

# The Epiphany of the Lord

## January 6, 2019

### Mass Intentions

#### Monday, January 7<sup>th</sup>

7 A.M. – Gladys Newby

#### Tuesday, January 8<sup>th</sup>

7 A.M. – Elvera Janak

#### Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>

7 A.M. – Johnny Havel

#### Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup>

7 A.M. – Otto, Lydia & Toni Havel

#### Friday, January 11<sup>th</sup>

7 A.M. - James Konvicka

#### Saturday, January 12<sup>th</sup>

5 P.M. – Sweet Home – Norman Chumchal

#### Sunday, January 13<sup>th</sup>

7 A.M. – Sweet Home – Wilma Ebner

9 A.M. – Koerth – Frankie Raska

### Your Gift to God: December 23<sup>rd</sup>

Sweet Home	\$2,154
Online Giving	\$
Koerth	\$859

### Your Gift to God: December 25<sup>th</sup>

Sweet Home	\$2,059
Koerth	\$799

### Your Gift to God: December 30<sup>th</sup>

Sweet Home	\$1,662
Online Giving	\$
Building Fund	\$5,370
DSA	\$30
Koerth	\$983
Building Fund	\$525

*May God reward your generosity!*

### Sanctuary Candle Intention

The Sanctuary Candle will burn this week in memory of the Poor Souls in Purgatory.

### This Sunday's Holy Scriptures

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

### 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.



### Consoling the Heart of Jesus Small-Group Retreat

Join us for a 10 week small –group retreat that delves into the simplicity and grandeur of Consoling spirituality. This retreat is based on the popular book by Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC, *Consoling the Heart of Jesus*.

Gain new insights into how you can console Jesus; learn the keys to the great sanctity of the saints and blessed like Therese of Lisieux, Faustina Kowalska, and Mother Teresa; and have all the tools you'll need to "Become a saint, a great saint, and quickly."

The Small-Group Retreat will be held at **6:00 P.M.** in Yoakum at the St. Joseph Family Center beginning on **Sunday, January 6<sup>th</sup>** and will continue for the following Sundays ending on March 10<sup>th</sup>. For more information, contact Joan Macha at 361-293-1371 or Joyce Harper at 361-798-6325.



## Blessed Epiphany Chalk

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

### Faith Formation

CCD/Faith Formation classes will resume  
Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 P.M.

## Baptismal Preparation Class

The next Baptismal Preparation Class will be held Saturday, January 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 A.M. in the St. Joseph Family Center Meeting Room in Yoakum.

## Chalking the Door: Blessing Your Home for Epiphany

**20 + C + M + B + 19**

### 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 + 19. 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 2019 is the year.

### 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 + 19 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 benedicat*, "May Christ bless the house."

## 5 Things Catholics Should Know About First Fridays

Philip Kosloski

*Learn about devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the graces that come from observing First Fridays*

*"It is no wonder, therefore, that our predecessors have constantly defended this most approved form of devotion — the pious devotion of the faithful toward the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus [and] the custom of receiving Holy Communion on the first Friday of every month at the desire of Christ Jesus, a custom which now prevails everywhere." — Pope Pius XI Miserentissimus Redemptor*

What's so special about First Fridays?

Our parents grew up going to church every First Friday of the month and taking part in Sacred Heart devotions, but in recent decades the pious practice has fallen out of practice, and is dismissed by some as an "old-fashioned" anachronism.

A main reason for the decline in interest in this devotion is probably rooted in simple ignorance: people don't know what First Fridays are all about; families and parishes may not have adequately passed down their importance to the next generation. Here are five things to know.

### 1. How did the First Friday Devotion begin?

While some saints referenced the Heart of Jesus in their writings even centuries earlier, in 1673, a French Visitandine (Visitation) nun named Margaret Mary Alacoque had visions of Jesus, wherein he asked the Church to honor His Most Sacred Heart. In particular, Jesus asked the faithful to "receive Communion on the First Fridays, for nine consecutive months." The request was connected to a specific promise made to all who venerated and promoted devotion to the Sacred Heart.

After Margaret Mary's death, the First Friday practice steadily spread in the Church — endorsed by popes and promoted by saints — but it greatly increased in popularity when Margaret Mary was canonized a saint in 1920 by Pope Benedict XV.

## 2. Why nine consecutive months?

The number nine is traditionally associated with a novena and finds its origin in the nine days that the apostles spent in prayer before Pentecost. A novena provides an extended amount of time for preparation and interior renewal.

## 3. What am I supposed to do on First Fridays?

Go to Mass and receive Holy Communion with the intention of honoring Christ's Sacred Heart. If you are not in a state of grace, and thus unable to receive, you will also need to go to confession.

## 4. What are the “promises” connected to this devotion?

Jesus said to St. Margaret Mary, “In the excess of the mercy of my heart, I promise you that my all powerful love will grant to all those who will receive communion on the First Fridays, for nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance: they will not die in my displeasure, nor without receiving the sacraments; and my heart will be their secure refuge in that last hour.” This means that if a person faithfully receives communion for nine consecutive months on First Fridays, Jesus will grant that person extra graces at the time of their death, making it possible to repent of their sins and receive the last rites (if needed).

This promise is the last of 12 promises connected to the Devotion to the Sacred Heart, particularly attached to the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in one's home:

- (1) I will give them all the graces necessary in their state of life.
- (2) I will establish peace in their homes.
- (3) I will comfort them in all their afflictions.
- (4) I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all, in death.
- (5) I will bestow abundant blessings upon all their undertakings.
- (6) Sinners will find in my heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.
- (7) Lukewarm souls shall become fervent.
- (8) Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection.
- (9) I will bless every place in which an image of my heart is exposed and honored.

10) I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.

(11) Those who shall promote this devotion shall have their names written in my Heart.

(12) I promise you in the excessive mercy of my Heart that my all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on the First Fridays in nine consecutive months the grace of final perseverance; they shall not die in my disgrace, nor without receiving their sacraments. My divine heart shall be their safe refuge in this last moment.

## 5. Are the First Fridays a “ticket” to heaven?

It is not as simple as going to Mass for nine months and then clocking out, never going to Mass again and leading a sinful life! The entire purpose of this devotion is to draw a person closer to the heart of Christ. If a person fulfills these obligations with sincere faith, it is natural for he or she to be closer to God and better prepared for death. The moment that this devotion is observed in a superstitious manner, neglecting the need to live a virtuous life, all bets are off and Jesus' promise is null and void.

Jesus wants us to rest on his heart, like St. John, and the First Friday devotion is an opportunity for us to encounter him more than just on Sundays and to deepen our love of him.

Coming to know, love and trust that we may take rest in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and place our anxieties within, is what the First Fridays are all about.



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