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Sharing God's Blessings

Date	Collection
Dec 30 & 31	\$ 1102

Thanks for your contribution

LITURGY SCHEDULE

SATURDAY: 5:00 p.m
SUNDAY 11:00 a.m

WEEKDAY: Tue, Wed, Thu at 5:00 p.m.
 Friday at 8:00 a.m
Holy Day of Obligation at 6:00 p.m

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:
 Every Tuesday at 5:00 p.m prior to Mass
RECONCILIATION: Any time 30 minutes before or after daily Mass, After Sunday Mass
Other days by appointment

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday Jan 4 —Mass at 5:00 p.m
 Ruth & John Taylor, Cam Taylor & Ella June Patton;
 Hellen Teets, Betty Johnson, Leo Ruppert

**SUNDAY JAN 5
 FOR PARISHIONERS OF ST. THOMAS**

Tue, Jan 7 for Sienna Cavallo

Wed, Jan 8
For Miles Christian Allen

Thursday Jan 9
For Robert & Beverly Milky

Friday Jan 10
*For Orpha & Eva Turner
 Kenneth, Earnest Turner*

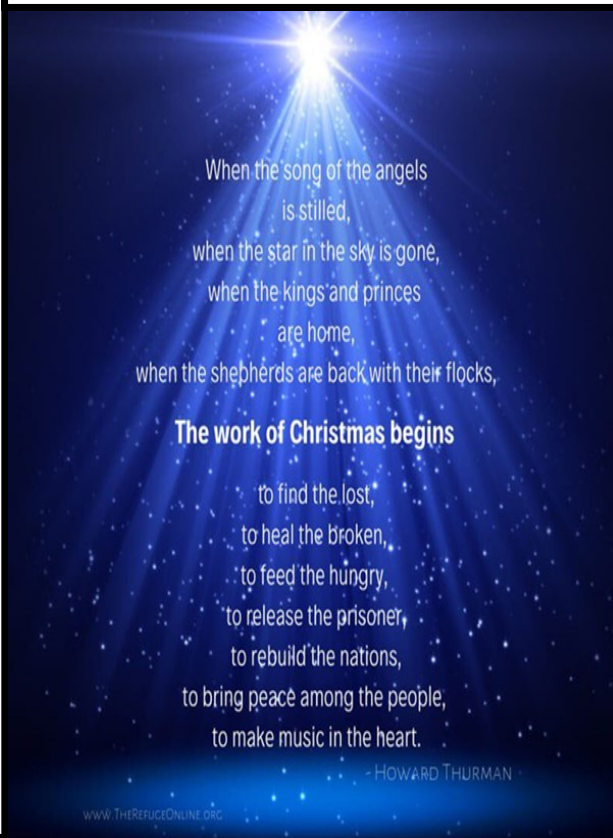


HAPPY BIRTHDAY
 Genevieve Harman Jan. 7
 Nicole Bramble Jan. 10
*Wishing you all Happy
 and Blessed Birthday*

CCD Class will be held on Jan 12 & 26
 Parents, please bring your kids to the class
**Next OCIA Class will be on Friday
 Jan 10, 17, 24 & 31 at 6:00 p.m**

Notice: 2024 Catholic Calendar and Contribution envelopes are available at vestibule. If you don't see your envelope box, please pick up a box of "unnamed" envelopes to use and please let us know your number. Thanks for your contribution.

Food Pantry-Help Wanted!
On January 8, 2025
Pick up, Unload + Make boxes & Prepacked
 1:00 p.m.
Distribute on January 9
 from 9:00 a.m. —noon



Greetings on the Feast of The Epiphany!

Today, we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord, a significant moment in the liturgical year. The word *epiphany* means "manifestation" or "revelation." On this feast, we commemorate the moment when Jesus Christ, the Savior, is revealed not just to the Jewish people but to the entire world. In the Gospel reading, the Magi, or wise men, follow a star that leads them to the infant Jesus. Their journey is one of faith, hope, and divine revelation.

The Journey of the Magi with Faith and Hope: The Magi were travelers from distant lands, men who spent their lives studying the stars and seeking truth. Coming from the East, the Magi symbolize the Gentile world, distant from the promises of Israel, yet seeking truth and salvation. We see in their journey the process of seeking and finding. The Magi followed the star without fully knowing the destination or the significance of their journey. **Their perseverance and faith were rewarded when they found Jesus, who was the fulfillment of all they had been seeking. The Magi did not know the full meaning of what they were searching for, but they were driven by hope.** They followed the star with unwavering faith, hoping to encounter the truth that would fulfill their hearts. Their journey reflects the pilgrimage we undertake in our own lives. It reminds us that even in the darkness and uncertainty of our lives, if we continue to seek Jesus with a sincere heart, we too will be led to Him. In this Jubilee Year of Hope, we are reminded that **we too are on a pilgrimage of hope.** The star of Christ's light calls us to leave behind what we know, to move beyond our comfort zones, and to seek His presence in our lives, even if we do not always know the way.

Our lives are a continuous journey of faith and hope. **This pilgrimage of faith and hope involves walking with others.** The Magi traveled together, and so too do we walk together as a Church. As we journey through this Jubilee Year, we are reminded that we are not alone. We are part of the pilgrim people of God, called to support one another, to walk with others who may be struggling or searching for the light, and to share the hope that Christ has given us.

The Universal Call of Christ: The Epiphany reveals that Jesus is not just the Savior of the Jews, but the Savior of all peoples. This is clearly reflected in the readings from Isaiah and Ephesians. In Isaiah, we hear that "*nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.*" The people of Israel, who had long awaited a Messiah, were now given the privilege of seeing that God's plan of salvation was not just for them but for the entire world. In Ephesians, St. Paul reminds us that "*the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*" Through Christ, the wall that once separated Jews and Gentiles has been broken down, and all are invited to share in God's covenant. The Epiphany is the manifestation of that universal call: Jesus came for everyone, regardless of their race, status, or background.

As we reflect on this, **we are reminded that the invitation to come to Christ is open to all.** This message is crucial in today's world, where divisions and barriers still exist among people. The Church, in its mission, continues the work of the Epiphany by reaching out to all people, proclaiming that Jesus is the light of the world and that no one is excluded from His love. When the Magi found Jesus, they did not just admire Him from a distance; they fell down and worshiped Him. They offered gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh—which were symbols of Jesus' kingship, divinity, and eventual suffering. These gifts were their response to the revelation they had received, an offering of their hearts in adoration of the Christ Child. In our own lives, we are called to respond to the revelation of Christ in a similar way. **In our celebration of the Eucharist today, we too offer ourselves to the Lord. We bring our gifts—our time, talents, and treasures—to Him in worship, recognizing that He is the true King, the divine Son of God, and the Savior who came into the world to redeem us.**

The Epiphany challenges us to reflect on how we respond to the light of Christ in our own lives. Just as the Magi followed the star and sought Jesus with faith and devotion, we too are called to seek Him in our daily lives. The light of Christ shines brightly for all to see, but it is up to each of us to allow ourselves to be drawn to that light. Let us ask ourselves: **How am I seeking Christ in my life? Am I open to the ways He is revealing Himself to me?** Like the Magi, let us offer our hearts in worship and surrender, recognizing that Jesus is the true light who has come into the world for all of us. May we always be willing to follow His light, wherever it may lead, and share that light with others. We pray for those who have not yet encountered Christ, that they may experience His light and truth in their lives.

The Gospel today ends that "...they [magi] departed for their country by another way." The "other way" that the Magi took is more than just a geographical detail. It represents a deeper spiritual truth. The way they departed—away from Herod and toward their homeland—symbolizes a conversion of heart. They no longer followed the ways of power, fear, and manipulation, as embodied by Herod, but chose the path of peace and truth...In our spiritual lives, we too are called to take "another way" when we encounter the truth of Christ. This might mean stepping away from destructive patterns, sinful habits, or influences that lead us away from God. It's a call to conversion, to choose the road less traveled, the way of Christ, which may not always align with the world's values or desires but leads to life and peace. It takes courage to follow Christ, to trust in God's plan even when it is not easy, and to choose the "other way" that leads to true freedom, peace, and salvation. **Are we open to the "other way" God might be leading us? ~Fr. Thien**

THANKS ALL VOLUNTEERS!

On Dec 12, at St. Thomas Food Pantry we gave more than 9,000 pounds of food to 141 families. We also gave winter coats and more than 400 Christmas presents. We also assisted 18 mothers in need by delivering diapers, baby wipes, clothes and toys.

A volunteer from Weirton, Cindy H shared that a recent widow with no winter coat received an answer to her prayers. When we found a coat that fit her, the widow wept and said, "God is great. Thank you, Jesus." She gave all the glory to God, said the volunteer working with her. The volunteer continued, "The person who was with her said that all she'd been praying for was a coat for Christmas... We found a matching set of gloves and a hat...then I found a warmer pink one and put it on her head. I told her to wear it when she was feeling sassy. It made her laugh and help dry the tears..." The Gospel today Saint John remind the crowds and us..."Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise."



Congratulations to Matthew Peters and Genevieve Harman, who received their First Communion on Gaudete Sunday, December 15, 2024. Thank you to all those who helped with the Christmas Party at St. Thomas on December 15, 2024. There was much joy in our parish.



At Risen Lord church in Clay, On Dec. 7, 2024 Charleston Catholic High School (CCHS) students along with the Risen Lord church sponsored the annual Christmas party for about 280 kids who had their pictures taken with Santa and Mrs. Claus, enjoyed hot chocolate and homemade cookies, and picked up stockings, presents, and food boxes. CCHS students distributed about 280 presents along with more than 200 food boxes to the kids' families.

On Dec 19, Risen Lord Food Pantry served 334 families and gave more than 900 Christmas' presents to people in Clay. Thank you all Benefactors and Volunteers. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas.



