



THEY OPENED  
THEIR TREASURES  
AND OFFERED HIM GIFTS  
OF GOLD, FRANKINCENSE,  
AND MYRRH.

MATTHEW 2:11

## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

JANUARY 2, 2022

### GIFTS

Gifts are everywhere at this time of year. Christmas gifts. Hostess gifts. Hidden gifts. Wrong-size gifts. Unexpected gifts. Unwanted gifts. Unreciprocated gifts. And in today's readings we hear about even more gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But we know intuitively (or, one hopes, eventually!) that gifts are symbols of something much deeper and less tangible. The gift of God's Son is, of course, at the heart of our Christmas festivities. We are not—and never—alone, because “God is with us.” (Thus the name Emmanuel.) But wait, that's not all! The liturgy reminds us over and over that this is a “holy exchange.” As Christ came to share in our humanity, we come to share in his divinity. The full significance of that mystery is a gift we have yet to unwrap completely.

### WHAT KIND OF GOD IS THIS?

Christmas is a season of abundance. Christmas cookies and carols. Parties and presents. Mangers and mistletoe. The same is true in our church. Within a period of nine days we celebrate Christmas, the Holy Family, Mary Mother of God, and today the Solemnity of the Epiphany. Truly an embarrassment of liturgical riches. (And we are not finished yet!)

However, for many people, Christmas is already over. Trees litter the curbside or make their way back to the attic. Presents are put away or returned. We prepare to go back to school or work. But as Christians we have barely dipped our toes into the profound mystery of a God who walks among us. What kind of a God is this whose kingdom is not limited by our borders, fears, expectations, or imaginations? Today's psalm reminds us, “Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.” Diversity and inclusion are not new to God's agenda.

### TRADITIONS UNCOVER MEANING

Two traditional rituals, one liturgical and one domestic, help underline the meaning of the Epiphany. The Proclamation of the Date of Easter is an option for inclusion at Mass today. This text which formally announces the dates of the upcoming major feast days reminds us that Christmas is best honored in the context of the whole story of salvation that culminates in Easter. Or as writer Nathan Mitchell reflects, the wood of the crib becomes the wood of the cross.

The second tradition connected to Epiphany is the blessing of the door of one's home with chalk. It includes a prayer for protection for all who enter therein. One explanation of this tradition ties it to the Passover in the Book of Exodus: the marking of the doorposts with the blood of the lamb kept the Israelites safe. This tradition too offers a connection between Christmas and Easter.

As we continue to mine the richness of this season we hum along with the angels, *Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

### TODAY'S READINGS

Isaiah 60:1–6

Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 10–11, 12–13

Ephesians 3:2–3a, 5–6

Matthew 2:1–12

# *The Church of the Incarnation*

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Mrs. Audrey Saharek

## *Sacristan*

Toni Munoz

## *Coordinator Middle School Faith Formation Gr. 7-12*

## *Confirmation Coordinator*

Gina Burby

## *Director of Music*

Mrs. Theodora Niver

## *Cantors*

Vanessa Crowley.....Lorissa Heath  
Rosanne Sweeney Gowdy.....Andrew Russo  
Heather Picard.....Gianna Bielenda

## *Rectory Staff Assistant*

Mrs. Marguerite Devitt

## *Rectory Assistant*

Marguerite Heinemann

## *Mass Schedule*

Confessions on Saturdays from 3:30 - 4:15pm  
in Father Crawford Hall

Vigil Mass: Saturday at 5:00pm

Sunday Masses: 8:30 & 10:30 am

Daily Mass: (Mon. - Fri.) 9:00 am

Recitation of the Rosary for Peace before  
9:00 am daily Mass

## *Sacrament of Baptism*

By previous appointment by calling the rectory.  
Sundays at 12:30 pm

## *Weddings*

Please contact a priest 6-10 months prior.

## *New Parishioners - Faith Formation Registration*

The Church of the Incarnation  
welcomes new parishioners.

Forms are available at the  
main entrance of the church.

Please mail or drop off at the rectory.

You may also visit our website for printable forms at:  
www.thechurchoftheincarnation.com

## *Rectory Hours*

9:00 am - 4:30 pm

# Mass Schedule



## Sunday, January 2nd, 2022!!

8:30am— A Special Intention for Harold Walmsley

10:30am—Anthony Melillo

## Monday, January 3rd

9:00am—For all our deceased parishioners & benefactors

## Tuesday, January 4th

9:00am— Mass for a Special Intention

## Wednesday, January 5th

9:00am— For all our parishioners

## Thursday, January 6th

9:00am— Donna Esposito Hughes

## Friday, January 7th

9:00am— A Special Intention for Henry and Judy Williams

## Saturday, January 8th

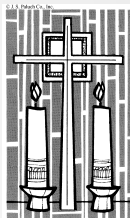
5:00pm—Rose L. Cecere

## Sunday, January 9th

8:30am—Robert & Anna Liegl

10:30am—John Biancamano

**The Sanctuary Candle** will burn from 1/3/2022–1/9/2022 in memory of Mary & Nicholas Champ.



**The Blessed Virgin Mary Candle** will burn from 1/3/2022—1/9/2022 in memory of Donna Esposito Hughes.

## **PRAYER OF THE WEEK**

The Epiphany of the Lord  
At the Mass during the Day  
O God, who on this day  
revealed your Only Begotten Son to the nations  
by the guidance of a star,  
grant in your mercy  
that we, who know you already by faith,  
may be brought to behold the beauty of your sub-  
lime glory.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

**This weekend the church continues our Christmas celebration with the Feast of the Epiphany, marking Jesus' being made known to people in every part of the world.**

The crèche, while a depiction of Jesus' birth in a manger, also reflects the people who created that particular crèche. As a result, every crèche is unique and different, and tells a story about the people in the region it is from. We invite you to bring a Nativity from your home to be blessed at Mass this weekend. If it is too large, you can bring just the Baby Jesus. During Mass we will say a special prayer of blessing & sprinkle them with holy water, so that you can bring that blessing back home with you.

**Women's Club cooking team:** Monday, Jan., 3, 2022 from 1-3 pm in Fr. Crawford Hall.

**The Second collection next weekend** is the monthly collection.

**Wishing everyone a Joyous Christmas season & a Happy, Healthy & Holy New Year!**

## **2022 NEW YEAR'S MASS SCHEDULE**

Masses on Sunday, January 2, 2022 will be at 8:30am & 10:30am.

**Fr. Moran wishes to thank all parishioners** for the cards, prayers, good wishes, and gifts for Christmas and New Years. Fr Moran is most grateful to **ALL** who work during the year in any capacity from Parish Council members to our devoted Catechists to make our parish function with such devotion. Thank you to all who helped prepare and decorate the Church so beautifully for Christmas, to all who donated to the special flower collection, and to all choir members/ musicians who helped to make our Christmas Masses so moving. Happy New Year!

**FAQS: Building a new Parish from Incarnation and Christ the King**

Q: Will the parishes of Christ the King and Incarnation be merged to create a new, combined parish?

A: As of January 1, 2022, Fr Nick will be pastor of both Christ the King and Incarnation. He will be the pastor of the new combined parish. We are hoping that the official merger of the two parishes will be effective by July 1, 2022.

Q: Why are the parishes being merged?

A: To reflect changing realities of diminishing church attendance combined with a shortage of priests. The merger is designed as an important first step to better position our local church to meet the current & future needs of Wethersfield.

Q: What is the vision for the merger?

A: To establish a new, vibrant, welcoming, dynamic and growing parish, one which loves and honors God, respects, loves and welcomes all people, & makes disciples who change the world.

Q: What will be the name of the new combined parish?

A: To be determined. When Corpus Christi, Sacred Heart and St. Luke merged into Christ the King in 2017, we knew the possibility of further consolidation existed. And so while it makes sense to see this merger as having Incarnation join with Corpus Christi, Sacred Heart and St. Luke as Christ the King, and while it makes sense from a legal and canonical perspective as well, the Transition Team will have input into the final decision.

Q: Will the name of our churches change?

A: No. The names of the church buildings will remain the same, and will be used to identify the campus locations that form the one combined Parish.

Q: Will the churches of Christ the King and Incarnation remain open?

A: Yes. Both church buildings will remain open. Each church building will be a campus of the combined Parish. The current Mass schedules at each church will continue for 2022, but will be streamlined for 2023.

Q: What priests will staff the new parish?

A: We will be fortunate to have three priests ministering during 2022. Fr. Nick will be the Pastor. Fr. Moran will be the Senior Parochial Vicar, and Fr. George will be the Parochial Vicar. Fr. Moran will retire in February 2023, at which time only Fr. Nick & Fr. George will serve our new Parish.

Q: Which church(es) will be available for sacraments and funerals?

A: Sacramental life will be available at Corpus Christi, Incarnation, and Sacred Heart churches.

Q: Will offices at both campuses remain open?

A: Yes, for now. As the merger evolves and progresses, office hours, availability, and locations will be developed to ensure the best possible service to our new parish community.

Q: What happens to the parishes' financial resources?

A: The financial resources of both parishes will be combined, and the Finance Councils, along with Archdiocesan guidance, will provide oversight of these processes.

Q: What other changes can we expect?

A: The merger will entail a number of 'behind-the-scenes' as well as more visible issues. For example, the Transition Team is serving as the Pastoral Council for the immediate time, and we will then hold an election to create a new Pastoral Council. The Finance Councils of both parishes are already meeting to prepare budgets for 2022. Because we have not legally merged yet, separate budgets need to be prepared, but in doing them together, they are anticipating one joint budget going forward. The Faith Formation programs have merged for Middle and High School, and the Elementary School programs will merge for the Fall of 2022. Mens' and Womens' groups, Social Action, and Building Committees are already joining forces as well. The intent is to have stronger and more efficient sustainable resources to carry us into the future. Pastoral, administrative and ministry functions will be streamlined to more efficiently serve and support the combined parish.

Q: Where can I find updated merger information?

A: The Transition Team has a Communications Committee. They will be sharing information via the bulletin, the websites, Facebook ([facebook.com/ChristtheKingCT](https://facebook.com/ChristtheKingCT)), email, and announcements at Mass. If you have questions, please send an email to [incarnation.ctk@gmail.com](mailto:incarnation.ctk@gmail.com).





## PRAYER CORNER

### The Epiphany of the Lord

#### JOURNEY TOWARD GOD

In our celebration of the Epiphany, two interwoven themes are present in the readings today. God is beginning something new, and God gathers all of humanity to participate. For Isaiah, God's bright light, manifested in the people of Israel, attracts and summons people from many nations to Jerusalem. In the letter to the Ephesians, God's grace makes the Gentiles co-heirs and co-partners in the gospel. Matthew tells the story of the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel through the birth of Jesus, and simultaneously leading foreigners to share in these same promises. With the birth of Jesus, God chose a particular people, in a particular time and place, to enter most directly into the human story. Today's readings teach that God did this in order to gather all people, all cultures, into unity with God. Like the magi, we are drawn into a journey toward God, becoming co-partners in God's work.

#### TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! The LORD shines upon you and the glory of the Lord appears over you (Isaiah 60:1-6).

Psalm — Lord, every nation on earth will adore you (Psalm 72).

Second Reading — The mystery has been made known that the Gentiles are coheirs, copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel (Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6).

Gospel — Magi from the east arrived, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews?" (Matthew 2:1-12).

#### SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sunday: Epiphany of the Lord;  
National Migration Week  
Monday: The Most Holy Name of Jesus  
Tuesday: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton  
Wednesday: St. John Neumann  
Thursday: St. André Bessette  
Friday: St. Raymond of Penyafort; First Friday

#### READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: 1 Jn 3:22 — 4:6; Ps 2:7bc-8, 10-12a;  
Mt 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday: 1 Jn 4:7-10; Ps 72:1-4, 7-8; Mk 6:34-44

Wednesday: 1 Jn 4:11-18; Ps 72:1-2, 10, 12-13;  
Mk 6:45-52

Thursday: Jn 4:19 — 5:4; Ps 72:1-2, 14, 15bc, 17;  
Lk 4:14-22a

Friday: 1 Jn 5:5-13; Ps 147:12-15, 19-20; Lk 5:12-16

Saturday: 1 Jn 5:14-21; Ps 149:1-6a, 9b; Jn 3:22-30

Sunday: Is 42:1-4, 6-7 or Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 29:1-4, 3, 9-10 or Ps 104:1b-4, 24-25, 27-30; Acts 10:34-38 or Ti 2:11-14; 3:4-7; Lk 3:15-16, 21-22

#### Christ The King/Incarnation Merger

The Transition Team encourages all parishioners to refer to this bulletin for the FAQ's regarding the merger that will be taking place within the Christ the King and Incarnation communities. In addition, if there are any questions or concerns that you would like to share with the Transition Team you may e-mail them to the team at the following e-mail address: [incarnation.ctk@gmail.com](mailto:incarnation.ctk@gmail.com)

The websites can be found at:

[Https://](https://www.thechurchoftheincarnation.com)

[www.thechurchoftheincarnation.com](https://www.thechurchoftheincarnation.com)

[Https://www.christthekingparishct.org](https://www.christthekingparishct.org)

Christ the King Parish (**Corpus Christi Church**), Wethersfield will be adding a 5:15pm Mass the 1st Sunday of each month throughout the school year.

#### A message from the Archdiocese of Hartford

Due to a further threat of the spread of COVID-19, the archdiocese is recommending the wearing of masks in church for everyone.

**Pastor's Corner – January 2, 2022**

Who were those wanderers who, unimpressed by King Herod, did homage to a newborn babe and allowed an angel to change their travel plans? Our crèche sets, carols and myths tell us they numbered three - an idea deduced from the gifts Matthew mentions - but there's no reason to think that there were not more of them: more people and more gifts.

By tradition, they are called kings. If so, probably no more than ourselves who are baptized as priests, prophets and kings. Better we call them the Magi, a title that hints at mystery, magic and miracles.

Historians say it's unlikely that their story reflects any verifiable event. For us, more important than historical fact is the reason Matthew made this part of his Gospel.

First of all, Matthew borrowed key details for his story from Isaiah's prophecies. Isaiah assures the people who have been in darkness that the light of God's glory will shine on them and that their faith will attract people from afar who will come bearing gifts. With that, we have the background for the star, the travelers, the camels and the gifts: all signs of the advent of God's salvation.

Matthew is commenting on Isaiah and portraying Jesus as the fulfillment of ancient hopes. He begins his Gospel with Jesus, Emmanuel, endangered among his own people and revered by representatives of the Gentile world. Then he ends his Gospel with Christ's command to make disciples of all the nations and the promise that as our Emmanuel, he will remain with us until the end.

What does this narrative mean for us today as we begin the year 2022? Perhaps in these uncertain times (will COVID-19 ever end, what will our new parish become?) the Magi can be our guides. More than the time and money required for their journey, they possessed a key combination of self-confidence and desire for more meaning in life. These attitudes urged them to read the signs of the times and to venture into the unknown. They humbly believed there was more wisdom in the world than they had yet discovered. Thus, they set off in a caravan that became the first Christian pilgrimage.

As we begin this new year we too are setting off, as the Catholic community in Wethersfield on a pilgrimage that will bring us together as one parish. God is leading us where we need to go, if we but follow His star, if we but have the courage to read the signs of the times and venture into the unknown.

Back on December 19<sup>th</sup>, we included in the bulletin an insert with Frequently Asked Questions concerning the transition process. It is available on the websites of both Christ the King and Incarnation Parishes. We also now have a dedicated email address for you to submit questions, comments, concerns or suggestions to the Transition Committee ([incarnation.ctk@gmail.com](mailto:incarnation.ctk@gmail.com)).

I am excited by the possibilities given us for the future of our Church in Wethersfield. I am appreciative of the energy and enthusiasm of our Transition Team. And I look forward to joining you on this journey as together we build the Father's Kingdom of true and lasting peace.



### **Church of the Incarnation Faith Formation**

**Elementary Grades K-6:** Our Elementary Faith Formation Program has embarked on a new family structured model. Individual families gather at home to pray, learn, and share their faith. They come together monthly at church for fellowship, to share experiences, and to engage in community outreach.

**Middle School Grades 7 & 8:** Sunday, 6-7pm at Corpus Christi School on **Jan. 2, 9, 23, and 30.**

**Confirmation Grade 9:** Sunday, 6:30-7:30pm at Corpus Christi School on **Jan. 2, 9, 23, and 30.**

**Family Mass for Middle School & Confirmation Grade 9 students & families** will be held the 1st Sunday of each month, Christ the King Church, 5:15pm. Dates: Jan., 2nd, 2022. All families are welcome.

**Pflaum Elementary Family Gatherings:** The next Pflaum Family Gathering K-6: (Parents & Children) will be **Sunday, January 9th** from 11:30-12:30 pm in Fr. Crawford Hall.

**Children's Liturgy of the Word** will be celebrated on **January 9th and 23rd** at the 10:30 am Mass.

### **Advent Angel Tree of Giving Outreach:**

Thank you to all our parishioners and in particular our faith formation families for their generous toy donations to CT Children's Medical Center (CCMC) in honor of Elizabeth Carcia. The outpouring was a wonderful testament to our most giving parish. A special and most gracious thank you to the Carcia family who have coordinated the Angel Tree Project at our church for the past 23 years.



### **Please enjoy this beautiful thank you note from The Carcia family:**

Elizabeth was a gift to us from God. In memory of her, we organize an Angel Tree at our Church of the Incarnation every Christmas and have done so for the past 23 years. This year as well as last due to Covid we have had to modify the Angel Tree. Instead of giving to needy children and adults from organizations in the Hartford area, we chose one organization CCMC.

With the tremendous help of Filomena Gaetani Marinelli and her Faith Formation families and the generous parishioners of Incarnation Church, we held a drop off toy drive last Saturday and were able to donate hundreds of toys to the children at CCMC. Your generosity is overwhelming. I also want to thank Emilia Harshaw, Donna Szumilak Spada, Trish Kinney McDonald, Phyllis DiLeone DiFiore, Cathy Coelho Beers, Lynn Reale and Filomena for your generous toy donations. "May you rejoice in the miracle, the gift, and the promise of Christmas".

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