

The Disciple



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What does Epiphany mean in your life?

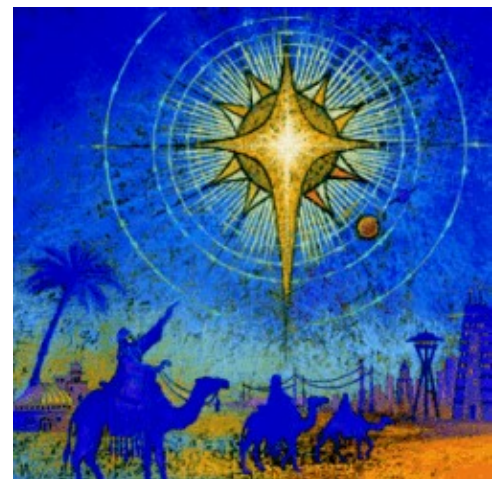
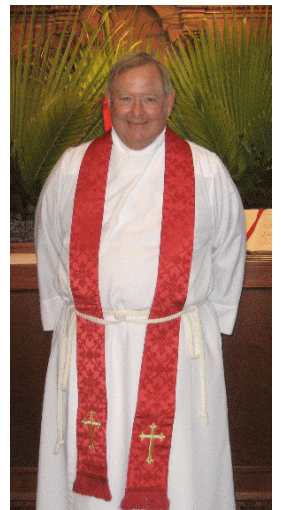
By Fr. Jim Parker

This first Sunday of January we shall celebrate the feast of the Epiphany. What is Epiphany? **Epiphany**, also called **Feast of the Epiphany**, **Theophany**, or **Three Kings' Day**, (from Greek *epiphaneia*, "manifestation"), is the Christian holiday commemorating the first manifestation of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi, and the manifestation of his divinity, as it occurred at his baptism in the Jordan River and at his first miracle, at Cana in Galilee. Epiphany is one of the three principal and oldest festival days of the Christian church (the other two are Easter and Christmas). Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, and other Western churches observe the feast on January 6, while some Eastern Orthodox churches celebrate Epiphany on January 19, since their Christmas Eve falls on January 6.

The festival originated in the Eastern church, where it at first included a commemoration of Christ's birth. In Rome, by 354 Christ's birth was being celebrated on December 25, and later in the 4th century the church in Rome began celebrating Epiphany on January 6. In the Western church the festival primarily commemorates the visit by the Magi to the infant Jesus, which is seen as evi-

dence that Christ, the Jewish Messiah, came also for the salvation of Gentiles. In the East it primarily commemorates the baptism of Jesus and celebrates the revelation that the incarnate Christ was both fully God and fully man.

What I have presented to you is a formal definition of how Epiphany can be described. I suggest the deeper question is what does Epiphany mean in your life. I believe this season is a wonderful time for each of us to search our hearts as to how this Christ child has changed our lives. How he has been made known to you. I encourage each of you to take this time to pray and thank God for what has been bestowed upon each of us. God has blessed each of us! How shall we show our gratitude to him? This is a wonderful season for that reflection.





Hello, Saint John's!

Praised be our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

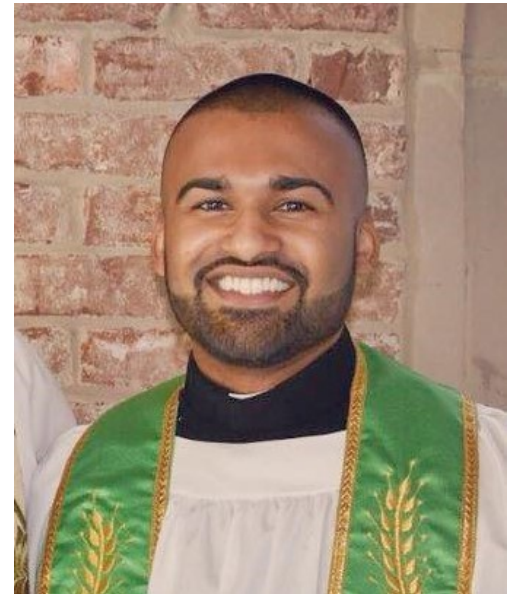
In the name of the Almighty God from whom all blessings flow, it gives me great pleasure to wish you all a Blessed & Grace-filled New Year. There is an old saying, "Don't cry, because it is over; smile that it happened." A new year is a time for new beginnings, a time to start anew, and do things that could make another soul smile. Before we enter into the New Year, through the Christmas event, God invites us to forget about all the distrust and fear, all the anxieties of the past, all the resentments we have been holding against others, all the criticism, and to begin anew. This New Year gives us an opportunity for a new beginning not only as individuals, but as a family, a parish, and a community. A familiar year has passed out, and an unknown future is approaching us. One thing we can be certain of in the coming year is that Our Lord walks with us. Our future is in His strong and caring hands. "And I will be with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). For He is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. His kingdom will last forever as our rock and refuge throughout the New Year.

In January, the church celebrates the magnificent Feast of Epiphany. The word "Epiphany" means shining forth or manifestation of our God. God's glory was revealed to us through His Son's birth, it is now time for us to be witnesses of God's glory in this world. So, "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you" (Isa 60:1). My hope and prayer is that we set spiritual goals for ourselves, our family, and our parish during this coming year, 2020. May the grace of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you all, throughout this New Year. God Bless!

Faithfully yours in Christ Jesus,

Sean+

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Rev. Sean George



What are the Twelve Days of Christmas?

By Greg Goebel

“On the Twelfth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me...” Wait, there are TWELVE Days? I thought Christmas ended at 9 am on the 25th of December?

Christmas is actually a season that lasts until the Epiphany, January 6th. On Christmas morning, the party has just gotten started! But many people wonder what happens on the rest of the 12 days? Well, not every day of the 12 has a major feast associated with it. But we will cover the ones that do below. Note that in some years, some feasts are “transferred.” This means that if they fall on a Sunday, they are moved to a Monday.

Christmas Eve

The Christmas Eve Eucharist is actually the first worship service of Christmas. The emphasis is usually on the story of the birth of Christ. The church is greened (and redded) in preparation.

The Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day

Christmas Day is the day of the “Christ Mass.” It is a festival day, a day of rejoicing that God has been made man in the person of a tiny baby, born of the virgin Mary. Gift giving on Christmas day is a tradition that can remind us, and help us to put into action, the great gift that God gave the world that day in Bethlehem.

December 26th: The Feast of St. Stephen

You can read about St. Stephen in Acts, chapters 6 and 7. He is considered to be a proto-deacon of the church, with others, because he was set apart to minister to the needs of the widows on behalf of the apostles.

December 27th: The Feast of St. John

St. John was the “beloved disciple.” He was basically Jesus’ best friend. He wrote the Gospel of John, which focused on the theology of the incarnation (Christ becoming man) and the person of Jesus Christ. John focused on the light of Christ coming into a dark world.

The First Sunday After Christmas

The first Sunday after Christmas is focused more on the *theology* of the Incarnation and the dual nature of Christ. John 1 is read. The Word was made flesh, and it changed the world. There is no other God like our God,

who came to live among us. There is no other story like this Story, and it has radically transformed our world.

December 28th: The Holy Innocents

This is a more reflective, somber day. This day commemorates the innocent children who were killed by Herod in Bethlehem when he was trying to eliminate the baby that was said to be the Messiah (Matthew 2).

January 1: The Holy Name (New Year’s Day)

January 1st is actually not the first day of the Church Year. In our calendar, this is the day that Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day according to the custom of the Jews (Luke 2). This was when the child was given a name. The name “Jesus” is the Greek form of the Hebrew “Joshua” which means “the Lord will save.”

The Second Sunday after Christmas

Focuses on the humanity of Christ. He came into this world and walked in our shoes. He experienced life just as we do, but without sin. He was poor and lowly, and he came to serve. He loved us, even to death. Our God became one of us.

January 6th: The Epiphany

The Epiphany follows the Twelve Days. It is the feast that commemorates the coming of the Wise Men to Jesus, following the star. The light of Christ still shines today through us. We are not called to put it under a basket and hide it or try to keep it for ourselves. We are called to shine his light to all the world.

The Feast of the Epiphany both closes the Christmas season and opens the Season after the Epiphany. This is called “ordinary” time. It shows us that our ordinary lives are indeed filled with the light and love of God, and are the place where he works.

Thanks for joining me on this journey. May the peace of the Christ Child be yours this Christmas season, and forever.

Greg Goebel





ST. JOHN'S ON SOCIAL MEDIA

We now have a presence on the web (StJohnsAmericus.org), on Facebook (StJohnsAmericus), and on Instagram (stjohnsamericus). Check them out (the

Instagram account is new and I'm still figuring it out!). If you're on Facebook, like our page and visit it from time to time, like our posts and share them. A recent post was shared by a handful of folks and, through the miracle of sharing, reached over 600 people. It's a great way to spread the word.

Our Web site now has a photos page. It has a few shots on it but could use a lot more. If you have photos that you'd like to share, please send them to me (dsnell@fullercenter.org) and I'll get them up.

Social media can be a great tool in our commitment to spread the Good News. Thanks to all who are following our pages—keep sharing!

David Snell



Saint Johns and The Perry Wellness Center Christian Witness to The Nativity

This third season of the celebration of Christ's birth, God's gift to the world, was symbolically represented in the beautiful exchange of gifts by these two "Christian Communities in Action!"

Over thirty five gifts were given to Perry Wellness Center Peers for children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. This act of love by Saint Johns was overshadowed by the heart felt love of the peers in song, witnessing and Christmas cheer. Surely the Love of the Lord was in this annual celebration.

What's GOING ON?

Coffee & Conversation

Coffee & Conversation

We welcome everyone to coffee and conversation each Sunday in the Parish Hall from 9:30-10:00 AM. This will give us an opportunity to visit before Church and at the same time give people a quiet time to pray in the sanctuary before Church. I look forward to seeing you this Sunday!

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Men's Christian Fellowship

Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 6:00 PM in the Parish Hall

Bring a steak and join us. Sides provided.



January

3-John & Alice Davidson



January

3-Alice Davidson
5 -Debbie Standridge
16 -Sid Cameron
20-Aimee Argo
21-June Pierce
22 -Everett Byrd

JANUARY ROTA

DATE	SERVICE	LEM	LECTOR	USHER	ACOLYTE
1/1	Evening Prayer & Healing		Susan Curtis		
1/5	Holy Communion	Andrea Thomas	David Snell	Jeff Joiner	
1/8	Evening Prayer & Healing		Jeff Joiner		
1/12	Holy Communion	Beth Cameron	Susan Curtis	Darrell Hobgood	Sydney Joiner
1/15	Evening Prayer & Healing		Beth Cameron		
1/19	Holy Communion	George Peagler	Andrea Thomas	Alan Curtis	
1/22	Evening Prayer & Healing		Jeff Joiner		
1/26	Holy Communion	Jeff Joiner	David Snell	Sid Cameron	Sydney Joiner
1/29	Evening Prayer & Healing		Susan Curtis		