

NOTES FROM FR. SEÁN

January 3, 2021

In Today's Gospel

Today, we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. The word epiphany refers to a sudden revelation of the truth. In the West, it is commonly associated with the visit of the magi from the east. In today's gospel, we read of their visit to Jesus. The language used in today's gospel points to the passion and death of Jesus Christ.

When the magi entered Jerusalem, we are told that King Herod assembled "the chief priests and scribes of the people." (Mt 2:4) We are later told in the Gospel of Matthew that those who had Jesus arrested brought him to "Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled." (Mt 26:57b) The image of assembling the priests and the scribes is present at both the beginning and the end of the life of Jesus. In both instances, they were assembled to plot against his life.

The gifts presented by the magi also point towards the death of Jesus. Two of the gifts, gold and frankincense, were foretold in Isaiah's prophecy that we heard in our first reading. (cf. Is 60:6) These gifts were certainly fit for a king. The third gift, myrrh, was a little more unusual. Myrrh was a perfume generally used for embalming dead bodies. It may even have been among the "spices and perfumed oils" (Lk 23:56) prepared by the women who went to anoint the body of Jesus on Easter Sunday, only to find an empty tomb.

As we continue to celebrate the birth of Christ, we must always remember that he came to die. He came to die to redeem us from our sins. By his death and resurrection, he has destroyed sin and death and restored us to eternal life. This is the greatest gift of Christmas.

Pray 7:07

As most of us know by now, the Archdiocese of Detroit is engaged in a major restructuring of parishes. Gone are the days when each parish operates independently of its neighbors. Going forward, parishes will be grouped into Families that will work together to Unleash the Gospel.

Our parishes will be joining the parishes of Ss. Simon and Jude, St. Mary Cause of Our Joy, and St. Thomas the Apostle as we move forward in this new initiative. In the next six months, you will hear information about just what it means to form a "Family of Parishes." There will undoubtedly be changes.

Because we are in the first wave of parishes to embark on this journey towards Families of Parishes, there will be a lot of work, although at this time I do not know what all that work will be. We will be working together with the parishes in our Family and the Archdiocese to determine our family structure.

Before we start any task, it is essential to begin with prayer. As we enter into the new year, this will be the intention for our 7:07 prayer:

We pray for our family of parishes, for St. Mary, St. Richard, Ss. Simon and Jude, St. Mary Cause of Our Joy, and St. Thomas the Apostle, that we work together to Unleash the Gospel in our hearts, our community, and the world.

Happy New Year!

On behalf of St. Mary and St. Richard parishes' staff and volunteers, I want to wish all of you a happy, safe, and prosperous new year. 2020 has been a challenging year for all of us. Let us pray that in 2021 we will see the dawn of light and health throughout the world.

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