

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

522 Main Street • P.O. Box 399 • Marydel, Maryland 21649-0399

Phone: 410-482-7687 • Fax: 410-482-7253

www.immaculateconceptionmarydel.com

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Friday 9:30-12 noon, Closed Wednesdays

Because of the limited size of our staff, hours are subject to change. It's best to call first.

January 3, 2016 – Solemnity of the Epiphany

Eucharist of the Lord's Day

Sunday: 8:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m.
7:00 p.m. (in Spanish)

Weekday Eucharist

Thursday 7:00 p.m. (in Spanish)

Holydays of Obligation

As announced in the bulletin

Reconciliation

After the Sunday morning Masses,
Thursday evening 6:30pm

And by appointment at any reasonable time

Pastoral Care and Liturgy

Very Rev. James S. Lentini, V.F., Pastor
Rev. John Olson, Associate Pastor
Rev. Anthony Giamello, Associate Pastor

Deacon James M. Tormey, Sr.
Deacon Sherman Mitchell, III

Christian Formation

Mrs. Alicia Poppiti, D.R.E.

Hispanic Ministry

Mrs. Arline Dosman

If you or someone you know is in need of
financial assistance, please call

St Vincent DePaul (302) 670-6702

The Sacraments

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is the process in which adults and children of catechetical age join the Catholic Church. Please contact Deacon James M. Tormey, Sr., our R.C.I.A. Coordinator, for details at 302-697-2049.

Parents wishing to present their children for **Infant Baptism** must participate in an orientation session. Please call the parish office at 410-482-8939 for details.

Please contact Alicia Poppiti at 410-482-8939 about the preparation of young people for **Confirmation**, or about children's first reception of the Sacraments of **Reconciliation** and the **Eucharist**.

Couples planning **Matrimony** meet with the Pastor or one of the Deacons at least one year in advance of the wedding date they are considering. Please call the parish office to arrange for this meeting.

Pastoral Care of the Sick: The **Anointing of the Sick** is appropriate for anyone faced with hospitalization or a serious challenge to health. When a hospital admission is planned, please arrange to receive the Anointing here beforehand, if at all possible. Our lay ministers to the sick bring **Holy Communion** to those unable to come to Mass for any length of time. Please call the parish office to arrange for these services.

Your Pastor, Deacons and parish staff members are always happy to speak in confidence with anyone who senses a call to **ordained ministry** or **religious life**.

Pastor's Desk

Dear Parishioners,

It's like Christmas 2014 all over again! You see, due to bulletin deadlines that are shortened because of the Christmas season, I am writing this column before Christmas (two weeks before Epiphany). Because of this deadline crunch, and because I need to get ready for Christmas, I'm going to cheat a little with this pastor's column. So, like they do on TV, this week I am showing a rerun. Fear not, it's not a rerun of "My Mother the Car," "Joanie Loves Chachi" or "ALF" – this is, rather, a rerun of my column about the meaning and history of the feast of Epiphany.

Epiphany in 140 Words

Epiphany is celebrated around the world on January 6th – famously known in Christmas music circles as the twelfth day of Christmas. In the United States we transfer the observance of this day to the first Sunday after January 1st. In its simplest explanation, Epiphany is the day when, at the time of the birth of Christ, Wise Men from the east came following a star that would lead them to the place

where the newborn King of Israel was – laying in the manger. They indeed "traversed afar"; and after a brief *tete a tete* with King Herod, they found the Christ child and gave him gifts – gold, frankincense and myrrh. This event is called Epiphany – when the mankind, represented by the Wise Men (sometimes called kings), came to be aware of the birth of Christ – God made man – into our world.

The Story Behind the Story

Here's the more complete story: In the Middle Eastern region around Israel, at the time of Christ's birth, the Jewish people were the sole monotheist people around. That is to say, the Jewish people believed in one God, Yahweh, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth. Israel was surrounded by polytheistic nations and empires that believed in many Gods. So, for example, while the Jews worshipped one God, the citizens of the Roman Empire worshipped a God of Sun, a God of water, a God of war, a God of agriculture, etc. The Greeks did likewise. Surrounding Israel to the south and east were other

native peoples who also worshipped many Gods or just worshipped nature itself. In the realm of the battle between monotheism (there is one God) and polytheism (there are many gods), Israel was like an island of faith in the one God, surrounded by the societies and believers of mythology.

Mono y Mono

There was however another civilization not that far from Israel which was also monotheistic: The Persians. The Persians lived in what we today call Iran; they were monotheists... they believed in one God. The chief priests in Persia were people were called "Magi." The word magi means "power" – it is from the word magi that we get the words like "magician" (exerciser of power), "magistrate" (administrator of power) and "your royal majesty" (one with the glory of power). All of these folks exercise some form of power. As you might imagine there are many other words – like "imagine" – that have their origins in "magi" (FYI – "imagine" speaks to the power of the mind). In any event, the Magi of Persia were powerful men.

Lion Eyes: Daniel and the Magi

You may wonder how monotheistic high priests in Persia wind up, gifts in hand, at a stable in Bethlehem. We have to take the Wayback Machine and set the controls to several hundred years before Christ to make sense of this. You see, at one point in time after the Jewish exile to Babylon, but hundreds of year before Jesus was born, a man named Daniel – yes, that Daniel: the famed Old Testament prophet -- found favor with King Darius of Persia (note: Persia had conquered Babylon). Ultimately King Darius appointed Daniel, who was a Jew, as a great prophet, into a position of great power. In fact, he was considering placing Daniel in authority over the Magi. As you could imagine, this went over very, very badly with the Magi; hence Daniel landed in the famed lion's den. Once he survived the ordeal of lion's den by faith in God's protection, Daniel's prophecies were given a greater weight of authority. Ultimately, the things Daniel prophesied, especially that there would be a Messiah (Dan 9:24,27), took hold with the Magi. His prophecies were deemed worthy of belief.

It's Good to be the King Makers

One of the roles of the Magi – and this is key to understanding the Epiphany – is that they were kingmakers. Much like the manner in which the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury today retains the authority to crown any new monarch in England, the Magi, by the power of the one God, had the authority to confirm anyone who was to be an earthly King. The Magi's role as high priests (or Wise Men) declared kings "true kings" or "false kings." This reputation of the Magi was learned by the Jewish people during their time of exile; it remained with the Jewish people when they returned to Israel.

Hit the fast-forward button. Five-hundred years later: the

Magi arrive to Jerusalem following a star and seeking a "newborn king of the Jews." (Mt. 2:2) They wind up visiting with King Herod who – needless to say – had a lot of questions. Herod's reaction to the presence of the Magi was understandably one of fear and disquiet as these were king-makers. It should be noted, that while not part of the Roman nor Jewish system of belief or government, the Magi held sway and possessed the cachet of traditional authority. So, here we had Herod, a King, being visited by men who approve new kings; perhaps the most awkward conversation in the entirety of the Biblical-era must have taken place.

Herod consulted his own religious leaders and scribes, and no doubt they reminded him of the prophecies in the Scriptures that the Messiah, a King, would be born in Bethlehem. Herod hides his fears and expresses to the visiting a Magi a sincere interest in the journey; he asks only that they keep him informed if they find "the one" whom they seek. Needless to say Herod's motives were not pure – he sought the death of anyone who challenged his reign.

Star Struck: The Wise Men meet the Lord

And we know the rest of the story: The Wise Men depart from Herod (and never return to see him again) and they do find the Promised One. Following a star – commonly referred to as the Star of Bethlehem -- the Wise Men make their way to a babe in a manger. And they prostrate themselves before Him giving him gifts that hold special significance:

Gold: This is what is given to a king, to confirm Christ's kingship.

Frankincense: This is incense only offered up to God, to confirm Christ's divinity

Myrrh: This is a perfumed embalming ointment used to prepare bodies for burial, to confirm Christ's humanity

Thus, the Magi understood this child to be a King; the immortal God (the one God of monotheism); and a human being who would face death one day.

A World of Significance

These Magi from Persia believed that there was only one true God. On this moment of the Epiphany, these Wise Men come to Israel, and confirmed that this was that one true God. This child in a manger was not just recognized by the Jewish people in Bethlehem, but by royalty: Wise Men from the east. He was not just to be revered and recognized by the people of Israel, but by the entire world. And today, we celebrate Christ's manifestation... his being made known to world.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. James Lentini

Pastor

MASS INTENTIONS:

Sun., Jan. 3 8:30am: Deceased Families of Immaculate Conception
11:00am: Catherine Larkin

Misa en Español **7:00pm:** For the People

Thur, Jan. 7 7:00pm: Anna Weber

Sun., Jan. 10 8:30am: Anna Adam

11:00am: Ann & Neal Thomas

Misa en Español **7:00pm:** For the People

Our Mass book for 2016 year is open. Please stop by office or call to have Masses scheduled.

STEWARDSHIP OF TIME & TALENT

Collection Counters

Jan. 3 - Frank & Joyce Cristiano

Jan. 10 - Robin & Paul Engstenberg

Jan. 17 - Tom & Mary McGowan

Church Cleaning Crew

January 9, 2016 Grupo #10

Miguel López, Verónica López, Gregorio López, Juan Ramírez, Federico Pérez

January 16, 2016 Grupo #11

Genaro Pérez, **Elizabeth López**, Edelfo Tomas, Edgar Ramos, Alfonso Chun

January 23, 2016 Grupo #8

Hortencia Bamaca, Lucia Morales, Rosemary Bamaca, Froilán Berduo, Sheila Berduo, Andy De León

Altar Servers

Jan. 10

8:30am Mass – Evan Nagyiski

11:00am Mass – Carmine Poppiti & Joanna Santizo

Spanish Misa 7:00pm – Itzel Roblero, Alex & Jeffery Gabriel

Lectors

Jan. 10

8:30am Mass – Paul McQuaide

11:00am Mass – Alicia Poppiti

Spanish Misa 7:00pm –

Eucharistic Ministers

Jan. 10

8:30am Mass – Deacon Tormey, Marilyn Dixon, Mark Plucenik

11:00am Mass – Judy Carrow, Paul Lardizzone, **Server Needed**

Spanish Misa 7:00pm -



- ❖ “The Women of Grace® Study Program leads women on an exciting journey to discover the gift of authentic femininity™, holiness of life, and woman's purpose and mission in the world today.”

Informational Meeting:

Saturday, January 23, 2016: 9:30 am Luke meeting room in the Parish Center (2nd floor of the Early Learning Center)

For more info: ckrebs@holycrossdover.org

(302) 674-5787 ext. 122

REGISTRATIONS FOR HOLY CROSS SCHOOL AND ST. THOMAS MORE ACADEMY are online.
Contact either school with any questions.

STMA: St. Thomas More Academy is accepting sponsors for the sports programs during games.
Contact John Taylor at STMA for more information jtaylor@saintmore.org

COLLECTION TOTALS:

Regular Offertory: \$3009.50

Supplemental \$ 471.00

Christmas: \$5331.18

Second Collection Today: Supplemental

Your continued support of the work of your Church is much needed, and appreciated.



Knights of Columbus: Meet every 2nd & 4th Tues., in the hall at 6:30pm. For more information contact Grand Knight, Clyde Hinebaugh 410-482-8699 or clydehinebaugh@gmail.com

SCHEDULED EVENTS

SRE TODAY: Sun, Jan. 3, 2016, 9:40am, classrooms

Knights of Columbus Breakfast: today 9am, hall

Reconciliation Prep: Today, Sun. Jan. 3, 12:30pm, hall

RICA: Sun, Jan 3, 1:30pm, Computer Center

JOVENES: Sun, Jan. 3, 3:30pm, church basement

St. Vincent de Paul: Mon. Jan. 4, 6pm, office meeting room

ESL: Mon. Jan. 4 & Wed Jan. 6, 7pm, cc and Basement

Juan XXIII: Tues, Jan. 5, 7pm computer center

Estudios Biblicos: Tues, Jan. 5, Basement

Confessions: Thur. Jan. 7, 6:15pm

Misa: Thur. Jan. 7, 7pm, Church

Bible Study: Thur. Jan. 7, 7pm, hall

First Reconciliation: Sat., Jan. 9, 10am, Church

Bamaca Quinceañero: Sat. Jan. 9, 3pm, Church



Save The Date

Annual Penny Party
Sat., Feb 20th, 2016

Marriage & Family Life Corner

Marriage Moment –

The 3 wise men recognized power in the unlikely person of a baby. Indeed it is wisdom that helps us see the Godliness within the ordinary people in our lives. Our beloved may seem pretty ordinary today. Look for the Godliness within.

Parenting Pointer –

Consider making a "clean break" with the start of the New Year. Ask if everyone in the family would be willing to clean one space - a drawer, a shelf, a toy box? Start with taking everything out. Then put back only those items you really want. Give away or throw away the rest.

FROM THE DRE'S DESK

School of Religious Education

SRE TODAY, 9:40-10:50, classrooms

SACRAMENTS:

First Reconciliation Make up session: Today only. You must attend. If not sure, check with Ms. Alicia

Confirmation Session #1: Sunday, January 10th, 12:30-3pm in the parish hall. All youth registered much attend this session.

First Communion Prep: Tuesday, January 12th, 6:30-7:30, in the Church.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Solemnity of the Epiphany

Theme: The mystery of the incarnation - Jesus is a gift to all humanity.

Question for Children: In your life, who helps you to see Jesus in other people such as a classmate or a friend?

Question for Youth: The star guided the Magi to Jesus. What are the people or events who have guided you in your relationship with Jesus?

Question for Adults: How this past week did you demonstrate God's love at home and at work?

Pregunta de la semana

Solemnidad de la Epifanía

Tema: El misterio de la encarnación, Jesús es un regalo para la humanidad.

Pregunta para los niños: En tu vida, ¿quién te ayuda a ver a Jesús en otras personas como un compañero de clase o un amigo?

Pregunta para los jóvenes: La vida en ocasiones puede ser difícil: perder tu casa, cambiarse, sentir temor o estar en peligro. ¿Cómo experimentas a Dios que está y permanece contigo en dichas ocasiones?

Pregunta para los adultos: En esta semana que pasó ¿cómo demostró el amor de Dios en casa y en el trabajo?

Are you called to be a Deacon?



The Diocese of Wilmington welcomes applicants for a new class of Permanent Deacons that will begin formation in June 2016. The five-year preparation program consists of human, spiritual, academic, and pastoral formation. Spiritual formation programs are held one Saturday a month during the initial year of discernment. Academic formation, beginning with the second year, takes place one weekend a month from September to June. Applicants must be 60 or younger when the program begins. Minimum ordination age is 35. Applicants must demonstrate a zeal for service to God's people; experience in some volunteer parish or diocesan ministry is preferred. Information nights are scheduled from 7:00 to 8:30 PM at the following locations:

Tues, January 12, 2016

Church of the Holy Child, 2500 Naamans Rd.,
Wilm, DE 19810
Parish Activities Center (Education Wing)

Thursday, January 14, 2016

Holy Cross, 631 S. State St., Dover, DE 19901
Early Learning Center (2nd floor)

Thursday, January 21, 2016

St. Francis de Sales, 535 Riverside Drive, Salisbury,
MD 21801
Mercy Hall

Wives of interested married men are invited and strongly encouraged to attend. The sessions will discuss the role of the permanent deacon, qualifications for admission, and the formation process.

For further information and registration, please contact the Office for Deacons at 302-573-2390.

COLUMNA DEL PÁRROCO PADRE JAMES

LENTINI 3 DE ENERO, 2016.

Queridos feligreses,

Es como la Navidad 2014 de nuevo! Ven, debido a las fiestas el tiempo en que tengo que tener la columna se acorta, y estoy escribiendo esta columna antes de la Navidad (dos semanas antes de la Epifanía). Debido a esta contracción del tiempo, y porque tengo que estar listo para la Navidad, voy a duplicar la columna de este pastor. Así, como lo hacen en la televisión, esta semana estoy mostrando una repetición. No temas, no es una repetición de "Mi Madre el Carro", "Joanie Ama a Chachi" o "ALF" - esto es, más bien, una

repetición de mi columna sobre el significado y la historia de la fiesta de la Epifanía.

La Epifanía en 140 palabras

La Epifanía se celebra alrededor de todo mundo el 6 de enero – famoso por la Rosca de Navidad y música navideña, alrededor de los doce días de Navidad. En los Estados Unidos transferimos la observancia de este día al primer domingo después del 1 de enero. En su explicación más simple, la Epifanía es el día cuando, los Reyes Magos visitaron al niño Dios en el portal de Belén. Los hombres sabios del Oriente vinieron siguiendo una estrella que les llevaría al lugar donde estaba el Rey recién nacido de Israel – acostado en un pesebre. De hecho "vinieron desde lejos"; y

después de un breve encuentro con el Rey Herodes, encontraron al niño Jesús y le dieron regalos: oro, incienso y mirra. Este evento es llamado la Epifanía – cuando la humanidad, representada por los Reyes Magos (a veces llamados Reyes del Oriente), llegó a conocer el nacimiento de Cristo – Dios hecho hombre – en nuestro mundo.

La historia detrás de la historia

Esta es la historia más completa: en Oriente una región alrededor de Israel, en el momento del nacimiento de Cristo, el pueblo judío eran los únicos monoteístas alrededor. Es decir, el pueblo judío creía en un solo Dios, Yahvé, el Padre todopoderoso, creador del cielo y de la tierra. Israel estaba rodeado por naciones politeístas y los imperios que creían en muchos dioses. Así, por ejemplo, mientras que los judíos adoraron a un Dios, los ciudadanos del Imperio Romano adoraban a varios dioses, un Dios del sol, un Dios del agua, un Dios de la guerra, un Dios de la agricultura, etc... Los griegos creían lo mismo. Rodeaban a Israel en el sur y sureste también otras tribus indígenas que también adoraban a muchos dioses o simplemente adoraban a la naturaleza. En el Reino de la batalla entre el monoteísmo (hay un solo Dios) y el politeísmo (hay muchos dioses), Israel era como una isla de fe en el único Dios, rodeado de las sociedades y los creyentes de la mitología.

Mono y Mono

Había sin embargo otra civilización no lejos de Israel que también era monoteísta: los Persas. Los Persas vivían en lo que hoy llamamos Irán; Eran monoteístas... creían en un solo Dios. Los Sumos Sacerdotes de Persia eran personas que también eran llamados "Reyes Magos". La palabra magos significa "poder" – es de los magos que proviene la palabra magia como "mago" (tiene poder), "magistrado" (Administrador de energía) y majestad "su Alteza Real" (uno con la gloria del poder). Todas estas personas – magos, magistrados y Majestad – son personas que ejercen alguna forma de poder. Como se puede imaginar, hay muchas otras palabras – como "Imagina" – que tienen su origen en los "Reyes Magos" (FYI – "imaginar" habla del poder de la mente). En cualquier caso, los magos de Persia eran hombres poderosos.

Los ojos del León: Daniel y los Reyes Magos

Se preguntarán cómo es que los monoteístas, los Sumos Sacerdotes de Persia terminaron con regalos en la mano, en un portal de Belén. Tenemos que remontarnos a la máquina del

recuerdo y ajustar los controles en cientos de años antes de Cristo para dar sentido a esto. Verás, en el tiempo después del exilio judío a Babilonia, pero cientos de años antes del nacimiento de Jesús, un hombre llamado Daniel – Sí, el mismo Daniel: el famoso profeta del Antiguo Testamento--encontró gracia con el rey Darius de Persia (Nota: Babilonia había sido conquistado por Persia). En última instancia el rey Darius nombró a Daniel, quien era judío, como un gran profeta, en una posición de gran poder. De hecho, estaba considerando poner a Daniel en autoridad sobre los Reyes Magos. Como se pueden imaginar, esto no fue muy bien recibido, fue de muy mal gusto para los Reyes Magos; por lo tanto, Daniel aterrizó en la famosa Cueva del León. Una vez que sobrevivió la odisea de la cueva del León por la fe en la protección de Dios, las profecías de Daniel recibieron mayor peso de autoridad. Y por último, las cosas que Daniel había profetizado, especialmente que habría un Mesías (Dan 9:24, 27), se apoderó de los Reyes Magos. Sus profecías fueron consideradas dignas de fe.

Es bueno ser el Creador del Rey

Uno de los papeles de los Reyes Magos – y esto es clave para entender la Epifanía – es que eran Creadores de Reyes. Tanto que el arzobispo anglicano de Canterbury hoy retiene la autoridad para coronar a cualquier nuevo monarca en Inglaterra, los Reyes Magos, por el poder del único Dios, tenían la autoridad para confirmar quien iba a ser el Rey terrenal. Papel de los Reyes Magos como sumos sacerdotes (o sabios) declaraban Reyes "Reyes verdaderos "como " Reyes falsos." Esta reputación de los Reyes Magos fue conocida por el pueblo judío durante su tiempo en el exilio; y permaneció con el pueblo judío hasta cuando regresaron a Israel.

Presiona el botón de avance rápido. Quinientos años más tarde: los Reyes Magos llegan a Jerusalén siguiendo una estrella y buscando un "recién nacido Rey de los Judíos". (Mt. 2:2) Acaban de visitar al rey Herodes que – no hace falta decirlo – tenía un montón de preguntas. Reacción de Herodes a la presencia de los Reyes Magos es comprensible era uno de temor e inquietud éstos eran los creadores de reyes. Cabe señalar, que mientras no forma parte del sistema romano ni judío de creencia o de gobierno, los Reyes Magos predominaron y tuvieron el prestigio de la autoridad tradicional. Aquí teníamos a Herodes, un rey, siendo visitado por hombres que tienen el poder de aprobar a nuevos reyes; Tal vez la conversación más incómoda en toda la era bíblica debe haber tenido lugar.

Herodes consulto a sus propios líderes religiosos y a los escribas, y sin duda recordaron lo de las profecías de las escrituras había prometido de que uno, el Mesías, un Rey nacería en Belén. Herodes, oculta sus temores y expresa a los Reyes Magos su agradecimiento por su visita y un sincero interés en el viaje; sólo les pide que lo mantengan informado si encuentran "aquel" a quien buscan. Ni decir los motivos de Herodes no eran buenos o puros – buscaba la muerte para cualquiera que se enfrentara a su reinado.

Brilla una estrella pulsado: el Señor conoce a los Hombres Sabios

Y sabemos el resto de la historia: los Reyes Magos partieron de donde Herodes (y nunca más volvieron a verlo) y encontraron al Elegido.

Siguiendo una estrella – comúnmente conocida como la estrella de Belén, los tres Reyes Magos hacen su camino hacia un bebé en un pesebre. Y ellos se postraron ante Él y le dieron regalos de oro, incienso y mirra (Mt 2:11). Esto son importantes:

- Oro es lo que se le da a un rey, para confirmar su reinado.
- Incienso el incienso es ofrecido sólo a Dios, para confirmar su divinidad.
- Mirra es un ungüento de perfume para embalsamar que solía usarse para preparar los cuerpos para la muerte, para confirmar su humanidad.

Así, los Reyes Magos, estos sacerdotes, entienden que este niño iba a ser Rey, el Dios inmortal (el único Dios del monoteísmo) y un ser humano que se enfrentaría a la muerte un día.

Un mundo de mayor significado

Estos Magos de Persia creían que había solamente un Dios verdadero. En este momento de la Epifanía, estos Hombres Sabios vinieron a Israel y confirmaron el que es el único Dios verdadero. Este niño nacido en un pesebre no sólo fue reconocido por el pueblo judío en Belén, pero por la realeza: Los Reyes Magos del Oriente. Era no sólo para ser venerado y reconocido por el pueblo de Israel, sino por todo el mundo – un mundo por el cual El sería el Salvador.

Y hoy, celebramos la manifestación de Cristo... Fue dado a conocer a todo el mundo. Y es nuestro trabajo de seguir proclamando y hacerlo conocer a todos los confines y rincones del mundo. Feliz Epifanía!

Suyo en Cristo,
El padre. James Lentini,
Párroco

