

St. Francis of Assisi Mission



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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

Sunday: 9:15 AM
St. John of the Cross
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 ~
Adoration ~
Thurs. (Sp.) - 6:30PM
1st Saturday Mass: 8:00 AM

Reconciliation

Thursday: 5:30 PM
Saturday: 5:00 PM - 5:30 PM
Sunday: 5:30PM

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

St. John of the Cross
Mon., Tues., Wed., and 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

MASS INTENTIONS

Sun.-Jan. 4 9:15 AM
The Epiphany of the Lord

† Juan Robles (Birthday)
by Palmira Robles-Cardona
† Phyllis A. Toler
by Charles D. Toler
Altar and Rosary Society on their Communion
Sunday
People of the Parish

Sun.-Jan. 11 9:15 AM
The Baptism of the Lord

† Phyllis A. Toler
by Charles D. Toler
People of the Parish

PRAYER LIST

May He bless all who are in need of His strength, especially:

Ana Culpepper, Henry Garrett, Kenton Heider, Paula Heider, Gerald Lindsey, Melba Malik, Cheryl Marshall, Adrian Nunez, Daniel Nunez, Phillip Torres, Paige Trevino, Adolfo Trevino, and Bo Weaver

Praying for expecting mothers and their babies:
Theresa Laurienti and Amanda Smithwick

Please contact the parish office for any additions or deletions.



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, Audrey Winstead

Army: Father Jim Craig, Magdeleena Delaney, Celine De Los Santos, Allen McDonald, Jacob Madrid, Eduardo Enrique Perales, Robert Ponce, Fernando Ramos III, Anthony Rios, 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'

Stewardship of Treasure

PREVIOUS WEEK	12/21/2025	CURRENT WEEK	12/28/2025
Collection	\$1553.00	Collection	\$365.00
		Christmas	\$339.00
		Our Living Church Bldg Fund	\$200.00

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

ALTAR & ROSARY SOCIETY
NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 12 @ 2PM

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS # 8335
NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 6, 2026



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 distributions will be at 9AM
at **SJoC** on **Wednesday, January 14, 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.**

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 6th. This was to commemorate the appearance of the Christmas Star on the 25th 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.

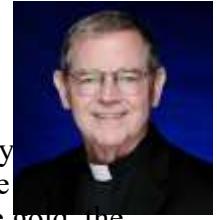
The gifts of the Magi are representations of Jesus as Priest, Prophet, and King. Frankincense, the finest quality incense used only by the High Priest in the Temple, was given to Jesus as he is the True Priest of God. Myrrh was an anointment used in medicine and burials, as the calling of the Prophet 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



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

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



YANDRY FERNANDEZ PERDOMO / CATHORIC

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday	Wednesday	Saturday
January 5 <i>St. John Neumann, Bishop</i> 1 Jn 3:22–4:6 Mt 4:12–17, 23–25	January 7 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 4:11–18 Mk 6:45–52	January 10 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 5:14–21 Jn 3:22–30
Tuesday	Thursday	Sunday
January 6 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 4:7–10 Mk 6:34–44	January 8 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 4:19–5:4 Lk 4:14–22a	January 11 <i>The Baptism of the Lord</i> Is 42:1–4, 6–7 Acts 10:34–38 Mt 3:13–17
Friday	January 9 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 5:5–13 Lk 5:12–16	