



# St. John of the Cross

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## Our Parish COMMUNITY

January 4, 2026

**The Epiphany of the Lord (A)**

Isaiah 60:1-6 / Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6 / Matthew 2:1-12



## Good News!

January 4, 2026

**The Epiphany of the Lord (A)**

Isaiah 60:1-6 / Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6 / Matthew 2:1-12

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

“We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage” (Matthew 2:2) describes the spark that sent the Magi on their journey. Something unusual in the sky, interpreted as a sign of something wonderful—in response, they changed direction in their lives and devoted themselves to a completely different path. As wonderful as it might well be, a special star in the heavens is not the ordinary experience of how we learn to follow the Lord or discern his will. If only there could be a sign in God’s universe for each of us, beckoning us forward, clarifying what we need to do, setting down the path that needs to be followed. Perhaps life would be much simpler. Or perhaps not?

Would it truly be less complicated if everything were made clear and certain? Is the manifestation of God’s grace and blessings confined to the straight and narrow, or can we also experience God in the chaos—“in the weeds,” so to speak. Human experience seems to suggest that life is more “gray” than “black and white.” There is real grace in the journey, in making mistakes, even in choosing something that is incomplete. Thankfully, God’s grace does not need perfection to be powerful. We can know and follow God’s will for us in the ordinary moments of day-to-day living. We do not need the extraordinary or the dramatic. ●

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### Mass Schedule

**Saturday: 6:00 PM**

**Sunday:**

7:30 AM & 11:00 AM ~ English

6:00 PM ~ Spanish

**Daily Mass:**

Mon., Tues., & Fri. ~ 8:00 AM

Thurs.(Sp.) ~ 6:00 PM

**1st Saturday Mass: 8:00 AM**

**Adoration**

**Thurs.~ Spanish—6:30PM**

### Reconciliation

**Thursday: 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM**

**Saturday: 5:00 PM - 5:30 PM**

**Sunday: 5:30 PM**

Please contact Fr. Patrick by phone or email if you need to make an appointment for **Confession** or **Anointing of the Sick**.

### Parish Office Hours

**Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs:**

8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

1:00 PM - 4:30 PM

**CLOSED FOR LUNCH**

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

**OFFICE IS CLOSED**

**Fri., Sat., & Sun.**

# Worship, Prayer, & Ministries

## MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

<b>Sat.-3 6:00PM</b>	† Feliciano Borrego, Jr., by Dolores Borrego † David Gaza (10th anniv.) by San Juanita Gaza † Catarina Pena (Heavenly birthday) by Romanos Family † Charles Skrobarczyk (Heavenly birthday) by Skrobarczyk Family
<b>Sun.-4 7:30AM</b> <i>The Epiphany of the Lord</i>	† Consuelo Gamez (3rd anniv.) by Erasmo & Luz Paiz † Cyndi Garcia (10th anniv.) by the Forbes Family
<b>11:00AM</b>	Living and Deceased Members of the St. John of the Cross Altar Society
<b>6:00PM</b>	Las familias de la parroquia
<b>Mon.-5 8:00AM</b>	<i>Mass is open and available.</i>
<b>Tues.-6 8:00AM</b>	† Manuel Alejandro (39th birthday) by Lupe & Angie Alejandro † John & † Bea Graham (75th Wedding Anniversary) by Graham Family † Maximina Rivera (anniv.) by Bazan, Leal, and Hinojosa Families
<b>Thurs.-8 6:00PM (SPA)</b>	<i>La misa está abierta y disponible.</i>
<b>6:30PM</b>	Adoracion
<b>Fri.-9 8:00AM</b>	Birthday Blessings for Jarrod Stewart by Remy Stewart

## Masses for January 10 & 11

<b>Sat.-10 6:00PM</b>	† Manuel Alejandro by Graciela & Pablo Alaniz, Jr. † Harry Davis by Anita Bazan
<b>Sun.-11 7:30AM</b> <i>The Baptism of the Lord</i>	† Lorraine Robinson by Jana Robinson Living and Deceased Members of the St. John of the Cross Altar Cemetery Association
<b>11:00AM</b>	<i>Mass is open and available.</i>
<b>6:00PM</b>	Las familias de la parroquia



The sanctuary light is in memory of

**Marvin Mussman**

by Mussman Family

**Sanctuary light and altar flowers** ~ The sanctuary light and / or the altar flowers may be sponsored in honor of or for the repose of the soul of a loved one, for special intentions, or in celebration of special occasions like birthdays or wedding anniversaries.

The sanctuary light is \$20 / weekend.

The altar flowers are \$80/ weekend.

Please contact the office for more information.

**Feast of the Baptism of the Lord** ~ The Christmas season will come to an end with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord on Sunday, January 11.

Help will be needed to remove the Christmas decorations on January 11, at 2:00PM.

Strong volunteers are needed to carry the decorations down to the basement.



## Ministry Schedule for Mass

### Ministry Schedule

**January 10—6:00PM—Lector:** Pablo Alaniz

**EM:** Liza Ochoa, San Juanita Gaza, Sharry Stipp

**Head Ushers:** Raquel S. Jimenez, Mike Schroedter

**January 11—7:30AM—Lector:** Lucille Klaevemann

**EM:** Maria Miller, Luz Paiz, Quinton Smithwick

**Head Ushers:** Gerald Murray, Emmanuel Alejandro

**11:00AM—Lector:** Ernest Henderson

**EM:** Diana Aguilar, Maria Galvan-Gordon, Dee DeLeon, Volunteer

**Head Usher:** Lonnie Rodriguez

**6:00PM—Lector:** Jose Isaia

**EM:** Mariela Ordonez, Esmeralda Castro

**Head Usher:** Angel Isaia

We are in need of more lectors, eucharistic ministers, and ushers for all Masses. Please let the parish office know if you can help.



## PRAYER LIST

We continue to pray for the needs of those in our parish:

**Maria Bernal, Elias Bernal, Jr., Art Forbes, Angelica Frees, Cindy Lopez, James Matheny, Antonio Medrano, Oscar Ortiz, Jr., Johnny Soliz, and Christina Tipton**



*The names of newly added persons will remain for three weeks. Contact the Parish Office if names need to be added to the prayer list.*

Praying for expecting mothers and their babies:

**Theresa Laurienti, Ricki Rodriguez Choat, and Amanda Smithwick**



## Praying for our Military

**We remember these service personnel in each 'Mass for the Families of the Parish'**

**Air Force:** Preston Holliday, Alayah Moore, Deborah Thomas

**Army:** Father Jim Craig, Madeleena Delaney, Celine De Los Santos, Allen McDonald, Jacob Madrid, Eduardo Perales, Robert Ponce, Fernando Ramos III, Anthony Rios, and Tyree Winstead



**Coast Guard:** Corey Bunton and Joshua Salinas

**Marines:** Aurora Alarcon, Hunter Frees, and Andre Rodriguez

**Navy:** Cory Elyasevich, Diane Martinez, and Noah Vasquez

Please pray for our **ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY!**

Please call the parish office or use the online form to submit names & branch of service.

1. Go to **www.st-johnog.org**

2. hover mouse on **ABOUT** tab

3. click on **'Active Military Prayer Request'**

# A Note From Our Pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,



“On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me a partridge in a pear tree. ...”

This favorite Christmas Carol actually was the calendar of the “twelve days” for the people between the birth of Jesus and the giving of the gifts of the Three Wise Men. Christmas gifts for many centuries were not given until the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6<sup>th</sup>. This was to commemorate the appearance of the Christmas Star on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December and the making of those special gifts of the gold, the frankincense, and the myrrh for the new King, the days of preparation for the trip, and the traveling for the Kings to make it to Bethlehem. It was often the time that people actually took to prepare their own gifts for each other. Epiphany was the great day of celebration for the Christmas Season when the “foreigner” kings recognized and adored the new King of Kings. It is the reality that the “event” of Jesus’ birth by the appearance of the Star of Bethlehem that began the searching of these astrologers for the new King. We must remember that they were not Jewish but from three other far away nations who were searching the night sky for a sign of the one true God. By tradition they came from the North, the South, and the East. On the Feast of the Magi, we must first remember that all of us have at some time in our life begun a searching for God and the meaning for our own lives. Like the three kings, we come from many different situations, directions, nations, languages, and cultures, but we all end up recognizing and adoring the one and same King of Kings. It is that epiphany or “showing” in which we recognize the one true Lord is for all nations and all peoples. It is where we get the Catholic and Universal marks of the Church – open to all peoples around the world. It is the special reality that I have always admired in the many cultural expressions of the Nativity Sets that I have collected over the years from Africa, Asia, Europe, and South American. Each displays Jesus, Mary, and Joseph with different colors of skin, and different cultural clothing and animals. One set from Peru did not have sheep but llamas! One set from Alaska had seals and dogs instead of cattle and donkeys! All were nativity scenes of the One True King of Kings, but as He would be “seen” in their familiar images.

The gifts of the Magi are representations of Jesus as Priest, Prophet, and King. Frankincense, the finest quality incense used only by the High Priest in the Temple, was given to Jesus as he is the True Priest of God. Myrrh was an anointment used in medicine and burials, as the calling of the Prophet and healing of God’s People back to Himself. And the Gold was given to the kings as the sign of their being of royal and divine selection as the King.

But we also need to see that the Magi must have thought what do I bring as an offering for this great event. How many times have you had the difficulty of “What should I bring as a gift to this party, dinner, or celebration?” How many times were you just doing that very same thing last month for those people on your Christmas list? And since it was for a King, what would be special enough or of sufficient value. Using gold for comparison, would it be 10k gold, 18k gold, or 24k gold for the King? And remembering that there was no Walmart at that time, the gold would have to be mined out of the ground, smelted in the furnaces, and refined many times over to be 24k gold. The Frankincense and Myrrh also would take time to gather the sap from special trees, and then through long and complicated processes finally produce the finest quality gifts. That is the depth that these gifts “show” to the Christ Child. If you were a “fourth king” on that day, what gift would you give of yourself to lay before the King? And, after all of that expense and hard work, to give such a valuable gift away to an infant, you must truly see these gifts as a personal and important action of honor and great love.

As a “fourth” king, who would I love and want to honor so much that I would travel across the world? And what gift would I give of my possessions to show my willingness to make a sacrifice of love and honor for such a person? In many hospitals I have heard people ready to offer their own organs for a loved one. Many of us have been in such a situation when there has been a medical need to restore a family member to health? One of my best friend’s own brother-in-law was in such a predicament. After years of dialysis for his kidney failure, a transplant was the final option for a normal life. And so my friend gave one of his kidneys to his brother-in-law to save his life. That is a gifting worthy of a “fourth” king. And I have always admired him for such a selfless act of love. Even I have reluctantly wondered if I would have the same courage and generosity if I was in such a situation – I pray that I would have it if called upon.

So, on this Feast of the Epiphany, you are the fourth king! What is your special gift? It doesn’t have to be some materialistic thing. It could be a spiritual item as well, such as finally letting go of some injury or hurt that keeps you awake at night. Or reconciling with an enemy and making them a friend. Take some time this weekend and actually kneel before our Nativity in the parish, and give your gift to recognize, love, and honor Him as your King of Kings.

Love and Prayers,

Fr. Patrick



## Deacon's Corner

Today we celebrate (January 4, 2026), the Epiphany. The readings are from Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13; [Ephesians 3: 2-3a, 5-6](#); and [Matthew 2:1-12](#). We hope you are having a good Christmas season. This year it will end before the evening Mass on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord for the Roman churches. Some of the Eastern churches consider the Baptism of the Lord as the Epiphany. The word simply means manifestation, or a real, actual, live recognition of Jesus as Lord. Generally the word means “a moment of sudden revelation or insight.” It is also kind of a re-orientation in thinking that clears up doubts, suspicions, uncertainties. You know that you’re on the right path because you are no longer the same. Jesus has somehow influenced you to recognize him, normally through the Holy Spirit, and you manifest that recognition by doing things differently. We are aware that evil lurks around us, and we attempt to avoid it. Evil bothers us. The Good attracts us. I think “Epiphany” means all that. Jesus is manifested to the world, and the world acknowledges his Lordship, or rejects him. The Story of the Magi is **only** in Matthew’s Gospel. It became popular in the early church alongside the Baptism of the Lord as “epiphanies” that demonstrated a recognition of Jesus as Lord. In the Baptism of Jesus we see the revelation of the Blessed Trinity, and the voice announcing Jesus as the Son of God. The Baptism of the Lord is in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In 1955, Pope Pius XII made the Baptism of the Lord a separate feast, except when the Epiphany falls on January 7 or 8, “this causes the Baptism to be celebrated on the Monday immediately following the Epiphany.” Source: Wikipedia, citing, “Lectionary: Movable Feasts during the Christmas Season.” Catholic-resources.org. Retrieved 2024-09-09. Meditate on the words of scripture for this Sunday. In Isaiah the prophet describes the joy of the light, “upon

you the Lord shines, and over you appears his glory.” I think it is a description of Immanuel, God-with-us. “...Then you shall be radiant at what you see, your heart shall throb and overflow....” Today’s Psalm is a prophetic Psalm: “**Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.** O God, with your judgment endow the king, and with your justice, the king’s son; He shall govern your people with justice and your afflicted ones with judgment.” This is kind of a description of the triumph of good over evil. St. Paul tells the Ephesians that the Spirit has revealed “that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.” This describes a realization that the Lord Jesus came into the world for all peoples and nations. No one is excluded. I like the Gospel of Matthew because it always tries to verify the Old Testament themes. Or maybe we might say Matthew is constantly reinforcing Old Testament themes by showing that Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophecies about him. So, you see the ideas of frankincense and gold in both Isaiah and Matthew. You also see the fulfillment of the prophecy that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem of Judah. “(F)or thus it has been written through the prophet: *And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel.*” We will see by the end of the liturgical year that Matthew emphasizes the need to serve the poor, a vital theme of the Old Testament that is swallowed up by the desire to wield power and influence, sometimes called Pharisee-ism. Read chapter 23 of Matthew for the Lord’s condemnation of this kind of rule and influence. Perhaps condemnation is too strong a word, let’s use criticism. Does the Lord criticize? I think he does, if we think of criticism as constructive. God bless you on the journey of faith as propounded by Matthew in this new year. Deacon Cavada

# Stewardship of Treasure

Week #25	COLLECTION	Totals Prior Week -	Goal	Actual	Total Annual Over / (under)	YTD Goal	TOTAL OFFERTORY
12/21/2025	Envelope Collection	\$ (6,488.78)	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 2,008.00	\$ (6,580.78)	\$ 52,500.00	Data for current week was unavailable at time of printing.
	Loose Collection	\$ 9,307.08	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,126.00	\$ 9,233.08	\$ 30,000.00	
	On-Line Collection	\$ 9,294.25	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 2,117.95	\$ 10,012.20	\$ 35,000.00	
	TOTAL Collection	\$ 12,112.55	\$ 4,700.00	\$ 5,251.95	\$ 12,664.50	\$ 117,500.00	

## Our Living Church Building Fund Capital Campaign



### OUR GOAL:

**\$675,000 By 2032**

The second collection this weekend supports **Our Living Church Building Fund Capital Campaign**.

Through your generous support, **Our Living Church Building Fund** will fund essential improvements to restore and revitalize the parish campus, including replacing the deteriorating stucco on the outside of the church building, removing and repairing the stained-glass windows in the church as well as necessary repairs to the parish hall and church parking lot.

## Parish Organizations

PARISH COUNCIL

NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 5, 2026 @ 6PM

ALTAR SOCIETY

NEXT MEETING: FEBRUARY 23 @ 6PM

**Monthly processional**—January 4, 2026 — Liza Ochoa

### ALTAR DUTY CLEANING SCHEDULE

**Jan. 8-10**—Mrs. Laura Adams, Mrs. Nicole Bunch, Mrs. Carol Broerman, Mrs. Nicole Arnold

**Jan. 15-17**—Mrs. Gracie Castaneda, Mrs. Stephanie Wright, Mrs. Blanca Gonzalez, Ms. Liliana Loera

**Epiphany Blessing with Chalk**—Just as the Israelites in the old Testament marked their doors to be saved from the Angel of Death during the Last Plague in Egypt, the Epiphany tide practice serves to protect Christians from evil spirits. On the Epiphany families are invited to bless their home by marking their doorway with the following symbols: 20† C † M † B † 26. The custom expresses the blessing of Christ throughout the entire home through the intercession of the three wise men. *Our Altar Society will distribute the blessing and chalk this weekend at all Masses.*



SOCIEDAD GUADALUPANA

NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 19



**Hostess Group:** Jennifer Alejandro

**Corporate Mass**—January 18 @ 7:30AM

**Rosary at 7:00AM**

**Leader:** Jana Robinson

**Offertory:** Maria Miller, Belinda Ortiz, and Frances Matheny

**Roses provided to Our Lady of Guadalupe**—by Isabel Alanis and Mary Villarreal

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS # 8335



NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 6, 2026

**Rosary: 6:40 PM** at the KOC Building *Men 18 yrs. & older are welcome*



CASA DE LUCY WILL RESUME MEETING ON JANUARY 6, 2026.

## Religious Education

Religious education classes will resume on Wednesday, January 7, 2026.

Grades kinder through fifth grade meet at 5:30PM in the Religious Ed Bldg.

Students in jr. high through high school meet at 6:30PM in the parish hall.

## Works of Mercy

The next bread and pastries distribution will be at 9AM  
at **SJoC** on on **Monday, December 29 and at**  
**St. Francis** on **Saturday, January 10.**



Coastal Bend Food Bank distributions at 9AM at  
**St. John of the Cross** on **Tuesday, January 6,**  
and at **St. Francis of Assisi** on **Saturday, January 24.**



# Dear Padre,

*I recently lost my husband of sixty years. I prayed for him through his four-year illness. Since he has died, I cannot pray. Any advice for me?*

My heartfelt condolences on your profound loss. When someone we love dies, a part of us dies too. Sometimes, the trauma is so severe that it can even affect our relationship with God.

Psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross identified five stages of grief. In the denial stage, some people can't accept the reality of the death. It becomes too much to handle. In the anger stage, some may question their belief in God—especially if their prayer requests (such as, "Please God, if you heal my loved one, I will...") weren't successful in the bargaining stage. People in the depression stage feel overwhelmed by the reality of the loss and may not always feel like connecting with others—even with God in prayer. However, in the acceptance stage, emotions stabilize, and a person comes to terms with their new reality. Nothing makes up for the absence of a loved one, but people manage to cope and live on.

It's because you loved so deeply that the loss feels so deep. God accepts you completely; God understands how you feel. He wants you to be at peace and live life fully. Our compassionate God yearns to help console you and offer assistance in your healing process until you can embrace him again in prayer. ●

**Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org)**

## A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

*Let us resolve to bring [God's] love everywhere, never forgetting that each of our sisters and brothers is a dwelling place of God and that his presence is manifested above all in the little ones, in the poor and the suffering, who ask us to be thoughtful and compassionate Christians.*

REGINA CAELI, ROME, MAY 25, 2025



## Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

### Monday

January 5  
St. John Neumann,  
Bishop  
1 Jn 3:22–4:6  
Mt 4:12–17, 23–25

### Tuesday

January 6  
Christmas Weekday  
1 Jn 4:7–10  
Mk 6:34–44

### Wednesday

January 7  
Christmas Weekday  
1 Jn 4:11–18  
Mk 6:45–52

### Thursday

January 8  
Christmas Weekday  
1 Jn 4:19–5:4  
Lk 4:14–22a

### Friday

January 9  
Christmas Weekday  
1 Jn 5:5–13  
Lk 5:12–16

### Saturday

January 10  
Christmas Weekday  
1 Jn 5:14–21  
Jn 3:22–30

### Sunday

January 11  
The Baptism  
of the Lord  
Is 42:1–4, 6–7  
Acts 10:34–38  
Mt 3:13–17