

St. Therese Catholic Church

January 2, 2022 **Ministered by the Discalced Carmelite Friars** Est. 1924
510 North El Molino Street | Alhambra CA 91801 | (626) 282-2744 | www.StThereseChurchAlhambra.org

OFFICE HOURS | CONTACTS

Monday – Friday: 9:00 am-1:00 pm; 2:00 pm-5:00 pm

Pastor: Fr. Thomas Koller, OCD X222

Associate Pastor: Fr. David Guzman, OCD X232

In Residence: Fr. Albert Bunsic, OCD;

Fr. Bernard Perkins, OCD X225; Bro. Jason Parrott, OCD;
Fr. Godfrey Chandya, OCD

Deacons: Dcn Joseph Mizerski | Dcn Gilbert Vargas X333;

Annulments: Deacon Gilbert Vargas X333

Vocations: For the Archdiocese: (213) 637-7515

For the Carmelites: www.discalcedcarmelitefriars.com

Parish Secretary: Denise McMaster-Holguin X223
denisekay@hotmail.com

Finance: Noralyn Cailan X228 / cailannocds@gmail.com

Music Director: Paula Grimm | pgrimm.dir@gmail.com

Respect Life Ministry: Catherine Contreras X112

MASSES | CONFESSIONS

Masses—Saturday: 8:00 a.m. & Vigil at 5:00 p.m.

Sundays at 7:30, 9:00, 11:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m.

And Traditional Latin High Mass at 1:00 p.m.

Monday-Friday Masses: 6:00 and 8:00 a.m.

(the daily 8:00 a.m., the Sunday 11:00 a.m., and the weekday 7:00 p.m. Masses are **LIVE STREAMED** on Facebook AND YouTube); **Rosary: Mon-Sat after 8:00 a.m. Mass**

Masses on Monday, *Tuesday (*Spanish), Wednesday & Thursday EVENINGS at 7:00 p.m. (Tues. and Thurs. are preceded by a showing of The Chosen, Season 2, from 7:00 to 7:15 p.m.); **First Friday Mass: 7:00 p.m.**

CONFESSIONS (OUTSIDE)-Wednesdays from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m.; Saturdays from 3:00 to 6:30 p.m. and Sundays from Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Carmelite Cloister: 7:30 a.m., Monday-Saturday



ST. THERESE CARMELITE SCHOOL

(626) 289-3364

www.SaintThereseCarmeliteSchool.com

Principal: Alma Cornejo X661

principal@sainttheresecarmeliteschool.com



SACRAMENTS

- Baptisms: Register online
- Weddings: Register online at least six months in advance
- Anointing of the Sick: Call the office

FROM OUR PASTOR

Christ has shone upon us! Glorify Him!!! Blessed Epiphany to all!!!

Normally, this Solemnity is celebrated on January 6th, and it is actually the main Christmas celebration for most Christians throughout the world, because it celebrates the day when Jesus was revealed not just to the local people in Bethlehem, but to the whole world—represented by the magi. I hope you have taken the time to sit down with your loved ones to watch the newest episode of *Christmas With The Chosen: The Messengers* (remember... it's free!). All you have to do is download *The Chosen* app onto your phone, and then you can stream it to your TV, etc.) I also recommend watching the documentary, *The Star of Bethlehem* (available on YouTube.com or, for the written version, at www.bethlehemstar.com). In the box below is an excerpt from that website (search for *The Nine Points of Christ's Star*), to entice you to watch/read the whole NASA- and EWTN-approved research about who these magi were.

The word, "magi," which is sometimes translated "wise men," is the root from which we get our word "magic." This doesn't make them all magicians, in the present sense of the word. Some of them were learned men in general, who studied the physical world and were knowledgeable about many things, including the stars. Magi were often court astronomers who were consulted by the rulers of the day for guidance in affairs of state. This was also true in much earlier times. For example, during the Babylonian captivity of the Jews, some 500 years earlier, King Nebuchadnezzar kept a stable of court magi. Nebuchadnezzar made the Jewish prophet Daniel the Chief Magus of his court when Daniel was able to interpret a dream the other magi could not. There were magi of various schools,



and some were more respected than others. We know something of a particularly prestigious school of magi from the writings of Philo—a Jewish philosopher and contemporary of Jesus who lived in the large Jewish community of Alexandria, Egypt. Philo wrote in praise of an Eastern school of magi and their great learning and understanding of the natural world. This school may have descended from the Babylonian magi of Daniel's day. Matthew does report that the Wise Men were from the East, and Babylon is east of Judea. It was at one time part of the Persian Empire, which ties in with Philo.

So, it is possible the Wise Men were of this prestigious Eastern school. This would account for Herod giving them an audience, and for his strong reaction to the news they brought: "Where is the newborn king of the Jews?" (Matthew 2:2a). The Magi's question gives us three points for our list of qualifications for the Star. Whatever happened in the sky indicated 1) birth, 2) kingship and 3) the Jews. It also gives us a clue about the Magi. They were interested in things Jewish: "We saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him" (Matthew 2:2b). When the Wise Men said "we saw His star in the east," they didn't mean "we saw His star while we were in the East." The Greek text here says the Star was "en anatole," meaning, they saw his star rising in the east. That's what all but polar stars do, because of the rotation of the Earth. Stars rise in the east, but not all celestial objects do that. So, that's another qualification for the Star: 4) it must rise in the east like most other stars.

The motive of the Magi in coming to Jerusalem tells us a great deal more about them. They wanted to worship a Jewish king. It can't be proven from the text, but it is quite possible that some of the Magi were of Jewish descent, perhaps a Jewish remnant from Daniel's day. This would help explain why a Jewish philosopher, Philo, would admire them, why they were watching the sky for things Jewish, why they wanted to worship a Jewish King, and why they were taken so seriously by Herod and the Jewish chief priests. If they

were not Jews, then they must have been most impressive magi indeed, as Jews of the time were deeply disdainful of pagans and their beliefs: "When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him" (Matthew 2:3). You must know more to understand just how very troubled Herod and Jerusalem became at the Magi's news. Historians tell us that respect for the stars and the guidance derived from them was at a peak. Both ancient historians and the Bible make it clear that the Jews of this period expected a new Jewish ruler to arise, based upon Jewish prophecy. And it was accepted that the stars could announce such an arrival.

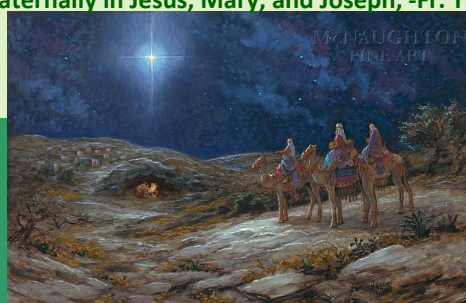


For example, about 60 years earlier, in 63 B.C., magi made a presentation to the Roman Senate. They described celestial portents indicating that a new ruler had been born. Evidently regretting that news, the Senate responded by ordering the death of baby boys in the candidate age range (6). Sound familiar? It turns out that when Herod ordered the slaughter of children in Bethlehem, he may have been following a sort of Roman precedent. That precedent may be one reason Jerusalem was troubled at the news the Wise Men brought. Perhaps they realized the Romans might shed blood in response: "When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. 'In Bethlehem in Judea,' they replied, 'for this is what the prophet has written: 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.' " Herod took the Magi's message as factual and consulted the Jewish experts about the location of the birth. The fateful verse in the Book of Micah, which is quoted to Herod by the Jewish experts, soon resulted in the death of many little boys in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:7). Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the Star had appeared. Another qualification for the Star: It appeared at an exact time. And yet another qualification: Herod didn't know when it appeared; he had to ask: "He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and make a careful search for the Child. As soon as you find Him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship Him.' After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the Star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the Child was" (Matthew 2:8).

And now we have the last three qualifications for the Star: 1) It endured over a considerable period of time. The Magi saw it, perhaps from Babylon, traveled to Judea, and saw it still. 2) It went ahead of them as they traveled from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. You might not realize that this doesn't mean the Star was needed to guide the travelers to Bethlehem. Bethlehem was (and is) just five miles south of Jerusalem on the main road. They couldn't miss it. No, the Star appears ahead of them as they trek south, not so much as a guide but as a further confirmation of the signs they had seen. Lastly, 3) The Star stopped! Can a star do that? Yes, it can, as we shall see!

Keep reading/viewing the information on the website, www.bethlehemstar.com; it gets even better!!!

Fraternally in Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, -Fr. Thomas



EVERY NATION ON EARTH ADORES HIM...



THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD: Gifts are everywhere at this time of year. Christmas gifts. Hostess gifts. Hidden gifts. Wrong-size gifts. Unexpected gifts. Unwanted gifts. Unreciprocated gifts. And in today's readings we hear about even more gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But we know intuitively (or, one hopes, eventually!) that gifts are symbols of something much deeper and less tangible. The gift of God's Son is, of course, at the heart of our Christmas festivities. We are not—never!—alone, because "God is with us" (thus the name "Emmanuel".) But wait...that's not all! The liturgy reminds us over and over that this is a "holy exchange." As Christ came to share in our humanity, we come to share in his divinity. The full significance of that mystery is a gift we have yet to unwrap completely.

WHAT KIND OF GOD IS THIS? The secular celebration of Christmas is a season of abundance. Christmas cookies and carols. Parties and presents. Mangers and mistletoe. The same is true in our Church. Within a period of nine days we celebrate Christmas, the Holy Family, Mary the Mother of God, and today the Solemnity of the Epiphany. Truly a multitude of liturgical riches—and we are not finished yet! However, for many people, Christmas is already over. Trees litter the curbside or make their way back to the attic. Presents are put away or returned. We prepare to go back to school or work. But as Christians, we have barely dipped our toes into the profound mystery of a God who walks among us. What kind of a God is this whose Kingdom is not limited by our borders, fears, expectations, or imaginations? Today's Psalm reminds us, "Lord, every nation on earth will adore you." Diversity and inclusion are not new to God's agenda.

TRADITIONS UNCOVER MEANING: Two traditional rituals, one liturgical and one domestic, help underline the meaning of the Epiphany. The Proclamation of the Date of Easter is an option for inclusion at Mass today. This text which formally announces the dates of the upcoming major feast days reminds us that Christmas is best honored in the context of the whole story of salvation that culminates in Easter. Or as writer Nathan Mitchell reflects, the wood of the crib becomes the wood of the cross. The second tradition connected to Epiphany is the blessing of the door of one's home with chalk. It includes a prayer for protection for all who enter therein. One explanation of this tradition ties it to the Passover in the Book of Exodus: the marking of the doorposts with the blood of the lamb kept the Israelites safe. This tradition too offers a connection between Christmas and Easter. As we continue to mine the richness of this season, we hum along with the angels, **Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

FLYERS IN THE CHURCH

Please do **NOT** post or remove any flyers in the church without first getting permission by the Parish Staff or by Fr Thomas. For the second time, we have had some flyers removed from the vestibule that had been posted there by Fr. Thomas. No one has the right to do this; doing this is tantamount to destruction of property and is a serious offense.

Your cooperation and respect will be much appreciated.

THEOLOGY OF THE BODY

Everyone is invited to come and learn more about St. John Paul's Theology of the Body by attending this series (facilitated by Fr. Thomas). We meet on the **SECOND** and **FOURTH** Fridays of each month from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., in the Guadalupe Courtyard of the Parish Offices. Included in the series is audio, video, and Power Point presentations, as well as discussion and prayer. You are also welcome to join us **VIA ZOOM**. The Personal Meeting ID Number is 846 381 4560 and the Passcode is yaCsG6.

JOURNEY TOWARD GOD

In our celebration of the Epiphany, two interwoven themes are present in the readings today. God is beginning something new, and God gathers all of humanity to participate. For Isaiah, God's bright light, manifested in the people of Israel, attracts and summons people from many nations to Jerusalem. In the letter to the Ephesians, God's grace makes the Gentiles co-heirs and co-partners in the Gospel. Matthew tells the story of the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel through the birth of Jesus, and simultaneously leading foreigners to share in these same promises. With the birth of Jesus, God chose a particular people, in a particular time and place, to enter most directly into the human story. Today's readings teach that God did this in order to gather all people, all cultures, into unity with God. Like the magi, we are drawn into a journey toward God, becoming co-partners in God's work.



The gifts the Wise Men bring are symbols of who Jesus is: a King who is both God and human. And I wonder what our gifts to the Lord say about our faith in Him. Remember the song about the little drummer boy, who had no gift to bring but his ability to play the drum? Or the parable of the woman who brought two small coins to donate at the temple (Mark 12:42)? They both remind us that a person who gives all they have, no matter how little it seems, is the most generous.

So, what do we bring to the newborn king? I can give my time by coming to church for the feast of Epiphany and actually paying attention. How often do I sit in the pews, answer the prayers by heart, and suddenly realize that I can't remember what the first reading was, or what the homily was about? Just making the effort to listen to the words of Scripture, to hear what God may be trying to tell me, could be a great gift. Or I could bring someone to church who doesn't go very often.

Now, let's not forget the meaning of "epiphany." In ancient times it meant the appearance or manifestation of a divine being. In the early Church the feast included the baptism of Christ (with the voice of the Father and the Spirit as a dove) and the miracle at Cana, as well as the visit of the magi. So, what we celebrate is not so much our gifts or those of the Wise Men as it is a gift from God, manifested in Jesus. Maybe a way to celebrate the Epiphany is to reflect on how God has been made known to me. Simple things, like a hug from a friend or an answered prayer, or major events like a wedding, the birth of a child, or a funeral, can all be ways to experience the Lord. The Wise Men received the gift of an epiphany by following a Star. **May the light of Christ lead you to Him also.**

FORMED: THE CATHOLIC FAITH ON DEMAND



Fr. Thomas has purchased a subscription to the Catholic media website, *FORMED*, as a gift for Our Parish. PLEASE be sure to make use of it and share it with your family. This "True Catholic" streaming service has so much to offer for Catholics of all ages, and will bring you and your family closer to our Faith.

To get started, go to our website home page and scroll down to find the logo in the center column. Click on the image and then enter your name, your email address, a password, and your zip code—and get started enjoying movies, programs, talks, audio dramas, and popular e-books—all just a link away!

Feasting on Diligence and Understanding

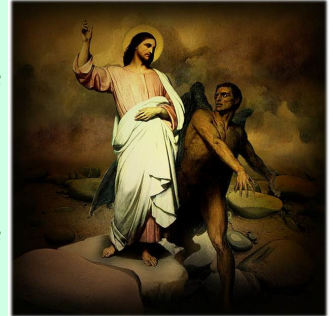
PAUSE TO HEAR GOD SPEAK:

"We are the Easter people
and hallelujah is our song."
-St. John Paul II

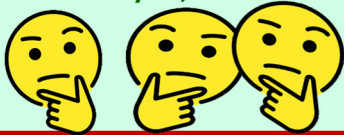
"Therefore, my beloved brothers,
be firm, steadfast, always fully
devoted to the work of the Lord,
knowing that in the Lord your labor
is not in vain." -1Corinthians 15:58

Today, I choose to feast on diligence and understanding. Diligence is the virtue that replaces sloth, understanding removes confusion. Our diligence is motivated by desire and passion for the things of God. We are excited to move forward and ready to get underway. We know where we are going and we want to get there.

In the Gospels we read of Jesus going into the wilderness. After forty days, He must have been tired, hungry, and thirsty. Because of understanding, Jesus was diligent in His resistance to Satan's temptations. Jesus understood who He was and why He was here. This allowed Him to stand firm in the face of temptation and resist the shortcuts to comfort



and power offered by the enemy. Try to get to Mass a little early next time. Settle into your seat, and offer your week to God. In your mind, place it on the altar and prepare your heart for the gifts of the liturgy. As you pray for the Lord's mercy during the Penitential Act, allow your heart to release sloth and confusion. Embrace the Good News (Gospel) of diligence and understanding that is available to you, and celebrate your restoration and healing in the Eucharist.



ASK YOURSELF...

- ◆ What is my purpose or mission?
- ◆ How does God see me?



Pray slowly... Heavenly Father, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, I accept the gifts of diligence and understanding in my life. I accept my identity as the beloved child of a gracious Father God. I thank you for my life's purpose and the strength to fulfill it. I accept your healing grace. Amen.

The above is taken from the book, *Lenten Healing*, by Ken Kniepmann—available for sale in the parish office.



FINANCIAL OFFERINGS

May God reward you for giving from your heart! Below you will find the total collection for last weekend, as well as for the previous four weekends. Note: There is a second collection on the 2ND WEEKEND OF EACH MONTH for our School.

The totals for the weekend of
December 18/19 & Christmas will be
available in the bulletin of January 9.

November 20/21.....	\$17,923.00
November 27/28.....	\$13,078.00
December 4/5.....	\$17,540.00
December 11/12	\$31,382.00

CHECK USERS: Please use a donation envelope in order to more easily credit your account.

Mass Intentions

January 1 to 8, 2022

Saturday evening:

5:00 p.m.: Christmas Novena 7

Sunday:

*7:30 a.m.: Florence Schroeder, RIP
 7:30 a.m.: Christmas Novena 8
 9:00 a.m.: Eliseo Tan, RIP
 11:00 a.m.: Angelina Brajkovich, RIP
 1:00 p.m.: Gilbert Geraks, RIP
 5:00 p.m.: Parishioners

Monday:

6:00 a.m.: Christmas Novena 9
 *7:30 a.m.: Florence Schroeder, RIP
 8:00 a.m.: Maria Elena Arando Paredes and Carmen Kelly, RIP
 7:00 p.m.: Gabby Mena, INT

Tuesday:

6:00 a.m.: Liam Cox, Birthday, INT
 *7:30 a.m.: Paul Duyet Phan, RIP
 8:00 a.m.: Boyd Johnson, RIP / In Honor of St. Jude for the Souls in Purgatory
 7:00 p.m.: Souls in Purgatory

Wednesday:

6:00 a.m.: Nathen Coyle, INT
 *7:30 a.m.: Joseph Can Kim Dang, RIP
 8:00 a.m.: Armando & Carmen Silva, INT
 7:00 p.m.: Yosef-Mari Ibarra, INT

Thursday:

6:00 a.m.: Souls in Purgatory
 *7:30 a.m.: Aurora Garcia, RIP
 8:00 a.m.: Maria Elena Arando Paredes, RIP
 7:00 p.m.: Fr. Bernard Perkins, OCD, INT

Friday:

6:00 a.m.: Ebner Sobalvarro, Jr., INT
 *7:30 a.m.: Emma Lowenberg, RIP
 8:00 a.m.: Maria Elena Arando Paredes, RIP
 7:00 p.m.: Carmina and Julius Doria, INT

Saturday Morning

*7:30 a.m.: Carmelite Community
 8:00 a.m.: Lily Edusma, Birthday INT

***Held at the Cloistered Carmelite Chapel 215 E Alhambra Rd, Alhambra**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC Mon.-Sat.

LIVE STREAMED MASSES:

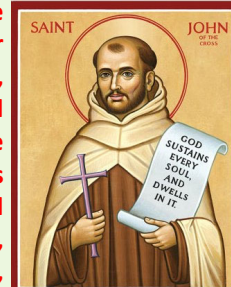
The 8:00 a.m. Daily Mass (Monday—Saturday), the 11:00 a.m. Sunday Mass, and the 7:00 p.m. weekday Masses are live streamed on Facebook AND YouTube (for those unable to attend due to illness, etc.).

Links to those two sites are on our website's home page (in the top left column).

Quiet Listening Prayer

From *The Living Flame of Love* By St. John of the Cross

Hence, persons at this time should be guided in a manner entirely contrary to the former. If, prior to this, directors suggested matter for meditation and these individuals meditated, now this matter should instead be withheld and they should not meditate. For, as I say, they are unable to do so, even though they may want to; and were they to try, they would be distracted instead of recollected. If previously they sought satisfaction, love, and devotion, and found it, now they should neither desire nor seek it; for not only do they fail to procure it through their own diligence but, on the contrary, they procure dryness. Through the activity they desire to carry on with the senses, they divert themselves from the peaceful and quiet good secretly being given to their spirit. In losing one good they do not gain the other, for these goods are no longer accorded through the senses as before.



Therefore, directors should not impose meditation on persons in this state, nor should they oblige them to make acts or strive for satisfaction and fervor. Such activity would place an obstacle in the path of the principal agent who, as I say, is God, who secretly and quietly inserts in the soul loving wisdom and knowledge, without specified acts; although sometimes He makes specific ones in the soul for a certain length of time.

Thus, individuals also should proceed only with a loving attention to God, without making specific acts. They should conduct themselves passively, as we have said, without efforts of their own but with the simple, loving awareness, as when opening one's eyes with loving attention. (Stanza 3, No. 33)

Deaths

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

† Marietta Okamoto
 (Marietta took care of the Religious Goods counter for many years)

† Alicia Nava

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