

Connections...

January 5, 2003 - Epiphany of the Lord

† *When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage..."*

The star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was.
Matthew 2:1-12

A twisting walk of peace on canvas

On the stone floor of the famed Chartres Cathedral in France is a large star with a pattern of torques and curves around it. The design is called a labyrinth. The pattern around the star is a walkway, a single path leading inside to the center of the star and then back out again. Back in the 13th and 14th centuries, visitors to Chartres and other soaring cathedrals like Rheim and Amiens would walk these labyrinth designs as the culmination of their pilgrimage.

The labyrinth walks of the middle ages have been rediscovered today as a path to prayer, introspection and emotional healing. San Francisco's Grace Cathedral has installed a canvas replica of the Chartres labyrinth in the nave of the church and is building a permanent labyrinth in the cathedral garden. While walking a labyrinth can be no more magical than a walk in the woods, those who walk them often say it focuses the mind, slows the breathing, and calms the spirit, enabling walkers to pray and confront problems in their lives. Walking a labyrinth can take anywhere from a few minutes to an hour, depending on the pace of the walker and the size of the design. In the past few years, permanent and temporary labyrinths of all shapes and sizes have been created in churches, hospitals, gardens and fields. In San Francisco, visitors walk the labyrinth barefoot, some crawl on their knees, some hobble along with their canes; some walkers keep up a steady pace, some stop every few steps.

The Rev. Lauren Artress, who brought the labyrinth to Grace Cathedral, explains:

"When you walk into the labyrinth, the mind quiets, and then you begin to see through what's happening inside. You become transparent to yourself. You can see that you're scared, or frightened, or that you lack courage. People can see for the first time that their anger is in the way. You can see your judgments against people and against yourself."

[*The New York Times*, May 10, 1998.]

CONNECTION: *Our lives are a continual labyrinth walk in which we try to make sense of the complexities of life and cope with the doubts and confusions we encounter - all while making our way, step by step, to God the center. The magi's journey - a long, difficult trek to find the newborn "king of the Jews" - images what our life's journey should be. The Epiphany story, as does the walking prayer of the labyrinth, challenges us to slow down and check our bearings, to focus on the "star" we should follow to make our lives all that God has created them to be, to fix our lives on the constant, eternal values of peace, compassion, mercy, justice and forgiveness - the treasures that are of God. ■*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5 – EPIPHANY

7:30am Mass
9:30am Mass
10:30am New Parishioner Registration (Room 211)
11:30am Mass
1:00pm Baptisms (Church/Chapel)
4:00pm Epiphany Evensong (Church)
6:15pm Mass
7:00pm Just Faith Class (St. Clare)
7:15pm Confirmation Session

MONDAY, JANUARY 6

8:00am Rosary (Chapel)
8:30am Mass (Chapel)
6:30pm Bell Choir (Church)
7:00pm RCIA (St. Vincent de Paul)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7

8:00am Rosary (Chapel)
8:30am Mass (Chapel)
6:30pm Stewardship Committee (Kateri)
7:00pm Baptism Class (St. Vincent de Paul)
7:15pm Jazz Rehearsal (St. Cecilia)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8

8:00am Rosary (Chapel)
8:30am Communion Service (Chapel)
9:45am School Mass (Church)
2:00pm Cancer Spirituality (LL109)
4:15/5:15pm Hallelujah Chorus (St. Cecilia)
4:45/6:30pm Odyssey Jr. High FF (Youth Room)
6:30pm Faith Formation Catechist In-Service
6:30pm St. John's Adult Choir (St. Cecilia)
7:00pm Art & Environment (St. Vincent de Paul)
7:00pm Befrienders (St. Martin de Porres)
7:00pm Finance Committee (Kateri)
7:00pm SPAC (St. Clare)
7:15pm Hosanna (Church)
7:30pm Jr. High Live (Youth Room)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9

8:00am Rosary (Chapel)
8:30am Mass (Chapel)
9:15am Circle of Women
1:00pm Afternoon Quilters (Jeanne Jugan)
6:30pm Preschool Board (St. Peter Claver)
7:00pm Faith Formation Committee (St. Clare)
7:00pm Ladies Night Out Concert (Church)

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10

8:00am Rosary (Chapel)
8:30am Mass (Chapel)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11

4:30pm Mass

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12

7:30am Mass
9:30am Mass
9:30 & 11:30am Sunday School
11:30am Mass
1:00pm Sr. High Basketball League (Gym)
6:15pm Mass
7:00pm Just Faith Class (St. Clare)
7:15pm Confirmation Session

Looking Ahead

Before I Forget...

I understood... that finding one's way in the desert is much easier by night than by day,
that the points of reference are numerous and certain.
In the years which I spent in the open desert
I never once got lost, thanks to the stars.

– Carlo Carretto, Letters from the Desert

Today we celebrate the feast of Epiphany. The pagan kings bring their costly gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh for the newborn king. Because there are three gifts, we have come to believe that there were three kings. But there are at least five kings in the gospel story: the three who brought gifts; King Herod; and the newborn king, Jesus. As we read the story in Matthew's gospel, it is a story of ASTONISHMENT. They find the newborn king, not in a palace, but in a simple dwelling in Bethlehem. The story, only recorded in the gospel of Matthew, demonstrates that salvation is for everyone, not only for the Jewish people. These pagan kings are seekers and searchers who come to adore the true king. They are willing to travel from their homes because they believe that this newborn king is someone extremely important. They come to offer praise and homage. They are willing to bow down before an infant.

These kings, these magi, these wise men, whoever they were, bow in adoration before the King of Kings. The other king in the story, Herod, harbors destruction in his heart. This is a fabulous story of true kings and false ones, of people willing to travel and one who was very close to the truth but wouldn't move from his palace. The pilgrim kings are willing to take the journey and be led by a star. But Herod, who is only a short distance from Bethlehem, doesn't take the journey to find his rival. Herod goes on to decree the slaughter of the innocents. Some years later the true King, the sinless One, will also be put to death on a cross.

Today's feast is not about the three kings, but it's about those early Christians who embraced the universal salvation that was offered to everyone. We owe so much to those first generations of Christians, both Jewish and Gentile, who risked their lives for Christ.

* * * * *

I read a list of resolutions by (Rev.) Walter Schoedel. He calls them the 7-Ups for the New Year. They are about attitudes and actions, not the soft drink!

- 1) Wake-Up: Begin the day with the Lord. It is always the Lord's Day. Rejoice each day.
- 2) Dress-Up: Put on a smile. It improves your looks and says a whole lot about your attitude.
- 3) Shut-Up: Watch your tongue. Don't gossip. Say nice things about people. Learn to listen.
- 4) Stand-Up: Take a stand for what you believe. Do good and resist evil.
- 5) Look-Up: Open your eyes to Christ. He is your only Savior.
- 6) Reach-Up: Spend time in prayer with your adorations, confessions, thanksgivings and petitions to the Lord.
- 7) Lift-Up: Be available to those in need - serving, supporting and sharing.

How do I want to invest my time, energy, money, and talents in 2003? How will you make the most of the time offered you each day this year? What are your priorities for 2003? What is the most important thing we will do this year? Can we answer that question by saying: It's about pleasing God with my life?

Pleasing God with my life! How do we do each month, each week, each hour, each minute, each second, each millisecond? You don't think a millisecond is important? Ask the person who won the silver instead of the gold in the Olympics.

Life is great. What a gift. Make God the center of each day and it becomes a greater gift.

Happy 2003!

Fr. Bill

Funeral Luncheon Committee...

In 2002 we served 60 funeral luncheons here at St. John's. We are so fortunate to be able to offer this service to grieving families. Thanks to all those who prepare food, make phone calls, serve lunch and help with clean-up, you are a gift from God! Please remember to pick up your dishes!

God Bless, Loretta

A Word from the Associate...

There are Two Kinds of People in the World

So goes the common phrase, followed by an arbitrary division of the two kinds of people: people who put anchovies on pizza and people who don't; people who like Neil Diamond and people who don't; people who divide the world into two kinds of people and...

But in fact there really *are* two kinds of people in the world, seen from God's point of view as he reveals it in the Sacred Scriptures. There are Jews, and there are Gentiles. This is the great division of the human race.

Jews were the Chosen, Gentiles were everyone else. Jews were God's people, Gentiles were the people of the false gods. Jews were those among whom God dwelt, Gentiles were those who were without God and without hope in the world. This is the Scriptural picture. Not by their own desire or accomplishment, not for any special merit or talent or impressiveness, but by the mystery of God's choice, the Jews were set apart to be the special possession of God. They were given the covenant, the commandments, the promises, the temple, and from them was to come the Messiah, the anointed King of the human race.

But from the beginning there were hints that this special choice of God was meant to benefit not only the Jews but the whole human race. "All the nations shall be blessed in you," was the promise of God to Abraham, our father in faith. And Isaiah spoke of the coming day when "all nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising."

So we celebrate Epiphany, the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. When those three kings, the magi, came from distant lands to do homage to the babe in the manger, they were a sign of what was still to come, when all nations would come to recognize their true king. And though Jesus came to preach to the Jews, he then gave his disciples the solemn command: "Go and make disciples of all nations." We, the Gentiles, have been grafted in to the tree of life, we have become spiritual children of Abraham and inheritors of the promises of God. The ancient division between Jew and Gentile has been overcome, and those who were "far off" (the Gentiles) have been brought "near" (into the family of the Jews).

It happens that we live in a time of great missionary expansion. The Gospel had been spreading rapidly in many parts of the world, and kings and peoples are coming alive to Risen Christ. Even as Europe is largely abandoning the faith, and the United States grows more distant from Him, others are recognizing their true King. So it has always been: no one people or nation or ethnic group can claim to own Christ, not even the Jews, his own chosen and beloved people. This is the glory of Epiphany: the delight of the nations who have seen a great light and come streaming to do homage to Christ.

"When I am lifted up, I will draw all men to myself."

Fr. Michael Keating

Youth News...

Parents of Odyssey students are asked to attend meetings on January 8th, at 5:00 or 6:30pm. Classes will resume for students on January 15th.

There is an ongoing need for adults and peer ministers with IIB training to facilitate small groups in the Jr. High Odyssey (faith formation) program. Volunteers need only commit to one unit, 5-7 sessions, at a time. The next session begins January 15. Substitutes are also needed. All materials and support are provided. Our 7th and 8th graders appreciate your participation. Please call Kate Roush if you can share your time and talents! 763-754-7666.

9th -12th grade students are encouraged to join Service Club III, meeting on five Thursdays, 4:30-7:30pm beginning January 23rd. Students will perform service in the community for the first 4 weeks and will participate in a social activity on the 5th Thursday. This is a great way to earn service hours for school or Confirmation. Deadline to register for Service Club is January 9th. Details and a brochure were included in the December issue of the *Newzpaper*, or you may call Sara Riehle for more information, 763-754-7666.

All 7th -12th graders, and their friends, are invited to join us at Afton Alps on Monday, January 20, for an exciting day of skiing and snowboarding. The deadline to register for the event is January 13th. Details are included in the December issue of the *Newzpaper*. You may call Sara Riehle for more information 763-754-7666.

The first meeting of the Youth Ministry Commission will be January 14th. We will meet monthly to discuss, create and revise our mission, goals and action plans for the future of youth ministry at St. John's. Any and all family members are invited to participate! Please contact Sara Riehle if you have any questions 763-754-7666 or sara@theyouthroom.com.

The next Confirmation session will be held Sunday January 12, 7:15-8:30 pm.

Birthright

Caring help for pregnant women.

651-646-7033 – St. Paul
763-757-0715 – Coon Rapids

School News...

Catholic Schools Week is coming – January 26 –31, 2003
Catholic Schools – “Making A World Of Difference”

On January 22 we are conducting our kindergarten **round up** at 7:00 p.m. in **St. Joseph Hall***. This is the time to discover information about St. John’s School and Kindergarten in particular. You will have an opportunity to learn about the programs available to you as parents. You will be able to see slides showing the Kindergarten class in action. You will learn about St. John’s Mission and Philosophy.

In addition we are providing registration papers to all who attend. You may take them home to fill out. Please join us on January 26 for 11:30 a.m. Mass followed by open house in the school from 12:30–1:30 p.m. Return registration forms to the school office on January 26.

Please bring the following with the registration form:

1. Birth Certificate
2. Baptismal Certificate unless baptized at St. John’s
3. A fee of \$10 paid at time of registration. No student is considered registered unless the fee accompanies the form.

Come join us and we will answer your questions.

*NOTE: Room change

Seniors...

CASINO TRIP

Grand Casino - Hinkley

January 23, 2003

\$6.00 each (\$5.00 voucher at the door). Sign up soon! For more information call Ginny Petro at 763-784-5254. Registration forms in the parish office.

Pastoral Ministry...

NURSING HOME SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 7

Mass	11:00am	Presbyterian Homes
Word/Comm	2:15pm	New Brighton Care Ctr.

Thursday, January 9

Word/Comm	10:15 am	Innsbruck
Word/Comm	7:00 pm	St. Anthony
Word/Comm	7:15 pm	Trevilla

Thanks to all of you who make extra stops and extra visits this time of year. It means so much and is truly the spirit of the season.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

Those in our community who are ill:

Beau Anderson, John Battmer, Donald Beaubien, Marcelline Beseler, Marcella Boomer, Karen Bona, Wayne Carlson, Helen Cmiel, Ann Czech, Louis Czech, Lenore Dougherty, Joe Fellner, Linda Franklin, Bernice Hopkins, Anna Horbatuck, Henry Horbatuck, Mike Kallok, Kevin Keenan, Br. Joseph Katzmarek, Michael Kavanagh, Esther Knapp, Mary Krenik, Linda Leier, Herb Loscheider, Nancy Mehrer, Rupert Meyer, Irene Mitchell, Lance and Ann Moe, Corliss Moore, Donna Murphy, Ray Nelson, Ben Ruebbelke, Frances Sventek, Ted Spiess, Ed Stich, Richard St. Germain, Sr., Bob Sorem, Robert Tharaldson, Fr. Greg Tolaas, Frances Vonacek, Donna Waldoch, Mildred Werner, Linda Zappa.

The souls of those who recently have died:

Robert Heidebrink

PRAYER LINE

Call one of these numbers with your prayer requests.

All requests are confidential.

651-633-1618

763-784-5254

651-636-5251



“Man does not live by bread alone. Man has been adding a great deal of butter.”

Circle of Women...

Please join us this Thursday morning, January 9, 2003, from 9:15-11:30am. Our speaker will be nationally recognized financial educator and author Ruth Hayden. Ruth's local money classes challenge women to take charge of their lives as knowledgeable, strong, focused women. Our Circle talk will focus on Women and Money: Strategies for Change. Come join the Circle, and bring a friend... Call Circle of Women Coordinator Ruth Pauly with your questions 651-717-0010. Child care will be available; suggested donation is \$3. Please call Rita 651-639-0291 to register your child.

Ladies Night Out!

Sisters, Mothers, Aunts, Cousins, Grandmothers, Neighbors, Friends... St. John the Baptist Church invites women of all ages to for a special night out.

Musical performance by the group *Sisters*
Refreshments

Thursday, January 9, 2003
7:00—9:00 p.m.

Tickets \$5 in advance \$6 at the door

Childcare will NOT be available. For more information call Shannon Mildenerger at 763/780-4449 or Mary Walus at 651/633-1540 ext. 1227.

NAME _____

PHONE # _____

ATTENDING _____ AMOUNT PAID \$ _____

Send Registration & Payment To:

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
Sister Performance
835 2nd Avenue NW
New Brighton MN 55112



OPEN DOORS - A social group for divorced, widowed, and single men and women -- meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. in the St. Vincent De Paul Room for socializing and snacks. Come to the meetings or just the events. You're always welcome!!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

January 14 - Next monthly planning meeting - 7:30-9:00 p.m. Come and share your ideas for winter fun!

January 23 - Restaurant of the Month -- Group will meet at 6:00 p.m. at St. John's parking lot to carpool to "The Machine Shed Restaurant." (Address/Directions: 8515 Hudson Blvd. No. in Lake Elmo. Take 694 east to 94 east and exit at Radio Drive north - exit #250. Go across bridge -- restaurant is the NW corner - Phone: 651-735-7436). Reservations will be made for 6:45 p.m. **Please RSVP by no later than January 20 to Mary Kay at 612-782-3872.**

January 25 - St. Paul Winter Carnival Grand Day Parade - 12:30 p.m. Watch the bulletin for additional information!

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation

A Fervent Belief

Sunday, January 19, 2003

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Registration begins at 2:30 p.m.

St. Odilia Catholic Church
3495 Victoria Street North
Shoreview MN

Action On

- * Immigration Issues
- * Housing Issues
- * Renewing The Mission
of our Faith Communities

"You ought to believe in something in life, believe that thing so fervently that you will stand up till the end of your days... We have a power, a power as old as the insights of Jesus of Nazareth, and as modern as the techniques of Mahatma Gandhi."
— Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

We search for **meaning**
In a culture that offers **entertainment**
In place of **community**,
That urges **consumerism**
As the road to **fulfillment**,
That wants congregations to **care for the poor**,
But keeps silent about **why poverty exists.**

Isn't it time for people of faith to **take a stand?**