

Epiphany of the Lord
January 05, 2025

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER



CATHOLIC CHURCH

1120 MYRTLE WALK
BATON ROUGE, LA 70802

Rev. Ugochukwu Henry Ihuoma, SSJ
Pastor

stfrancisexavierbr.org

PARISH OFFICE:

MRS. MARVA KADOR WILLIAMS ~ SECRETARY

1134 JULIA STREET

BATON ROUGE, LA 70802

9:00 AM TO 3:00 PM

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SCHOOL OFFICE:

CHRISTOPHER J. ROGERS, PhD ~ PRINCIPAL

1150 SOUTH 12TH STREET

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7:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

225.387.6639 OR 225.387.6630

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MASS SCHEDULE:

SATURDAY:

SUNDAY:

TUESDAY:

WED-FRI:

HOLYDAYS:

FRIDAY:

VIGIL ~ 5:00 PM

8:00 AM & 11:00 AM

OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP NOVENA- 5:00 PM

9:00AM

9:00 AM & 6:00 PM

SCHOOL MASS 9:00AM

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM IS CELEBRATED ON THE 4TH SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH (NO BAPTISM DURING LENT). BAPTISMAL PREPARATION CLASS IS HELD ON THE THURSDAY BEFORE BAPTISM AT 6PM. THIS CLASS IS MANDATORY. PLEASE REGISTER AT LEAST ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE OF THE CLASS THROUGH THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE OR THE PARISH OFFICE.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION IS CELEBRATED ONE HALF HOUR BEFORE EACH WEEKEND MASS.

MARRIAGE LAW OF THE DIOCESE REQUIRES A SIX MONTH PREPARATION PERIOD BEFORE MARRIAGE.

COUPLES MUST ATTEND A PRE-MARRIAGE SEMINAR. IN THIS DIOCESE THERE ARE NO EVENING WEDDINGS ON SATURDAY IT IS NECESSARY TO SEE THE PRIEST BEFORE SETTING A DATE.

CARE OF THE SICK: PLEASE CALL THE PRIEST FOR THE SACRAMENT OF THE SICK AND /OR HOSPITAL VISITATION. IF THE SACRAMENT OF THE SICK IS CRITICALLY NEEDED, PLEASE CALL REV. HENRY IHUOMA'S NUMBER LISTED ABOVE OR THE CHAPLAINCY OFFICE AT THE HOSPITAL.

FUNERALS: PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE BEFORE SETTING A DATE AND A TIME FOR A FUNERAL.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES ARE EVERY SUNDAY FROM 9:30AM TO 10:30AM.

RCIA (RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION) CLASSES ON SUNDAY FROM 9:30A.M. TO 10:45A.M. PLEASE CALL THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE AT 225.343.3075

Welcome To St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Baton Rouge, LA

Welcome: You enter this Church not as a stranger, but as a guest of God. He is your heavenly Father. Come, then, with joy in your heart and thanks on your lips into His presence, offering Him your love and service. Be grateful to the strong and loyal ones who, in the name of Jesus Christ, built this place of worship, and to all who have beautified it and hallowed it with their prayers and praise. Ask His blessing on those who love His house of faith as the inspiration of their labor, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit, and may that blessing rest on you, both on your going out and your coming in.

PSR News January 2025

05 PSR Class - **The Epiphany of the Lord**

The Epiphany

Epiphany (or Theophany, as it known in the Eastern Rite Catholic Church), also known as three Kings' Day, is a Christian feast day that celebrates the revelation of God in His Son as human in Jesus Christ. The word *epiphany* comes from the Greek word meaning "manifestation." The feast also commemorates the visit of the Magi to the Christ child, and thus Jesus' physical manifestation to the Gentiles.

Typically celebrated on January 6, or the closest Sunday to that date, the feast of Epiphany allows us to truly comprehend what it means that God has brought His only Son into our world. The Wise Men – Casper, Melchior, and Balthazar were the first people outside the stable to come and pay homage to Jesus. These unlikely royal visitors showered Jesus with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, herbs typically used for burial, possibly foreshadowing Jesus' destiny.

The Magi were taking a huge risk in following the star to Bethlehem, but they trusted that God was leading them to something far greater than they could know. This is such a powerful example of how we as Christians should live our lives. Trusting that God knows what is best for us and that His plan, no matter how unattainable things might seem on the journey, will lead us to where we need to be. We should also have the strength to see Jesus in our lives in unexpected ways and when we do, worship and adore him.

The Epiphany not only signifies the calling of the chosen few, like the Wise Men, but it also is an invitation to anyone and everyone around the world to follow Christ. For the first time, God was physically present for people on Earth through His Son, no longer just a voice in the wilderness.

Jeroboam vs. "A Man of God" and Ahijah (1 Kings 13 & 14)

In the north, Jeroboam had a new, big kingdom, but he also had a problem. The presence of the Lord remained in the south, so his people continually went to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices. He feared his people would wind up back under Rehoboam's rule, so he created his own worship system in the north, erecting two golden calves for the people to worship. This didn't go well for Aaron in Exodus 32, and it doesn't go well for Jeroboam here.

He is confronted twice with the prophetic word. First, in 1 Kings 13 "a man of God" opposes him at the altar in Bethel, denouncing his idolatry and announcing the end of the northern kingdom. Jeroboam tries to buy this prophet's favor but the man of God shuts him down, refusing to disobey the word of the Lord.

Then in Kings 14, Jeroboam is opposed by Ahijah (the first prophet in 1 Kings). Jeroboam's son gets sick, so he sends his wife to Ahijah to find out what will happen. The prophet speaks on God's behalf. His son will die, but his death will be more bearable than what is about to unfold for the nation. The Lord is going to cut off Jeroboam's house because of his brazen idolatry. The prophetic word is confirmed by his son's death the minute his wife arrives home. In another showdown between a king and a prophet, the word of the prophet wins the day.

Nest issue: Ahab & His Family vs. Elijah (1 Kings 17 & 18)

PRAYER LIST

John Paul Moore * Loraine Perry * Martha Proctor * Whitney Robiho * Joyce Decuir * Patricia Armstrong

Elouise Noel * Betty Dupas * Denise Chutz * Fred Dejuan * Loretta Warren * Lorenzia Dardone * Patricia Tyson

Elizabeth Whitfield * Linda Gills-Beshears * Phyllis White * Mary E. Bourgeois * Easton Charles * Walter Gabriel

Welcome to St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Baton Rouge, LA



Through trials and tribulations, by God's grace, we triumph!

3 Ways to Give St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church

*Online Giving: www.stfrancisxavier.org *Text the word "GIVE" to (225) 396-4347
Mail: St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, 1120 Myrtle Walk Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

All online methods are safe and secured. Thank you for your generosity!

Bible Study

We will be having our Bible Study every Thursday at 6 pm at the Parish Office.

Parish Office

The Parish is opened from Monday through Friday from 9 am - 3 pm. Thank you. Happy New Year!!!

GriefShare Ministry

A GriefShare support group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. At this 13-week group, you'll receive valuable guidance and tips, leading you to relief, comfort, and peace of mind. This ministry will begin on January 22, 2025. Please contact Paulette 888-6528, Jamie 975-7577 for more information.

Is God calling you to join a ministry in our parish? Please feel free and sign up. There are applications at the back of the church for various ministries. You can meet the pastor or the ushers for further information.

COPE Workshop

Together Baton Rouge and Communities Organizing for Power Through Empathy (C.O.P.E) workshop series is gearing up for a mental health workshop at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. Communities Organizing for Power through Empathy- is a structured series of small group interactive workshops that reconnect people to each other and to their community. COPE builds skills identifying our reactions to stress and trauma, methods for supporting others, and work together to identify resources and take action.

The first session is scheduled for January 18, 2025, from 10:00am -2:00pm at the church. Adults ages 18 years old and older at Francis Xavier Community and friends who are interested can sign up at the back of the Church. A flyer is attached to the church bulletin board with the dates and more information about COPE. We'd love to have you sign up and join the discussion on managing stress, supporting others in distress, and collective community mapping. Thank you.

Upcoming Events in the Parish

*COPE workshop - Saturday, Jan. 18, 10 am - 2 pm.

*GriefShare Ministry- Wednesday, Jan 22, 6 pm.

*Ministers of the Word Workshop, - Saturday, Jan. 25, 10 am - 11 am.

Mass Intentions Jan 4-8, 2025

Saturday	5pm	Richard Campbell, Jr. <i>By: Betty and Val Lowery</i> Mass of Thanksgiving <i>By: Gail Jones</i>
Sunday	8am	Lester and Ronnie Gauthier <i>By: Mary, Danna & Edward</i>
	11am	Bridget Taylor <i>By: Family</i> Chavon D. White <i>By: Denise Williams</i> Dolores Williams <i>By: Kenny and Angela</i>

Wednesday	9am	Wilbert Jordan III <i>By: Winston, Jackson, Barbara Decuir</i>
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Thursday	9am	Isaiah Garnett <i>By: Parish</i>
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Stewardship December 2024

	<u>12/22</u>	<u>12/29</u>
Regular Collection:	\$9064.00	\$14,775.50
Online Support:	\$1040.00	\$1893.00
Parish Needs:	\$55.00	\$65.00
School Support:	\$80.00	\$180.00



Thanks for your Generosity!

Today's Readings
Isaiah 60:1-6, Ephesians 3: 2-3a, 5-6, Matthew 2: 1-12

The Epiphany of the Lord
A Gift for the Wise Men

A rather liberal priest was teasing one of the women of the parish, asking, “How do we know the Wise Men weren’t Wise Women?” She answered, “If they were, they’d have brought bottles, diapers, and a bassinet, instead of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” Maybe they were wise enough to know that Mary could have bought a lot of diapers with the gold.

The gifts, of course, 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 in our family, or a friend, who doesn’t go to church very much.

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.

Tom Schmidt