

The Epiphany of the Lord January 4, 2026

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Givers and Receivers *Today's liturgy celebrates the marvelous magnanimity of God. We hear the familiar story of the child Jesus receiving gifts, but we are the ones who are gifted. For our part, we must be like the magi and not only be open to the gift but be willing to go after it, even in the dead of winter.*

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THE LIGHT OF FAITH

The first reading today is charged with the glory of the Lord. Everyone who can come to the holy city does come—whole caravans of people of all ages on foot and on dromedaries and camels.

This description of an irresistible light-filled city prepares us for the story of the magi. They are guided by their own lights—their study of astronomy and astrology—and by the light of a peculiar star. Their study tells them that an unusual event in the heavens is a sign of an extraordinary birth on earth. They mean to find out about this, and they set out with gifts worthy of a king. They are welcomed into an insignificant house in Bethlehem, offer gifts befitting a king, and receive the gift of faith.

Paul reinforces the great gift of faith available to the Gentiles, whom the magi represent. What they have seen has changed them, just as it changed Paul and all who heeded his proclamation. Like the magi and like Paul, we are invited to receive this life that is filled with the light of faith. Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

REFLECTING ON GOD'S WORD

They were men in love with the lights of night—astrologers, star-gazers, meaning-makers tuned in to the signs in the heavens, as Matthew tells it. A strange star moving across the sky led them into Israel. Arriving in Jerusalem, they asked where the newborn king of the Jews was, so they could offer homage. Herod was less than delighted, indeed “greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him,” at hearing of a new king on the block (Matthew 2:3). But he assembled the chief priests and the scribes, who

remembered that the prophet Micah had proclaimed that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. So they set out again, with Herod's duplicitous request whispered into their ears. The star reappeared and led them to the house where the child and his mother were. Falling down in worship, they offered gifts, and went back home. End of story—as we like to remember it. Of course, that is not the end. Receiving no word, Herod is enraged and orders the death of all children under the age of two. Joseph, Mary, and the child flee to Egypt. Power does not welcome competition, even in the form of a child.

But God wills all people to know salvation. Jesus came to draw all into the reign of God and to empower them to live the God-life that is the Father's gift. The darkness of evil continues to threaten but it will not overcome as long as there are those who seek the light, follow it, and allow it to lead them to the child.

—James A. Wallace, C.Ss.R.

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REFLECTION

Pilgrims know they are in a geographical place and have a family and friends, a job, a collection of possessions. But they do not exactly feel at home. Something is missing; an itch needs scratching. So, pilgrims set out in search of what is missing. They do not necessarily wander the earth. They do not even have to leave home, actually. But they search, and they search purposefully. They follow their lights—insight and the advice, guidance, and direction of those they trust.

The magi were pilgrims—traveling pilgrims. But another character in this story, Herod, was firmly ensconced in his home place. He liked his position of power and meant to keep it. He didn't want any usurpers. He wanted only to know what was necessary to keep that power. He was not looking for anything else.

The magi, those pilgrims and seekers, finally descended from the East into a temperate valley and to the unlikely village of Bethlehem. They found their spiritual home there. When they entered the humble home of the Holy Family, they found their gift, their reward, their souls' longing. They knew it and expressed it in their gifts befitting royalty—gold and frankincense—and the added gift that hinted at mortality, myrrh. They quietly slipped by the boundaries of the country and returned to their homeland by a new route. And their souls also knew a new way.

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CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS -RELIGION CLASSES ---

●No Sunday Classes January 4th. Classes will resume Sunday, January 11th, 2026.

●Wednesday Classes will resume Wednesday, January 7th, 2026.

***WEDNESDAY – Back on Schedule** - Confessions begin at 5:15pm followed by Mass at 6:00pm & Adoration until 8:30pm at IHM.

ULTREYA in English will not meet until after the new year. Date to be determined.

PARISH MOVIE GROUP – will meet this Sunday, January 4th, @4:00pm at Holy Family Hall.

2026 OFFERTORY ENVELOPES – are on the 2 back pews. Please be sure to look for your numbered box. Thank you for your continued support.

MARCH FOR LIFE - On January 24th, The March for Life will take place in Austin, Texas. A bus will be provided for the trip originating in Abilene with a stop at Holy Angels Church in San Angelo. We need at least 30 participants before a bus will be provided. I need to have an answer if you plan to participate by January 16th! Donations to offset the price of the bus will be appreciated.

I can be reached at jmpoutdoorsmen@aol.com, or Phone 325-374-5300, or send a message!

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

Life hands us many epiphanies or “wake-up calls.” A few years ago, a young couple adopted a two-year-old child in a morass of red tape, complications, and court hearings. At the baby’s baptism, the priest suggested appending an “adoption blessing,” wherein the new relationship was expressed and affirmed. There is a place in that rite for the child to speak, and instead the priest said, “Can you give Daddy a kiss?” Standing in the midst of his church, the young adoptive father suddenly welled up with tears as he embraced the child. Afterward, he explained that through all the hassles and legal struggles he never until that moment in church understood that he was the parent of this child. The ritual claimed them for each other, gave expression to their relationship that the legal documents never could, and firmly cemented this child into the heart of a community as everyone erupted into heartfelt applause. This assembly witnessed in a powerful way what happens in every baptism: the mystery of adoption, the free flow of grace, the overwhelming sense of God’s presence at the heart of our life’s journey.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

*Lord, every nation on earth will adore you
(Psalm 72).*

Saturday, January 3rd -

5:00PM-IHM– For Guadalupanas vivas y difuntas
7:00PM-St. Albert – Por la gente de Nolan County

Sunday, January 4th -

8:00AM – **IHM** +Cirilo, Victoria y Lucia Chavira
11:00AM – **IHM** +Martina Herrera

Tuesday, January 6th 9:00AM - HF

For the well-being of Tanis Moreno’s family

***Wednesday, January 7th 6:00PM– IHM**

+Miguel Ortiz, Tomasita Alcaras, Alfonso, Sara & Benjamin Gonzales

Thursday, January 8th 9:00AM-HF

In thanksgiving for Teresa Jane Mendez’s birthday

Friday, January 9th 9:00AM HF

For the health and well-being of Al and Virginia Mendoza

Saturday, January 10th -

5:00PM-IHM– For the well-being and health of Tony and Matt Albidrez

Sunday, January 11th -

8:00AM – **IHM** +Martina Herrera; +Marina Hernandez; +Sarah Gomez, Eulalio y Sarita Olvera; Ysidro y Elvira Navarrette
11:00AM – **IHM** For the People of Nolan County

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: 1 Jn 3:22 — 4:6; Ps 2:7bc-8, 10-12a; Mt 4:12-17, 23-25
Tuesday: 1 Jn 4:7-10; Ps 72:1-4, 7-8; Mk 6:34-44
Wednesday: 1 Jn 4:11-18; Ps 72:1-2, 10, 12-13; Mk 6:45-52
Thursday: 1 Jn 4:19 — 5:4; Ps 72:1-2, 14, 15bc, 17; Lk 4:14-22a
Friday: 1 Jn 5:5-13; Ps 147:12-15, 19-20; Lk 5:12-16
Saturday: 1 Jn 5:14-21; Ps 149:1-6a, 9b; Jn 3:22-30
Sunday: Is 42:1-4, 6-7; Ps 29:1-4, 3, 9-10; Acts 10:34-38; Mt 3:13-17

**Collection Data
12/20-21/202 * 12/27-28/2025**

ENVELOPES/CHECKS	\$ 3,329.00	\$ 5,612.00
LOOSE PLATE	1,238.00	1,332.00
BUILDING FUND	777.00	
CHRISTMAS		<u>3,09300</u>
TOTAL COLLECTION	\$ 5,344.00	\$ 10,037.00

The Epiphany of the Lord



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Epiphany in Greek means “manifestation”. In the West, the visit of the Magi is celebrated as the event through which the Lord was “manifested” to the pagans and, therefore, to the world. In the Eastern Church, the accent for this solemnity is on the Trinitarian “manifestation” during the Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan. While what is central on Christmas is the birth of the Child Jesus, on Epiphany, what is highlighted is that this poor and vulnerable Child is King and Messiah, the Lord of all the earth. With Epiphany, Isaiah’s prophecy is fulfilled, as can be discerned through the first reading: “*Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come*” (Is. 60:1ff). It’s as if the liturgy is saying – don’t cut yourselves off, don’t give up, don’t remain prisoners of your “convictions”, don’t be demoralized, react, “lift up your eyes”! Like the Magi, observe “the star” and you will find “the star, Jesus”.

The gifts

Gold and incense recall the gifts of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon, a reference we find in the Responsorial Psalm (Ps. 72). Gold represents Jesus’ kingship; incense, His divinity; myrrh, His humanity since it was a substance that was used to sprinkle over the bodies of the dead. The light of the star always leads to an act of adoration, of bowing before the mystery that has drawn near. It leads to giving, but even more, to self-giving. It is precisely this act of “self-giving” that stops many from allowing themselves to be attracted to Jesus because it leads to the fear of losing a position, comfort, security, privileges, thus hindering them from a change of life and conversion.