



When I was 22, I went on a pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee Year of 2000. I was traveling light with just a backpack, one blue shirt and black pants, little money, and no Italian. I had a few close friends and one goal: to reach the Eternal City. Despite the challenges and deprivations, I felt alive in a way I had never known before.

When do you feel most alive? I'd wager it's not when you're most comfortable or surrounded by stuff. Rather, it's when your life is aimed at something great; when you're on a meaningful and challenging journey with good friends. That's the image the Magi give us in today's Gospel. They set out from the East not with certainty, but with hope. They study the signs, discipline their attention, and journey together, offering the best they have when they find the newborn King. The Church gives us their story at the start of the year to reawaken something in us. We are not meant to drift. We're meant to journey as pilgrims. The Jubilee Year of 2025 may have ended, but our pilgrimage has not. Like the Magi, the closer we get to Christ, the more alive we become. — Fr. John Muir

LITURGICAL MINISTERS FOR JAN. 10 & 11, 2026
Sat. Jan. 10 @ 4:30PM @ St. Nicholas
 Reader: Don Cureton
 Music: Sally Rehberger, Barb Zaloga, & Colleen Lozier
 Euch. Min.: Brenda & Marce Tebbe
 Server: Pat Kalous

Sun. Jan. 11 @ 8:00AM @ St. Gertrude
 Reader: Chad Korte
 Music: Nick Worman & Randy Eckstein
 Sacristan: Wendy Essenpreis
 Euch.Min.: Jane Deiters, Carole Sauls & Judi Rode
 Ushers: Bryan Rutz & Kevin Schwarz
 Servers: Makayla Korsmeyer & Teagan Barr

Sun. Jan. 11 @ 10:00AM @ IC
 Reader: PAPAYA Youth Group
 Music: Joy Winkler
 Servers: PAPAYA Youth Group
 Euch. Min.: Amy Gilomen, Mary Korte & Evelyn Knebel



Members of our parish families who are recovering in the hospital & at home, for their strength and patience each day, and for all those who ask for our prayers for health or other issues.

John Alberternst, Pat Beard, Ana Cantrell, Steve Crawford, Don Dapkus, Teresa Dickman, Joan Dickshot, Jean Fields, Gabriel Frey, Jerry Fyke, Ed Gagen, Karen Grabowski, P.J. Hereford, James Hodge, Gene Jolliff, Pat Kalous, Val King, Barrett Korte, Denny Korte, Randy Korte, Ruth Korte, Steve Korte, David Kuehn, Sue Lubber, Christopher Marti, Taylor Marti, Barry May, Alex McCall, Eleanor Munie, Cody Neal, Jeannie Oestringer, Robin Pollmann, Suzanne Steinbring, Marcia Rowe, Gunner Sadler, Abby Schrage, Bill Schroeder, Marie Weis, Ginny Werner, Dean Wernle.

FOR OUR PARISHIONERS IN NURSING HOMES:
 Delmar Knebel, Ann Plocher, Barbara Weiss, Margie Zurliene and special people in our families.

FOR THOSE CURRENTLY SERVING IN THE MILITARY:
 Adam Canfield, Tim Doll, Chad Knebel, Michael Knebel, Dustin Korte, Solon McGill, Lt. Abigail Mesaros, Jerritt Mettler, Jimmy O'Boyle, Sgt. Joseph Patterson, Rickie Schuster, Joseph Schatte, Greg Spina, T.J. Waddington, Sgt. Tyler Wegman, Sgt. Zach Weiss.

If you would like to have someone added or removed from the prayer list please call the parish office.

Readings for the week of January 4, 2026

Sunday:
 Is 60:1-6/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13/
 Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12

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 72:1-2, 3-4, 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 and 15bc, 17/
 Lk 4:14-22a

Friday:
 1 Jn 5:5-13/Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20/
 Lk 5:12-16

Saturday:
 1 Jn 5:14-21/Ps 149:1-2, 3-4, 5 and 6a and 9b/Jn 3:22-30

Next Sunday:
 Is 42:1-4, 6-7/Ps 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10/
 Acts 10:34-38/Mt 3:13-17

"Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." Matthew 2:11

The image of the Magi kneeling before the infant Jesus and opening their treasure chests for Him is an image that we should all try to follow each day. In gratitude for all that we have been given, we are called to generously share all our gifts, not just the ones we pick and choose. God wants us to be generous with everything, but especially that one thing that means the most to you.

The journey of the Magi reflects how treacherous our Christian life on earth can be. Always, evil works against us — Satan lays traps. He sows confusion. May we, like the Magi, recognize the will of God as our guiding star.

At St. Paul in Highland

Adult Catholic Refresher

- January 7th
- January 14th
- January 28th
- February 4th
- and more...

A time for parents and parish adults to gain a deeper understanding of our Catholic Faith on select Wednesdays from 6:10pm-7pm in the St. Paul Room. Child care will be available for ages 2-8th grade if they are not in PSR/Edge.

Each session discusses a different practice or teaching of the Catholic Church.

Attend the dates that are best for you!

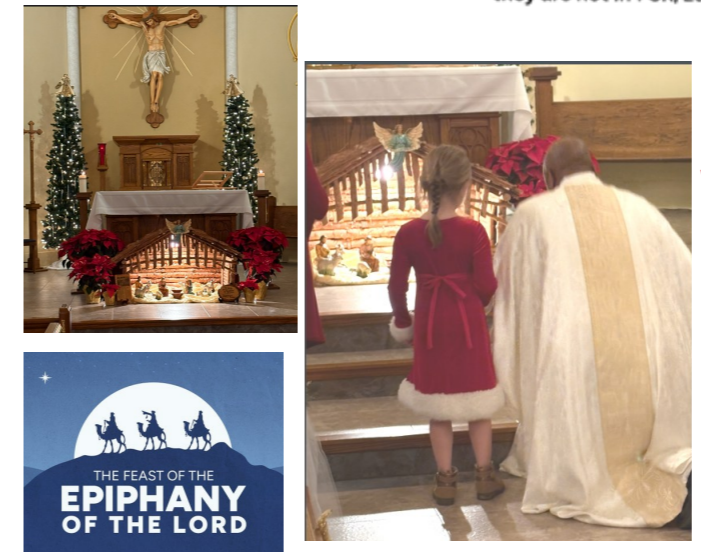
Observances for the week of January 4, 2026

Sunday: The Epiphany of the Lord
Monday: St. John Neumann, Bishop
Tuesday: St. André Bessette, Religious
Wednesday: St. Raymond of Penyafort, Priest
Next Sunday: The Baptism of the Lord

HAPPY BIRTHDAY God created you on a special day. Your birthday is special and so are you. We would like to pray in a special way for all those born during the month of January. May God bless you abundantly especially on your birthday.

Instead of listing individual names of those celebrating a birthday, and in an effort to celebrate all with birthdays, we would like to instead say, "Happy Birthday to all who are celebrating a birthday this month!"

PSR Classes return January 7th

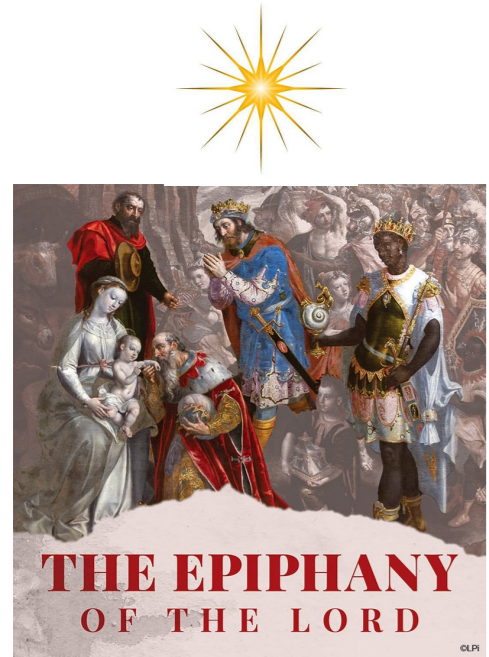


Finley Richardson with Fr. Cal on Christmas Eve at St. Gertrude Church placing the Baby Jesus in the manger.



Christmas Eve at St. Gertrude Church

We will be removing the Christmas decorations from the churches next weekend, Jan. 10 & 11 after each mass.



Pics of Immaculate Conception Church at Christmas

Mon. (Jan. 5) 8:00am
 Tues. (Jan. 6) 8:00am (St.G)
 Wed. (Jan. 7) 8:00am (IC)
 Thur. (Jan. 8) 8:00am (St.N)
 Fri. (Jan. 9) 8:00am (IC)
 Sat. (Jan.10) 4:30pm (St.N)
 Sun. (Jan.11) 8:00am (St.G)

Sun. (Jan.11) 10:00am (IC)

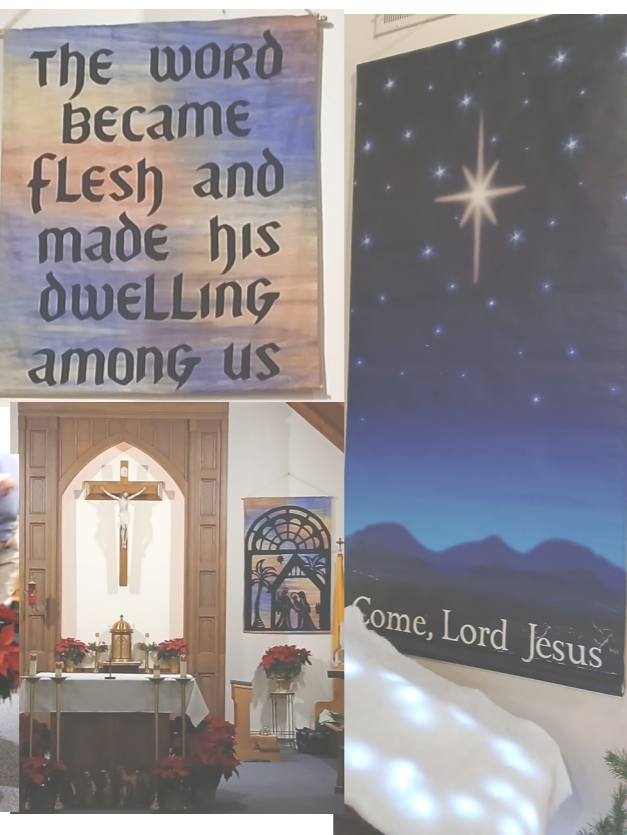
† Mass Intentions †
No Mass
 † **All Souls**
 † **Peggy Gibson** — Int. of Bill & Denise Trickey
 † **Kenny Korte** — Int. of Mark Williams
 † **Ron Davis** — Int. of Aaron Gelly
 † **Scott Frank** — Int. of Don Cureton
 † **Helen Wuebbles** — Int. of Bill & Denise Trickey
For the People of St. Gertrude, St. Nicholas & Immaculate Conception
 † **Mike Schreiber** — Int. of Kay Williamson & Family
 † **Bob & Pam Winet** — Int. of Rick & Ruth Zurliene

STN Collection	12/27/25
Envelopes/Loose	\$2,365.66
Christmas	\$811.00
First Offering	\$5.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$100.00
Sister Parish	\$60.00
Capital Improvement	\$61.00
Children's Home	\$195.00
Budget Goal	\$1,257.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	\$2,024.66
Support Needed (budget)	\$32,682.00
Support Actual	\$35,663.72
Surplus/Deficit YTD	\$2,981.72

STG Collection	12/28/25
Envelopes/Loose	\$1,651.66
IC Collection	\$10.00
Christmas	\$730.00
Retired Religious	\$5.00
Sister Parish	\$15.00
Children's Home	\$165.00
Candles	\$27.00
Budget Goal	\$1,505.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	\$886.66
Support Needed (budget)	\$39,130.00
Support Actual	\$34,392.66
Surplus/Deficit YTD	\$-4,737.34

IC Collection	12/28/25
Envelopes/Loose	\$4,032.68
IC Collection	\$15.00
Christmas	\$1,725.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$40.00
Retired Religious	\$20.00
Sister Parish	\$160.00
Children's Home	\$515.00
Christmas Flowers	\$10.00
Catholic Times	\$35.00
Building Fund	\$30.00
Candles	\$20.00
Budget Goal	\$2,672.00
Weekly Surplus/Deficit	\$3,140.68
Support Needed (budget)	\$69,472.00
Support Actual	\$71,541.13
Surplus/Deficit YTD	\$2,069.13

Pics of St. Nicholas Church at Christmas



Meet Our Seminarians



Samuel Lutostanski
Propaedeutic
St. Meinrad Seminary

One thing I have learned about discernment is the importance of giving everyone and everything in my life back to God. He can take far better care of my friends and family than I can, and everything I offer Him will be returned in a much greater form.

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD JANUARY 3 & 4, 2026



Saint Nicholas - Pocahontas



Immaculate Conception—Pierron



Saint Gertrude—Grantfork



Virtues, Explained!

The virtue of love seeks the good of the other, a reflection of the love of God who created us for this very purpose. In practicing this virtue, we express the fullness of our identities as sons and daughters of God. In true Christian love, we find freedom.

Epiphany Blessing

Dear God,
It was You who inspired the Magi to follow the star to find You. Inspire us to seek You, as well. Bless our homes and families this season, make them places where we can encounter You through prayer and community. Amen.

Virtues Explained!
LOVE

The virtue of love seeks the good of the other, a reflection of the love of God who created us for this very purpose. In practicing this virtue, we express the fullness of our identities as sons and daughters of God. In true Christian love, we find freedom. If you've ever been a guest at a Christian wedding, chances are you have heard 1 Corinthians 13:4-8: "Love is patient, love is kind ... love never fails." But what and who we love is just as important as how we love. Loving God, we know, is the greatest commandment of Jesus Christ, followed by loving others (Matthew 22:37-40). We are called to exhibit this love even — and, perhaps, especially — when it is difficult, when it demands we sacrifice our own preferences, our own desires and our own prejudices (Matthew 5:46). In doing this, we "no longer stand before God as a slave, in servile fear, or as a mercenary looking for wages, but as a son responding to the love of him who 'first loved us.'" (CCC 1828). So yes, love is patient, and love is kind — and, when practiced correctly, love is also freedom. @LPI



My Jesus, teach me how to love. Teach me to use each sacramental union with you as a preparation for the next, so that when my last Holy Communion comes I may but exchange one heaven for another, the heaven of you in my heart for the heaven in which I shall see you in all your beauty face to face.

Blessed Basil Moreau
from the meditation of January 6



SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2026

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. - Mt 2:10-11a

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

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+BISHOP
THOMAS JOHN PAPROCKI
DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD
IN ILLINOIS
✠
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Mon.—Thurs. 9am to 4pm
Fridays 9am to 1pm

Mass Times
Immaculate Conception
Wed. & Fri. —8:00am
Sunday —10:00am

Saint Nicholas
Thursday — 8:00am
Saturday — 4:30pm

Saint Gertrude
Tuesday — 8:00am
Sunday — 8:00am