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Manager



# Blessed Sacrament

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

www.blessedsacramentchapel.org or email at pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org

## The Jubilee Prayer

**Father in heaven,  
may the faith you have gifted us in  
your son Jesus Christ, our brother,  
and the flame of charity  
kindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,  
reawaken in us, the blessed hope  
for the coming of your Kingdom.**

**May your grace transform us  
into diligent cultivators of the evangelical seeds  
that make humanity and the cosmos rise  
unto the confident expectation  
of the new heavens and the new earth,  
when with the powers of Evil overcome,  
your glory shall be manifested eternally.**

**May the grace of the Jubilee  
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,  
the yearning for heavenly treasures  
and pour over all the earth  
the joy and peace  
of our Redeemer.**

**To you God blessed in eternity,  
be praise and glory for ever and ever.**

### 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

**Parochial Vicar:** Father Shibu Cheriankunnel  
moc\_scheriyankunnel@sscobo.org

**Parish Life Coordinator:** Sr Jeannette Fennewald,  
SSND pa@blessedsacramentchapel.org

### Sunday's Readings

#### First Reading:

Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! 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:

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:

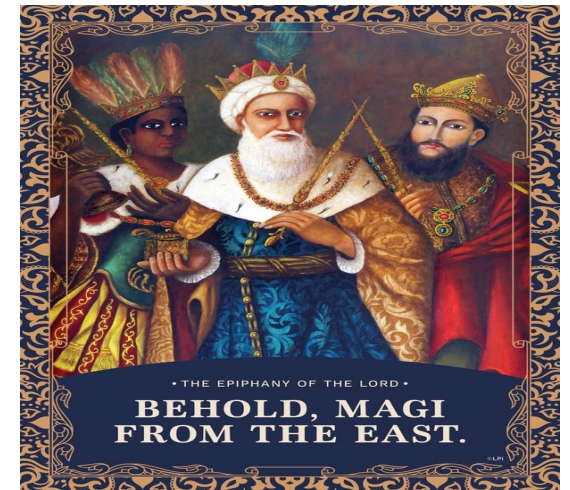
"Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." (Mt 2:2)

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970



### January 5, 2025 Feast of Epiphany

He shall have pity on the lowly and the poor; the lives of the poor he shall save. (Ps 72)



My Dear Parishioners:

.In today's scripture passages the language is epic, the imagery apocalyptic, and the action dramatic. There is ominous danger from a tyrannical and insanelly 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 the land of the pyramids 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. Light struggles against darkness. Discovery follows wandering and searching. Truth vanquishes deception. 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? Isn't it true that the only thing that nothing can produce is nothing? And how can evolution create light out of darkness? For us, when we look at the cosmos, the world, and our own human nature, we see evidence of a cosmic creative intelligence. 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. Evil is the first to jump into action when goodness manifests itself. 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 energy, 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 will we make? Blessings, Fr. John

## Jubilee 2025 – Pilgrims of Hope

The Jubilee Year of Hope began December 24th with the Opening of the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Bishop Medley opened the Jubilee Year with Mass at Saint Stephen Cathedral on December 29, Feast of the Holy Family, at the 11:00 AM Mass.

A Plenary Indulgence can be gained by visiting one of the following sites that have been designated by Bishop William Medley as pilgrimage sites:

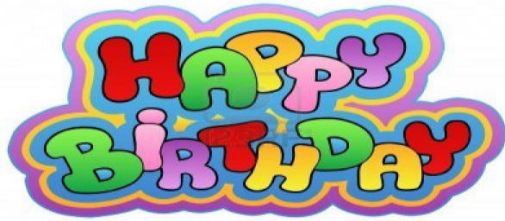
1. St. Stephen Cathedral, Owensboro
2. Holy Redeemer Church, Beaver Dam
3. Marian Shrine at St. Joseph Church, Bowling Green
4. St. Francis de Sales Church, Paduc
5. St. Leo Church, Murray
6. St. Romuald Church, Hardinsburg

In addition to visiting one of these pilgrimage sites one must do the following ;  
Make a sacramental confession either while on pilgrimage or within a few days before or after making the pilgrimage;  
Participate at Mass and receive Holy Communion, preferably on the same day as the pilgrimage and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father; While on pilgrimage, devoutly assist at a liturgical celebration or other pious exercise such as the rosary, stations of the cross, etc., or spend some time in pious meditation ending with the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed, and prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary  
The indulgence, which remits all temporal punishment owing to sin, may be obtained once daily throughout the Jubilee Year, and can be applied to oneself or the one of the faithful departed.

For more information about the Jubilee Year of Hope in our Diocese, please visit <https://owensborodiocese.org/jubilee-year-pilgrims-of-hope/>

## JANUARY BIRTHDAY

7--Jacques Williams II  
 10--Whitney Williams  
 14--Burnell Hamilton  
 20--Janet Clark  
 22--Von Williams  
 30--Pam Wilson



### GROWING FORWARD IN CHRIST

*It has been two years since we began our Growing Forward in Christ campaign. Thanks to all of you who have pledged and faithfully have been fulfilling that pledge. Please continue to contribute; the three year pledge period is not over (and you can even continue after that!).*

*If for some reason you have not contributed, it is not too late. We will have a plaque board in the vestibule with the name of everyone who has contributed to the campaign. We would like to see the name of every parishioner on it. If you can make a contribution, please mark it "Capital Campaign" or use the envelope in your box of envelopes titled "Growing Forward. This is a separate donation from your tithing. Thank you for consideration. We will be making decisions about the contribution board soon.*

## Mass Intentions

December 31--Jackie Jones  
 January 5--Clyde Coble  
 January 12--Jackie Jones  
 January 19--Sharlene Hatfield  
 January 26--Clyde Coble

*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: Larry Allen, Kathi Skidd, Ray Higgs, Mike Bogden, Gene Forsyth, Pam Wilson, Donna Fennewald, Emma Latta, Phil Armendarez, Cindy Heckmann, Joe Washington, Judy Stinett, Shaun Winchell, China Dulin, Rachel Mattingly, Charlie Brown Sr, Steven Moorman, Philip Moorman, Jr., Ronnie Hollis, Chandra Hagan, Larry Clark, Ruth Coble, Carol Hatchett, Jordan Gertisen, Shelby Webster, Andy Evans, Gary Moorman. If you know of anyone who is in need of prayer or visitation, please notify the office.**

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(See Luke 2:1-16) 12-23-2013  
 YOU KNOW GUYS, RUMOR HAS IT THE BABY SHIVERS IN THE COLD ... MAYBE INSTEAD OF GOLD AND PERFUME HE WOULD ENJOY A BLANKET?

## Coming Events



### Blessed Sacrament Happenings

#### Feb. 22--Italian Dinner

Kenneth Hunt who grew up as a member of Blessed Sacrament and then moved to LA has died. There will be a Mass offered here in January.



Dec. 29--NA

Budget--\$1,300

MTD Collection--NA

MTD Budget--NA

YTD Collection--NA

YTD Budget--NA

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).*

## GOSPEL MEDITATION

Have you ever wondered *why* the magi had gold, frankincense, and myrrh? Matthew's Gospel tells us, "Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt. 2:11). Why are these things their "treasures"? One possible answer is they were magicians and astrologers, and these three items were the tools of their questionable trade. In offering them to Christ, they demonstrate that they will cease using such items to predict or control life. They place this baby-king, the God of Israel, at the center of their lives, and not their own devices of control, manipulation and prediction.

Isn't that what we need to do, too? Consider, for example, the magical power of money, symbolized by the magi's gold. Seemingly whatever we ask of money, it does. It wields a god-like power over the world. It can predict the future by guaranteeing better outcomes for us — which is why it is such a tempting alternative to trusting in God. The problem is such absolute trust in money enslaves us to the economic forces that make money so powerful. In paying homage to Jesus with "gold" (i.e., tithing), we participate in his authority over (and therefore freedom from) the magical sway of money.

What things in your life do you use to predict or control your future? What in your life seems to give you power over the world? Those are your treasures. Are you tired of feeling enslaved to them? Find a way to open them and give them to Christ, and you will be freer.

— Father John Muir

## MINISTRY SCHEDULE

### Lectors

January 5: Leland Herzog, Barbara Bisel  
January 12: Layson Brooks, Greg Gough  
January 19: Wayne Stephens, Misty Sanford

### Eucharistic Ministers

January 5: Katie Goins, Holly Hollis, Misty Sanford  
January 12: Barbara Bisel, Denise and Greg Richardson  
January 19: Janet Clark, Greg Gough, Rita Moorman

### Collection & Gifts

January 5: Steve Coble, Ron Moorman  
January 12: Joyce Moorman, Dee Brashear

### Significance of Epiphany

It originates from a story unique to Matthew (2:1-12). Magi from the East come to offer homage to the newborn King, presenting him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. This part of Matthew's infancy narrative differs from Luke's account of the birth of Jesus. In Luke there are no Magi, star, nor gifts. Luke has Jesus being born in a stable after Mary and Joseph's long travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Matthew seems to have the family living in a house in Bethlehem, where the Magi find them.

Why these differences? They stem from the needs and concerns of the audience the authors were addressing. Since Matthew was writing primarily to a Jewish community, his concern was to show that Jesus did not come just for Jews, but for Gentiles as well. From his very birth, Jesus not only manifests himself to Jews, but also to Gentiles, symbolized by the Magi and their journey. This is the most significant aspect of the feast of Epiphany. How do you manifest Jesus to all with whom you come into contact? ©LPi

## Epiphany

**Mini Reflection:** The journey of the magi would have been treacherous and uncomfortable. Imagine the peace in their hearts as they approached the young Messiah and fell to their knees. The new, vibrant awareness of what their own purpose was. It was an epiphany for them. It can be the same for us.

### The Answer

Have you ever had an epiphany?

I'll confess that I've never spent much time reflecting on the term "epiphany." In my head, there has always been a strict separation of church and state when it comes to this word. I think of the religious feast of the Epiphany, when we celebrate the magi's encounter with the Christ Child, as totally distinct from our modern understanding of the ancient Greek word *epipháneia*, which means "manifestation" or "appearance."

"I've had an epiphany," I have said many times before, and what I mean is that I have come to a long-awaited realization. I have received the answer to a question which has perplexed me, perhaps troubled me. I now know what course of action I must take.

"Today is the Epiphany," I say to my children when we make a king cake and bring the little magi figures to our Nativity beneath the Christmas tree (which will, after today, be put back into storage, for the Christmas season has come to its fulfillment). And I've always thought I meant I was saying two very different things. But today, I ponder the journey of the magi, one that must have often been treacherous and uncomfortable. I think about their meeting with Herod, a situation that certainly was fraught with tension and fear. And I imagine the feeling in their hearts as they approached the young Messiah and fell to their knees. I think of the peace they must have felt. The new, vibrant awareness of what their own purpose was.

It was an epiphany for them — a discovery of truth. An answer. It should be the same for us.

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### Readings for the Week

Monday: 1 Jn 3:22—4:6/Ps 2:7-8, 10-12/Mt 4:12-17, 23-25  
Tuesday: 1 Jn 4:7-10/Ps 72:1-4, 7-8/Mk 6:34-44  
Wednesday: 1 Jn 4:11-18/Ps 72:1-2, 10, 12-13/Mk 6:45-52  
Thursday: 1 Jn 4:19—5:4/Ps 72:1-2, 14 and 15, 17/Lk 4:14-22  
Friday: 1 Jn 5:5-13/Ps 147:12-15, 19-20/Lk 5:12-16  
Saturday: 1 Jn 5:14-21/Ps 149:1-6 and 9/Jn 3:22-30

### Observances for the week of January 5

Monday: St. André Bessette, Religious  
Tuesday: St. Raymond of Penyafort,

### Jesus Is The Reason For The Season

Santa lives at the North Pole; Jesus is everywhere. Santa rides in a sleigh; Jesus rides on the wind and walks on water. Santa comes but once a year; Jesus is an ever present help. Santa comes down your chimney uninvited; Jesus stands at your door and knocks. Santa makes you stand in line to see him; Jesus is as close as the mention of His name. Santa lets you sit on his lap; Jesus lets you rest in His arms. Santa asks, "Little boy, little girl, what is your name?" Jesus knew our names before we did. Santa has a belly like a bowl full of jelly Jesus has a heart full of love. Santa offers "Ho, ho, ho"; Jesus offers health, help, and hope. Santa says "You better not cry"; Jesus says "Cast all your cares on me for I care for you." Santa's little helpers make toys; Jesus makes new lives, mends hearts, repairs broken homes. Santa may make you chuckle; Jesus gives you joy. Santa puts gifts under the tree; Jesus became our gift and died on the tree. There's really no comparison. Jesus is the reason for the season.

## FINDING GOD

The splendid magi, all sparkle and dash and solemnity, march right up of he pages of Matthew's Gospel and into our churches today. Matthew alone tells us this grand and seductive story so that we might see the light and know that the child these magi visited is the fulfillment of prophecy, the kind of the world that stretches to the magi's home country and beyond, right down the ages to us.

We too see and understand anew. Like the magi, our patron saints for this day, we see in the newborn child the king of the universe and light of the world. Like the magi, we find in ourselves a new faith and a new life. Like them, we return to our home by a new route. We are asked to come away from this festive season ourselves renewed and awake to the presence of God among us. We are asked to find God where God is to be found, to be attentive and surprised and ready to bow down in adoration and to offer our gifts. -copyright J.S.Paluch Co.

### THANK YOU—FLOWER DONATIONS

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