

January 8, 2017

*The Epiphany of the Lord (A)*

Is 60:1–6

Eph 3:2–3a, 5–6

Mt 2:1–12

## Wise Humility

An amazing thing happens in today's Gospel: Representatives from the farthest ends of the earth follow a heavenly light and end in the humble cave of Bethlehem. The Wise Men first consult with King Herod, Galilee's civil authority. He checks with the high priest and rabbis to determine when and where the Messiah is to be born. The Jewish leadership is able to read the Scriptures and give Herod and the Wise Men all the information they need. Yet only the Eastern travelers go to adore the Lord. The priest and lawyers lack faith to see in those Scriptures a fulfillment of their hopes, while King Herod is blinded to Christ's salvific mission and moved by a will to power, as the killing of the

Innocents will make clear. They all have ears to hear and eyes to see but few pay heed to the signs of the times.

The Wise Men from the East, merely following their study of the stars and asking help from others, travel months in search of Jesus. Raphael shows the moment when they finally find what they have been looking for. The band of travelers—complete with horses, guards, and royalty—arrives at a broken-down stall. One of the Wise Men kneels, removes his crown, and offers Jesus his treasure. This small gesture shows an internal attitude that Herod and the chief priests were missing: the humility to lay aside power, wealth, and status to bend the knee before the king born in their midst.

—Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

### *For Reflection*

*Am I willing to humbly accept Jesus for who he is: the Son of God?*

*From what must I detach myself in order to accept Jesus more fully?*



*“Raise your eyes and look about; they all gather and come to you—  
Your sons from afar” (Isaiah 60:4).*

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

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Rev. Msgr. John B. McCann ..... Pastor  
 Rev. Leo S. Stajkowski.....In Residence  
 Deacon Paul J. Hiryak, Deacon James A. Bardi,  
 Deacon Charles A. Giordano  
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Immaculate Conception Academy.....610 404-8645  
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 Wendy S. Krisak, M.A. NC, LPC  
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## EPIPHANY OF THE LORD – JANUARY 8, 2017

*The Sanctuary Lamp Burns In Memory of Frank Janiszewski and  
 In Memory of Cynthia Swisher Schickram*

### ★ ★ MASS INTENTIONS ★ ★

SAT	5:15 PM	FRANK JANISZEWSKI	THURS	7:00 PM	JOSIE FREDRIKSEN
SUN	7:30 AM	BRUCE KETTERER	FRI	7:30 AM	JOYCE LAUCKS
	9:00 AM	NOAH CENCETTI		9:00 AM	<b>ICA Mass</b> – CYNTHIA SWISHER SCHICKRAM
	11:00 AM	LIVING & DECEASED PARISHIONERS	SAT	5:15 PM	DUANE MADZYKOWSKI – 2 <sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY
MON	<b>No MASS</b>		SUN	7:30 AM	LIVING & DECEASED PARISHIONERS
TUES	7:00 PM	GOD'S BLESSINGS UPON CYNTHIA HIRYAK		9:00 AM	CATHERINE TRUCKLEY
WED	7:30 AM	JANE KLINE		11:00 AM	JOHN IEZZI – 1 <sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY

### NEXT WEEK AT A GLANCE

**SCRIP:** Gulla **5:15pm** Pisarek **7:30am** Kasperowicz **9:00am** Carvalho **11:00am** Citrano

DAY	MASS	LECTOR	COMMENTATOR	ALTAR SERVERS
SAT	5:15 PM	Shirley Wheeler	Joe Bailey	Meghan Duffy, Isabella and Mia Pizzo
SUN	7:30 AM	Adelina Kieffer	Sherry McCollum	Veronica McClelland, Chris & Lyndsay Surkosky
	9:00 AM	Pam Amos	Barbara Giordano	Parker Davis, Sadie Mangan, Tim Stewart
	11:00 AM	Leonard Cline III	Leonard Cline Jr.	Meghan Greco, Faith Ouimet, Mya Salaneck

### ***Second collection next week is for Debt Reduction***

***Emmanuel: An Eternal Gift for Us Today***  
 Immaculate Conception will host a special Christmas concert on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 7pm  
 Join us as we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany with favorite carols and inspired readings for the whole family. This free concert will be performed by talented local musicians, including Sandy Bach on the organ and piano, the Bella Musica String Quartet, Pat DeWald on the flute, and Jaylynn Ritter on the trumpet. Refreshments will be served afterwards in the social hall. Come and enjoy some homemade wassail, egg nog, and other tasty treats. A free will offering will be taken up to benefit the Soup Kitchen at the Kennedy House in Reading.

Remember in your prayers the sick of our parish: Marco Fiato, Bryan Fiato, John & Margaret Kakas, Maryanne Prentice, Delores Woy, Alice Arantowicz, Yolanda Marino, Ann Schlott, Kathy Patrick, Joseph & Susan McCorristin, Mary & Phil Morici, Margaret Maccarone, Dan Casciano, Paisley Stout, Jake Maccarone, William Janda, Madge Butto, Roseann Malcom, Doris Slater, Joan Cronin, Rita Conrad, Rose Osorio, Tony Guilliams, Dolores McCullough, Steve Mammarella, Gloria Richards, Jane Falcone, Fannie Hunter, Andrew Martin, Mary Okuniewski, Paul Bringenberg, Joseph Kolenda, Kenneth Barth, Dominic Strock, Bob Hocker, Mike DiScala, Keith Kienle, Ralph Gullo, Nancy Iezzi, Sonny Motta, Joseph Shevenock, Jr., Mildred Mattassa, Deb Petras, Paul Milshaw, Ronald Kryman, Anna Swiezak, Margarie & Walter Hansen, Arlene Shirley, Mark McDonald, Louis Tamburro, Roger Wolf and Helen McDonald  
 Pray for the recently departed: Father Francis Straka, Anne F. Kretzman, Joseph M. Sipe, Jennie DeFrancesco

## ***THIS WEEK AT ICC:***

<b>Sun</b>	<b>01/08</b>	<b>7pm Emmanuel: An Eternal Gift Concert</b>
<b>Mon</b>	<b>01/09</b>	<b>7:30pm RCIA</b>
<b>Tues</b>	<b>01/10</b>	<b>7:30pm Bell Choir</b>
<b>Fri</b>	<b>01/13</b>	<b>7pm Senior High Youth Group</b>
<b>Sat</b>	<b>01/14</b>	<b>4-5pm Confession</b>

**Women's Society Soup Sale**

## **WHAT'S HAPPENING**

*Please be advised that there will be no daily Mass on Monday, January 9, 2017. Thank you for your kind understanding in the regard.*

**The Senior High School Youth Group** will meet Friday, January 13<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. All high school students are invited attend and bring a friend for an evening of fun, food, game and prayer.

**MARCH FOR LIFE** - On Friday, January 27, 2017 our parish family of the Immaculate Conception is sponsoring a bus to the March for Life to be held in Washington D.C. The bus will depart the ICC parking lot at 8am arriving in Washington D.C. for the noon rally and 1pm March for Life. It is anticipated that the bus will return at approximately 9pm. The cost is \$30 per person. For additional information or to reserve a seat, please contact Angela Peterson at 610-582-6993 or by e-mail at arpeterson@windsteam.net.

**CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS** – Any 8<sup>th</sup> grade student in Catholic, public or private school who is registered in a parish of the Diocese of Allentown is eligible to apply for a one-year partial scholarship of \$1,000 to be applied to tuition at Berks Catholic High School. Scholarships are awarded on the basis of participation in activities, service to school and community, special honors, leadership positions, academic achievement and the recommendation of the pastor. For an application please contact Immaculate Conception Academy Principal, Mrs. Patricia Tarquinio at 610-404-8645 or Mrs. Dawn O'Donnell, Director of Religious Education at 610-582-3880. **Application Deadline is Friday, January 20, 2017.**

***Immaculate Conception Academy Aftercare*** is looking for someone willing to work several hours per week from 3pm to 6pm. Must have completed "Protecting God's Children" and obtain required background checks and clearances. Call Laura DeFalco at 610-463-8157.

Before departing to become the fifth bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, NY, Bishop Barres will celebrate a final Mass in the Diocese of Allentown on January 22<sup>nd</sup> at 12pm at the Cathedral of Saint Catharine of Siena, 1825 W Turner St, Allentown. All are welcome to attend this Mass as we recognize and give thanks for the pastoral leadership of our fourth Shepherd. Let us pray together, as a Diocese, for Bishop Barres as he takes on the responsibility to lead and govern the people of Rockville Centre. Following the Mass a social will follow with light refreshments in the Parish Activity Center, directly below the Cathedral.

**Berks Catholic Open House, January 29, 2017 2-4pm**  
A terrific opportunity to meet faculty, administration and current students. Our clubs and activities are on display to give you a glimpse into what we are about. Open House is an exciting experience seeing our community together.

## **CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK STARTS JANUARY 29<sup>TH</sup>**

Love. Learning. Leadership.

Catholic Schools – Faith, Academics, Service

See [www.icaberks.org](http://www.icaberks.org) for a complete schedule.

**Women's Society Soup Sale, January 14/15** - It's that wonderful time of the year again! Soup will be sold by the quart for \$6. Choosing from the wide variety of homemade favorites will be a challenge. We have always been blessed with an abundance of delicious soup donations. Stop by and pick up a couple of your favorites. If you would like to make a donation of your favorite recipe, we would be most grateful. Contact Marsha at 610-385-6319 or email [mgazz615@icloud.com](mailto:mgazz615@icloud.com) if you would like containers.

**The Women's Society's** monthly meeting is on January 18<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the social hall of the church. We have a full schedule this spring. If you are interested in serving your church in the company of other women of faith and dedication, this is the group for you! If you are not a member and would like to see what the Women's Society is all about, you are invited to attend any meeting, or join in any of our activities for the benefit of our church. You will be warmly welcomed.

## ***Immaculate Conception Academy and Early Education Program is now enrolling for the 2017-18 School Year!***

ICA offers extended and full day preschool and pre-k, as well as a full day kindergarten program.

### ***Open House Dates:***

Sunday, January 29, 1pm-3pm

Wednesday, April 12, 9am-Noon

***"Be an ICA student for a day"***

April 25, 26, 27 9am-1pm

*To RSVP for an event or to schedule an individual tour, please contact Adele Reilly, Advancement Director at 610-404-8645 or [adele.reilly@icaknights.org](mailto:adele.reilly@icaknights.org).*

***Visit us at [www.icaberks.org](http://www.icaberks.org)***

**TRANSFER GRANTS:** Any public, private, or charter school student who transfers into Immaculate Conception Academy, grades 1 through 7, will receive a Bishop's Tuition Transfer Grant of \$1,500 over two school years (\$1,000 for the first year; \$500 for the second). Call Adele Reilly at 610-404-8645 or email [adele.reilly@icaknights.org](mailto:adele.reilly@icaknights.org). [www.icaberks.org](http://www.icaberks.org)

The Knights of Columbus cordially invite you to an Oldies Dance on Saturday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 6:30-11pm at the Knights Council Hall, 675 Constitution Ave, Pottstown. Tickets will be sold at the door and are \$15 per person. Tickets include a home cooked meal. Cash bar available. Our DJ is sure to get you up and moving so you'll forget all about the cold weather outside. Proceeds directly benefit the KoC charitable works in this and our other member parishes.

**Bulletin Deadline – Wednesday at Noon**  
**[bulletin@icbvm.org](mailto:bulletin@icbvm.org)**



## Calendar

### Monday

January 9

*The Baptism of the Lord*

Is 42:1-4, 6-7 or

Acts 10:34-38

Mt 3:13-17

### Tuesday

January 10

*Weekday*

Heb 2:5-12

Mk 1:21-28

### Wednesday

January 11

*Weekday*

Heb 2:14-18

Mk 1:29-39

### Thursday

January 12

*Weekday*

Heb 3:7-14

Mk 1:40-45

### Friday

January 13

*Weekday*

Heb 4:1-5, 11

Mk 2:1-12

### Saturday

January 14

*Weekday*

Heb 4:12-16

Mk 2:13-17

### Sunday

January 15

*Second Sunday  
in Ordinary Time*

Is 49:3, 5-6

1 Cor 1:1-3

Jn 1:29-34

# Dear Padre,

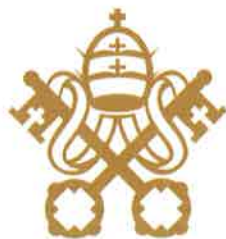
**If God wants everyone to believe in him, why doesn't God offer undeniable proof of his existence? Surely more would join the Church if adequate proof were available.**

Perhaps what is missing is the ability to perceive and understand the evidence before our eyes. In the *Catechism* we are taught that God "provides men with constant evidence of himself in created realities" (CCC 54).

Despite the evidence, however, God does seem to be hidden from the sight of some. Why might this be? Again, the *Catechism* offers an important truth: While faith is a grace, it is also dependent on the "free assent" of the human person to accept what God has revealed (CCC 150). Faith is a gift, but it is also a human act: "Believing is an act of the intellect assenting to the divine truth by command of the will moved by God through grace" (CCC 155; see *Summa Theologica*, II-II.2.9).

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), Abraham declares to the rich man, "If they [his brothers] will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead" (16:31). So evidence of God's presence, the witness of the Church, and even the most persuasive arguments might not be enough to convince every person to come to faith.

Fr. Tom Santa, CSSR  
sundaybulletin@liguori.org



## *A Word From Pope Francis*

*"Religious man is a wayfarer; he must be ready to let himself be led, to come out of himself and to find the God of perpetual surprises."*

—On Faith (*Lumen Fidei*), 35