

## *A Message from fr. Jason Grisafi*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This week we receive grace and consolation from God in the Nativity proclamation: "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). We have awaited in hope many things this year. Christmas, the celebration of the birth of God with us, boldly announces that our hopes can be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. I pray for all of you, that during this Christmas season you do find the fulfillment of your hopes in Jesus, or at least the start of that fulfillment. I pray for all of you, that you may find wonderful consolations as your faith increases through the pious celebration of the birth of the Savior. And I, and my brother priests here, would like to actively help bring those graces to you in a very special way this year. How? Keep reading.

The birth of the Christ was an awesome event, but few knew about it at the time. It was only when Jesus began His ministry that people began to realize how God was acting. This revelation happened in a special way at the River Jordan, with the baptism of the Lord. Then at His first miracle at Cana in Galilee. These two events, combined with the visitation of the magi, form the basis for the feast of the Epiphany. Yes, it is with the Epiphany that we realize that Christ's blessing has come to us! In the early centuries of the Church, the Epiphany, not Christmas, was held second to Easter. Special blessings developed in order to bring that grace of Christ to every household. This year, we are going to reconnect with this ancient tradition. On January 5th, the vigil of the Epiphany (note that in the US we celebrate the Epiphany on the second Sunday after Christmas, but the general Church calendar has the Epiphany on January 6th), starting at 7pm, we will conduct a solemn blessing of water associated with this special feast. That water will then be used to bless houses throughout the year (I have personally purchased large vats to hold the water). Fr. Marcin and I want to reach as many houses as possible throughout the year! The challenge of COVID may give us a slow start, but we will be ready to provide this extraordinary blessing to you and your home.

More information regarding the blessing of the water and the homes will follow, but for now let me note a few things: the blessing for epiphany water comes from an older ritual book, and is thus conducted in Latin. Normally, only a bishop can bless this water, but I have obtained delegation from Bishop Barres' office so as to have the proper authority to conduct this blessing. This blessing will be preceded by a Solemn High Mass of the Extraordinary Form (also in Latin), with preaching done in both English and in Spanish. Registration will be necessary to attend. Both the Mass and the blessing can be quite long, and so those who do register should count on the entire evening running between two and three hours (in Latin). The prayers will be live streamed. And most importantly, even if you cannot be present the whole point of this is to prepare special water to bless houses on a later date. A system for scheduling such a house blessing will be set up so that parishioners can make an appointment for Fr. Marcin or I to visit and conduct the blessing.

What a special year of grace we have before us: a year dedicated to St. Joseph, the chance to have our houses blessed with Epiphany water, and a renewal of faith through the proclamation of Christ's birth. May all of you know the love of God through these days of feasting and celebration!

In Christ,

fr. Jason