

FROM THE RECTOR...

GOD AND THE INTERNET...



Epiphany is the Season of Striking Appearances...Jesus revealing himself to the World as God made Flesh. Like it was on Christmas...we find ourselves once again sheltering-in-place...unable to gather in person for Sunday Mass or the Great Feast of the Epiphany. But our faith is strong and we are not deterred...we are determined to persevere...even in these extraordinary times.

Saint Joseph Parish is not alone in having to find ways to stay connected to each other during the pandemic. The Internet has been an invaluable tool for many small parishes...even those with limited resources...to stream Sunday Mass via Facebook, Zoom, You Tube and other media platforms. The response to our Facebook Parish Sunday Mass and other Services has been positive and has reached people far beyond the Parish.

The word *epiphany* from the Greek means *manifestation* or *appearance*. The first striking appearance Jesus makes is to the shepherds on Christmas...as we heard on the Fourth Sunday in Advent...not in blazing flashes...but rather with a fragile flame...a baby. The Epiphany Season is an extension of Christmas...it is the principal celebration of the birth of Jesus and his Baptism among our Orthodox brothers and sisters.

During the Epiphany Season this year we will focus on these striking appearances Jesus makes and what we learn from them:

- The Epiphany...Wise Men (Magi) come from the East...drawn to Bethlehem by the blazing light of a star,
- I Epiphany...Jesus goes AWOL and Mary and Joseph find him teaching the teachers in the Temple,
- II Epiphany...Jesus is baptized by his cousin, John, the Holy Spirit comes down on him and God identifies Jesus as his own Son,
- III Epiphany...Jesus performs his first miracle at a wedding banquet in Gentile territory...turning water into the best wine ever,
- Conversion of Saint Paul...Jesus makes himself known in a striking appearance of the up close and personal kind.

- The Presentation of Christ in the Temple...The Old man held the Salvation of the World in his hands.

Throughout this Epiphany Season let's try to see Jesus making himself known to us in the striking appearances and miracles...large and small...of everyday life.

We must also remember God works through the science and scientists that developed the Internet. While we may be a Parish Family kept physically apart by circumstances, we, and the Church everywhere, remain spiritually connected to each other.

The Collect

O GOD, who by the leading of a star didst manifest thy only-begotten Son to the Gentiles; Mercifully grant that we, who know the now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Father Craig Looney+

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD...



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021

11:00 AM – FACEBOOK MASS & HOMILY*

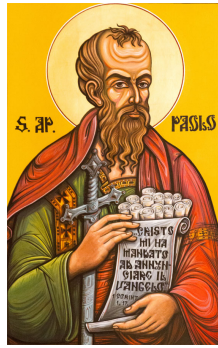
Our Facebook services are pre-recorded and posted on the Parish Facebook Page at the times shown, giving us time to address any technical issues and do any editing prior to posting the video.

State and County Covid-19 regulations do not permit gatherings after church services. We will not be able to hold our traditional Epiphany pot luck this year. We look forward to reinstating Coffee Hour, Discussion Group and other events and activities at a future date, when it has been determined it is safe to do so.

CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL...

The Conversion of Saint Paul, recorded in Acts 9.1-19, can quite rightly be called an epiphany. Jesus makes himself known to Paul in a striking appearance of the up close and personal kind.

We first meet Paul, also known by his Hebrew name, Saul, in the 7th Chapter of Acts of the Apostles. He was an violent persecutor of the Church and was present at and approved of the murder of Saint Stephen Protomartyr.



Saul's remarkable conversion from a hater and destroyer of the Church took place on the Damascus Road. He had arrest warrants for followers of "The Way of the Lord" and hoped to bring them back to Jerusalem for trial.

As he was approaching Damascus, a flashing light from the knocked him off his horse and he fell to the ground. A voice said to him, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you persecute," the voice replied. (Acts 9.4-5)

In the King James Version of the *Book of Common Prayer*, Jesus then tells Saul, "...it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." (Acts 9.6) A "prick" was a pointed stick or goad used to prod stubborn oxen when plowing and to steer them in the right direction. Jesus is telling Saul he is going down the wrong path persecuting the Church. In spite of his stubbornness, he was going to goad him into the direction God wanted him to go.

Paul's conversion on the Damascus Road was the turning point in his life. He no longer persecuted the Church; he became a powerful ambassador for Christ to the Gentile world, assuring them the Good News about God's plan for salvation was also meant for them.

We call Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles. Paul himself writes he doesn't deserve to be called an Apostle, because he persecuted the Church. (I Cor. 15.9) Paul was not one of the Twelve Apostles, but he justifies his claim to Apostleship because he received the Gospel directly from Jesus at his conversion and not from another human being. (Gal. 1.12)

The Christmas and Epiphany Seasons are about the Light of Christ coming into the World. Paul's spiritual...and for a time temporal blindness...were replaced by a fervent desire to preach the Gospel to the world. His feast day is January 25 and almost always occurs during the Epiphany Season.

THE MEETING...



The *Book of Common Prayer* entitles February 2nd *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, commonly called *The Purification of Saint Mary the Virgin*. It is one of two Marian feast days retained in the Book of Common Prayer...the other being the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (March 25).

According to Luke 2.22-40, Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus to the Temple forty days after his birth, to complete her ritual purification. This allowed Mary to re-enter society. They also performed the *redemption of the first-born son*, in obedience to the Torah (Leviticus 12; Exodus 13.12-15). Mary and Joseph "bought" Jesus back from lifetime service in the Temple, with an offering of two turtle-doves. We learn from this Mary and Joseph were observant Jews and they couldn't afford a lamb for the sacrifice. Joseph provided for his family, but they were not wealthy.

Eastern Orthodox Christians often call this day *Hypapante...The Meeting*. Luke describes a devout man named Simeon, whom God had promised would not die before he had seen the Messiah, taking the infant Jesus in his arms. He blesses God and in the words of the *Nunc dimittis* said at Evening Prayer (*BCP, Page 28*), says he's OK with dying now...God has kept his promise. It is one of the most touching episodes in the New Testament; Simeon the old man held God in his hands. Simeon also blessed Mary and Joseph and prophesies her heart will be pierced. She would understand what he meant at the Crucifixion.

The Presentation is also known as Candlemas...from the custom of blessing candles used at the Altar throughout the year...and of blessing individual tapers which are distributed to the congregation. The tapers are lighted before the reading of the Gospel and remain lighted through the Nicene Creed...a reminder Jesus is the Light of the World (Matthew 5.14-16; John 8.12).

We will not be able to observe Candlemas in person this year. We will celebrate this great festival of the Church Year with a Facebook Mass and Blessing of the Candles streamed over our Facebook Page at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, February 2. Like the Conversion of Saint Paul...the Epiphany theme of the Light of Christ coming into the World is richly woven into the Gospel for *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (BCP, Page 232)*.

2021 ORDO KALENDARS...



We still have some 2021 Ordo Kalendar available. The Ordo Kalendar conforms to the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer* and *Anglican and American Missals*. It contains useful information on the Church Year, the Liturgical colors, and a List of the Dates of Easter through the Year 2050. Please contact the Rector if you would like a copy mailed to you.

CANS FOR GOD...

During the time we are not meeting in person, you may continue to bring your crushed aluminum cans and plastic bottles (**no glass bottles**) to the Parish for recycling. Please keep cans and bottles separated. You may drop off your cans and bottles on Saturday morning...not during the week when Gazelle School is in session. Please contact the Rector first, by phone or e-mail, to let him know when you will be dropping off your cans and bottles. The proceeds from the recycling is used where needed within the Parish.

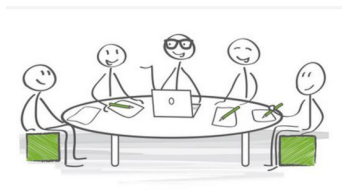


JANUARY BIRTHDAYS...



If you have a birthday coming up in January and would like to receive a virtual Birthday Blessing at the January 3rd Facebook Mass, please e-mail the Rector or leave a message on the Parish's answering machine.

VESTRY MEETING...



A Zoom Vestry Meeting will be held at 10:30 AM on Sunday, January 17. Regular sessions of the Vestry are open to all interested parishioners. You do not need a Zoom account to join the meeting.

EVERY MEMBER CANVASS...



Every-Member Canvass letters for 2021 were mailed to all Parishioners on December 8. The Biblical standard for giving since Old Testament times is the Tithe. Jesus places a higher standard on us: *"To those to whom much has been given, much is expected; to those to whom much more has been given, much more is expected."* (St. Luke 12.48)

Please give prayerful consideration when making your pledge for 2021. Please return your signed Pledge Card by January 17.

Prayer and Intercessions

We continue to pray for our men and women serving in the Armed Forces, that they may be brought home safely to their families and loved ones; for police departments throughout the country; for First Responders; for those developing vaccines for COVID-19; and for peace in the World, our Country, our State, our City and our hearts. If you have someone you would like prayed for during the Intercessions at Sunday Mass...please e-mail the name(s) to the Rector.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Corporation Meeting (APCM) will be held at 10:30 AM on Sunday, January 31. This will be a Zoom meeting. Instructions on how to join the meeting will be e-mailed to all Parishioners prior to the meeting. You do not need a Zoom account to participate in the meeting.

Parishioners who have pledged to support the Parish financially for 2021 and have returned a signed and dated Pledge Card prior to the APCM are entitled to vote at the meeting. Our Parish By-Laws permit proxy voting at the APCM. We're asking all parishioners who have returned a signed and dated Pledge Card for 2021 and will not be participating in the Zoom APCM, to complete a Proxy Voting Card and return it to the Parish Office by January 30.

PRE-LENT...



Pre-Lent commences on Septuagesima Sunday...January 31 this year. Septuagesima comes from the Latin word for "seventieth" and refers to the period within seventy days of Easter. The other two Sundays in the Pre-Lenten Season...Sexagesima and Quinquagesima...refer to the periods within sixty and fifty days of Easter respectively.

The Pre-Lenten Season was instituted by Pope Saint Gregory the Great in the late Sixth Century. Gregory was committed to revitalizing the missionary activity of the Church...most famously the evangelization and conversion of the Pagan Anglo-Saxons of England. He accomplished this with the help of Saint Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

Pre-Lent is a transitional season of preparation, easing us into the more somber Season of Lent. We should be thinking about what changes we can make to our spiritual disciplines as we approach Lent.

The Liturgical Color of the Pre-Lenten Season is violet. The penitential nature of the Season is seen in the absence of the *Gloria in excelsis* and *Alleluia* at the Mass.



We will continue to offer Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament from the back steps of the Church leading to the Parking Lot at 10:30 AM on Sunday...weather permitting. This is by reservation only...please e-mail the Rector Saturday if you plan on attending.



We're delaying publishing the 2021 Parish Directory until after the Annual Parish Coporation Meeting. The target date for disribution is the first week of February.

Please review your contact information in the current Directory and advise the Rector of any changes to your address, telephone/mobile numbers or e-mail.

It's important your contact information be up-to-date and accurate.



Note: Find us on Facebook at: Saint Joseph Parish – San Mateo CA

SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS –PARISH MASS & SERMON
(CURRENTLY STREAMED ON FACEBOOK AT 11:00 AM)

WEEKDAYS/HOLY DAYS AS ANNOUNCED

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE BY APPOINTMENT

THE REVEREND FATHER CRAIG LOONEY, RECTOR

THE CONTINUATION OF ANGLICANISM: We affirm that the Church of our fathers, sustained by the most Holy Trinity, lives yet...are determined to continue in the Catholic Faith, Apostolic Order, Orthodox Worship and Evangelical Witness of the traditional Anglican Church.

www.saintjosephparish.net
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