

 **AnITConsultant** LLC

**Whaylon Coleman**  
Chief Technology Officer

Office : PO BOX 22998  
Owensboro, KY 42304-2998  
Phone : 270-883-1450  
Email : [it@anitconsultant.com](mailto:it@anitconsultant.com)

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# Blessed Sacrament

602 Sycamore Street • Owensboro, KY 42301 • 270-926-4741

[www.blessedsacramentchapel.org](http://www.blessedsacramentchapel.org) or email at [pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org](mailto:pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org)

## Mission Statement:

*Established in the Spirit of Jesus Christ with an Afro-centric focus, Blessed Sacrament Chapel is committed to spreading the "Word" through fellowship and good works.*

**Sunday Mass: 10:00AM**

**St. Stephen Cathedral Parish Office:** 270-683-6525

**Pastor:** Father John Thomas  
[jthomas@sscobo.org](mailto:jthomas@sscobo.org)

**Parochial Vicar:** Father Shibu Cheriankunnel  
[moc\\_scheriyankunnel@sscobo.org](mailto:moc_scheriyankunnel@sscobo.org)

**Parish Life Coordinator:** Sr Jeannette Fennwald,  
SSND [pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org](mailto:pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org)

## First Reading:

Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you. (Is 60:1)

## Psalm:

Lord, every nation on earth will adore you. (Ps 72)

## Second Reading:

It was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. (Eph 3:5-6)

## Gospel:

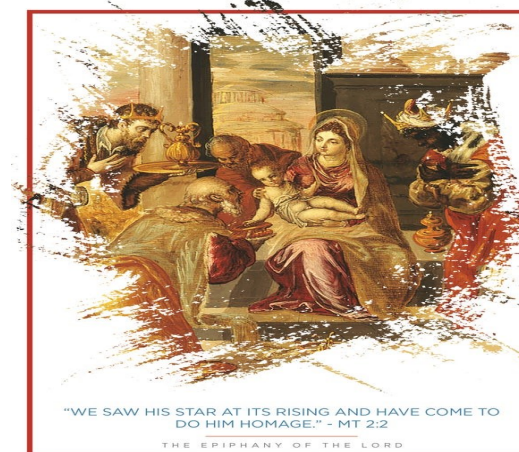
"Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." (Mt 2:2)

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001



**January 7, 2024 Epiphany of the Lord**

All kings shall pay him homage,  
all nations shall serve him Ps. 72:11



My Dear Friends:

In today’s scripture passages the language is epic, the imagery apocalyptic, and the action dramatic. There is ominous danger from a tyrannical and insanely jealous king, a king who mercilessly slaughters innocent babies. There are worldly rulers of great power, wisdom, and wealth, on a quest. There is a great escape, a long journey into that land wherein the waters of the great river Nile push back the boundaries of the death-dealing desert in order that humans might live. The hero-child, the God-Man baby, is saved in order to grow in wisdom, strength, and knowledge so that He may push back the boundaries of arid human living, and even death itself, that we might live in eternal life. Good prevails over evil. A heavenly guiding star shines in night’s darkness, a darkness that does not overcome God’s Light entering the dark void of chaos, reminding us that in the Book of Genesis God’s first act of creation was to create light in the darkness of chaos.

In our time there are those who say that light and life happened because of blind chance. We are who we are, they claim, as a result of a blind and chaotic development of an evolutionary force. But how, we are entitled to ask, can something come from nothing? The sun, moon, stars, and the creatures that inhabit our world, are manifestations, epiphanies, of God’s creative sharing of His love and life with us. The Magi are nobles; noble human beings possessed of great earthy power and wisdom, trekking for the truth. The epic Star Trek series of movies finds its origin in today’s biblical narrative. Finding what they quest, the Magi fall down and acknowledge the Source of Life which they have come to recognize. They bring gold to honor his kingship and dominion; they bring frankincense to acknowledge His Divine Being; and they bring myrrh, the ointment used for burial, knowing that the worldly will try to rid themselves of His presence among us. Gold, frankincense, and myrrh were those days, back in the Eastern world, priceless and precious substances, treasures of the utmost value in the life and times of people who lived there back then. Immediately the Darth Vader of the day, King Herod, Satan’s agent, leaps into action. Evil is the first to be alert to the approaching presence of goodness.

We see that in our own lives, don’t we? Try to advocate taking the good path, the moral option, and note what happens around you. Accusations of being “holier than thou,” accusations of being a hypocritical Christian, will quickly surface. You will be mocked, especially for being a Catholic, ridiculed, shunned, and cast out of the world’s inner circle of the elite, the moment you attempt to be an epiphany of God’s purity and goodness. Why do history’s Herod fear the child? Why do we fear the child within us? Is it because a child lays claim to our time, our caring concern, and our commitment? Commitment requires the closing off of other options. And, as the Evil One knows full well, as he whispers into our ears, the false notion that to be like God, to be god-like, we must keep all of our options open. The presence of a child is quite limiting. So is love. Why? Because it is focused. Or can it be the fear of love that is rebelling against the child? Children require love. If love is a threat then the baby must be eliminated.

This Herod knew full well. No wonder that even in our world of today, not just back when Jesus was born, children are at risk. A self-indulgent culture attempts to reduce the claims of children. It needs to eliminate their insistent calls of love. As a result the world needs to marginalize the demands of commitment. In a culture that exalts living together for pleasure without the restrictions of commitment, marriage itself must be marginalized and put to flight. Narcissism, instant gratification, sensuality without limits, and the withholding of promised commitment, are the tactics of the Father of lies, the great Deceiver, the Seducer of Souls. Euphemisms are his literary form so that death is cosmetically covered over and benignly renamed “termination of life;” killing is made to seem merciful; only beautiful children are called “wanted,” and the suffering and dying are called upon to voluntarily step aside for the sake of the sleek who want more out of their limitless lives.

The Herodian consciousness isn’t something remote and distant, something that came and went 2,000 years ago. Oh, no. The Herodian consciousness is quite alive, and quite active, right here in our time. All forms of innocence are to be slaughtered before they gain much life and strength, before they can establish claims on our hearts. It is good, therefore, to ponder the meaning of the very last words in today’s Gospel narrative: “...and having received a message in a dream, they returned home by another route.” What route are we taking on our trek back home to heaven? A route that takes us back to Herod, or a route that is prompted by the message of angels? Love requires choices. What choices have we made? What choices have we made? What choices will we make? Blessings Father John

St. Tarcisus Biography

St. Tarcisus (263-275) was a 12-year-old boy who lived in 3rd-century Rome. Although what is known of him is legend taken from a poem written by Pope Damasus (366-384), he is still considered an important Catholic martyr, remembered for protecting the Eucharist from desecration with his life.

According to legend, Tarcisus served as an acolyte. One of his duties was to aid in visiting the Christians imprisoned for their beliefs in Rome, bringing them the Eucharist.

One day, as Tarcisus was on his way to the prison, carrying the consecrated Host from a secret underground Mass to those in need, he was confronted by a group of boys who demanded to know what he was carrying. Realizing the sacredness of his mission, Tarcisus refused to reveal the contents of his pouch, even in the face of the boy’s threats of violence. Subsequently, the boys beat him and stoned him to death, martyring him as he protected the Body of Christ.

St. Tarcisus' sacrifice serves as a powerful reminder of the immense value of the Eucharist and how important it is to serve those who desire to receive Christ. His story also speaks to the incredible value of the church’s youth and God’s special mission in each of their lives. He is the patron saint of altar servers and first communicants.

**Safe Environment** The safety of our children is the responsibility of every Christian. Anyone aware of the abuse of a person under the age of eighteen is required by law to report this to the proper state authorities (800-422-4453); local law enforcement (800-752-6200); or the Kentucky Child Abuse Hotline (toll-free: 1-877-597- 2331). To report abuse to the diocese, current or past, by anyone acting in the name of the Church (paid or volunteer), call Louanne Payne, Pastoral Assistance Coordinator (English) on the confidential phone line: 270-852-8380, or Susan Montalvo-Gesser/Miguel Quintanilla, Pastoral Assistance Coordinators (Spanish): 270-880-8360. The Diocese of Owensboro’s sexual abuse policy is available at this parish (in the bookshelf in back of the church), in the parish office and hall, and on the diocesan website (<https://owensborodiocese.org/safe>). To make a report of sexual abuse of a minor and related misconduct by bishops, go to [ReportBishopAbuse.org](https://ReportBishopAbuse.org) or call 1-800-276-1562



## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

3--Parker Malone  
7--Jacques Williams II  
10--Whitney Williams  
14--Burnell Hamilton  
17--Adaira Hatchett  
20--Janet Clark  
22--Vaughn Williams  
26--Frank Adams  
27--Sarah Malone, Lilly Malone  
30--Pam Wilson



### Thanks to all who donated for the Christmas flowers

- Connie Clary
- Yvonne Mundy
- Cindy Clark (In memory of Chick, Betty Jo, Holly Thompson)
- Jean Higgs (In memory of Rachel Hershey, Doris Smith, Lucille Higgs, Kenneth Higgs, Penny Blackwell)
- Ruth Coble
- Steve Coble
- Janet Clark (In memory of R.T. and Ethel Clark)

## Mass Intentions

January 7--Sandra Brown

January 14--Kenneth Higgs

January 21--William Tapp

January 28--David "Smokey" Millard

*Let us remember to pray for those who have recently died or those in the process of dying. Remember to pray for the souls in purgatory, especially for those who have no one to pray for them.*

**Our thoughts and prayers are with the sick: Charlie Brown Sr, Jim Fennwald, Steven Moorman, Rachel Mattingly, Gina Kirby, Philip Moorman, Jr., Yuri Phen, Larry Clark, Ruth Coble, Shaun Winchell, Jeeriah Cruite, Carol Hatchett, Teresa Woods, Larry Allen, Jordan Gertisen, Buddy Adcock, Debbie Moseley, Donna Kaelin, Janice Taul, Pam Wilson, Frank & Gloria Adams, Shelby Webster, Larry Conder, Andy Evans, Gary Moorman, Wynter Keller, If you know of anyone who is in need of prayer or visitation, please notify the office.**

## IMP—Kroger

Thank you to everyone who has designated Blessed Sacrament as your community reward partner. We have 39 households that designate Blessed Sacrament as their community partner. Our last donation was \$152.22. If you do not have a community reward partner, please designate Blessed Sacrament. Blessed Sacrament's # is WX799. Go to [krogercommunityrewards.com](http://krogercommunityrewards.com) to register. Thanks to each of you for your support.

## Coming Events



### Blessed Sacrament Chapel

**January 7--Take down Christmas decorations.**

**January 14--Parish Meeting**

### THE LOAN

*We didn't inherit the earth from our parents. We are borrowing it from our children.* Chief Seattle



Dec. 31--\$938.50

Budget--\$1094

MTD Collection--\$10,105

MTD Budget--\$5,470

YTD Collection--\$36,633.19

YTD Budget--\$29,508

May each give according to what the Lord has blessed us with.

*Thanks to everyone who practices stewardship on a regular basis. An active parishioner attends Mass regularly and practices stewardship (time, talent, treasure).*

## The Epiphany of the Lord

A stranger in a foreign land, I was exhausted and homesick as my summer Spanish immersion ended in Guatemala. The rusty minivan arriving outside my small residence filled me with joyful hope. I was flying home to the U.S. and would be, at long last, completely happy. Or so I thought. After about half an hour of being home, I thought to myself, "This place is boring. I want to go somewhere." So, I hopped in my car and left to see my friends. As I drove, I wistfully wondered, "Where am I *truly* at home?"

The feast of Epiphany has a lot to do with our notion of home. Where is our origin? Where are we going? When is our wandering done? Saint Matthew tells us of the Magi, "**They were overjoyed at seeing the star.**" This star will bring them *home*, to a place where their questing will end, and they will be satisfied. Their real home is neither in the East nor in the earthly Jerusalem. Somehow, their home is wherever this boy and his parents are.

If you're a teenager or older, you probably know by now that every physical home we have is temporary. So, we look up at the countless stars in our proverbial skies: things which bedazzle and beckon us to follow toward peace. The Gospel invites us to behold that — at long last — God has sent us a star to follow home, one that whispers, "Follow me! I will take you home!" Perhaps that star is your spouse. A friend. An opportunity. A cause. An intuition about a new direction. A prayer group. What is it for you? How will you know? It will lead you to Mary and Joseph and their son, and you will be home.

— Father John Muir

MINISTRY SCHEDULE	
LECTORS	
<u>January 7:</u>	Greg Gough, Misty Sanford
<u>January 14:</u>	Alexis Hatchett, Jacques Williams
<u>January 21:</u>	Layson Brooks, Sarah Malone
Eucharistic Ministers	
<u>January 7:</u>	Holly Hollis, Rita Moorman
	Charlene Meadows
<u>January 14</u>	Greg Gough, Barbara Bisel, Misty Sanford
<u>January 21:</u>	Janet Clark, Katie Goins, Vivian Higgs
Collection & Gifts	
<u>January 7:</u>	Jacques, Whitney Williams and sons
<u>January 14:</u>	Campbell Family
<u>January 21:</u>	Sondra Hibbs, Marcia Wilhite

**Chalking the door,”** as it is known, is seen as invoking Christ's blessing not only on the physical house but on the people who live there and those who visit. There is a long tradition of blessing homes, especially on the Epiphany, which falls on Jan. 6 each year, and the weeks that follow.

The Epiphany blessing is a simple blessing written on your door as follows: the first two digits of the year + C + M + B + the last two digits of the new year. So, today, it would look like this: **20 + C + M + B + 24**. The C M B serves as reminding us of the wise men. The legendary names for the three Magi: Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar are most often seen symbolically to represent Asia, Europe and Africa,

Step Into the Light
How strange it is to think that if not for Herod’s directions, the magi would not have known where to find Jesus. They were not Jews, they knew nothing of the old prophecies. It was Herod who convened the scholars. It was Herod who pointed the way — for ulterior motives, certainly, but nonetheless, this is the part he played. It was Herod who made the Epiphany possible.
“Nations shall walk by your light, and kings by your shining radiance,” writes the prophet (Isaiah 60:3). A king may keep to the shadows, suspicious of the light — he may foolishly imagine he can snatch it from the sky to keep as his own possession, and, upon finding the light cannot be governed, grow to loathe it, and even seek to extinguish it once and for all.

But all his grand designs will come to nothing because there is no king so powerful that he can see in the dark. And even a man like Herod — a man so jealous that he sought to kill God — cannot prevent the breaking of day.

The Epiphany marks the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. It is a celebration of truth reaching places it was not expected to reach, of brightness illuminating corners of the world long ago consigned to shadow. It is a reminder that the battle has already been won, the night is over. All that remains is for us to decide: will we step into the light?

*“See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; but upon you the LORD shines, and over you appears his glory.” — Isaiah 60:2*

By Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Readings for the Week	
Monday:	Is 55:1-11/Is 12:2-6 (3)/ 1 Jn 5:1-9/Mk 1:7-11
Tuesday:	1 Sm 1:9-20/1 Sm 2:1, 4-8/ Mk 1:21-28
Wednesday:	1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20/Ps 40:2 and 5, 7-10/Mk 1:29-39
Thursday:	1 Sm 4:1-11/Ps 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25/Mk 1:40-45
Friday:	1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22/Ps 89:16-19/ Mk 2:1-12
Saturday:	1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1/Ps 21:2-7/Mk 2:13-17

**Observances for the Week of January 7**

Sunday:	The Epiphany of the Lord
Monday:	The Baptism of the Lord
Saturday:	St. Hilary, Bishop and Doctor of the Church; BVM

**Prayer for the New Year**

Dear Lord,  
With thanksgiving we entrust our year to You: whatever it holds, whoever we encounter, wherever we traverse. What You supply is gift. May our comings and goings be aligned with Your will. Amen.

**EPHIPHANY**

The Epiphany season focuses on revealing Jesus to the world. Following the Christmas celebration, the liturgical year lays out a series of manifestation points in which Jesus is made publicly known. From its very beginning, the Christian community highlighted three events in the life of Jesus. These are the Epiphany, the Baptism of the Lord and the wedding feast at Cana.

The Epiphany discloses Jesus to the world of the Gentiles, represented by the magi from the East. The accounts of Jesus' baptism reveal his identity and mission, along with exposing him to those to whom he was sent to minister. The miracle of turning water to wine at the wedding feast of Cana, unique to John's Gospel, is the first public sign that Jesus performs, thus manifesting his public identity and his powers. Today in the Roman Church, these are usually celebrated on three successive Sundays: Epiphany, the Baptism of the Lord which is usually the next Sunday, and the wedding feast of Cana, which is proclaimed on the 2nd Sunday of Ordinary Time in lectionary year C.

These feasts connect around the concept of epiphany, public manifestation of Jesus to the world. They help us get to know more intimately who Jesus is and what he is about. Spend some time delving deeply into your understanding of who Jesus is. Continue to cultivate these "epiphany" moments in your life.

**GOD’S PROMISE TO ALL PEOPLE**

Today Isaiah reminds the people of God that the land shall be restored to their possession, they shall rejoice to see their people return from the bondage of exile, and that they shall be a light to the nations. In other words, through the people of Israel, the Savior shall come to all people who seek God with a sincere heart. This brings joy and the radiance of God’s glory to all the world and to all people everywhere. Through the fidelity of the people of God, and through God’s fidelity to them, all people shall become God’s children and rejoice in the fulfillment of God’s promise to Israel.

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**Three Wise Women**

You know what would have happened if there had been three wise women instead of men, don’t you?

They would have asked for directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the baby, cleaned the stable, made a casserole, and brought disposable diapers.