

January 07, 2018

They were Overjoyed at Seeing the Star!

Are you overjoyed right now? If not, when was the last time you felt overjoyed? Throughout the Advent Season and the Christmas Season (ending tomorrow Monday, January 8, with the celebration of the Baptism of Jesus), we have spoken about this amazing 3-letter word: **Joy!** Today, we may feel **overjoyed** like the **Magi** who followed a rising star from the East and came to adore baby Jesus, the newborn King! We, too, have been looking for Jesus. We, too, have followed the signs leading us to the stable and manger in Bethlehem! We, too, on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, have come to adore baby Jesus: We have come to have a special and personal **encounter with Him!** We, too, have come to offer ourselves to God made man, our Lord Jesus Christ. We, too, have come to offer gifts; especially gifts of **love**. Our children were radiating with **JOY** as they came to offer their hearts to baby Jesus on Christmas Eve: Jesus, You are my Joy! Jesus, I love you! Jesus, I offer you my heart!

Since our childhood, we love the arrival of the **Three Kings**. In many countries, the Feast of the **Epiphany of the Lord** is one of the major celebrations, especially for children as they receive Christmas gifts on January 6 (as opposed to December 25) brought to them by the **Magi**. Epiphany in Greek means Manifestation. Today, we are celebrating that major manifestation of **God**, the one which transformed the whole world forever! While God was already recognized by the shepherds at Christmas, the arrival of the Three Kings in Bethlehem takes a world-wide dimension. The first ones to come and adore Jesus, the shepherds were all from Israel: the chosen people of God in the Old Testament. The Magi were foreigners, they came from a distant pagan land. They fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy (which we heard in today's first reading): Rise up in splendor Jerusalem! **Your light has come!** See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; but upon you the **Lord shines...Nations walk by your light...They all gather and come to you!** (Beginning verses of Isaiah 60) **Baby Jesus is that new light!**

In chapter nine of his book, "Joy to the World" (book given to each of you at Christmas Masses), Scott Hahn gives insights on the meaning of the adoration of Jesus by Magi. He quotes St. Ephrem (page 114): "The Magi brought more to Bethlehem than the gifts in their coffers. The Magi brought themselves, as representatives of **all the Gentiles**; and the Magi brought the whole cosmos, which they had strived to understand and had mistakenly worshipped...The visit of the Magi signals the **salvation of the whole world! God had extended joy to the world, and the world responded with worship and celebration!**

As we reflect on the Magi's discovery, we may attempt to answer the following questions:

Like the Magi, which is the **star** that I am looking for?

Have I already found that star in my life?

What is my own relationship with Jesus?

When was the last time that I felt overjoyed?

What are the presents I give to GOD?

How will my **consecration to Jesus, through Mary**, help me to discover **Jesus' light** and to take away the thick clouds of darkness which cover my heart, my sinfulness, my attachment to the world's pleasures?

How will "**Walking with Mary**" help me to become an intentional disciple of Jesus?

Have I already chosen my New Year's Resolutions?

Which one of these resolutions is the most important one?

As we return to *Ordinary Time* this Tuesday, may the **Holy Spirit** help us to keep the extraordinary **joy** of the Christmas Season in our hearts! May Mary, Mother of God, continue to lead us to Jesus! **Jesus, may we be One in You!**



*One in Christ,
Fr. Alain*

The Epiphany of the Lord

CCD Class Schedule

Our Lady Help of Christians 2017-2018 CCD Registration is open online: www.olhoc.org.

Classes begin Jan. 7/8 in the New Year

Contact **Therese Thiedeman** at 301-645-7112 or dre@olhoc.org

Parish Youth Night !

Life Teen: high school youth ministry

(Sun., 5-6:30 pm- check website)

Edge: middle school youth ministry (meets monthly)

FIAT: elementary school Faith in Action Team (meets monthly)

Attention Families!!

The next All-Youth Night (FIAT, Edge and Life Teen) will be on Jan. 28, 2018 and will begin with 4:00 PM Mass followed by fun! Bring your friends ! See the website at: olhoc.org/ym.

Mass Intentions this Week

Saturday, Jan. 6, 5:00 PM: Audrey Laplaca-Mulligan

Sunday, Jan. 7, 8:30 AM: Milton Truxon (+)

Sunday, Jan. 7, 10:00 AM: OLHOC Parishioners

Sunday, Jan. 7, 11:30 AM: Francis T. Schwab (+)

Monday, Jan. 8, 9:00 AM: Awetash Berhane (+)

Wednesday, Jan. 10 9:00 AM: Michael Sitek (+)

Mass Readings for January 14, 2018

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading - 1 Samuel 3:3b-10,19

Second Reading - 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20

Gospel - John 1:35-42

Men's Discernment Retreat

Cardinal Wuerl invites men in their 20's, 30's, or 40's who are open to a call to the priesthood to attend a discernment retreat led by priests of the Archdiocese of Washington. The retreat will be held on the weekend of Feb. 2-4, 2018, at St. John Paul II Seminary in Wash. DC. The weekend will offer time away from your daily routine and will provide an opportunity for prayer and reflection to examine God's call. There is no cost to attend. Registration is now open at www.dcpriest.org. Email vocations@adw.org with your questions.

Prayer Requests

We are asked to pray for: Larry McGraw, Audrey Laplaca-Mulligan, Cecilia Spinks, Dwi, Chantelle Angelini, Sonia Knapp, Lynn & Ronald Henrion, Liz Marcus, Ebony Jenkins, Tina Gallagher-Detwiler, Judy Studds, Vincent Argiro, Sr., Pearl Green, Graham Waldon, Linda Kelly, Barbara Tice, James Thompson, Doris Chesley, Joseph Albrittain, Ester Baraquio, Chris Goldhammer, Audrey Proctor, Fr. Robert Pittman, Brenda Dobson, and all our military and civilians serving in harm's way.

**Names will remain on our list for 3 months. Please call the parish office to re-request a name after 3 months or to remove a name when the person has regained health.*

OUR LADY'S LITTLE CHRISTIANS

<http://www.olhoc.org/preschool.html>

- Please call 301-645-7112 or email : preschool@olhoc.org for information.

English/French Mass in the New Year!

Our monthly French Mass has taken root and is scheduled every week beginning this Sunday, January 7, at 1:00 PM in a bilingual setting.

Community Outreach

The next **Shepherd's Table Dinner** will be held on **Thursday, January 18, 2018 at Good Shepherd Church.**

Volunteers go to: www.olhoc.org and click on the Community Outreach link.

Come join us at our next Outreach Committee Meeting to be held on February 7, at 7 pm in our social hall. **New members and ideas are welcome!**

Sharing Sunday

Sharing Sunday is the first Sunday of the month. Items may be left in the Social Hall in boxes marked 'Food Donations'.

Upcoming Youth Events

We still have spots available for the March for Life, Mount 2000 in Emmittsburg, Steubenville Youth Conference and many more events! For more info, visit www.olhoc.com/ym or contact Marlen at : marlen@olhoc.org.

RCIA Invitation

We meet on Wednesdays from 7:00-9:00 PM. Come and join us! If interested call the office (301-645-7112) or email deacon@olhoc.org. Classes in Spanish are on Sundays at 5:00 PM Domingo a las cinco de la tarde. Salon #105.

Upcoming Child Protection Classes

Upcoming sessions of "Protecting God's Children for Adults" are for those who need to become Virtus Compliant (Adults wishing to volunteer in any capacity while children are present). Go to VIRTUS.org to register. Call Nieda or Therese with questions at 301-645-7112.

Poinsettia Pick-Up

Contributors of the Memorial Poinsettias may pick up their flowers after the 9:00 AM Mass on Tuesday, January 9.