

January 2 – 3, 2021 Epiphany – and more work in the Church!

Last week I told you that Christmas is so important that we celebrate it not just for a day but for a whole season. This season is filled with feasts (holy days) that help us celebrate and understand the meaning of Christmas more completely. We have already celebrated Christ's birth on Christmas, the Feast of the Holy Family last Sunday, and the Feast of Mary, the Holy Mother of God on New Year's Day.

Today we celebrate another great Feast of the Christmas Season, the Epiphany. The word Epiphany means to 'reveal or make known something which was hidden.' We call this feast epiphany because the star revealed to the Magi – or Wise Men – that the baby lying in the manger was no ordinary baby. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Savior of the World.

For us today, the epiphany is an invitation to think prayerfully about a few things. First, we should ask ourselves how we 'reveal' our faith each day. Are people able to 'see' Jesus in us? Acts of charity, attendance at Holy Mass, if our health permits that at this time, and humility and patience in dealing with others are some ways we can reveal our faith to the world.

Secondly, the Epiphany invites us to see the universal nature of Christ's mission. The fact that the Magi were foreigners who came from faraway places reminds us that Jesus came for all people. This is one reason why our Catholic Church teaches respect for every human person, from the immigrant to the old friend to the very ill to the unborn child. How well do we live up to this?

Finally, the gifts of the Magi invite us to ask ourselves what gifts we will give Jesus in this New Year. Will we devote ourselves more completely to prayer? Be more generous towards the poor? Strive to grow in patience or break some bad habit? Think about this today!

Some of us are old enough to remember when Epiphany was the end of the Christmas Season. Since the reform of the Church calendar following Vatican II in the 1960's, the Season extends thru the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which will be celebrated next Sunday. This means that, as Catholics, our Christmas Season still has a week to go.

Try to keep the Christmas spirit alive in your home and heart this week. Keep the trees and decorations up, play Christmas music, and, most of all, continue to meditate and reflect on the birth of Jesus. Make the most of the Christmas Season the Church gives us, so that the joy of Christ's birth may truly touch your heart and be evident in your life throughout this New Year.

I want to close with some important news regarding the celebration of Mass in our parish for the next two months. We will be moving temporarily into Mercy Hall for all of our Daily and Sunday Masses from January 5th – March 5th. This will allow workers to complete the last major project undertaken as part of the Capital Campaign we undertook over the past three years. Many of you will recall that we did this successfully for several weeks some years ago when our pews and floor were being repaired.

Having already completed many projects, including the renovation of our historic pipe organ and the improvement of the lights in our Church, we will now undertake the repair of the plaster in the nave (seating area) of our Church. You can look up and see that it is coming undone in spots, and it looks worse close up! We need to do this project to ensure the safety of everyone.

After the repairs are done, the nave will be repainted, in pretty much the same colors we have now (but a bit lighter, I believe). When all is said and done, it should look great!

We had hoped to do this work last summer, but the diocese thought it prudent not to close the Church just as it was reopening for public Mass at that time, which made perfect sense! We are doing the work at this time because we have period of time when there are no scheduled weddings, etc.

Seats in Mercy Hall will be arranged with proper spacing, six feet between rows in all directions. Reservations will still be needed for the time being, to make sure we have proper seats and space for everyone. For now, and I pray this doesn't change for the worse any time soon, we can have 150 people safely spaced in Mercy Hall for Holy Mass – about the same as in Church.

Knowing how cooperative and helpful our parishioners always are, I am certain we can make this happen. Indeed, it is the generosity of our people that is making this work happen in the first place, and has gotten us through all the craziness of this pandemic so far. I have no doubt that the same generous and cooperative spirit will carry us through this, too!

Happy New Year!

Fr. John

RALLY FOR LIFE

The Rally for Life will be held on Friday, Jan. 22nd, from 11am – 1pm at the Capitol in Trenton, NJ. Come & listen to your local representatives & pro-life organizations about what they are doing to promote life. If interested in caravanning or carpooling, call 908-454-9880 & leave your name & phone number.

SAFE HARBOR EASTON

Safe Harbor Easton Emergency Winter Shelter December 1 – March 31, 2021. Overnight Shelter Hours are 7pm – 7am every day. Must be in by 9pm unless brought in by emergency personnel. Winter Shelter Programming 7am – 7pm daily. Meals, Case Management, Referrals Shower & Clothing. Subject to capacity restrictions due to COVID-19. MASKS ARE REQUIRED!! Masks will be provided to all participants. Direct inquiries to smassaro@safeharboreaston.org or jpoch@safeharboreaston.org.

ANNUAL DIOCESAN RESPECT LIFE MASS

Please consider joining us for the Annual Diocesan Respect Life Mass & Pro-Vita Awards on Friday, Jan. 22 at 5pm at the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi, Metuchen. Bishop James F. Checchio will be the celebrant. Seating is limited so registration is required. Please register by visiting: www.diometuchen.org/humanlifeanddignity. The Mass will also be live-streamed. For more information, contact human.life.and.dignity@diometuchen.org.

LEGION OF MARY LIBRARY

January is the month of the Holy Name of Jesus. Legion of Mary Library has a wonderful selection of books & videos for the entire family to choose from. Although the library is currently not opened, please see information on Formed.org where similar resources can be found.

MARCH FOR LIFE BUS TRIP

Come & join us for the March for Life on Friday, January 29, 2021. Join the greatest movement for Life! We will be leaving from SPSJ Catholic School located at 137 Roseberry St. at 6:30am, and returning approximately at 9:30pm. For more information or to reserve a seat, call 908-454-9880 & leave your name & phone number.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

“...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!

FORMED...A GREAT WAY TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR FAITH!

FORMED is a collection of Catholic Bible studies, talks, movies, and other programs for people who want to learn more about their Catholic Faith. Anyone in our parish can access it by following three simple steps: (1) Google formed.org. (2) Scroll down to where it asks if your parish already subscribes and indicate yes. It will ask you to enter your parish code, which is GMKZ4Q (all capitals). (3) You will then be asked to set up your own account by establishing your own password.



St. Philip & St. James School
137 Roseberry Street
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865 (908) 859-1244 –
<http://sspjnj.org/>
Follow us at:
[facebook.com/sspjschool](https://www.facebook.com/sspjschool)

SAINTS UPDATE:

Enrolling now! Saints Philip & James School is rich in tradition and academic excellence. We educate students in Pre-K through grade 8. We offer small, safe class sizes, where your student will receive individual attention. Our classes are taught by dedicated, compassionate, certified teachers. In addition, we are pleased to offer the St. Bernadette Program for students who need additional help in reading and or math. To learn more about the Saints difference, please email Mrs. Kucinski at Kucinski.donna@spsj.org.

MONSIGNOR SHEEHAN SCHOLARSHIP:

Give the gift of a Catholic education! Contributions to the fund are awarded each July to families that otherwise could not afford a Catholic school education. To contribute, simply put your donation in an envelope marked for the scholarship and place it in the collection basket. Do online donation? Consider adding a scholarship fund to your monthly donations.

SCRIP FOR SALE!

With the holidays approaching, Scrip is the perfect way to do your Christmas shopping, while supporting the school, at no additional cost to you. Scrip can be purchased using the mobile app or by contacting Diane Charnak at charna.diane@spsj.org

CALENDAR RAFFLES:

We are once again be selling Calendar Raffles for the spring. These make excellent stocking stuffers, and give you chances to win weekly cash prizes. Please contact 908-859-1244 to purchase your raffle.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are hard at work planning the Saints Sprint and the end of the year Luau. If you would like to join the planning committees for these events, please contact Sierra Fenton at fenton.sierra@spsj.org.

SPSJ TOURS

We will be offering tours for new families this spring. To learn more about why it is great to be a Saint, please email Mrs. Kucinski at Kucinski.donna@spsj.org or call 908-859-1244.

MASS SCHEDULE

Masses for the month of January and February will be held in Mercy Hall. Please make sure you make your reservations by calling the church office at 908-454-0112.

NJ HOPE AND HEALING CRISIS COUNSELING SERVICES

Crisis counseling services for those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through a statewide partnership, Catholic Charities of New Jersey is providing crisis counseling to those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. If you or anyone you know needs to speak with someone call 732-204-6510. This program is a Crisis Counseling Program (CCP) is brought to you by NJ Hope and Healing, Catholic Charities Community Services in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Human Services' Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Disaster and Terrorism Branch, through a FEMA grant.

NEW JERSEY REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM ACT

On October 8, 2020, The Reproductive Freedom Act (RFA) S3030 was introduced in the New Jersey State Senate and was referred to the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee. If passed, the RFA would codify into New Jersey law the findings of Roe v Wade, meaning that abortion would remain legal in New Jersey even if the case were overturned by the Supreme Court. The RFA would also strip safeguards and regulations on the abortion procedure, making New Jersey a more dangerous place for women and their unborn babies. The Assembly companion bill is A4848. The Diocesan Office of Human Life & Dignity has been working closely with the New Jersey Catholic Conference (NJCC) on this issue to develop resources and monitor the bill. Here is the link to NJ Catholic Conference's updated Reproductive Freedom Act resource page:

<https://njcatholic.org/reproductive-freedom-act>. Please check this website frequently for updates. Also, please make sure to sign up on the above website to receive action alerts. A webinar has been recorded which focuses on providing an overview of the legislation, an update on the bill's legislative status, and suggestions on action steps people can take at this time. This is something you can use to help educate family, friends and fellow parishioners. You are encouraged to watch it so you can understand the radical nature of this measure. The link is here: <https://youtube.com/watch?v=kshuo78QZdA&feature=youtu.be>. For more information contact: human.life.and.dignity@diometuchen.org. Thank you!

ANNIVERSARY OF CONSECRATION OF JESUS THROUGH OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

On December 12, the Diocese of Metuchen marked its one-year anniversary of consecration to Jesus through our Lady of Guadalupe. In celebration of this spiritual milestone, the faithful of the diocese were invited to participate in a Season of Renewal, a week-long series of virtual events leading up to the first anniversary of the diocesan consecration. While the events have concluded, recordings of the events can be viewed here, including the praying of the rosary for renewal, led by Bishop Checchio: lightingheartsonfire.org/renewal.

WOULDN'T YOU JUST LIKE TO TAKE A JOURNEY?

Sometimes this time of year gets dreary. Remnants of tinsel cling to discarded Christmas trees at curbsides and we are reminded that nothing in this life lasts forever. Masks, confinement, Covid restrictions-we are starting to get weary. There were those in Jesus' early life who were able to see God's revelation, through him, and then act upon it. The contrast today is dramatic. One response is to ignore the signs and to depend on human power. The other is to journey into unknown territory and to follow unfamiliar routes. We in this Catholic faith community, invite you to journey with us into the unknown, to discover more about God's revelation, through Jesus Christ. Anyone who is unbaptized, baptized into another Christian denomination, or baptized Catholic but has never received BOTH sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist are invited to an RCIA Inquiry Session. For more information, please reach out to our parish office.

TOGETHER IN CHARITY COLLECTION

On the weekend of January 2/3, 2021 the annual "Together in Charity" collection will be taken up at all Masses. The proceeds of this collection helps to fund Catholic Charities' Parish Assistance Program, which provides 24 hour/seven day a week assistance to parishes faced with individuals and families with serious and urgent financial, housing or medical needs. In 2020, over 48% of the parishes in the Diocese availed themselves of this program. Please give generously to this collection and contribute to making this a blessed new year for a family or individual in crisis.

COUNSELING AND WELLNESS SERVICES

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Metuchen is offering Counseling and Wellness Services. If you or someone you know needs counseling or is impacted by addiction, we can help. Individual and family therapy for children and adults is available. For an appointment, call 800-655-9491.

NURSING HOME TEAMS

All Care Centers are under quarantine. No services will be held.

Stewardship of Treasure

December 20 2020: \$7,910.00
December 27, 2020 not available at time of printing
Food for the Needy: \$215.00
Retirement Fund Religious: \$317.00
SPSJ School: \$934.00
Christmas \$3,060.00
Christmas Decorations: \$145.00
Immaculate Conception \$145.00
Solemnity of Mary: \$150.00
Debt Reduction: \$272.00
November Online Contributions: \$14,529.50

Parish Capital Campaign

Total Pledged as of 12/4/2020: \$1,525,499.22
Total Collected as of 11/6/2020: \$1,246,628.21

Have you considered online giving? If interested in signing up for online giving, please go to: <https://spsj.churchgiving.com>

+ MASSES FOR THE WEEK +

SUNDAY, Jan. 3rd

7:00 - For the People of the Parish
 9:00 - Frank Bigelli by Yola & Enzo Marinelli
 11:00 – Agnes Doyle by Pat & Mike James
 1:00 (SP) – Thanksgiving to the Sacred Heart of Jesus
 5:30pm – Gregory Laing by Jane Hanisek

MONDAY, Jan. 4th

6:45 – Msgr. Patrick Francis Connolly (A)
 8:00 – Eileen Volk by Scott, Colleen, & Jack Surdoval
 12:10 – Beverly Koogler by Dean Family

TUESDAY, Jan. 5th

6:45 – Neil Scott Turdo by Deacon Enock & Ines Berluce
 8:00 – Dr. Robert Emery by CCD Teachers & Students
 12:10pm – Robert Burke by Burke Family

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 6th

6:45 – Loretta Ratti by Sr. Gloria Pighini
 8:00 – Eileen Volk by Catalli Family
 12:10pm – Eugene & Louise Farro by Burke Family

THURSDAY, Jan. 7th

6:45 – Roberta Rosen by Kane Family
 8:00 – Dolly Corcoran by Catalli Family
 12:10 – Leo & Margaret Burke by Burke Family

FRIDAY, Jan. 8th

7:00 – Dr. Robert Family by JoAnn Scott
 9:00 – Mary Elliott by Elliott Family
 11:00 – Pete Youpa by Jim Sciascia

SATURDAY, Jan. 9th

8:00 – Kazimierz & Joanna Malopolski by Family
 4:30 – William & Elizabeth Witterschen & Thomas Carroll by Family

SUNDAY, Jan. 10th

7:00 – Jimmy Richline by Mother
 9:00 – Joyce Gasparovic by Ayala Family
 11:00 – John Natisin by Deacon Larry & Carol Bevilacqua
 1:00 (SP) – For the People of the Parish
 5:30 – Jane Merlo by Bob & Patti Merlo

Mass Celebrants for Jan. 9th and 10th

4:30pm – Fr. Gilbert
7:00am – Fr. John
9:00am – Fr. Pat
11:00am – Fr. Pat
1:00pm – Fr. Gilbert
5:30pm – Fr. John

+ MASS ASSOCIATION INTENTIONS +

Monday, January 4th

George E. Francis by Maria Jinks
 Eddie Welch by Rick & Paulette Leverberg
 Elizabeth Dugan by Tony & Dolly Loiacono
 Jose Lagrimas by Geraldine Lagrimas
 Peter C. Garcia by Geraldine Lagrimas
 George E. Francis by Maria Jinks
 Eddie Welch by Rick & Paulette Leverberg
 Peter Stasi by Natalie Barbella
 Kyle McDevitt by Aunt Eileen & Children
 Bernardine Gilet by Fr. John Barbella
 Enzo Marinelli by Volk Family
 Enzo Marinelli by Sharon & Miriam
 Charlene Hummell by Fran O’Hanlon
 Marjorie La Bella by Fran O’Hanlon
 Dorothy Johnson by Fr. John Barbella
 Camilla Jebran by Nick Merlo & Family
 Nancy Gazzana by Terri Clymer

MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Jan. 9th and 10th

Saturday Jan. 9th

4:30pm	Acolyte	Lianna Krouse
	Lector	Mary O’Sullivan
	Minister	Margie Markus
	Server	Brady Carver
	Server	Jeremy Carver

Sunday Jan. 10th

7:00am	Acolyte	Dominic Russo
	Lector	Lucas Anmolsingh
	Minister	Patricia Flynn
	Server	Isabella McKenna
	Server	Oliver McKenna
9:00am	Acolyte	Aiden Hayes
	Lector	Henrietta Schupper
	Minister	Tom Casey
	Server	Gavin Hayes
	Server	Kiernan Lopez
11:00am	Acolyte	Joseph Cruz
	Lector	Denise Kassick
	Minister	Kevin Kassick
	Server	Andrew Sretenovic
5:30pm	Acolyte	Ricky Krouse
	Lector	Susan Gerhardt