

JAN 5, 2025

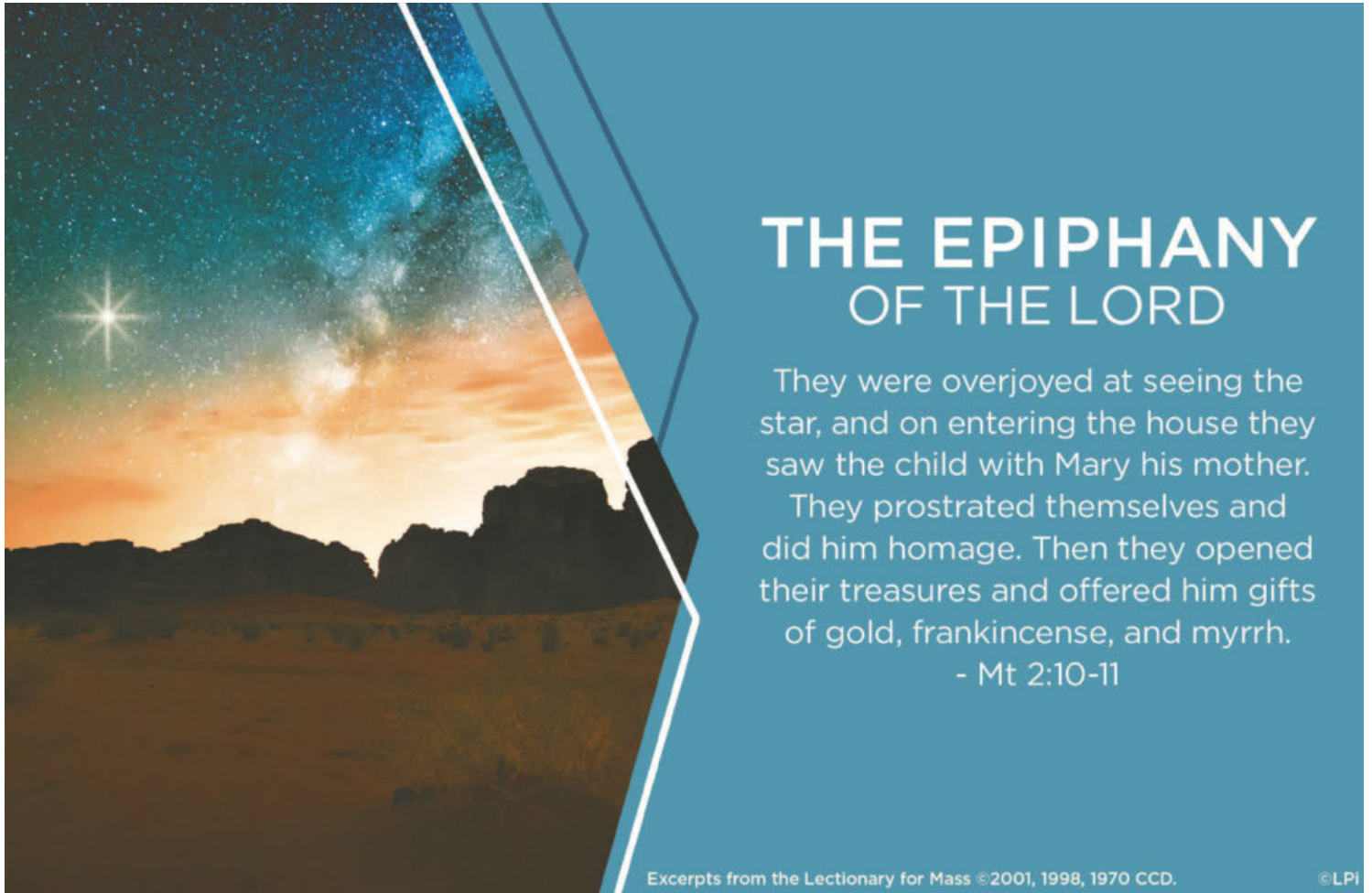
Epiphany



# Our Lady of Lourdes

Catholic Church

... a pilgrim church  
coming to know  
the kingdom of God  
by being Christ  
to the world.



## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother.

They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

- Mt 2:10-11

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

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### EUCCHARIST:

**SAT** 4:00 PM

**SUN** 8:00 AM | 10:30 AM

**WED** 9:30 AM

### PARISH DIRECTOR

**DEB STEPPE**

Office: (414) 545-4316 x113

### CONNECT:

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# FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

## Parish Support - December 2024

	<b>ACTUAL</b>	<b>BUDGETED</b>
	<i>as of 12/13/2024</i>	<i>for Dec</i>
Reg. Envelopes .....	\$55,518.16	\$87,222.47
Offertory .....	\$1,716.10	\$4,999.95

## Budget Updates Fiscal Year: December 2024

	<b>ACTUAL</b>	<b>BUDGETED</b>
Operating Income.....	\$436,684.12	\$477,667.86
Operating Expenses.....	\$408,505.62	\$461,131.08

## Improvement Fund Updates

Beg. Balance 7/1/24...	\$169,666.89
Donations.....	\$12,128.64
Expenses .....	\$83,376.50
<b>Balance (11/30/2024)</b>	<b>\$98,419.03</b>

**THANK YOU!**

*Our Lady of Lourdes is greatly  
blessed with your continued  
generous support  
of all our ministries!*

## 2024 Catholic Stewardship Appeal (11/21/2024)

Donations: ..... **\$38,923.40**  
Goal is \$61,175.....63.62%

Donors: ..... **135**  
# of donors: 1,010.....13.37%  
Participation goal ..... 15.6%

**DECIDE TO LEAD**

[www.CatholicAppeal.org](http://www.CatholicAppeal.org)

## NOTES FROM DEB

### Pennies from Heaven

Greetings all,

In our effort to be transparent in all matters—especially those around our finances, I am pleased to announce that we have received a generous bequest from one of our parishioners who passed away last year. We do not have the exact amount of how much we will receive, but we do know the donor has delineated several ministries, including the Love One Another campaign for their bequest. We will work hard to be faithful to the donor's wishes.

Needless to say, this donation came as a surprise to us. While we cannot budget for bequests, the income we receive from them can help with budget shortfalls, and can allow us to undertake projects and ministries that we normally could not afford.

I continue to be touched by the generosity of our parishioners in everything from prayer shawls to Giving Tree Christmas gifts, to the financial stewardship of the parish, to IRA contributions, and to bequests. Wow! We can maintain and improve our facility and are able to undertake some awesome ministries because of your generosity.

Please know of my profound gratitude.

Your shepherd,  
Deb Steppe

## VIRTUE OF THE WEEK

### Why virtues?

As we welcome in a new year, it seems a good time to recall why we choose a virtue to ponder each week.

Virtues exist within each of us as potential. They are the goodness in us. As spiritual beings, we need to strengthen the virtues within us by toning them as we do muscle. We need to recognize and name the virtues we see in ourselves and others.

It is our hope that by choosing a virtue to reflect on each week, we can learn to enliven the goodness within.

Can this be a way to overcome darkness?

**SUN 5**

**MON 6**

**TUE 7**

8:00 am Liturgy                      Church  
10:30 am Liturgy                    Church

1:00 pm Sheepshead Group   Rm 10

10:30 am SVDP Meeting            Rm 3  
6:30 pm Faith Sharing Group   Rm 3

## COMMUNITY LIFE

## FORMATION

### Women's Spirituality Group Meeting

Wednesday, January 8  
6:30 pm–8:00 pm

Discussion and reflection, lead by fellow parishioners, of next weekend's scripture readings. All women welcome (ages 18-100+)!

### Order of Christian Initiation for Adults and Children (OCIA)

Join us on Thursday, January 9, from 6:30 pm–7:30 pm for the next OCIA check-in. These monthly meetings offer a chance to connect and learn more before the official process begins in Lent. With only one meeting left before formation starts, now is a great time to join if you or your child are interested in receiving the sacraments. Contact Maggie Russell for Zoom details.

### What's So Amazing About Grace?

From baptism to our present contentious times our hope lies in the gift of grace! Come explore with Mary Osep how we can seek, find, and share grace at GIFT on Sunday, January 12, at 9:00 am in the Hall. If you do not typically attend GIFT and wish to join us, please call the Parish Office to let us know that you will be attending.

Mary Osep was a youth minister for 35 years, 17 here at OLOL, and also worked with young adults. She considers raising 5 sons and enjoying her grandchildren in retirement her greatest work.

## GOSPEL MEDITATION

Have you ever wondered why the magi had gold, frankincense, and myrrh? Matthew's Gospel tells us, "Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt. 2:11). Why are these things their "treasures"? One possible answer is they were magicians and astrologers, and these three items were the tools of their questionable trade. In offering them to Christ, they demonstrate that they will cease using such items to predict or control life. They place this baby-king, the God of Israel, at the center of their lives, and not their own devices of control, manipulation and prediction.

Isn't that what we need to do, too? Consider, for example, the magical power of money, symbolized by the magi's gold. Seemingly whatever we ask of money, it does. It wields a god-like power over the world. It can predict the future by guaranteeing better outcomes for us — which is why it is such a tempting alternative to trusting in God. The problem is such absolute trust in money enslaves us to the economic forces that make money so powerful. In paying homage to Jesus with "gold" (i.e., tithing), we participate in his authority over (and therefore freedom from) the magical sway of money.

What things in your life do you use to predict or control your future? What in your life seems to give you power over the world? Those are your treasures. Are you tired of feeling enslaved to them? Find a way to open them and give them to Christ, and you will be freer.

Father John Muir  
©LPi

**WED 8**

**THU 9**

**FRI 10**

7:00 am St. Ben's Meal Prep Kitchen  
9:30 am Communion Service Church  
10:15 am Faith Group Social Hall C  
6:30 pm Women's Spirituality Group Rm 7  
7:00 pm GASIC Virtual  
7:00 pm Liturgy Team Mtg. Rm 3

6:30 pm Social Justice Cmte. Rm 3  
6:30 pm OCIA Info Session Virtual

**Office Closed**

## WORSHIP

### They Followed a Star!

When was the last time you looked at the stars? What does the sheer vastness and beauty of the universe evoke in you?

This Sunday, we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. St. Augustine tells us that this feast marks the time when Jesus began to manifest himself to the Gentiles: not just to the Jewish peoples. This was a radical departure from the idea that Jesus came only to and for a select group of people. The Three Kings represented the universal invitation for all peoples to know and follow Jesus. Three Kings, each from different countries, saw a bright light in the skies and were inspired to follow it with faith and trust.



The stars were evocative symbols of angels and of the Holy Spirit. They were objects that instilled wonder and awe of God. The Magi had the faith and trust to follow the star to Christ's birth. It pointed the Magi to Christ's presence within our humble human form.

What they found was not a shiny palace, but a poor stable. Yet, they recognized the significance of what they saw: "heaven on earth, earth in heaven, humanity in God, God in humanity, one whom the whole universe cannot contain now enclosed within a tiny child. Their symbolic gifts bear witness: incense for God, gold for a king, myrrh for one who is to die." (Peter Chrysologus, 5C)

For us, in this season of light and new birth, may we, like the three Magi, follow the light that leads us to Christ and worship in wonder at the mystery of the Incarnation. What is the "gift" we wish to offer to God today?

### Mitten Tree

Between January 4-11, we will be collecting donations of new and hand-made hats, scarves and mittens for the Gaenslen school and an Ascension Family Health Care center. All donations are welcomed!!

### Scripture Readings for January 11/12

#### The Baptism of the Lord

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11 | Psalm 29 | Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7 | Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

## OUTREACH

### St. Ben's Meal Program

We serve at St. Benedict the Moor's meal program on Wednesday, January 8. Please bring food donations to the Parish Office on Monday, Tuesday, or no later than 3:00 pm on Wednesday.

[ololmke.org/st-bens/](http://ololmke.org/st-bens/)

### Social Justice: An Invitation

The Social Justice Committee seeks to educate and awaken people to the issues of justice that confront society today. We meet monthly on the second Thursday. Our next meeting is January 9, at 6:30 pm, in Room 3. We invite you to be our guest to learn more about our mission and activities.

### Upcoming Food Pantry Dates:

#### January 14 and 28

Please note the date changes from previous bulletins.

#### 2025 Food Pantry Calendar

- January 14 and 28
- February 11 and 25
- March 11 and 25
- April 22
- May 6 and 20
- June 3 and 17
- July 15 and 29
- August 12 and 26
- September 9 and 23
- October 21
- November 4 and 18
- December 2, 16, and 30

Most needed items: spaghetti sauce, jelly, Chef boy R Dee, condiments, and canned meats. Thanks for your ongoing support to the pantry. It is because of you that we can provide food to the needy. God bless.

Please watch expiration dates.

[ololmke.org/food-pantry](http://ololmke.org/food-pantry)

**SAT 11**

4:00 pm Liturgy

Church

**SUN 12**

8:00 am Liturgy

Church

9:00 pm GIFT

Hall

10:30 am Liturgy

Church

11:30 am Environment Change

Church

## COMMUNICATIONS

## SPOTLIGHT

### Cancellation and Closing Notifications

Winter is here. Therefore, please stay in touch with OLOL regarding building and event notifications during inclement weather.

First alerts will go out through our app and text notifications. Then postings will go up on our website home page and Facebook. Lastly, the local TV stations will be contacted. This order is based on the speed and ease (fastest to slowest) of disseminating the information.

We are aware that not everyone has a smartphone, so we will continue to use every means necessary to alert people about closings and cancellations. If you do have a smartphone, we encourage you to download our app.

### The “Long Farm Table”

After all the holiday activities, I thought it was time to sit with a steaming cup of tea and a bit of warmth from the fireplace and reflect on what were some highlights of the holiday season. The “long farm table” kept coming to my mind. I grew up on a big farm in Illinois and the long, wooden farm table in the kitchen was always the center of meals, daily job discussions, the kids’ homework, and weekend company. We never seemed to get beyond the kitchen table with these discussions! Now as I become the senior member of the family, a “long farm table” is still the center of family events and talks. Several generations still gather every holiday season for college stories, sports events, new little ones, girl friends, boy friends etc. and we still never get beyond the kitchen! There is something about gathering around a kitchen table that is special, perhaps even sacred. When I think about the Eucharistic table at OLOL, that is where we, as family, gather each weekend and share Word and Eucharist with each other. It seems that even today the “long farm table” or kitchen counter in today’s world is an important part of most people’s life – social, political, financial, problem solving and even spiritual. Can you identify a “farm table” symbol in your life and recall special events from those table gatherings that have been so memorable for you and your family and friends?

Donna Van Wynsberghe  
Pastoral Council

## DISCIPLESHIP

## STAFF EMAIL

### Epiphany

They say that seeing is believing. We certainly live in a visual culture. Think about how we communicate truth to one another. When going visiting do we say “I am going to hear, or smell, or touch, or taste my family? No. We say we are going to see our family. When we hear a strange noise outside what do we say? We say we are going to see what has happened. Of all our senses we tend to trust our eyes the most. Hearing of something is not enough; we have to see it with our own eyes. This is what inspired the Magi. The star drew them out of the confines of their own understanding to witness something remarkable with their own eyes.

There are moments in all of our lives when something we see sends shock waves of understanding in and through us; moments that lift us way beyond normality. These are an Epiphany, moments when something we see transforms our lives with freshness and gives us a new found perspective.

Life speaks to us all the time. All we need is vision enough to respond to it. We do not need to search madly for enlightenment. All that is required is that we pay attention.

In this new year, let us all pay attention and let us follow that wondrous star!



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