

PASTOR'S NOTES

Many thanks ...

For your thoughtfulness of Christmas cards, gifts and goodies. All is deeply appreciated!!

Epiphany – *more than meets the eye*

We are familiar with the story of magi following a star and bearing gifts of gold, myrrh and frankincense to the Christ Child. **This story has become the liturgy celebrated on Epiphany.** It is a beautiful, sentimental story imbedded within the Christmas scene. But there is more here than initially 'meets the eye'.

Epiphany is a theological story rich in the great truths found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

First and foremost **the magi** in the Epiphany story represent the Gentile world (non-Jewish people) coming to worship a new born king of Israel. The Gentile world, unlike the Jewish nation, had not had the privilege of having had prophets announcing God's love affair with the human race. Yet here they come! The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the story of salvation for the whole world that will come to be in Christ's Death and Resurrection. As John's Gospel will say, "... anyone who accepts him, he empowered to become children of God." [Jn. 1:12]

In many ways **the star** of the Epiphany story confirms this. Abraham, the father of the Jewish faith, had been promised descendants as numerous as the stars of the sky. Now this secondary light of a star leads the magi to the true light of the world from whom the whole world will be 'born again'. The star also fore-shadows all of creation responding to the one born in Bethlehem. Beyond the twinkling of the star, Jesus will walk upon the waters and calm its waves [Mt. 14:25ff; Mk. 6:48], the sun will become darkened at his death [Lk. 23:44; Mk. 15:33], the earth will quake as he dies, rocks will be split asunder, and sheol will surrender its dead [Mt. 27:52]. The Christ Child is lord of heaven and earth. The Epiphany star is more than a celestial object or a stargazer's wonder.

The **gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh** also tell us who this Christ Child is. Gold represents a king, frankincense speaks of worship given to God, and the scent of myrrh will cover the smell of death, which all human beings will experience.

Such is the richness of the Epiphany story!

A Christmas reflection

The Church gives us the Christmas season as a time to reflect on the meaning and significance of God becoming man in Jesus Christ. Here is a quotation from a saint to aid our understanding of the Incarnation (God becoming man).

St. Hippolytus was a priest who lived between 170 and 236 AD. He was known for his great defense of Christianity in the throes of the Roman Empire. On one occasion he wrote, "*We know that by taking a body from the Virgin he (Christ) refashioned our human nature. We know that his manhood was of the same clay as our own; if this were not so, he would hardly have been a teacher who could expect to be imitated. If he were of different substance from me, he would surely not have ordered me to do as he did, when by my very nature I am so weak. Such a demand could not be reconciled with his goodness and justice. No. He wanted us to consider him as no different from ourselves, and so he worked, he was hungry and thirsty, he slept. Without protest he endured his passion, he submitted to death and revealed his resurrection. In all these ways he offered his own manhood as the firstfruits of our race to keep us from losing heart when suffering comes our way, and to make us look forward to receiving the same reward as he, since we know we possess the same humanity.*"



St. Leo's Catholic Church
211 Langer Ave North
PO Box 340
Casselton ND
347-4609

St. Thomas Catholic Church
401 Third St. North
PO Box 22
Buffalo ND
633-5150



The Epiphany of the Lord January 3, 2021

Weekend Mass Schedule for St. Leo's and St. Thomas

1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays: 8:30 am St. Thomas, 10:30 am St. Leo's

2nd & 4th Sundays: 8:30 am St. Leo's, 10:30 am St. Thomas

Every Saturday: 5:00 pm at St. Leo's

Mass Intentions for the week of Jan 3:

Mon - Jan 4 - 9:00 am - +**Margarette Schmidt** by David & Susan Schmidt

Tues - Jan 5 - 9:00 am - St. Thomas - +**Souls in purgatory**

St. Leo's - NO MASS

Wed - Jan 6 - 9:00 am - +**John 'Jack' Ermer** by Scott & Patty Carew

Thurs., Jan 7 - 9:00 am - +**Myrtle Mergner** by Marian Watson

Fri - Jan 8 - 9:00 am - +**Ann Marschke**

Sat - Jan 9 - 5:00 pm - +**Karol Utt** by Mike Utt

Sun - Jan 10 - St. Leo's - 8:30 am - **Madalyn Wiersma** by Casey & Anna Garman
St. Thomas - 10:30 am - **For the people of our parishes**

Parish Staff:

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Bea Bachmeier: 347-5555

Kelsey Lako: 793-7088

Maintenance: Paul & Sherry Radermacher

Phone: 701-793-7740; 701-793-7798

St. Leo's Directors: Mark Rehovsky & Dave Glennon

St. Thomas Directors: Larry Zaun & Gary Milbrandt

Sacrament of Reconciliation

at St. Leo's

4:00 - 4:45 pm Saturday

at St. Thomas

8:00 - 8:15 am

before all 8:30 am Masses

~ Anytime by appointment

~ Communal Services during
Advent and Lent

New Members: If you are new to the area, we would love to have you as a registered member. To register as a new member of the parish, please visit with Fr. Ermer after Mass.


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Please join in praying the Rosary  
25 minutes before the Saturday evening  
and Sunday morning Mass times.

## PARISH EVENTS/MEETINGS

Sun., Jan 3 - **NO Beverage and Bite** after 10:30 am Mass  
 Tues., Jan 5 - 7:00 pm - Liturgy meeting in the Spirit of Life Center  
 Wed., Jan 6 - 3:45 pm - RE classes at St. Thomas - Group B  
     6:30 pm - Re classes at St. Leo's - Group B, Simple Supper at 6:00 pm  
     6:15 pm - Junior class meets  
 Thurs., Jan 7 - 7:00 pm - Inquiry Class on the Catholic Faith in large classroom in lower level of church  
 Sun., Jan 10 - 4:00 pm - RE 10<sup>th</sup> grade in Spirit of Life Center  
 Mon., Jan 11 - 7:00 pm - Reconciliation parent meeting in the Spirit of Life Center  
 Tues., Jan 12 - 7:00 pm - Cemetery committee meeting in the Spirit of Life Center  
 Thurs., Jan 14 - 12:00 noon - Casselton Ministerium meeting in the Spirit of Life Center  
 Thurs., Jan 14 - 7:00 pm - Inquiry Class on the Catholic Faith in large classroom in lower level of church  
 Tues., Jan 19 - 7:00 pm - Finance committee meeting in the Spirit of Life Center  
 Sun., Jan 24 - 4:00 pm - RE 10<sup>th</sup> grade in Spirit of Life Center  
 Tues., Jan 26 - 7:00 pm - Pastoral Council meeting in the Spirit of Life Center



### Upcoming Ministry Schedule

|  | <b>Saturday Jan 9</b><br><b>5:00 pm</b><br><i>St. Leo's</i> | <b>Sunday Jan 10</b><br><b>8:30 am</b><br><i>St. Leo's</i> | <b>Sunday Jan 10</b><br><b>10:30 am</b><br><i>St. Thomas</i> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lector</b>                                                                      | Mark Voss                                                   | Shari Kensok                                               | Jackie Vavra                                                 |
| <b>Eucharistic Ministers</b>                                                       |                                                             |                                                            |                                                              |
| <b>Altar Servers</b>                                                               | Theo Metzger<br>Ben Metzger                                 | Sarah Kempel<br>Melody Kempel                              | Clay Hovelson                                                |
| <b>Offertory Collectors</b>                                                        | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                    | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                   | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                     |
| <b>Gift Bearers</b>                                                                | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                    | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                   |                                                              |

## NEWS AND NOTES

**Prayers and Sympathy:** Our Parish communities extend our deepest sympathies to Sarah Burchill and her family on the death of her father, John Peyerl.

*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. — Matthew 5:4*

**Catholic Daughters to Meet:** Court St. Ann #261 of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas will meet Tuesday, January 12<sup>th</sup> at St. Anthony's beginning with Mass at 5:15 pm; meal to follow and meeting at 6:30 pm. St. Anthony's requires attendees to wear a mask and to follow social distancing guidelines. If interested in CDA, please join us at our meeting. Members are invited to bring food pantry donations. Any questions, please send email to [regentctstann@gmail.com](mailto:regentctstann@gmail.com).

**Day of Prayer and Penance for Unborn Children:** 7:00 pm Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> at St. Mary's Cathedral, Fargo. The prayer service is being held in observance of the liturgical Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children, marking the 48th anniversary of legalization of abortion in our nation. In addition to this time of prayer, the faithful are encouraged to do some form of fasting or self-denial for the healing of our nation from the effects of abortion on families, our culture, and society.

**Hard Sayings: How to Answer Bible Difficulties:** 7:00 pm Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at Sts. Anne and Joachim Church, Fargo. Trent Horn, author of *Hard Sayings: How to Answer Bible Difficulties* and Catholic Answers apologist, offers clear, reasonable, and Catholic keys to unlocking scripture's true meaning. After the presentation, you'll be equipped to answer the toughest questions skeptics ask about the Bible. The event is free and open to the public. Space is limited. Sponsored by the Diocese of Fargo. For more information please visit: [fargodiocese.org](http://fargodiocese.org).

**Catholic Man Night: Men Meeting Jesus:** Pray and socialize with the guys. Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup> at St. Anthony's of Padua Church, Fargo. 6:00 to 7:00 pm - Adoration and confessions. 7:00 to 8:00 pm - talk and discussion. All area men are invited!

**REDEEMED Trusted Sisters Women's Conference:** The REDEEMED Women's Conference has been rescheduled for February 19-20, 2021 at the Delta Hotel in Fargo. Featured speakers will include Dr. Helen Alvaré, Dr. James Link, Marcie Stockman (foundress of Well Read Mom), and Andrea Thomas of the Vigil Project. The event will also include performances and worship led by the Vigil Project. The conference will be available to attend both in person as well as via livestream. More information on the schedule of events and to register please visit: [fargodiocese.org/redeemedwomen](http://fargodiocese.org/redeemedwomen).

**Follow the Diocese of Fargo** for more information on events and happenings throughout the Diocese at:  
[www.fargodiocese.org](http://www.fargodiocese.org)  
[www.facebook.com/fargodiocese](https://www.facebook.com/fargodiocese)  
[www.twitter.com/fargodiocese](https://www.twitter.com/fargodiocese)

### This week's Stewardship moment:

*"...they fell down and worshipped 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!