

The Epiphany of the Lord

January 7, 2018

Mass Intentions

Saturday, January 13th

5 P.M. – James & Frances Hermes

Sunday, January 14th

7 A.M. – Janie Migl & Laurence Bishop

9 A.M. – Margie Brosch

Sanctuary Candle Intention

The Sanctuary Candle will burn this week in memory of Hubert Smolik.

This Sunday's Holy Scriptures

Is 60:1-6; Ep 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12

Your Gift to God: December 24th

Sweet Home	\$1,405
Online Giving	\$20
Koerth	\$681

Your Gift to God: December 25th

Sweet Home	\$2,224.50
Koerth	\$503

Your Gift to God: December 31st

Sweet Home	\$1,593
Online Giving	\$320
Building Fund	\$1,001
Koerth	\$693
Building Fund	\$1,070
DSA	\$5

Your Gift to God: January 1st

Sweet Home	\$215
Koerth	\$15

May God reward your generosity!

Celebrate the Lord's Abundant Mercy

Each Saturday the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance/Confession) is available from 4:00 P.M. to 4:40 P.M. in the Sweet Home confessional.

Blessed Epiphany Chalk

Blessed Epiphany chalk is available at the Nativity for everyone to take home and mark the entrance to their home.

Baptismal Preparation Class

The next Baptismal Preparation Class will be held Saturday, **January 13th at 9:00 A.M.** in the St. Joseph Family Center Meeting Room in Yoakum.

Annual Contribution Statement

Those who would like a statement of their envelope support contributions should call the parish office, 293-3518.

Diocese of Victoria 30th Annual Catholic Conference

Saturday, January 27, 2018
Holy Family Church, Wharton

The seven principles of **Catholic Social Teaching** will be presented by 22 speakers in 32 workshops. The titles, descriptions and presenter vitae can be seen on the diocesan website.

Also see the newly revised flyer and registration form, mailed in mid-October, for titles and names of speakers. If you did not receive one, call us at (361) 573-0828 ext. 2224, 2225, or 2227.

On line registration is now open. Go to the Diocesan website www.victoriadiocese.org to register.

*“Lord, every nation on earth
will adore you.”*



Registrations are open for a Lead Me Retreat by God's Embrace. Come from wherever you are to experience a deeper walk with Jesus. Retreat will be held at the High Hill Conference Center of God's Embrace located at 2911 FM 2672, Schulenburg, TX. Weekend begins Friday evening and concludes with Sunday Mass. Open to couples and singles. Cost is \$100 for retreat and food. Overnight lodging is not provided, but discounted rate is available at Holiday Inn in Schulenburg. Register online at www.godsembrace.org or call 979-561-8883.

2018 13-day Camino de Santiago/ Fatima Pilgrimage!

Please join other Catholics from the Galveston/Houston/Victoria area to hike the Camino de Santiago along the countryside of Spain. This tour begins in Sarria, the most popular Camino starting point, covering the last 100km of the Camino Francés to converge on Santiago de Compostela with an additional stop in Fatima and Porto. There are spots available for the following 2018 dates: June 4-16 and June 25-July 7. If you are interested in joining this spiritual journey, contact Jane Lakatos at jlakatos@gmail.com.

Cemetery Inquiries

Anyone with questions regarding the Catholic Cemeteries should contact the local representatives for the Cemeteries.

Queen of Peace:

Harvey Matussek & J. O. Hermes

St. John the Baptist:

Gene Velek & Jerry/Joyce Kurtz

They can provide the needed information and help with locating available plots. They will also provide the needed details to complete a purchase/reservation and receive a deed for record purposes.

*"We saw his star at its rising and
have come to do him homage."*

Chalking the Door: Blessing Your Home for Epiphany

20 + C + M + B + 18

Some background:

The family gathers to ask God's blessing on their home and on those who live in or visit the home. It is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest in our home, our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows.

A traditional way of doing this is to use chalk to write above the home's entrance, 20 + C + M + B + 18. The letters C, M, B have two meanings. They are the initials of the traditional names of the three magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. They also abbreviate the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless the house." The "+" signs represent the cross and 2018 is the year.

Blessing the Chalk

V. *Our help is the name of the Lord:*

R. *The maker of heaven and earth.*

V. *The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in:*

R. *From this time forth for evermore.*

Let us pray.

Loving God, bless this chalk which you have created, that it may be helpful to your people; and grant that through the invocation of your most Holy Name that we who use it in faith to write upon the door of our home the names of your holy ones Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, may receive health of body and protection of soul for all who dwell in or visit our home; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Instructions for Blessing the Home Using the blessed chalk mark the lintel of your front door (or front porch step) as follows: 20 + C + M + B + 18 while saying: The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar followed the star of God's Son who became human two thousand and sixteen years ago. May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout the new year. Amen.

Then offer the following prayer:

Visit, O blessed Lord, this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live or visit here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may manifest your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and forever. Amen "Chalking the door" is a

way to celebrate and literally mark the occasion of the Epiphany and God's blessing of our lives and home. With time the chalk will fade. As it does we let the meaning of the symbols written sink into the depths of our heart and be manifest in our words and actions the Latin words, *Christus mansionem benedictat*, "May Christ bless the house."

Greeting the New Year the Catholic way

Larry Peterson

No fear, no matter what comes. Bring it, 2018.

According to Fides News Service, as of October 2017, there are 1.28 billion Catholics in the world. Some 70.4 million of them are in the United States. The USA has a population of approximately 330,000,000 people. That works out to about 22 percent of the American population being Catholic.

From the pope down to the vagrant, each of us is an individual creation made by God. We are all unique. Incredibly, we will all be judged individually. And, as Catholics, we will be held to a higher standard. After all, we proclaim that we are part of the Mystical Body of Christ, which has the deposit of faith. No matter how we lived our lives, the common denominator for all of us will be: *How much we loved each other.*

Based on that, here are some points to consider if we focus, before all else, on pleasing God in the New Year, the Catholic way:

Never forget that you are God's individual creation and therefore a gift He has bestowed on the world. Be humbled by the fact that He certainly has you in the palm of His hand. Without Him you are nothing.

- Be happy with who and what you are. God made you and loves you. If you feel you need to change to please Him, you can do it. Just ask for His help.
- The choices you make are your responsibility. Sometimes our choices hurt us. Embrace them and learn from them and move on. Thank God for the experience.
- Sometimes NOT getting what you want or what you think you need is a blessing. If you trust God, you will thank Him. When "one door closes another opens."

- Always count your blessings, not your troubles.
- Always do your best. The "best" is all God expects from each of us.
- You can make it through whatever comes along. Grace will be there, but it only comes one day at a time. Don't fret about the future.
- Prayer is the most powerful of weapons and can be your greatest ally in all diversity.
- Don't take things too seriously, especially yourself.
- The key to happiness is to give of yourself, not to "get" for yourself.
- Miracles happen; you are one — I am one — we all are one.
- Temptation is everywhere. It is okay to say "NO."
- Finally, never fail to help a neighbor, whoever it may be, even a stranger.

We all will experience "highs and lows" during the coming year. As Catholics, we have the armor of the Church to shield us and the angels and saints to help us fight our battles with the evil one.

St. Michael the Archangel will always "defend us in battle." St. Anthony will help us find lost items. St. Jude will help us through seemingly impossible barricades. Good St. Joseph is ready to help us, and especially to help all men be good fathers and husbands. St. Monica will help moms and St. Dymphna will help those experiencing emotional difficulties or suffering from Alzheimer's disease. And, of course, the Blessed Virgin Mary is always there for all of us.

Virtually every day of the calendar year honors a particular saint, and that saint is especially inspiring with certain needs — such as St. Padre Pio who is the patron of adolescents and volunteers, or St. Maximilian Kolbe, martyred in the Holocaust, who is the patron of drug addicts. Help is always available when you are Catholic.

Lastly, we have in place for our salvation the most beautiful thing this side of heaven: the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. We can actually *be* at the foot of the Cross and then witness the resurrection. Yes, that's what is happening at Mass. It is there for all of us every day if we so CHOOSE. Then there are the sacraments, always available to build us up and restore us to where we should be, especially the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Yes--being Catholic is very cool. We even have the Rosary.

HAPPY NEW YEAR, 2018 –“No Fear”