



CHURCH OF THE SACRED HEART

# Christmas Season Schedule

## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8

SATURDAY VIGIL: 5:00PM

SUNDAY - 9:00AM & 11:30AM

*The Children's "Procession of Stars"  
begins Sunday at 8:50AM*

## THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

MONDAY, JANUARY 9 - 7:00PM

## EL SANTO NIÑO

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21 - 12:00PM



20 + C + M + B + 17

**THE TRADITIONAL EPIPHANY HOUSE BLESSING** is a prayer that every Catholic can share. It can be a fun, family, faith activity! Blessed chalk is available at Church.

Use it to write the above inscription over the main (inside) entrance of your house. The numbers of the new year 20 and 17 are the beginning and end. The initials of the Magi are included C, M, B — Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. They may also represent the Latin words "*Christus mansionem benedicat*," "**May Christ bless the house.**" Four + crosses separate the letters and numerals.



Gather the family and pray the above words with the Sign of the Cross, and the Lord's Prayer as you write the inscription with the blessed chalk. You may choose to light a candle and read aloud a scripture passage from the Bible. Invite those present to share something of what they heard in scripture. Include your own special prayer of petition for family members and their needs. May all who enter your home may receive and share the blessing of Christ.



## 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

Christians have always kept Christmas as a season from December 25 until January 6 (the traditional date of Epiphany). The church calendar today even extends the celebration until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord - the Sunday after Epiphany. More than just "Jesus' birthday," the Christmas season is a time for remembering and reveling in the nativity of Christ, the revelation of Christ to the Jewish shepherds, the revelation of Christ to the Gentile magi (that's us!), Christ's baptism by John in the Jordan, and Christ changing water into wine at the wedding "on the third day" (John 2:1) in Cana of Galilee. In all these saving events, we know that "the Word is made flesh and dwells among us." How can we keep Christmas not just as a day, but as a season? Keep the tree up and shining bright until the Baptism of the Lord. Sing carols and read the scriptures every day. And...you can still send those belated Christmas cards out, because after all, it is still the SEASON of Christmas!

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## A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?

### *One Church, One Parish, One Family in Christ*

My parish is composed of people like me.  
I help make it what it is. It will be friendly, if I am.  
It will be holy, if I am.

Its pews will be filled, if I help fill them.  
It will be prayerful, if I pray.  
It will make generous gifts to many causes,  
if I am a generous giver.

It will bring others into its worship, if I invite them  
and bring them in.

It will be a parish of loyalty and love,  
of fearlessness and faith, of compassion,  
charity and mercy, if I, who make it what it is,  
am filled with these same things.

**Therefore, with the help of God, I now dedicate myself  
to the task of being all the things  
that I want my parish to be.**

**AMEN.**

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS CATHOLIC CITIZENSHIP  
ESSAY CONTEST WINNER ANNOUNCED**

The Knights of Columbus, South Plainfield Council, #6203, awarded the first place prize for their annual Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest to Mikayla Thompson. The topic was, **"The Importance of Religious Freedom."** Mikayla was presented with a \$50.00 check from the Knights of Columbus who sponsored the contest at December 6 meeting. After receiving the top prize, Mikayla read her essay to the Knights at the meeting and received a very hearty applause.



From left to right: Fr. John Alvarado, Knights of Columbus Chaplain and pastor at Church of the Sacred Heart, Mrs. Thompson, winner Mikayla Thompson, Knights Family Director Tom Walsh and Grand Knight Joe McGeehan .

The contest judging was done by Knights, Tom Walsh, Family Director, Joe McGeehan, Grand Knight and Charlie Butrico, Treasurer of South Plainfield Council #6203. A special thanks goes out to Religious Education Director, Louise Timko and Parish Center Office Administrator, Lisa Thompson for their help with getting the word out throughout our parish.

Our next contest will be coming up in the Spring which is the annual Substance Abuse Awareness Poster Contest. We encourage our South Plainfield youth to enter the poster contest. Prize money will be awarded. More info to follow in the coming months.



**The Knights of Columbus** is an international Catholic family fraternal service organization with 1.9 million members in over 14,500 local councils. Last year, Knights and their families donated 73.5 million volunteer hours and \$175 million to charitable and benevolent causes, sponsoring projects to benefit their Church, councils, communities, Culture of Life, families and young people.

**HISTORY OF OUR DIOCESE'S BEGINNINGS**

On November 19, the Diocese of Metuchen celebrated the 35th Anniversary of its founding by Pope St. John Paul II. Msgr. John Szymanski, who served then-Bishop McCarrick as chancellor and, later, as vicar general in the early years of the Diocese, has written a history of how the Diocese came to be established and a chronicle of its first five years. Entitled, *The Lighting of the Watch Fires*, it is available for purchase for \$25. Send your check to: Rev. Msgr. John B. Szymanski, The Maria Regina Residence, 5 Dellwood Lane, Somerset, New Jersey 08873.



THE DIOCESE OF  
*Santa Rosa de Lima*  
GUATEMALA, CENTRAL AMERICA

is our sister diocese in a relationship initially forged by Catholic Relief Services, International nearly 10 years ago.

We pray for one another and remember at Mass Bishop Bernabe de Jesús Sagastume of Santa Rosa.

If you are interested in where we are in our relationships and missionary effort, google the

**Catholic Charities Solidarity Team of the Diocese of Metuchen**

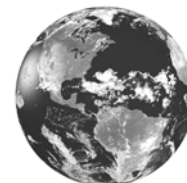
**WHOLE COMMUNITY CATECHESIS AND THE  
CHRISTMAS MASS**

The 5:00PM Vigil Mass for the Nativity of the Lord saw the sanctuary filled with many colorful faces represented by the girls and boys of our Religious Ed Program. *The Genealogy* from the beginning at St. Matthew's Gospel was proclaimed giving us the "Birth Announcement" of Jesus and the members of His Family Tree. This lineage has also been depicted on the Jesse Tree located in the church throughout Advent & Christmas. The December session of WCC centered on prayer, instruction and sharing on *Advent* and *The Liturgical Year*. The family table-activity had parents and their children creating masks for *The Genealogy* naming the members of the Family Tree that would also appear during the gospel and Fr. John's homily on Christmas Eve. It is rare for women's names to appear in an ancient Mid-Eastern genealogy. 5 women are mentioned ... 4 by name, the fifth whose name is unspoken, would unlock the dark sin of her husband, David the King. Do you know her name?



**PAPAL QUOTE AND CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING**

**THEME 6: Care for God's Creation:** We show our respect for the Creator by our *stewardship of creation*. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan, it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.



"I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all. ... Regrettably, many efforts to seek concrete solutions to the environmental crisis have proved ineffective, not only because of powerful opposition but also because of a more general lack of interest. Obstructionist attitudes, even on the part of believers, can range from denial of the problem to indifference, nonchalant resignation or blind confidence in technical solutions. We require a new and universal solidarity. As the bishops of Southern Africa have stated: "Everyone's talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God's creation". [22] All of us can cooperate as instruments" #14, ENCYCLICAL LETTER, *Laudato Si, On Care For Our Common Home*, Pope Francis I, May 24, 2015.