

**For The Bulletin Of  
January 8, 2017**



***From Father Robert***

How cool is that! Not a GPS, but a star guided “magi from the East” to “the newborn king of the Jews.” Awesome! Not a gift card to satisfy wants, but gold, frankincense, and myrrh were offered as gifts to this infant portending Who this Infant would be and what awaited Him. That’s epic! Not to be outfoxed, the magi, “warned in a dream” to give Herod the slip, “departed for their country by another way.” Today’s gospel has all the elements of a great story. Setting: The light of a star, big and little cities, house where a birth takes place. Characters: Protagonists (the enigmatic magi) and antagonists (Herod, the chief priests, and the scribes). Plot: Long, arduous journey from the East; duplicitous secrecy; warning in a dream. Conflict: Good and evil, truth and deceit, honest seeking and treacherous beguilement. Theme: Nothing can stop the “newborn king of the Jews” from being manifested to all the nations. This is not just the greatest story ever told; it is the only story that needs to be told.

Who is this newborn Child for Whom the magi are searching, being led by a star? He is “the newborn king of the Jews.” But in reality the One they seek is more: He is ruler, shepherd – the Christ. Do we ever ask, as did the magi, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews?” How diligently do we search? What star leads us? Whom do we find? How do we fit into this astounding story? How do we encounter the Light of the world?

The Light is a welcoming, peaceful warmth to which we surrender and are overjoyed. The Light entering the darkness makes the contrast between goodness and evil that much more magnified. Those who choose to recognize the Light are drawn to give homage and open the gifts of their hearts. Those who choose darkness enter a path of trouble and destruction. What does this Light reveal in our hearts? What part of the story do we embrace?

This Feast of the Epiphany celebrates the Light being manifested to all nations. This feast invites each of us to be among the seeker of the Light who do Christ homage. Our joy is found in the real surprise of the gospel: we are “members of the same body” who are now the light that shines in the darkness. The story of the “newborn king of the Jews” being manifested to all nations is our own personal story. Our own shining forth hastens God’s reign. With such grace given us, no wonder all we can do is set our hearts rightly, offer homage and gifts, and follow the Light wherever it leads. And how cool is that!

### ***Living The Paschal Mystery***

Just as Christ's birth sharpened the contrast between light and darkness, so will our faithful discipleship magnify this contrast as well. The disturbing message of the gospel is that we cannot follow Christ and expect that we won't experience troubling challenges. There is a price to pay for being the light. There is a price to pay for living this story.

Each fresh look at the Christmas story reminds us that all Christian living is paschal mystery living; that is, the rising (the Light) happens only when dying to self (darkness) is embraced. It ought not to surprise us, then, how much darkness accompanies these beautiful Christmas Season gospels; nor should it surprise us that there is a cost in our own lives for living the gospel. We continue to choose self-giving, nevertheless, because God's star always guides us and fills us with joy as we surrender to God's will and follow the Light that has come into our midst.

For many of us, today's liturgy will serve as the conclusion to the Christmas Season. As we hear today's scripture passages, and especially the gospel, what is my response?

- What I search diligently for is...
- The guiding star of my life is...
- I am the Light of Christ for others when I...

### ***About Liturgy: East and Light as Symbol***

We all know that the sun rises in the east, but probably most of us don't realize what a strong symbol this has always been, both in Christian theology and architecture.

***Resurrection:*** All four gospels mention that it was early in the morning on the first day of the week that they found the empty tomb. Hence, the sun rising in the east is a natural symbol for resurrection. Morning Prayer, ideally celebrated early in the morning, is a resurrection prayer and has motifs of light and glory as well as praise.

***Second Coming:*** From earliest times, Christians looked east for Christ's Second Coming, the source of light and a new dawning of life.

***Church Axis:*** Early church buildings were always constructed on an east-west axis; the altar was situated at one end so the assembly, standing facing the altar, faced east. A parallel symbolism of this axis is that as they left the building they left facing west – a symbol for darkness, sin, and evil. This was a constant reminder that the light showered upon them at liturgy was to be taken into a world darkened with sin, that they were to be the light dispelling that darkness.

***Posture:*** In the early church it was customary to turn eastward for prayer. During baptisms the Elect would face westward to renounce and then turn eastward to recite the Creed.



### ***Environment Help***

The Christmas Season concludes tomorrow, Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. On Tuesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 9:00 a.m., we will remove the Christmas Environment and install Winter's Ordinary Time. Many hands are needed for this major transition. You are invited to join us. Coffee and pastries are available in the morning, and if it is necessary to work beyond noon, then we also provide lunch. Please know that you are most welcome and invited to join us and while it is "work," it is even more importantly, spiritually rewarding.



### ***The Visit of William Cardinal Levada***

Next Sunday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, will be an historic moment in the life of our parish as **William Cardinal Levada** presides and preaches for our 10:00 a.m. Eucharist. We will also welcome his first cousin, **Father Richard Mangini**, Pastor of St. Bonaventure Parish, who will concelebrate the Liturgy. His Eminence is a personal friend with whom we celebrated my Fortieth Anniversary as a Priest in Rome two years ago at his titular church. It is a great joy to welcome him to Antioch and the blessing he will be to all of us. I know you will warmly welcome him.



### ***Knights of Columbus Crab Feed***

Tickets for our annual Knights of Columbus Crab Feed on Saturday, January 21st, are once again on sale following all liturgies this weekend. Space is limited so we advise you to get your tickets as soon as possible as no tickets will be sold at the door. All proceeds benefit our Knights of Columbus and their charitable programs.

### ***The Annual Report***

On the weekend of January 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, I will once again have the privilege of presenting **The Annual Pastoral and Financial Report** at each of our liturgies. This report is required to be given by Diocesan Statute on a weekend early in the new year as a way of being accountable to the parish for our life and ministry together. Hard copies will be available for all those who wish one. More than just reporting statistics, the Report details events, programs, and outreaches, ministries, volunteer involvement, and financial accountability to you for our Stewardship of Treasure. In addition, the Report will help prepare us for a major Town Hall Meeting to be held in early February that will address and present the findings of the Going Concern Committee that has been working for the past six months on issues that are facing us in 2017 and beyond. Please watch the bulletin and my insert for the day and time of this important gathering. All registered

parishioners will be requested to be present.

### ***Liturgical Morning of Enrichment***

Once again this year, our parish, along with St. Anne's, Byron, and St. Bonaventure, Concord, will be offering a Liturgical Morning of Enrichment for all those in liturgical ministry. It will be held here at our parish on Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The focus of the morning will be the New Rite of Christian Matrimony and the new Guidelines for Cremation. Presenters will be **Anthony Arteaga, Director of Liturgy** at St. Bonaventure and myself. Please see the flyer that is attached to my Insert for all the details. This is for ALL in liturgical ministry. There is no charge to attend. I hope you will put the date on your calendar and plan to be with us.



### ***The Chapel of the Nativity***

A number of years ago, we were fortunate to have our parishioner, **Sherry Morris**, a graphic artist, paint the alcove behind the Presidential Chair as the nativity scene with Bethlehem, the Star, and the nighttime sky. The figurines of the creche were placed appropriately in this chapel so that the mystery of the Incarnation would be ever-present in our church. Some parishioners have asked me why the nativity is not in the sanctuary and placed in its own separate chapel. The

answer is: “The creche is not a liturgical element or appointment; it is a devotional setting, albeit a time honored one in both our churches and our homes. Ordinarily, it should not be placed in the sanctuary, and **never under or in front of the altar**. It deserves to be in a place of honor but separate from the primary liturgical appointments that receive pride of place in the sanctuary. When choosing a suitable site for the creche, the Art and Environment Committee is to consider three locations: in the Gathering Area; in an alcove or shrine area where it is accessible, especially for children who want to approach it; and even an outdoor setting.” *From Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons, and Weekdays, The Almanac for Pastoral Liturgy, published by the Archdiocese of Chicago, Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago, Illinois.* The alcove behind the Presidential Chair was the perfect solution for our parish and thus became our permanent Chapel of the Nativity.

### ***Thank You***

...to those who cleaned and prepared the church for last weekend's liturgies as well as the parish hall: **Mency Osborne, Rose Salamanca, Angela Bueno, and Steve Rojek.**

...to those who cleaned and maintained the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall: **Robert Goncalves, Mary Ewing, Virginia Noack, Steve Rojek, and Harlan Young.**

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week:

**Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Rowena Cayaban, Monika**

**Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Belen Farin, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.**

...to our **counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week: **Sofie Zimmerman, Melodye Costanza, Harlan Young, Karen Oliver, Alicia Perez, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.**

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Bob Carvalho and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Bob Carvalho, Dave Costanza, Judy Quicho and Dilcia Aparicio.**

***From The Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County***

Dear Father Robert and Parishioners of St. Ignatius of Antioch Parish,

Thank you so much for your financial support of the Interfaith Council in the amount of \$650 towards our work and ministry. Our work together absolutely depends on the regular gifts such as yours.

This year's Elected Council is living into the process of our new structure, increasing the time we devote to Inter-religious conversation; responding to religious intolerance and religiously motivated hate speech and ideological violence. Our streamlined Governing Board, elected from among the Council, is maturing our internal processes. Our online presence continues to increase and we now network much of the East Bay through our website, Facebook page, and regular eBlasts to keep the community in touch with the latest events and programs.

You know our current programs: The Social Justice Alliance (SoJA) and the Homeless Summit of SoJA that operates the Winter Nights Shelter; the Singing Messengers that shares music and humor at over 60 programs a year at nursing homes; and we are creating a new Youth Council. Your gift also supports the Juvenile Detention Chaplaincy under the direction of The Reverend Dr. Charles Tinsley that ministers to young people in the facilities in Martinez and Byron, and beyond to those who take advantage of college.

As if that weren't enough, congregations and members of our Council are joining people of faith and the Multi-Faith Action Coalition in lifting the voice of the faith community in addressing poverty in our county. We are blessed with a broad base of affiliation that includes more than 107 congregations and dozens of agencies.

Join us for our annual Martin Luther King Jr. event brought to you by our Social Justice Alliance (SoJA) on Monday, January 16, 2017 at Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, 1801 Locassie Avenue, Walnut Creek. More information and a flyer can be downloaded from [interfaithccc.org](http://interfaithccc.org). Check out our new Calendar Events page and look for ongoing service opportunities on the Announcements page.

Your generous donation enables a wide range of healing and connecting interfaith activities. Thank you. Please invite your friends and family to join you in giving toward our important work.

With all good wishes for the Christmas holidays and “envisioning a world of Interfaith Peace,”

Rev. Will McGarvey  
Executive Director



Sunday, April 30, starting at 3:00 p.m. A Birthday Celebration for Father Robert who turns 70! And Dorothy Lamendola who turns 89!!! A Pasta Dinner, complete with salad and garlic bread, sponsored by YLI, our Social Events Committee, and our Knights of Columbus. Beer and Wine will be available. Come and go as you please. More information in upcoming Inserts!

***From St Vincent de Paul Society, Holy Rosary Conference***

Here is a summary of the St. Vincent de Paul Annual Report prepared by Bob Liles. Quoting from the report, “the parishioners at Most Holy Rosary and St. Ignatius of Antioch are extremely generous to us and without their financial help, we would not be able to do anything.”

In 2016, the number of families that came to the food pantry dropped to year 2007 levels (pre-great recession). However, the number of households receiving assistance other than food (e.g. rent, utilities, furniture, etc.) increased significantly. The Society spent approximately \$10,000 in rent assistance

and \$4,000 in utility assistance. The Society also provided families with furniture over the year with a fair market value of \$13,000, much of it donated. The conference expenditures exceeded revenue by \$10,000. This deficit was covered by cash reserves and was partially offset by a decrease in food pantry costs. 880 bags of groceries were distributed. One of our most successful programs involves home visits where we hopefully explore other options to help move the family to self-sufficiency. Emphasis on home visits as a means of assisting our clients will continue into the New Year.

*Note from Father Robert:* Thank you to everyone who supports the efforts of our St. Vincent de Paul Society. Your generous financial contributions (over \$11,000 this year) and your weekly donations of canned and dry goods for the food pantry are a tangible expression of your concern for the less fortunate members of our community.