

Week Day Mass in the Church on Tuesday, Wednesday, and First Friday 8:30 AM. In the event of a funeral, morning Mass will be cancelled on Tuesday, Wednesday and First Friday.

Please FOLLOW the Guidelines for returning to Church by wearing masks and practice social distancing.

Please pray for all who have been commended to our prayer that they will respond to God's healing will, especially:

Tim W.; Roger; Tom; Mike; Valarie W.; Mary S.; Al V.; David H.; Rachel L.; Sally S.; John S.; S.W.; John; Bill P.; Michael and Emme & family; Jeanne; Jim & Pat D.; Todd J.; Fred; Darlene; Art R; Matthew; and **those who are homebound and in assisted/nursing facilities.**

We are happy to list names of those who request prayers for one month. The list will be purged again on December 28. Please remember to contact the office 799-2460 ext. 1 when a loved one's name no longer needs inclusion on the prayer list.



PRAYER LINE...799-2460, ext.1

PARISH STEWARDSHIP

The three wise men who came from the East to pay homage to the infant Jesus brought Him rich gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh as part of their worship. What gifts have I brought to this celebration to offer to the newborn Savior?

The Parish Financial Stewardship will be listed in future bulletins due to holiday publication deadlines. Thank you.

Please remember St. Thomas Aquinas in your estate planning.



Due to holiday bulletin publication dates and the COVID-19 pandemic, Masses and or events posted in the bulletin may be cancelled or rescheduled.

Please see the website www.stasaginaw.org or sign up for MyParish App (text 88202) to stay informed.

Thank you for your understanding.

Thank You

The advertisements that appear in this bulletin completely defray all publishing costs which the church would otherwise incur. Please patronize the sponsors on the back of this bulletin and thank them for their kind generosity.

Father Rick's Reflections . . .



In the gospel of Matthew, the first word spoken by a human person is the one from one of the magi in address to Herod, “Where ...?” It is also the response of Herod when he summons the chief priests and scribes and his Jerusalem supporters (translated to “all Jerusalem”). But the two questions are spoken from very different hearts. Herod is panic-stricken at the thought of losing his power to another “king of the Jews,” and is desperate to know “where” this threat lurks. It is some of the same group that Herod summons to help him plot the death of Jesus and who will mock him on the cross. In contrast, the magi, Gentile (perhaps Persian) seekers and aristocratic scholars, have no concern with status or ethnicity – their “where” is a sign of their genuine search for the new king so that they may come to pay him homage. They also have the humility to come to Jerusalem to add to their foreign and pagan wisdom the wisdom of the Hebrew Scriptures to help them in their search. In the company of Herod and his cohorts, Matthew sees the magi as witnesses to the later call of Jesus for all his disciples to be “shrewd as serpents and simple as doves.” The search of the magi from the East begins with a sign in the skies and the guiding wisdom of pagan astrology. It ends with a Child of earth to whom they are led by both the star and the light of the Hebrew Scriptures. Whether Matthew intended it or not, later tradition has seen in the gifts the magi bring a hint of the paschal mystery – myrrh for embalming, frankincense for fragancing of sacrifices and burning before the holy of holies, the gold a fitting gift for a king. Their human “dreams” fulfilled by their visit to the Child, God touches their spirit in a dream that warns them of Herod’s hypocrisy so that they do not return to Jerusalem to tell him the “where” of Jesus but return to their own country by another way. When we place the magi in our Christmas crib, they are usually dressed in opulent robes and black, yellow and brown faces. For the number or the physical appearance of the magi we have no biblical evidence, but the truth that their visit declares and the symbolism that the presence in the crib proclaims is the gospel truth that Jesus is king of all the nations of the earth. That is what we pray in the words of Psalm 72 today – the establishment of God’s kingdom of just and peace throughout the world so that the rights of the poor and helpless are respected and the cries of the needy are answered.

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

In this story of the revelation of Jesus to the magi, what is revealed to us about our own eagerness or reluctance to seek God? What is our own ability to listen to the Word of God, our own discernment of hypocrisy and hunger for power, in ourselves, our world, our Church? What is our own attitude to strangers and our appreciation of their wisdom? Do we make the refugees and asylum seekers welcome in the parish or as our neighbors, or do we regard them as a threat to jobs, property values, national security, our own comfortable and near-sighted spiritual wisdom? How do we respond to the young people who are searching for their own stars to guide them in their “where” and “when” of something more in their lives? Where and when must there be a both a “birth” and a “death” in our Christian lives as we gaze on the Christmas Child and recognize the mystery of the adult Christ for adult Christians?

Let me express my gratitude for all the cards, gifts and well-wishes during the Christmas and New Year’s holidays. With my sister also with me, she has been doing a lot of baking, so my freezer is full of goodies. She will be returning home this week.

Because of bulletin printing schedules, I am writing these few words before Christmas as we are just beginning to see the roll out of vaccines for COVID-19. This brings about a level of hope that we will begin to move beyond the pandemic and return to what will be our “new normal” in our lives. As I reflect back upon 2020 and the number of funerals we have had, more have been people who have died either because of COVID or the repercussions of COVID upon their bodies. So many families watched their loved ones die alone in hospitals and nursing facilities. None of this has been easy for people, but we are a people of hope. As we begin this new year, let us remember that we are responsible to care not only for ourselves but also our brothers and sisters, the strangers and aliens in our midst, those forgotten by society, and those who are alone. Let us not have the hypocrisy that Herod showed, and this that life is all about us. God will always side with the *anawim*, the humble poor, and will turn upside-down those who think they are more important. It may be a message we do not like to hear, but it is the gospel. We need to be still and listen to God speaking in our hearts and our lives. If not, we may find ourselves on the outside looking in. Happy New Year and have a blessed year.

F. Rick



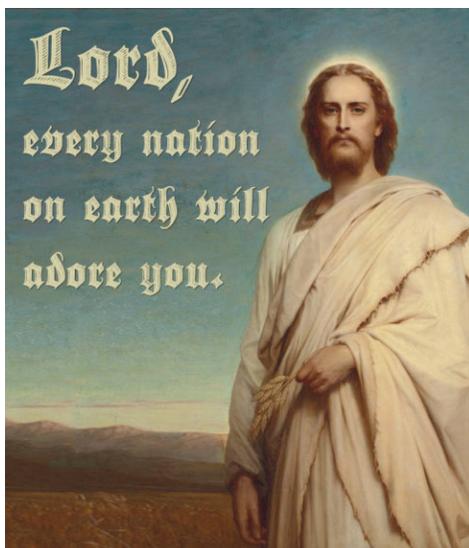
Welcome Visitors & Friends

If you are worshipping with us for the first time or have visited before, we welcome you! If you are looking for a church home in this community, we invite you to consider St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. Please come join us again!

God, thank you for a new year. May everyone in our family be willing to begin anew with a clean slate. We know that you are always ready to forgive us. Help us to be willing to forgive ourselves and to forgive one another.

As we begin a new year, remind us of our truest values and our deepest desires. Help us to live in the goodness that comes from doing what you want us to do. Help us to put aside anxiety about the future and the past, so that we might live in peace with you now, one day at a time. Amen.

Wishing you a
blessed Christmas season
and a Happy New Year.



Pray for a New Year

Strong in faith
True to our mission
Alive!



FINDING THE STAR...
Can you find the Star
hidden in our bulletin?



*The star was in the Christ's
Mission Appeal logo.*



The Christmas Flower donation listing will be published mid January. Thank you for the beautiful enhancement to the Church and Narthex.



Intention Candles

A candle will be lit for your intention.



Envelopes with a red dot will be lit for the Sacred Heart and blue dot will be lit for the Blessed Mother.

Place sealed envelope back in the basket, the weekend collection basket or in the parish office drop box.

Parent Baptism Preparation Class

The next preparation class will take place on **Monday, January 18 at 7:00 PM** in the Church. Please contact the Parish Office ext. 4 to register.

Parents are required to attend the preparation session and should be registered St. Thomas Aquinas parishioners attending Mass regularly. Baptisms are normally held on the first weekend of the month.



OLD TOWN CHRISTIAN OUTREACH
SOUP KITCHEN

January 9/10, 2021
Old Town Christian Outreach

Suggested items: dry pasta and sauces (in plastic if possible), canned soups, crackers, package dinners, canned meats, canned vegetables/fruits, pancake mix/syrup, cereals and any household paper products or cleaning products ie: dish/laundry detergents, cleaners, paper towel/toilet paper.

Monetary donations can be sent directly to 600 Gratiot Ave., Saginaw, MI 48602.

Kids Bulletins

Pick one up to share the Gospel with your children. Puzzles and games each week for ages 3-6 and 7-12. Bulletins are available in the narthex.

Songs and Phrases of Christmas in Gobbledygook

Corrected titles in next weeks bulletin

- ❄ An emotion excited by the acquisition of expectation of good given to the terrestrial sphere.
- ❄ Omnipotent supreme being who elicits respite to ecstatic distinguished males.
- ❄ The first person nominative plural of a triumvirate of far eastern heads of state.
- ❄ Tranquility upon the terrestrial sphere.



Corrected titles -
 Silent Night; The First Noel; O Holy Night; We wish you a Merry Christmas

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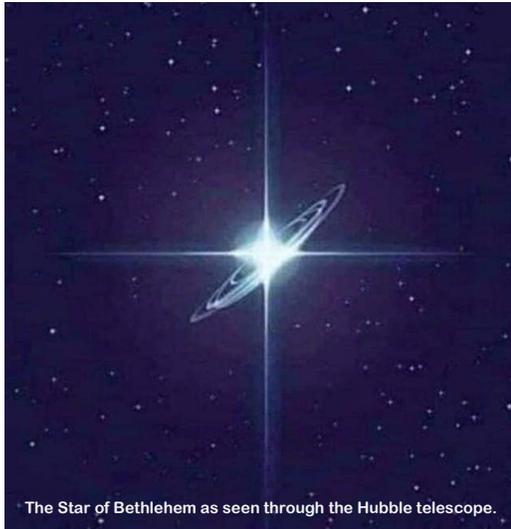
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COVID-19 Prayer of Solidarity

For all who have contracted coronavirus, we pray for care and healing.

For those who are particularly vulnerable, we pray for safety and protection.

For all who experience fear or anxiety, we pray for peace of mind and spirit.

For affected...

Readings for The Epiphany of the Lord

First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

The last part of the book of Isaiah contains the words of a prophet who lived after the Jews returned from exile in Babylon (which is modern-day Iraq). They found their temple destroyed and the city leveled. But with great faith the prophet envisions a wonderful future for Jerusalem.

Second Reading: Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6

The Ephesians were a community in which Jewish converts to Christianity lived side-by-side with Gentile converts. The author of this letter confirms that God's saving grace is available to everyone, whatever their background.

Gospel Reflection: Matthew 2:1-12

The Magi — Gentile (non-believers) possess humility of faith, and the openness of mind and heart to seek and welcome Jesus. King Herod reacts with anger and hostility toward Jesus. The chief priests and scribes greet the birth of Jesus with indifference, but will later resist everything Jesus does. Today we face modern day Herods and scribes with motives of power and domination, or with resistance to change or indifference.

For your reflection: The Magi followed a star to find Jesus. Who or what has been like that star leading me to find Jesus in my life?

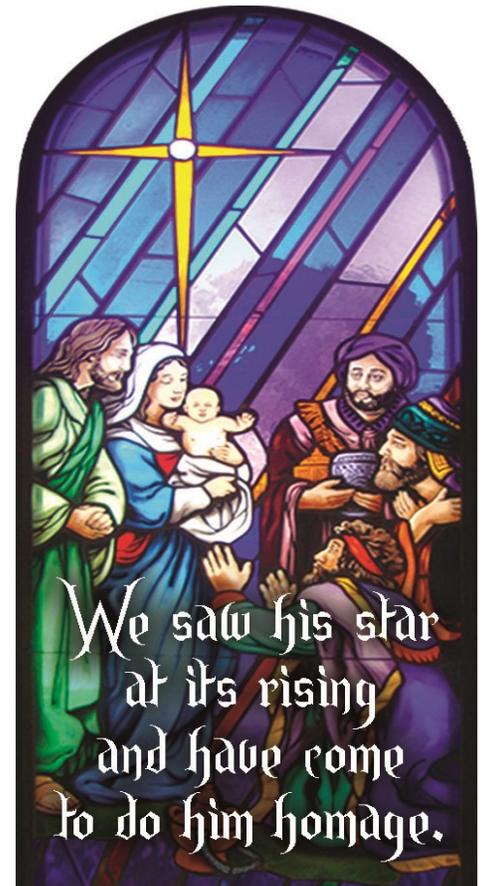
Family Perspective-by Bud Ozar

The Magi in today's gospel were led to Jesus by a star. Who are the stars your children follow? Don't let it be the tabloid stars. Resolve in this New Year to be the guiding star in the life of your children.

Stewardship Reflections

"..they fell down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh..."Matthew 2:11

Notice the order of events in the Magi's visit. First, they knelt before Jesus and prayed to Him. Then they presented Him with their gifts. We, too, must take time to pray before we present our gifts to the Lord. We never know what God may be asking us to share!



Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

January 3, 2021

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

The Christmas tree has become a fire hazard, shedding needles everywhere. The kids have cast aside their new toys. Perhaps we've overspent this holiday season and are vaguely anxious about the bills. The bookmark in our Advent devotional is stuck at Dec. 9, and we've already blown a couple New Year's resolutions. And yet, the words of prophet Isaiah shake us out of our doldrums: "Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you ... Raise your eyes and look about." Freed from the busyness of the holiday season, we get a kind of do-over. Even on the grayest of winter days, Christ's light breaks through in this new year and presents new opportunities to open ourselves to the activity of the Holy Spirit acting in our lives. Let us pray for the grace to recognize it.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

I love the feast of the Epiphany because I went into labor with my oldest son that night; he came into the world on a rainy, blustery Monday morning in 1998. I remember the joy my healthy baby boy brought to me and my husband, his grandmas, aunts, uncles and cousins. Imagine the joy the Wise Men must have felt when they followed that star and saw baby Jesus for the first time! They praised the Christ Child with their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. God still dwells among us today, and the Light of Christ beckons us all to follow it. As we bless our homes this Epiphany and pray, "May all who enter this home find Christ's light and love," let us witness to God's presence in our homes and in our hearts by offering Christ our very own gifts - of our lives and our abiding faith in him.

PRAY the Blessing of the Home and Household: "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."



RESET

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Theresa Stanulis
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In Loving Memory of Robert Chaklos
The Hill Family

The Miller Family
L&D Wizner & Skimbraukas Families
Gerald R. Maczik Family
L&D Pesta & Bruzewski Families
Melvin VanOchten
Rozek & Holihan Families
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L. & J. Pacholke - Deceased
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M. James Robinson Family
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