

THE PARISH FAMILY OF SAINT CLARE OF ASSISI & SAINT STEPHEN

PASTOR

Rev. Msgr. William F. Glosser, V.F., M.A., M.Div.



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St. Joseph Center for Special Learning ~ <http://stjosephctr.com/>



The Epiphany of the Lord
January 5, 2020

MASS TIMES

(Please check bulletin for changes)

Tuesday – Friday 8AM (Chapel)

Saturday – 4PM

Sunday- 8:30AM and 10:30AM

St. Stephen – 9:30AM

Holydays – Please check bulletin

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:15-3:45PM or call the rectory to schedule an appointment. St. Stephen Parish, please see Priest before Mass.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Prospective parents are expected to attend an instruction session. Please call the parish office to make arrangements and schedule an appointment.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Arrangements should be made one year in advance to schedule and plan your wedding.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

PREP/CCD classes are offered for our public grade school children. Classes are held Wednesday evenings 6PM to 7:30PM.

Parish Registration

Parish registration is recommended for all individual persons and families who worship regularly and who intend to participate actively in the life of our parish by sharing their time, talents and treasure. Registration is necessary for celebrating Marriage and Baptism, as well as for the issuing of Sponsor Certificates.

Director of Religious Education

Thomas Dowd

Parish Religious Education Website

stcstsprep.weebly.com

Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator

Mrs. Wendy S. Krisak, MA, MCC, LPC Direct: 1-800-791-9209

Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator

Sister Meg Cole, S.S.J., M.S., LMFT 1-610-332-0442, Ext 2019

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Dear Padre,

What do we know about the Three Kings?

Your question reminds us how much human tradition has embellished some of the events described in sacred Scripture. Historically, the name Magi designates members of an ancient Near Eastern priestly caste. In Matthew's Gospel, they are presented as noble wise men and astrologers.

The number three has long been associated with the Magi. However, the Gospel narratives never mention their number (though they did offer three gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh). Saint Matthew is also silent about their names. However, in the eighth century, Western traditions began calling them Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. Other Christian traditions use different names.

Though their gifts indicate they were from South Arabia, it's doubtful that they represented particular nations or the major racial families. At the very least, the Magi represent the Gentile peoples coming from afar to find the true God in Jesus Christ. This contrasts with King Herod and Israel. Both neglected this manifestation of God's presence in their midst.

Astrology permeated ancient cultures, so it isn't strange that astrologers appear in the Bible. The Church responded by "Christianizing" aspects of astrology. For example, the Church deliberately called Christ the "Sun of Justice," thus replacing the pagan god Sol with one true God. In the fourth century, the Church placed the celebration of Christ's Nativity on December 25, the birthday of the sun. We emphasize Jesus as the Light of the World and celebrate his feast every week on Sunday.

From Dear Padre: *Questions Catholics Ask*, © 2003 Liguori Publications

Monday, January 6, 2020
NO MASS SCHEDULED

Tuesday, January 7, 2020
8AM Martha Francis

Wednesday, January 8, 2020
8AM Emil Schultz

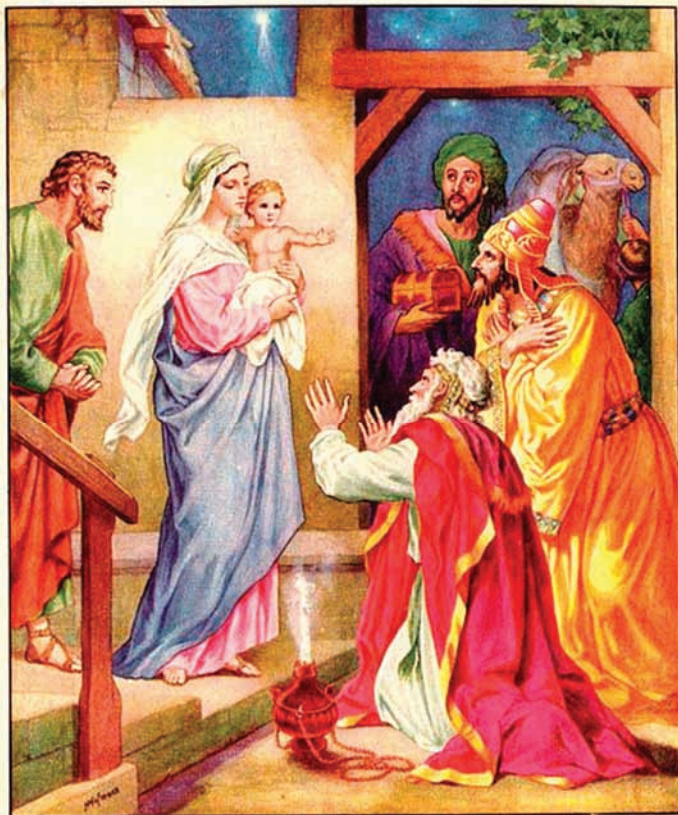
Thursday, January 9, 2020
8AM Dolores Hughes

Friday, January 10, 2020
8AM John & Josephine Larish

Saturday, January 11, 2020
4PM St. Clare Vigil Mass for Sunday—Robert Panchari
St. Stephen Intention—Joseph & Joan Krynock

Sunday, January 12, 2020 Baptism of the Lord
8:30AM John Miller
9:30AM at St. Stephen—Rev. John J. McNamara
10:30AM Joseph Skrobak

From the Pastor's Desk



THE VISIT OF THE WISE-MEN

Word traveled quickly. What had originally been known only to Mary, then to Mary's cousin, Elizabeth and then to Ann and Joachim and Joseph, was revealed to the shepherds on the night of Jesus' birth by angel choirs. Now the glorious birth is revealed to foreigners – the magi of the East. Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior, has been born into the world!

Our human curiosity draws us to go and see things we hear about or to follow new ways and trends; no one likes to be called 'old-fashioned' or out of touch. Nevertheless, the Magi's reason to follow a star is far different from our reasons to follow many of the things we follow today. The Wisemen followed the Star to discover a deeper faith in God; often the things we follow remove God from our lives. Let us rejoice for Jesus' saving presence has been made manifest to us through our Baptism! What can we do to follow more earnestly like the shepherds and Magi the Christ who comes to us?

Second Collections

St. Clare of Assisi: This week will be for Heat & Energy (Team 3). January 12 will be for the Building Fund.

St. Stephen: This week will be the Building Fund. January 12 will be for Cemetery Upkeep.

Changes in Next Week's Mass Schedule

Next Thursday, January 16, Mass will be offered at 6PM instead of 8AM. Following Mass, the Saints Peter & Paul time capsule will be opened.

Home for Christmas

Through the incarnation of Jesus on Christmas, we were all granted a place in Heaven. This past week our parish prayerfully sent Marty Skrobak to see the face of God. Our prayers of condolences to his sisters Rose and Sophie and his brother Paul.

Bible Study Resumes

Our weekly Sunday Mass Scripture review will be held this coming Thursday following the 8AM Mass.

Help Needed to Take Down Christmas Decorations

We need help taking down the Christmas decorations and storing them for next year on Saturday, January 11 beginning at 8:30AM. Just

a heads up! What does it mean when artificial Christmas trees shed their needles? Right, it is time to get new trees! After nearly 20 years of Christmases, we will need to purchase new trees for the parish.

We Are Family & All Are Welcome

As Parishioners of St. Clare of Assisi we are very familiar with the emotions of sadness, regret, anger, and loss. However, we have come to realize the blessings and gifts we have received by becoming the St. Clare of Assisi Parish Family. I ask you that in the next days, weeks and months we extend a heartfelt welcome to our new parishioners who will be coming to us from St. Stephen's. We need to support them with our presence, love, support and the common bond that we share with Jesus Christ through our Baptism.

I invite you, the parishioners of St. Clare to join us this Sunday evening, January 5 in St. Stephen's Church beginning at 5PM, where a prayer service will be held to celebrate the life of St. Stephen's Parish and what this parish family has meant to us over the years. The Blessed Sacrament will be on the altar at 4PM for parishioners to offer private prayer before our communal prayer at 5PM.

Following the service, a light social will follow in St. Clare of Assisi Church Hall for parishioners of both parishes.

Help Requested to Perform a Corporal Work of Mercy

One of our parishioners' adult age son is in Geisinger, Danville. This son is currently in serious condition. This elderly man has no way to visit his son in the hospital. If there are parishioners willing to drive this gentleman to Danville, please contact the rectory.

Attention Former Parishioners of Saints Peter & Paul (& other interested folk)

With the recent sale of Saints Peter & Paul, the cornerstone needed to be removed. If anyone would like to witness the opening of the time capsule in the cornerstone, join us on next Thursday, January

16 at 6:30PM in St. Clare of Assisi Hall following Mass at 6PM.

St. Stephen News

Schuykill Community Action has programs to help low income individuals and families. The ACCESS card does not permit the purchase of personal hygiene and household products. Our parishioner, Megan Chaklos, is collecting these articles such as toothpaste, deodorant, toilet tissue, household cleaning products, etc., for these people in need. If you would like to help, there is a collection box at the main entrance of the church.

St. Stephen Celebrant Schedule

January 5 Father Connolly

January 12 Father Bill

The 50-50 winner on December 8 was Pat Maloney, ticket sold by Diane Gately. Pat won \$785.00.

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Thank you to those who helped to make our church so beautiful for Christmas including Linda & Al Baldinger, Mary Margaret Burns, Megan and Annabella Chaklos, Maureen and Jacob Challenger, Rich & Carol DeWitt, Sam Kane, Luke Keitsock, Clare Lorence, Sue Shoer, Carol Stencovage, Amy West and Mary Ann Lubinsky.

We now need help Saturday, January 11 beginning at 9AM to take down and put away the Christmas decorations.

ST. CLARE OF ASSISI WEEKLY FINANCIAL REPORT	12/22/19
Contributions - Sunday Envelopes	\$ 4,135
Contributions - Other Sunday Giving (loose)	\$ 304
Total Plate	\$ 4,439
Needed to meet Church Budget	\$ 4,558
Total Contributions 7/1/19 to now	\$ 116,735
YTD Budget to now	\$ 113,942
Total Over (Under) Budget	\$ 2,793
Other Collections	
Heat & Energy	\$ 1,206
All Saints	\$ 844
Candles	\$ 139

ST. STEPHEN WEEKLY FINANCIAL REPORT	12/22/19
Contributions - Sunday Envelopes	\$ 2,206
Contributions - Other Sunday Giving (loose)	\$ 26
Total Plate	\$ 2,232
Needed to meet Church Budget	\$ 2,308
Total Contributions 7/1/19 to now	\$ 58,624
YTD Budget to now	\$ 60,002
Total Over (Under) Budget	\$ (1,378)
Other Collections	
Cemetery Upkeep	\$ 203

Sunday Mass Attendance	12/22/2019
4 PM (St. Stephen)	199
8:30 AM	144
9:30 AM (At St. Stephen)	96
10:30 AM	180

Sunday Mass Attendance	12/29/2019
4 PM (St. Stephen)	171
8:30 AM	142
9:30 AM (At St. Stephen)	99
10:30 AM	143

Upcoming Events

January 5 Remembrance Service at 5PM at St. Stephen Church
March 14 First Penance

March 22-24 Parish Lenten Mission “The 10 Commandments”

April 29 Confirmation at St. John the Baptist

May 17 First Communion at St. Clare

Collection Reports for December 29 not available due to holiday printing deadline. Reports will be available in next week’s bulletin.

Tough Decisions

PITTSBURGH DIOCESE WILL MERGE 26 PARISHES INTO 8

The Diocese of Pittsburgh has announced plans to merge more than two dozen parishes into eight new parishes next year. Bishop David Zubik said that 26 parishes will be part of the January 6 mergers, which will reduce the number of parishes from 170 to 152.

There are three primary reasons that parishes are closed, merged, or consolidated.

- The parish experiences serious decline in church census and Mass attendance.
- The parish can no longer financially sustain itself.
 - The ability to provide for a pastor
 - The ability to have a pastoral staff
 - To provide for various and specific parish ministries
 - Education of the parish’s children
 - Ongoing education of parishioners
 - Spirituality programs
 - Pastoral Care & Charity
 - The ability to have an ongoing maintenance program
 - Repairs
 - Replacement & Renovations
 - Monthly Costs
 - Payment to our Creditors on a timely basis
- The Diocese no longer has the available priests to cover parishes.

All three of these were factors pertaining to St. Stephen's. Just as no one wishes for a loved one to die; no one wishes to see their church close. For the person who has passed, we believe that heaven waits for them. In the same regards as we witness so many of our churches in Schuylkill County experience these same problems, we need to focus on our faith and making stronger, viable parish families.

The Green and Gold Booster Club

Sponsoring a Surf & Turf Bingo on Sunday, January 5th at Nativity BVM High School. Doors open at 11:30, Bingo at 1PM. Cost is \$20.00 Refreshments available. Call Diane @570-294-0551.

All You Can Eat Homemade Spaghetti Dinner Sponsored by St. Patrick Church, Sunday, January 5, 11:30 am to 2:30 pm at St. Patrick Parish Center, 319 Mahantongo Street, Pottsville. Eat in or Take out. Adults: \$8; Children: \$3.50

Worldwide Marriage Encounter

A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION! Make 2020 the year you resolve to improve your marriage! Attend a WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER weekend and learn how. For information call 610-449-1859 or visit www.wwme.org.

Open House and 2020-2021 Registration at Nativity BVM High School

Sunday, January 12. School tours, presentations and displays begin at 1PM. Contact the school at 570-622-8110 or jldaubert@nativitybvm.net with any questions.

ICF 101 – Christian Anthropology. What does it mean to be human? This course will examine who God is as the One who seeks to share Himself with His creation. A brief survey of Salvation History will be traced to Jesus Christ, the Redeemer who saves humanity, and teaches us what it means to be a human

person. This course will be presented **Online** by **Heather Maigur** and is scheduled from Monday, January 27 to Sunday, February 23, 2020.

Cost: \$35. Register at www.allentowndiocese.org/icf

ICF Courses are meant for any adult Catholic looking to grow deeper and learn more about the Faith. There are no prerequisites for these courses.

LIVE WEBINAR: The Beginner's Guide to Defending Your Faith with

Trent Horn an adjunct professor of apologetics at Holy Apostles College and staff apologist for Catholic Answers, where he specializes in teaching Catholics to graciously and persuasively engage those who disagree with them. In this webinar, Trent shows you that you don't need all the right answers—you just need the right questions and the right attitudes in order to share the Catholic Faith with anyone. This webinar will be live **Wednesday, January 29, 7:00 p.m.** The event will not be recorded or rebroadcast. Go to

Gifts of the Magi

Christ has appeared among us. Come, let us adore Him.

The precious gifts which the Magi brought to the Lord this day are threefold, and they are signs of divine mysteries. By gold the power of the King is signified, by frankincense His great priesthood, by myrrh the burial of the Lord.

The Magi worshipped the Author of our salvation in the crib, and of their treasures they brought to Him gifts of mystic nature.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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