



# Welcome to HOLY FAMILY PARISH

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, SUNDAY JANUARY 7, 2024

Email: [contact@holyfamilymh.ca](mailto:contact@holyfamilymh.ca) ~ Website: [www.holyfamilymh.ca](http://www.holyfamilymh.ca) ~ Phone 403-527-6933

Facebook: Medicine Hat Holy Family Parish ~ YouTube: Medicine Hat Holy Family Church

Office Hrs. Monday to Friday - 8:30am – 12:00pm & 1:00pm to 4:30pm. Closed on Holidays.

## CLERGY AT HOLY FAMILY PARISH

Fr. Iqbal Khurshid &  
Deacon Robert Risling

## RECONCILIATION...

Friday 9:30am–10:30am. & Saturday 3:30–  
4:45pm. Or by Appointment

## MASS TIMES... MONDAY to FRIDAY at 9:00AM

FIRST SATURDAY OF MONTH at 8:30AM, SATURDAY at 5:00PM

SUNDAY at 8:30AM, 10:30AM & 6:00PM

## THE CHAPEL IS OPEN

MONDAY - FRIDAY 9:30am - 4:00pm

ADORATION FRIDAY 9:30 – 10:30am

Knights of Columbus – Greg Martin

Catholic Women's League – Cathy Koch

Parish Pastoral Council Chair - Gary Heinbecker

Parish Finance Council Chair - Cheryl Pocsik

**We acknowledge that Treaty 7  
Territory, on which we stand, is the  
ancestral land of the Indigenous  
Peoples and is common home to  
everyone in Virtue of God, our  
Creator's Gracious Gift.**

*The wise still seek Him.*



## *The Epiphany of the Lord, Solemnity*

Isaiah 60:1-6.

Psalms 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13.

Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6.

Matthew 2:1-12.

## *Copartners in the Promise*

The readings and this solemnity are filled with competing images and persons. Darkness and light. Christians of Jewish heritage and Gentiles. Chosen people and coheirs, copartners. Herod and the Magi. Epiphany teaches us this: all are members of the same body, all are coheirs of God's goodness, all are copartners in the promise of Christ Jesus.

- ✚ Like the Magi, how will I give homage to Christ today?
- ✚ Whom do I look down upon that I must see as a copartner with me?
- ✚ What treasure will I give away, will I offer to another?

# THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, SUNDAY JANUARY 7, 2024

## OPERATING FINANCES

NOVEMBER 1-30, 2023

Operating Budget 2022	\$ 63,984
General Envelope Collection	\$ 44,777
Loose Collections	\$ 3,533
Future Development	\$ 3,259
Sale of Church Supplies & Other	\$ 9,102
<b>\$ 60,671- Budget Vs Actual</b>	<b>- \$ 3,313</b>

## SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Together in Action (TIA)	\$ 2,718
St Vincent de Paul	\$ 3,366
World Mission	\$ 65
Clergy Retirement	\$ 1,190
Mission Mexico	\$ 195
CARO	\$ 70
Seminary Fund	\$ 50
Needs of the Canadian Church	\$ 10

*Thank You for your Generous Contributions*

Average Weekly Attendance 956

## † Masses & Mass Intentions †



Saturday, January 6

8:30am ~ Frank Smith †

5:00pm ~ Theresa Smith

Sunday, January 7

8:30am ~ Holy Family Parish

10:30am ~ John Kopp †

6:00pm ~ Vipin for Healing

Monday, January 8

9:00am ~ Brian Corcoran

Tuesday, January 9

9:00am ~ Anne Keck

6:30pm ~ Sr. Clem Liboiron

Wednesday, January 10

9:00am ~ Nick & Rosina Mucciarone †

Thursday, January 11

9:00am ~ Cecelia Dunay

Friday, January 12

9:00am ~ Levi Leblanc †

The Feast  
of the  
Baptism of  
the Lord



January 8th

First Saturday Mass

The 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of  
each month  
at 8:30am

January 6, 2024



**Knights of Columbus**

Officers' Meeting

Monday, January 8 at 7:00pm

Faith Room

General Meeting

Monday, January 15 at 7:00pm

Faith Room



The Catholic Women's League

Catholic Women's League (CWL)

General Meeting

January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 7:00pm

Holy Family Parish Hall





Holy Family  
Parish Hall  
Breakfast 7:30am  
Presentation  
8:30 – 9:30 am  
January 13, 2024  
Theme  
Perfect Harmony  
No More  
Presenter  
Mike DiCosola

## Parish Breakfast ~ January 21<sup>st</sup> After 8:30 & 10:30 Masses

**BREAKFAST SANDWICHES**

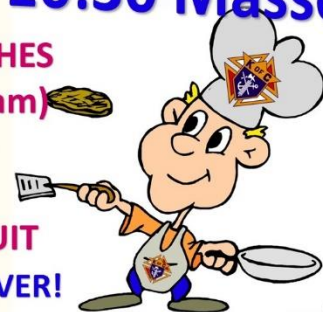
**(Bacon, Sausage or Ham)**

**\$5.00/SANDWICH**

**WITH**

**HASHBROWNS & FRUIT**

**THE BEST FELLOWSHIP EVER!**



Thank You to all our parishioners for all the Cards, Gifts, and Blessings we received through out the holidays.

And Thank You to all the Volunteers that give of their time and energy.

We really appreciate everything you all do!!!

Fr. Iqbal Khurshid, Dcn. Robert Risling & the Staff at Holy Family Parish



Holy Family Parish, Medicine Hat, AB

**WEDNESDAYS**

**7:00PM**

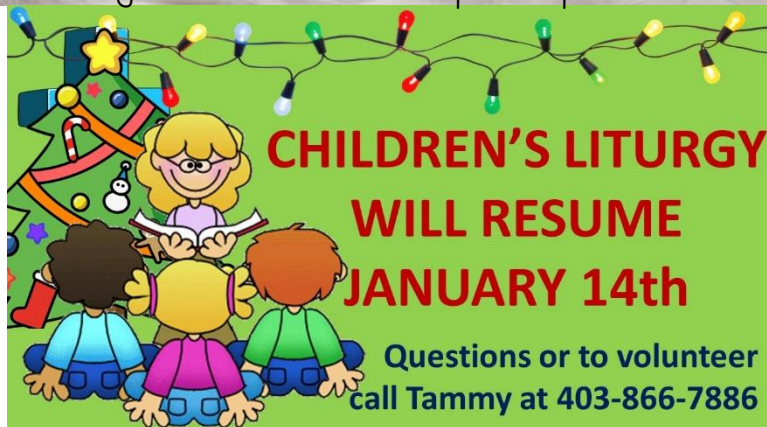
**FAITH ROOM**

### RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

DO YOU HAVE A DESIRE TO LEARN ABOUT  
THE TRADITIONS AND TEACHINGS OF THE  
CATHOLIC FAITH? DO YOU FEEL A NEED  
FOR A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR  
FAITH BELIEFS IN ORDER TO KEEP UP WITH  
THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF YOUR  
CHILDREN?

**Resuming January 10**

CHILDREN WHO HAVE NOT BEEN  
BAPTIZED IN THE RCIA PROGRAM.



## CHILDREN'S LITURGY WILL RESUME JANUARY 14th

Questions or to volunteer  
call Tammy at 403-866-7886

## Sacramental Preparation 2024

**1st Communion Parents Meeting**

**Tuesday, January 16 at 6:30pm in Faith Room**

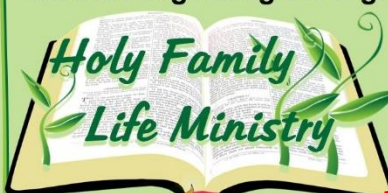
**Confirmation Class**

**Thursday, January 18 at 6:00pm in Faith Room**

**1st Communion Class**

**Sunday, January 21 at 10:15am in Faith Room**

If you are passionate about the dignity of life & would like to know more about what the Catholic Church teaches regarding the dignity of life, please join us.



**Prayer and Adoration**

**2nd Tuesday of the month  
at 7:00pm in the Chapel.**

**Education Evening**

**Resuming January 9**

**7:00pm in the Faith  
Room.**

**Information**

**Valerie at 587-588-5788**

**Sonia at 403-528-0028**

HOLY FAMILY PARISH

## MEN'S PRAYER GROUP

Thursday Mornings - 7:00 to 7:30 – Faith Room

Open to all men seeking to nurture their relationship with God and each other through prayer, song and reflection on the daily scripture readings.

More Information - Gord 527-7423 or Alan 527-4169

Pamphlets available at the Greeting Desk

## REAL MEN PRAY

Listen...with the ear of your heart.

This is the opening line of the rule of St. Benedict. Come join us (Benedictine Oblates) in prayer as we listen to the voice of God in our lives.

**Resuming January 13**

We meet every Saturday morning at 10:00 in the Hope Room at Holy Family Parish.

For more information call Carol at 403-526-0415.





## Vincentian Corner

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the parishioners at Holy Family and St. Patrick's Churches. Your commitment to generously donate to Society of St. Vincent de Paul allows us to continue our mission of helping our neighbours in need. With the cost of living so high and wages not keeping up, so many are struggling to sustain a place to call home as well as to buy enough food to feed their family. We are very blessed to be able to assist those who are in dire situations. The stories we hear are heartbreaking, but we are often able to make a difference. That brings us great peace and joy.

God bless you all for your prayers and your generosity. We wish you a healthy and happy New Year in 2024.

### Holy Communion to the Hospital

Volunteers are needed to bring Holy Communion to parishioners, in hospital, who desire to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. Training will be provided.

If you have a family member or friend who is in hospital and is requesting Holy Communion, please phone the Parish Secretary with the name and room number of the parishioner. The information will be forwarded to Pastoral Care. Thank you!



[catholicyyc.ca/Faithfully](https://catholicyyc.ca/Faithfully) keeps you updated with what's happening in and around our Diocese!

**EMAIL SCAMS AGAIN FROM PREISTS, CHURCH, STAFF, ETC.**  
**NOBODY** is going to ask you for gift cards, or bit coins! **NOBODY!!!**  
If you get an email or a text, **PLEASE DO NOT RESPOND** to it,  
**JUST DELETE IT!**

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[accounting@holyfamilymh.ca](mailto:accounting@holyfamilymh.ca)

Listen to Mass on your phone...  
Download the "Audio Fetch" app.  
Our Network is: HFP\_LIVE  
The Password is: Liv3HFP\*





**Medicine Hat Catholic  
Board of Education**

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Medicine Hat Catholic Schools'  
Education Foundation AGM



January 16, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.  
at Medicine Hat Catholic Board Office

All public welcome to attend!



### **École St. John Paul II School**

École St. John Paul II School is the newest of all Catholic schools in the Division. We opened our doors in August of 2017. This is our 5th year. The school building is located in Southlands (across from Masterpiece Southland Meadows Retirement). We have 300 students registered at the school in ELP (Early Learning Program), Kindergarten and Grade 1-6, as well as 30 staff members. Our school has two tracks of learning for parents to choose from - English or French Immersion.

On Friday, October 21, the staff, and students at École St. John Paul II School gathered in the Learning Commons area to celebrate the official unveiling of our new statues of St. John Paul II and Mary, Our Lady of Fatima (the day before the Feast Day of École St. John Paul II, which is celebrated each year on October 22). This was a very joyous occasion for all gathered. Many of you may have forgotten, but the parishioners of Holy Family Parish collected funds (in large part) for 3 years prior to the construction of École St. John Paul II School. Without your generosity, the acquisition of these beautiful statues would not have been possible. Thank you very much from the bottom of our hearts. Likewise, the students, staff, and parents of École St. John Paul II School very much appreciated having Fr. Iqbal and Deacon Robert Risling come lead a liturgy and the blessing of the statues.

**HOMESTAY FAMILIES NEEDED** - Are you interested in hosting an international student? Do you have the desire to help a student learn about our Canadian culture? The international program with MHCBE is currently recruiting homestay families for our February intake. We have students join us from all over the world to attend our highly rated junior high and high schools. If you have a spare room and the ability to make a student feel like part of the family, please reach out to,

[lori.frelick@mhcbe.ab.ca](mailto:lori.frelick@mhcbe.ab.ca)





Solemnity of Epiphany of the Lord Year B

January 7, 2024

## OUR PILGRIMAGE TO SEE JESUS

Many people, whether religious or not, are finding that journeying to and exploring special places is not only enjoyable but offers fresh perspectives on their daily lives. Some focus on the journey; others focus on the destination. However long or short the journey and however you choose to travel, stepping outside daily life, even for a short time, can be an inspiring adventure. Why is pilgrimage helpful? Pilgrimage is a chance to stand back from life and see what's important. "You have time to think, to pray. Sometimes answers break through like a shaft of sunlight." "I found peace, prayer and time." "Pilgrimage always brings a sense of peace, reward, fulfilment." "Although the building was busy, there was space for quiet." "The wonder of the building, the moving service, the sense of time, history, and place, all added to my everyday faith and worship." What is special about pilgrimage? An image of life. "Pilgrimage" is often used to describe an individual's journey through life, sometimes as a general description of personal growth and exploration, sometimes, as in Christianity, outlining a particular spiritual focus or pathway which it is believed will lead to encounter with God.

A little boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with Twinkies and a six-pack of root beer, and he started his journey. When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old man. He was sitting in the park just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old man looked hungry, so he offered him a Twinkie. He gratefully accepted it and smiled at him. His smile was so pleasant that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered him a root beer.

Again, he smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word. As it grew dark, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave, but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old man, and gave him a hug. He gave him his biggest smile ever. When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?"

"He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? He's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old man, also radiant with joy, returned to his home. His son was stunned by the look of peace on his face, and he asked, "Dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I ate Twinkies in the park with God." However, before his son responded, he added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

Saint Leo the Great, Pope says "The loving providence of God determined that in the last days he would aid the world, set on its course to destruction. He decreed that all nations should be saved in Christ. A promise had been made to the holy patriarch Abraham regarding these nations. He was to have a countless progeny, born not from his body but from the seed of faith. His descendants are therefore compared with the array of the stars. The father of all nations was to hope not in an earthly progeny but in a progeny from above. Let the full number of the nations now take their place in the family of the patriarchs. Let the children of the promise now receive the blessing in the seed of Abraham, the blessing renounced by the children of his flesh. In the persons of the Magi, let all people adore the Creator of the universe; let God be known, not in Judea only, but in the whole world, so that his name may be great in all Israel. Dear friends, now that we have received instruction in this revelation of God's grace, let us celebrate with spiritual joy the day of our first harvesting, of the first calling of the Gentiles. Let us give thanks to the merciful God, who has made us worthy, in the words of the Apostle, to share the position of the saints in light, who has rescued us from the power of darkness, and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved Son. As Isaiah prophesied: the people of the Gentiles, who sat in darkness, have seen a great light, and for those who dwelt in the region of the shadow of death a light has dawned. He spoke of them to the Lord: The Gentiles, who do not know you, will invoke you, and the peoples, who knew you not, will take refuge in you.

He continues to reflect "This is the day that Abraham saw, and rejoiced to see, when he knew that the sons born of his faith would be blessed in his seed, that is, in Christ. Believing that he would be the father of the nations, he looked into the future, giving glory to God, in full awareness that God is able to do what he has promised. This is the day that David prophesied in the psalms, when he said: All the nations that you have brought into being will come and fall in adoration in your presence, Lord, and glorify your name. Again, the Lord has made known his salvation; in the sight of the nations, he has revealed his justice. This came to be fulfilled, as we know, from the time when the star beckoned the three wise men out of their distant country and led them to recognize and adore the King of heaven and earth. The obedience of the star calls us to imitate its humble service: to be servants, as best we can, of the grace that invites all men to find Christ. Dear friends, you must have the same zeal to be of help to one another; then, in the kingdom of God, to which faith and good works are the way, you will shine as children of the light: through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with God the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

The Magi travel towards Bethlehem. Their pilgrimage speaks also to us, who are called to journey towards Jesus, for he is the North Star that lights up the sky of life and guides our steps towards true joy. Yet where did the Magi's pilgrimage to encounter Jesus begin? What made these men of the East set out on their journey? They had excellent reasons not to depart. They were wise men and astrologers, famous and wealthy. Having attained sufficient cultural, social, and economic security, they could have remained content with what they already knew and possessed. Instead, they let themselves be unsettled by a question and by a sign: "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star..." (Mt 2:2). They did not allow their hearts to retreat into the caves of gloom and apathy; they longed to see the light. They were not content to plod through life but yearned for new and greater horizons. Their eyes were not fixed here below; they were windows open to the heavens. As Benedict XVI said, the Magi were "men with a restless heart... They were filled with expectation, not satisfied with their secure income and their respectable place in society... They were seekers after God."

Where did it originate, this spirit of healthy restlessness that led them to set out on their journey? It was born of desire. That was their secret: the capacity to desire. Let us think about this. To desire means to fuel the fire that burns within us; it drives us to look beyond what is immediate and visible. To desire means embracing life as a mystery that surpasses us, as an ever-present cranny in the wall that beckons us to investigate the distance, since life is not just our here and now, but something much greater. It is like a blank canvas that cries out for colour. A great painter, Vincent Van Gogh, once said that his need for God drove him to go outside at night to paint the stars. For that is the way God made us: brimming with desire, directed, like the Magi, towards the stars. With no exaggeration, we can say that we are what we desire. For it is our desires that enlarge our gaze and drive our lives forward, beyond the barriers of habit, beyond banal consumerism, beyond a drab and dreary faith, beyond the fear of becoming involved and serving others and the common good. In the words of Saint Augustine, "our entire life is an exercise of holy desire."

Brothers and sisters, as it was for the Magi, so it is for us. The journey of life and faith demands a deep desire and inner zeal. Sometimes we live in a spirit of a "parking lot"; we stay parked, without the impulse of desire that carries us forward. We do well to ask: where are we on our journey of faith? Have we been stuck all too long, nestled inside a conventional, external, and formal religiosity that no longer warms our hearts and changes our lives? Do our words and our liturgies ignite in people's hearts a desire to move towards God, or are they a "dead language" that speaks only of itself and to itself? It is sad when a community of believers loses its desire and is content with "maintenance" rather than allowing itself to be startled by Jesus and by the explosive and unsettling joy of the Gospel. It is sad when a priest has closed the door of desire, sad to fall into clerical functionalism, very sad.

The crisis of faith in our lives and in our societies also has to do with the eclipse of desire for God. It is related to a kind of slumbering of the spirit, to the habit of being content to live from day to day, without ever asking what God really wants from us. We peer over earthly maps but forget to look up to heaven. We are sated with plenty of things but fail to hunger for our absent desire for God. We are fixated on our own needs, on



what we will eat and wear (cf. *Mt* 6:25), even as we let the longing for greater things evaporate. And we find ourselves living in communities that crave everything, have everything, yet all too often feel nothing but emptiness in their hearts: closed communities of individuals, bishops, priests or consecrated men and women. Indeed, the lack of desire leads only to sadness and indifference, to sad communities, sad priests, or bishops.

Let us look first to ourselves and ask: How is the journey of my faith going? This is a question that we can ask ourselves today, each one of us. How is the journey of my faith going? Is it parked or is it on the move? Faith, if it is to grow, must begin ever anew. It needs to be sparked by desire, to take up the challenge of entering a living and lively relationship with God. Does my heart still burn with desire for God? Or have I allowed force of habit and my own disappointments to extinguish that flame? Today, brothers and sisters, is the day we should ask these questions. Today is the day we should return to *nurturing our desire*. How do we do this? Let us go to the Magi and learn from their “school of desire”. They will teach us in their school of desire. Let us look at the steps they took and draw some lessons from them.

In the first place, they set out at the rising of the star. The Magi teach us that we need to set out anew each day, in life as in faith, for faith is not a suit of armour that encases us; instead, it is a fascinating journey, a constant and restless movement, ever in search of God, always discerning our way forward.

Then, in Jerusalem the Magi ask questions: they inquire where the Child is to be found. They teach us that we need to question. We need to listen carefully to the questions of our heart and our conscience, for it is there that God often speaks to us. He addresses us more with questions than with answers. We must learn this well: God addresses us more with questions than with answers. Yet let us also be unsettled by the questions of our children, and by the doubts, hopes and desires of the men and women of our time. We need to entertain questions.

The Magi then defy Herod. They teach us that we need a courageous faith, one that is unafraid to challenge the sinister logic of power and become seeds of justice and fraternity in societies where in our day modern “Herods” continue to sow death and slaughter the poor and innocent, amid general indifference.

Finally, the Magi return “by another way”. They challenge us to take new paths. Here we see the creativity of the Spirit who always brings out new things. That is also one of the tasks of the Synod we are currently undertaking: to journey together and to listen to one another, so that the Spirit can suggest to us new ways and paths to bring the Gospel to the hearts of those who are distant, indifferent or without hope, yet continue to seek what the Magi found: “a great joy”. We must always move forwards.

At the end of the Magi’s journey came the climactic moment: once they arrived at their destination, “they fell down and worshiped the Child”. They worshiped. Let us never forget this: the journey of faith finds renewed strength and fulfilment only when it is made in the presence of God. Only if we recover our “taste” for adoration will our desire be rekindled. Desire leads us to adoration and adoration renews our desire. For our desire for God can only grow when we place ourselves in his presence. For Jesus alone

heals our desires. From what? From the tyranny of needs. Indeed, our hearts grow sickly whenever our desires coincide merely with our needs. God, on the other hand, elevates our desires; he purifies them and heals them of selfishness, opening them to love for him and for our brothers and sisters. This is why we should not neglect adoration, that prayer of silent adoration which is not so common among us. Please let us not forget adoration. In this way, like the Magi, we will have the daily certainty that even in the darkest nights a star continues to shine. It is the star of the Lord, who comes to care for our frail humanity. Let us set out on the path towards him. Let us not give apathy and resignation the power to drive us into a cheerless and banal existence. Let our restless hearts embrace the restlessness of the Spirit. The world expects from believers a new burst of enthusiasm for the things of heaven. Like the Magi, let us lift our eyes, listen to the desire lodged in our hearts, and follow the star that God makes shine above us. As restless seekers, let us remain open to God's surprises. Brothers and sisters, let us dream, let us seek and let us adore. In this Christmas season now drawing to its close, let us not miss the opportunity to offer a precious gift to our King, who came to us not in worldly pomp, but in the luminous poverty of Bethlehem. If we can do this, his light will shine upon us.

Freddy and the Lord stood by to observe a baseball game. The Lord's team was playing Satan's team.

The Lord's team was at bat, the score was tied zero to zero, and it was the bottom of the 9th inning with two outs. They continued to watch as a batter stepped up to the plate named "Love."

Love swung at the first pitch and hit a single, because "Love never fails."

The next batter was named Faith, who also got a single because Faith works with Love.

The next batter up was named Godly Wisdom. Satan wound up and threw the first pitch. Godly Wisdom looked it over and let it pass; ball one. Three more pitches and Godly Wisdom walked because he never swings at what Satan throws.

The bases were now loaded. The Lord then turned to Freddy and told him He was now going to bring in His star player. Up to the plate stepped Grace. Freddy said, "He sure doesn't look like much!"

Satan's whole team relaxed when they saw Grace. Thinking there was no way he could lose, Satan wound up and fired his first pitch. To the shock of everyone, Grace hit the ball harder than anyone had ever seen! However, Satan was not worried; his center fielder let very few get by.

He went up for the ball, but it went right through his glove, hit him on the head and sent him crashing on the ground; the roaring crowds went wild as the ball continued over the fence for a home run!

The Lord's team won!

The Lord then asked Freddy if he knew why Love, Faith, and Godly Wisdom could get on base but couldn't win the game. Freddy answered that he didn't know why.

The Lord explained, "If your love, faith, and wisdom had won the game, you would think you had done it by yourself. Love, Faith, and Wisdom will get you on base, but only My Grace can get you Home."



"For by Grace are you saved, it is a gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly." Psalm 84:11



Feast of Baptism of the Lord, Year B

January 8, 2024

## BECOMING NEW CREATION

St. Gregory of Nazianzus invites us all to reflect as we today celebrate the Feast of Baptism of the Lord with words: "Christ is bathed in light; let us also be bathed in light. Christ is baptized' let us also go down with him and rise with him". Pope Francis addressing the congregation on this feast day said: Baptism integrates us into the body of the Church, into the holy People of God. And in this body, in this people journeying on, faith is passed down from generation to generation: it is the faith of the Church. It is the faith of Mary, our Mother, the faith of St Joseph, of St Peter, of St Andrew, of St John, the faith of the Apostles and of the Martyrs, which has come down to us, through Baptism: the chain of transmission of the faith.

At first glance, the Baptism of the Lord might seem an odd feast. Since the Catholic Church teaches that the Sacrament of Baptism is necessary for the remission of sins, particularly Original Sin, why was Christ baptized? After all, He was born without Original Sin, and He lived His entire life without sinning. Therefore, He did not need the sacrament, as we do.

Holy Father Pope Francis explains the mystery in this way “When Jesus received the baptism of repentance from John the Baptist, showing solidarity with the repentant people — He without sin and with no need for conversion — God the Father made his voice heard from heaven: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased” (v. 17). Jesus receives approval from the heavenly Father, who sent him precisely that he might accept to share our condition, our poverty. Sharing is the true way to love. Jesus does not dissociate himself from us, he considers us brothers and sisters and he shares with us. And so, he makes us sons and daughters, together with him, of God the Father. This is the revelation and source of true love. And this is the great time of mercy”.

In submitting Himself humbly to the baptism of St. John the Baptist, however, Christ provided the example for the rest of us. If even He should be baptized, though He did not need it, how much more should the rest of us be thankful for this sacrament, which frees us from the darkness of sin and incorporates us into the Church, the life of Christ on earth! His Baptism, therefore, was necessary—not for Him, but for us.

Many of the Fathers of the Church, as well as the medieval Scholastics, saw Christ's Baptism as the institution of the sacrament. His Flesh blessed the water, and the descent of the Holy Spirit (in the form of a dove) and the voice of God the Father announcing that this was His Son, in Whom He was well pleased, marked the beginning of Christ's public ministry. St. Paul sees baptism as a source of dying with Him and rising back to life with him: “Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

In fact, there is an invocation which the liturgy has us repeat during the Season of Advent: “O that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down” (Is 64:1). If the heavens remain closed, our horizon in this earthly life is dark and without hope. Instead, in celebrating Christmas, once again faith has given us the certainty that the heavens have been rent with the coming of Christ. And on the day of the baptism of Christ we continue to contemplate the heavens opened. The manifestation of the Son of God on earth marks the beginning of the great time of mercy, after sin had closed the heavens, raising itself as a barrier between the human being and his Creator. With the birth of Jesus, the heavens open! God gives us in Christ the guarantee of an indestructible love. From the moment the Word became flesh it is therefore possible to see the open heavens. It was possible for the shepherds of Bethlehem, for the Magi of the East, for the Baptist, for Jesus' Apostles, and for St Stephen, the first martyr, who exclaimed: “Behold, I see the heavens opened!” (Acts 7:56). And it is possible for each one of us, if we allow ourselves to be suffused with God's love, which is given to us for the first time in Baptism by means of the Holy Spirit. Let us allow ourselves to be invaded by God's love! This is the great time of mercy! Do not forget it: this is the great time of Mercy!

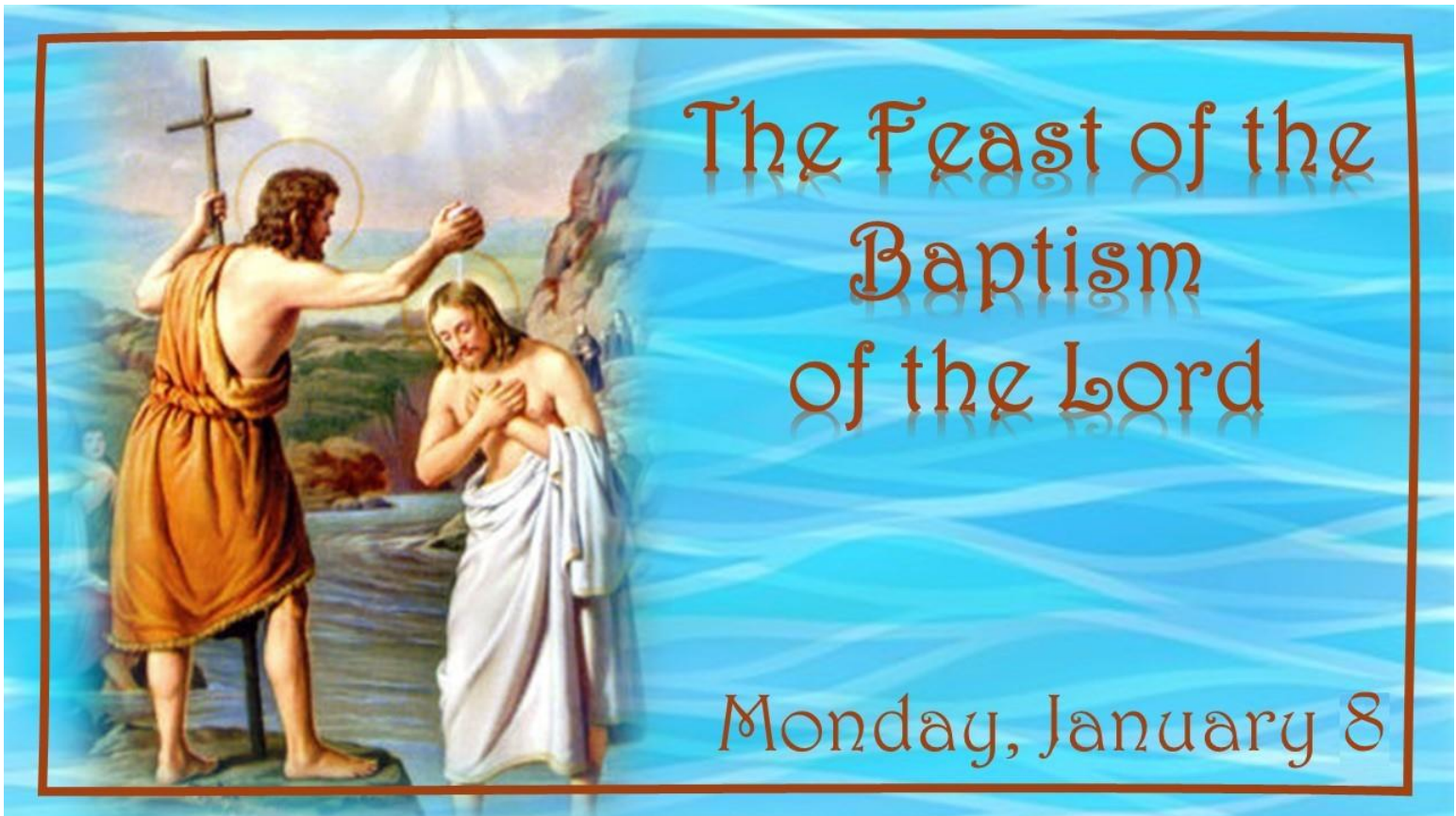
For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him” (Romans 6:4-8). “Jesus rises from the waters; the world rises with

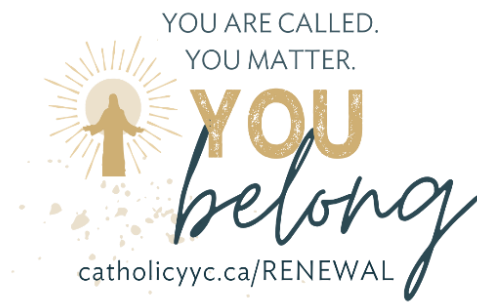


him. The heavens like Paradise with its flaming sword, closed by Adam for himself and his descendants, are rent open. The Spirit comes to him as to an equal, bearing witness to his Godhead. A voice bears witness to him from heaven, his place of origin. The Spirit descends in bodily form like the dove that so long ago announced the ending of the flood and so gives honor to the body that is one with God” as St. Gregory explained.

Through Baptism we not only leave our old life of sin, but we have become new a creation in Him who took our nature to be like us but sin. In Baptism we are consecrated by the Holy Spirit. This is what the word “Christian” means, it means consecrated like Jesus, in the same Spirit in which Jesus was immersed throughout his earthly existence. St. Paul reminds everyone of us to have same mind, like Jesus *“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:5-8).*

He is the “Christ”, the Anointed One, the Consecrated One; we, the baptized, are “Christian”, meaning consecrated, anointed. Baptism makes us to walk with him as his brothers and sisters remembering if we have died with him, we will also rise with him too. Let us today remember our Baptismal vows and live our lives accordingly so that we may inherit eternal life. Through the Baptism of the Lord, we share into his divinity and become new creations in the Holy Spirit which keep filling our hearts and minds to follow him who died on the Cross to give us eternal life.





# DIOCESAN SUNDAY UPDATES

## The Epiphany of the Lord

### Epiphany - January 7, 2024

The Son of God was first manifested to the world through the visit of the magi. Today, God's Son is brought into the world and is present to the world through His Church. If you think that God is calling you to a Church vocation, please contact the Office of Vocations at 403-218-5500 or email Fr. Cristino Bouvette

email [vocations@calgarydiocese.ca](mailto:vocations@calgarydiocese.ca)

[www.catholicyyc.ca/vocations.html](http://www.catholicyyc.ca/vocations.html)

### The Baptism of the Lord – January 8, 2024

Jesus' identity is revealed as "The Son of God" through His baptism in the Jordan. Our identity as "children of God" is revealed through our baptism. Our lives then, must constantly witness Jesus as Lord. If you think that God is calling you to a Church vocation, please contact the Office of Vocations at 403-218-5500 or email Fr. Cristino Bouvette

email [vocations@calgarydiocese.ca](mailto:vocations@calgarydiocese.ca)

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# Joe McKenna Council #9502 Knights of Columbus



Position	Name
Grand Knight	Greg Martin
Deputy Grand Knight	Jimmy Tablan
Financial Secretary	Pat Ries
Treasurer	Ron Pisoni
Chancellor	
Recorder	Pat Brigham
Advocate	Andy Hamel
Warden	Walter Pratt
Inside Guard	Dale Maddaford
Outside Guard	Michael Camphor
Year 1 Trustee	Herb Durda
Year 2 Trustee	Gary Heinbecker
Year 3 Trustee	Kent Friedt
Lecturer	Rick Brown
Membership Director	Garry Lux
Faith in Action Program Director	Greg Martin
Faith in Action Life Director	Allan Lawson
Faith in Action Family Director	Jimmy Tablan
Faith in Action Faith Director	Darrell Bonagofsky
Faith in Action Community Director	Ron Pisoni
Pastoral Parish Council Representative	Garry Mastel

## 2023-24 Knights Events

### Date & Activity

Sunday, September 10  
Corn Roast

Sunday, September 24  
Knights Mass

Sunday, October 15  
Breakfast

Sunday, November 19  
Breakfast

Saturday, December 9  
Knights Mass

Sunday, December 17  
Christmas Breakfast

Sunday, January 21  
Breakfast

Sunday, February 25  
Breakfast

Sunday, April 7  
Breakfast


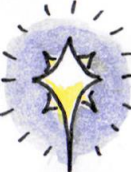
Sunday, May 5  
Breakfast

Sunday, June 23  
Parish Picnic



# The Kids' Bulletin

*Epiphany Sunday  
January 7th, 2024*

*Here is the story of the Wise Men,  
with pictures to make it fun to read!*

Long ago,  saw a special  in the

sky. They followed it to find the

newborn . But first they came to 

Herod, and asked him if he knew where the



would be born. He asked the priests,

who told him the  would be born in



Bethlehem. So the  went, and found the



where the  and His mother,



were staying. They knelt before the

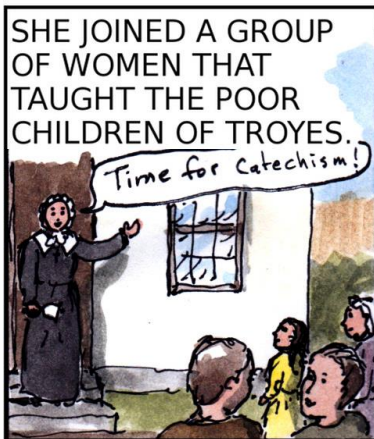
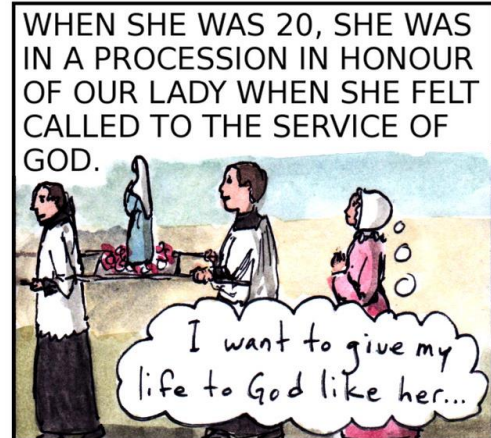
baby  and gave him their  of gold,

frankincense and myrrh.



# *Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys*

## *January 12*



SAINT MARGUERITE DIED AT THE AGE OF 80. SHE HAD HELPED THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW SETTLEMENT SO MUCH THAT THEY CALLED HER "THE MOTHER OF THE COLONY." SHE TAUGHT THE FAITH TO THE MOTHERS BECAUSE SHE KNEW THAT THEY WOULD BE THE FIRST ONES TO TEACH THE FAITH TO THEIR CHILDREN.







# The Magi Come to Worship Jesus



Today we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany, which is when the Magi, or wise men, of the East came to find and worship Baby Jesus. They travelled for many weeks across harsh country to find the new King, bringing their best treasures to give to Him.

Where did these men find the baby King? Not in Jerusalem in the palace, with riches and servants! They found Him in a little town, in a house with just His mother, Mary. But they still knew Who the Baby was, so they bowed down to Him and gave Him their treasures.

The wise men teach us that we can honour God in all sorts of places. Jesus is there when you help ordinary people and poor people. He is honoured when you pray at a little nativity scene. Like the wise men, we should give our very best to Jesus no matter where He is.



Answers to Cross-Word: Across: 4.myrrh 6.to 8.East 9.star 11.find 14.secretly 15.king 16.gold 18.Bethlehem Down: 1.frankincense 2.Jesus 3.at 4.Mary 5.Herod 7.overjoyed 10.they 12.as 13.its 17.lie

*[thekidsbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:thekidsbulletin@gmail.com)*



Back for a second series, Fr. Tim Boyle will speak on The Art of Accompaniment, picking up on the theme from the Synod preparation document "Enlarge the Tent."

**St. Martha's Parish, Lethbridge**

**Monday, January 22, 2024**

"Zacchaeus... the first of Many Seekers... and why they don't want to join"

**Monday, February 19, 2024**

"Finding the Real Presence of God outside the church"

**Monday, March 18, 2024**

"Mother Maria of Russia... on uniting the Cross and the Sword"

**Monday, April 15, 2024**

"Flourishing... not just maintaining the Faith".

Gatherings begin at 10:15 am with 15 minutes of checking in with participants.

Mass follows at 11:15 am

*St. Martha's parish, 355 Columbia Blvd W., Lethbridge – 403 381 8891*

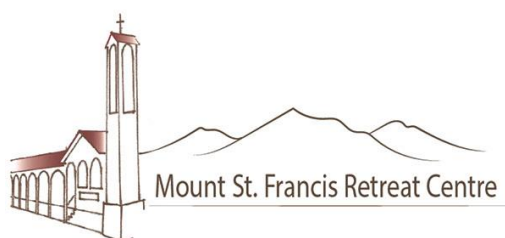


# Retreat Centers in Southern Alberta

## AN "OASIS" IN THE HEART OF CALGARY

FCJ Retreat & Conference Centre is seen by many as a spiritual home where God feels very present both in the building and the surrounding landscape, and every year welcomes thousands of visitors to a unique experience of warm hospitality and deep spirituality.

Our hope is that those who come to the FCJ Centre will encounter God, whether in prayer, in the Word, in the silence and the beauty; and that this encounter will touch many other lives too.



Mount St. Francis Retreat Centre is nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains where are all welcome in the name of Christ. The Franciscan Friars of Canada, inspired by the vision and example of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi, have served here since 1949.

We offer silent retreats and spiritual direction. We also serve those in the 12 Step Program through weekend and evening Serenity

retreats. We listen to 5th steps. We host groups and individuals seeking a place of quiet and stillness in an often-hectic world. We can accommodate up to 50 people (46 rooms/50 beds). We have one large and one small meeting room, a library and chapel. We can accommodate most dietary restrictions. There are approximately 500 acres to explore.

Our retreats are organized through a group of dedicated volunteer Captains that oversee the registration. Please see our retreats page for more information.

We have strong ties with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary; other Christian Churches, schools, and organizations; as well as others not affiliated with any particular faith but who are in accord with our mission of peace, healing and prayer. We value the many loyal friends and benefactors that have supported us in our ministry for over 70 years.

Martha Retreat Centre, situated on the edge of the beautiful Lethbridge coulees, is a ministry of the Martha Retreat Centre Society, which was established in 2018. Originally founded by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha of Antigonish, Nova Scotia in 1968, the Centre continues to be supported by and aligned with the mission of the Sisters of St. Martha: inspired by God's graciousness, we strive to hear, embrace and respond to the cry for gospel hospitality.





# Scams Alert

There are many scams going around masquerading as your clergy (priests, deacons or lately, the bishop).

Please exercise caution when responding to email messages. If you receive unusual emails, check the sender's email address to see whether it is the person's genuine address. Even if the sender's address looks correct, always verify suspicious emails by phoning the sender. There have been many similar scams reported by several parishes in our diocese and across Canada.

Note that these scams do not stop at emails. Those in social media should stay vigilant when responding to friend requests or to other compelling posts requiring a response. There are many fake Twitter, Facebook and other social media accounts trying to impersonate people you know and our church leaders. Some scammers may take the time to build a relationship with you to gain your trust, before trying to extort money or other things like gift cards.

Please exercise vigilance when you are being charitable. Use the channels you are most familiar with and avoid becoming victims of a scam.

**NOBODY is going to ask you for gift cards, or bit coins from the church! NOBODY!!!**

**All our email addresses only end in @holyfamilymh.ca never a @gmail account.**

**If you get an email or a text, PLEASE DO NOT RESPOND to it, you can forward it to [contact@holyfamilymh.ca](mailto:contact@holyfamilymh.ca) so it can be sent to the diocese.**