

Masses For The Week**Monday - January 7**

6:30 Paul Fontana
9:00 Anne Doolan

Tuesday - January 8

6:30
9:00 Helen M. Hooper

Wednesday - January 9

6:30 Henry Way
9:00 Angelina Sciuto

Thursday - January 10

6:30 Josephine Caprio
9:00 Deceased Members of the Schweiger Family

Friday - January 11

6:30
9:00 James E. Collins

Saturday - January 12

9:00 **Multiple Intentions Announced**
5:00 Peter S. Rossello
7:00 Margaret & Anthony Speelman

Sunday - January 13

7:00 The People of the Parish
8:30 Richard Godek
10:00 Patrick Curtin
11:30 Anna Marshall
1:00 Betty Sutton
5:30 Kevin & Kameron Jacobsen

Readings For The Week

Mon. 1 John 3:22-4:6; Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25
Tues. 1 John 4:7-10; Mark 6:34-44
Wed. 1 John 4:11-18; Mark 6:
Thurs. 1 John 4:19-5:4; Luke 4:14-22a
Fri. 1 John 5:5-13; Luke 5:12-16
Sat. 1 John 5:14-21; John 3:22-30
Sun. *Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11 "Comfort, give comfort to my people." Isaiah prophesies that "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it."*

Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7 Through the grace of God's appearance, we have been saved "through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit...through Jesus Christ our Savior."

Luke 3:15-16, 21-22 When Jesus was baptized, the heavens opened and a voice said, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Our Weekly Sacrificial Gift

We will have a detailed outline of all collections for Christmas in next week's bulletin. As always, thank you all so much for your support and great generosity!

Reflection & Living Stewardship

The three kings in today's gospel traveled a great distance at considerable cost to offer their richest gifts to the Infant Jesus. How far will I go and what will I offer to do homage to this newborn King.



We are grateful this week for all stewards in our parish who bring their gifts of prayer, time, service, energy and resources to pay homage to the Infant Jesus.

Especially during this Holy Season of Christmas, please pray for the women and men in our Military and their families and friends as they selflessly protect and defend our nation against all forms of terrorism. May they be under the protection of the Holy Family now and always!

**Charismatic Prayer Group****CLEAN SLATES**

2013 is brand new. You can do whatever you want with it. This time next year, will you look back and be happy with what 2013 was like for you?



It can all begin on Monday January 7th in the Church. When God's in your life, the possibilities are endless. Call (516) 993-9672 for any prayer requests or more information.

**Divine Mercy Novena**

**Every Friday at 2:00 p.m.
in the Eucharistic Chapel
ALL ARE WELCOME!**

St. Martin of Tours HOP Club

Winners from December 31 through January 4th will be announced in the next bulletin.

This is the homily I gave on the Third Sunday of Advent. Some parishioners asked me to put it in the bulletin. It concerns the terrible tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut. - Father Pat

Reflections on the Tragedy of Newtown, Connecticut

On Friday morning, I wrote a sermon for the Third Sunday of Advent whose theme is joy. The reason the priest wears rose colored vestments and lights the pink candle on the Advent Wreath is because this Sunday is traditionally called *Gaudete Sunday*. *Gaudete* is Latin for “rejoice.” The prophet Zephaniah tells us to “*Shout for joy because the Messiah is coming.*” St. Paul, in our second reading, speaks about a peace that surpasses all understanding, and in the Gospel we hear about John the Baptist telling the people to prepare to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. *Rejoice* is the message of this Sunday.

As Friday went on, I found it all but impossible to have any joy in my heart. I could not rejoice in any way. There was no peace in my heart, nor did there seem to be any promise of good news. Like you, like the people of Newtown, Connecticut, and like the people of our nation and the world, my heart and soul wept for what happened to the children and adults of that once peaceful community. Anyone who is a parent or grandparent, anyone who is a teacher or works with children, anyone who takes delight in the innocence of children, which is all of us, stands today in a confused, dark place with a haunting ache in our spirits. We all know we can only begin to get the slightest glimpse of the devastating horror of what a parent or spouse of a victim is experiencing from this tragedy or what a little child has seen or heard on that day. The brave teachers told the surviving children to shield their eyes from what no person should ever have to see as they rushed out of their school. It is impossible to celebrate Gaudete Sunday today. I think this is the saddest day our nation has experienced since September 11, 2001.

The first reaction we have is to cry to the heavens “*Why?*” Why does God allow such an event to take place? It is the age old question that we struggle with every time we see overwhelming tragedy. Our experience has taught us that there is no simple, satisfying answer to take away this echoing voice across our land. “*Why?*” The only comfort that I offer you and myself is that God has chosen to enter into the painful reality of humanity. That is the essence of Christmas and the Incarnation. He became like us in all things but sin. He too wept and cried and tasted the fullness of fear and agony. Although in my limited human wisdom, I can at times wish it were otherwise, God does not stop his sons and daughters from doing evil to one another. But I do believe God weeps with us. I image our God weeping with the people of families of Newtown, Connecticut as do you and I.

We want this violence in our nation to stop. We want to place blame on someone or something in addition to blaming the murderer who perpetrated this terrible evil. “*Get rid of the guns!*” is a cry heard on television. I am not an expert on gun control but I do know what a complicated question it is in terms of our second amendment. I must say that I can see no reason why any civilian ever needs an automatic weapon.

Experts will blame the violence on television, the internet and in video games. They may well be right. Do we ever know what the impact of a steady diet of viewing such material has on a person? As religious people, we raise the question about the dangers of secularization, about the efforts to seek to make our culture religious-free. There is a strong effort to remove the word God from the marketplace. Is a culture that seeks to be neutral toward all values, a culture that has no values? Who can say for sure? But I do believe this terrible moment of our history, at least for now, is not a time for blame, but rather for mourning and caring love.

In my heart, I believe there are no simple answers or solutions. We know a human being committed inhuman acts yesterday. Still, we saw our humanity at its best in the bravery of the teachers who sought to protect their students, in the immediate response of the rescue workers and police, and in the aching love of the parents that rushed to embrace their children. We saw one person do great evil, and hundreds upon hundreds of people perform loving acts. We cannot let our hearts turn cold and our souls stand in bitterness. Sinful though we are, we are made in the image of God.

What do we do? We do what we **can** do. We pray for the victims and for that suffering community. We seek to do all we can to protect our own children and families. We seek to love and hold tight to those we love. We ponder the fragility of life and seek to hold every moment we can in reverence. We promise to remember to never leave a loved one in anger or resentment. Life is too short for that. We pray to God for strength and healing and the faith to know that he is with us, that he is Emmanuel - **God with us**. We come together in support of one another. Pain is best eased when shared with others.

I find myself more and more quoting the words that were found in a Nazi concentration camp at the end of World War II:

*I believe in the sun even when it is not shining.
I believe in love even when I do not feel it.
I believe in God even when he is silent.*

Father Patrick Woods CSSR
woodscsr@aol.com
Website: smtbethpage.org

A Prayer for the Suffering People of Newtown, Connecticut

Dear Heavenly Father,

Please give your love to every family who has been crushed by this awful evil. May we as a nation and world pour love into these families with acts of kindness that will overflow into every neighborhood in this world. Father, you hate evil. Please protect us from all the hate and violence in this world. Please cause us to unite as a nation to bring healing to all injustice and to demonstrate love to every one of our neighbors. Please help us initiate a memorial of love to these victims which will honor them by our continued acts of compassion, love and justice to all people. Help us to put the needs of others first, and remove our egocentric wants and desires. I ask that you pour out your Spirit of Truth on all of us and empower us with your Love, the same Love you gave us on Christmas. Amen.

Father Patrick Woods, CSSR

Wedding Banns

No wedding announcements



*"Whatever you do for one of these,
the least of my sisters & brothers,
you did it for me."*

Happy New Year and THANK YOU for your generosity! This week the Pantry could use cookies, icing, pancake mix & syrup, canned fruit, white rice, jams/jellies, sugar, oil, mustard, catsup, tooth brushes, diapers (sizes 5 & 6) and laundry detergent.

Food Pantry:

208 Broadway, Bethpage
Monday: 9:30AM - 2:30PM
Thursday: 2:00PM - 7:00PM
Phone: (516) 931-7332

Hurricane Sandy: Rally and Concert Night**Friday, January 11, 2013****St. Bernard's Gymnasium, Levittown, NY****7:30pm - 11:00pm**

Admission: Non-perishable food items and a **suggested donation of \$5.00**. The devastation from Hurricane Sandy has reached heights never seen before on Long Island. Join together on Friday, January 11th for a night of music, prayer, community, fun and laughter.

We will have a free-will offering collection as we seek to raise money and donations for those directly impacted by the storm. We're having a Chinese Auction, 50/50 and raffles for an iPad and a 3 day/2 night weekend on Dune Road in the Hamptons!

Any questions, e-mail msherdan@drvc.org.

Please RSVP Mike Rodgers at

StBernardsYouth@aol.com by January 9th
if you plan on attending!



Week of January 6-12, 2013

Altar Bread & Wine

*In Loving Memory of
Rocco Luigi LoScalzo*

Please pray for the sick of our parish:

*Fr. Brendan Greany C.Ss.R., Fr. Tom Siconolfi CSsR
Fr. James Small CSsR, Helena Carroll, Pat Pedone
Vincent Valenti, Ledwin Mason, Leevalli Annearosa,
Fran Pignataro, Skylar Vega, Catherine Dalessio
Leigh Murphy, Helena Mulligan, Richard Piernini
John Tortorice, Joseph Simon, Douglas Torres
Patricia Hall, James Robertson, Amy Hayes
Mom & Dad, Gina Cava, Helena Mulligan, Bill Kelly
Salvatore Milo, Jr., Matthew Messina, Anne Cramer
William John Staudt, Jimmy Stiffa
Christopher Gratton, Sharon Shiepk*

Baptism Companions

St. Martin of Tours Baptism Program is in need!



Volunteers called "**Companions**" are at the heart of this program. They are the people who reach out to these families with the newborn babies. They guide and journey with them through the Gathering, Baptism, and Reflection.

Our parish has many young families with young children and in order to reach out to these families, we need more Companions. **If you think that you may be interested in this ministry, please call Deacon Gene Capobianco at 516-933-4690.**

**HOLY FACE OF JESUS
HOLY HOUR**

Come and experience this devotion to our Savior. It will be on **Monday, January 7th at 1:00 p.m. in the Church** in reparation for blasphemy and the Wounds to His Holy Face. All will be blessed with St. Faustina oil.

Rest in Peace

Acts 7:49: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Jane Brindisi, Donna Melkum

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Youth Ministry's Adoration Service: January 8
- Life Teen Information Meeting: January 9
- Mass for St. Vincent de Paul 7PM: January 9
- Life Line Screening: January 11
- Padre Pio 7PM: January 15
- Cub Scouts Fun & Faith Day: January 17
- Reconciliation Practice 6 & 7:15PM: Jan. 23
- Reconciliation Service 11 & 1:00: January 26
- Defensive Driving Course: January 26
- Reconciliation Practice 6 & 7:15: January 30
- Reconciliation Service 11 & 1:00 February 2

FOR THE PROTECTION AND SAFETY OF OUR CHILDREN

Please note that while school is in session, the Religious Education Department will lock both gates leading to the school parking lot on the following days and times:

Monday and Tuesday
3:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Saturday
8:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Please park outside the gates during these days and times.

GLUTEN, PEANUT & DAIRY FREE HOSTS

St. Martin's always has a supply of hosts available for anyone who is allergy-sensitive to these types of foods. Please seek out the sacristan *before mass* so that the priest is prepared to include it for consecration. Please be sure to follow this procedure every time you attend mass.

POSITION WANTED: Nurses needed part time for day and evening shift. Practice your skills in an atmosphere conducive to providing quality care together with the Little Sisters of the Poor at Queen of Peace Residence. Must have long term care experience.

Fax resume 718-464-4308

The Catholic Counseling Center

12 Ryder Court
Dix Hills NY 11746

Professional therapy, provided by NYS licensed therapists, is available to our parish and 147 other parishes. This program, under the direction of George A. Giuliani, PhD, Director/ Psychologist, is provided by the Catholic Counseling Center which is independent of and not controlled or supervised by the parish or the diocese. Most insurance policies, including Medicare, are honored.

Confidential information and appointments are available by calling Dr. Giuliani at 631-243-2503.

You may visit his website at
<http://thecatholiccounselingcenter.com>.

Life Line Screening

Life Line Screening is partnering with St. Martin of Tours in an effort to help save lives on **Friday, January 11, 2013 in St. Alphonsus Hall**. It is our mission to help bring awareness to vascular disease by offering to host a preventative stroke/vascular screening event. We are pleased to offer St. Martin's a \$10 donation for every member of the parish that signs up and attends this event.

Please sign up by calling the special Helping Hands registration number (1-800 324-9458). The first appointment is 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.



St. Martin's Life Teen program is for all high school aged teens (9th-12th grade). Life Teen gathers every Sunday for the 5:30pm Youth Mass and every Sunday night from 7-8:30pm in the Youth Center (room 107 of the school) for our Life Nights. Each week we gather to grow in faith and friendship with Christ & each other. Check out our parish website for a calendar of events at www.smtbethpage.org or contact Erin at EKHoran@yahoo.com.



The Edge program is for all middle school aged student (6th-8th grade). Edge meets every other Thursday evening from 7-8:30pm. This program is a wonderful way for young adolescents to grow in their faith as well as build lasting friendships.



Parent Life is designed to give parents an opportunity to support their parish ministry programs while strengthening their own relationship with Christ and His Church. Parent Life meets once a month on Sundays following the 5:30pm Mass in the school building. **All parents and adults are welcome!**

ATTENTION CUB SCOUTS



Attend the CUB SCOUT FUN AND FAITH DAY on Saturday, January 17, 2013 at Saint Ignatius Loyola Gymnasium in Hicksville. A special day of prayer, song, games and a craft are planned. Cubs, Dens, Packs are welcome.

For further information contact the Catholic Scouting Office: (516) 678-5800 ext. 245 or scouting@drvc.org.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

The Life Teen Youth Ministry has Eucharistic Adoration with Benediction every 2nd Tuesday of the month beginning at 7:00 PM in the Church. Our next service is Tuesday, January 8th.



We fervently hope that you come and join us in prayer and adoration of our Risen Lord. The music and praise that are lifted up to Christ will bring you to a place of peace and hope. Everyone is welcome!

"It is not to remain in a golden ciborium that He comes down each day from Heaven, but to find another Heaven, the Heaven of our soul in which He takes delight."
- Saint Theresé of Lisieux

DRIVER EDUCATION CONSULTANTS Martin Z. Hirschfield, Executive Director St. Martin of Tours is hosting a 6-hour Class 1 Defensive Driving course

Cost: \$45.00 per person
Saturday, January 26, 2013
from 8:30AM—3:00PM

St. Alphonsus Hall
38 Seaman Avenue, Bethpage

REGISTRATION:
call Driver Education at (631) 360-9720
Monday-Friday 9AM to 4PM.

Minimum enrollment: 15 people
Maximum enrollment: 40 people

Camp Veritas

2013

August 11-17th

Camp Lakota- Wurtsboro, NY



Tired of the same old summer vacation?...

Check out Camp Veritas:

GoKarting, Dodgeball, Holy Mass,
Kayaking, Baseball, Adoration, Rock
Climbing, Swimming, Reconciliation,
Hiking & much more!

Informational
Meeting

January 9th

7pm

Youth Center

(rm. 107 of the school)

EKHoran@yahoo.com

www.campveritas.com



RESPECT LIFE COMMITTEE**MARCH FOR LIFE, WASHINGTON D.C. - JANUARY 25, 2013**

Come to Washington D.C. for the 40th anniversary of Roe vs Wade and join us to witness to life. "The birth of every child changes the world. Let every child be born for a better world." Next week there will be a list of busses leaving from local parishes and also the schedule of busses leaving from the Diocese of Rockville Centre. Please look for a poster in the gathering area with the schedules.

OUR MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

"THIS MONTH, we observe the 40th anniversary of the infamous Roe v. Wade decision. Forty years after the Supreme Court handed down its decision, most Americans consider abortion to be morally wrong, and a large majority wants significant restrictions on its availability.

The fundamental ruling of Roe V. Wade rests upon a falsehood, namely that we cannot tell when the life of a human being begins. Today, we know beyond doubt that a child in the womb is precisely that.....A Child!"

Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson: K OF C Columbia mag.

"Today's technology enables us to see and know so much more about the gestation of a child in the womb. We can detect the unborn baby's brain waves, trace the development of genetic code and know when the baby can feel pain. The ultrasound machines that the Knights of Columbus have sponsored in so many places help expectant parents see for themselves the humanity of their tiny children waiting to be born. In other words, technology confirms what reason has always taught us - the unborn baby is a human being!" -**Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori Knights of Columbus**

Cardinal John Joseph O'Connor (1920 - 2000). Chosen **CATHOLIC MAN OF THE MONTH** - Knights of Columbus: Born in 1920 he entered St. Charles Borromeo Seminary at age 16. Was ordained to the priesthood in 1945. He served as a diocesan priest until 1952 then became a military chaplain. He joined the Navy as a Korean War chaplain, rising to rank of rear admiral and chief of chaplains of the U.S. Navy. 1979 appointed auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA. He was elevated to the College of Cardinals in 1985. After visiting Dachau concentration camp, Cardinal O'Connor vowed to do everything he could to protect and promote the sacredness of human life. He became a leading voice within the Church on various human rights issues, especially abortion. In 1991 he founded a new religious community, the Sisters of Life. It was he who suggested that the Knights of Columbus erect memorials to the unborn to raise awareness of pro-life issues. Hundreds of these memorials were erected around the world between 1995 and 2001. Re: Columbia. If you were lucky enough to see Cardinal John Joseph O'Connor standing on the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan on St. Patrick's Day or any given day....you were lucky enough!

FOR HELP IN A CRISIS PREGNANCY

Call Diana Mirando
(C)830-5077 (H) 605-1979

**ROSELINE, LIFE CENTER 24 HOURS,
RACHEL'S VINEYARD RETREAT
(631) 243-2373.**

**Baby Safe Haven, Safe Babies, Safe Place
at 1(877) 796-HOPE. Adoption, Foster
Care, Maternity Services, Catholic Home
Bureau 1(800) 592-4357.**

PASTOR'S PLACE: ON THE WEB

Please go to www.smtbethpage.org and click on **Pastor's Place** in the upper right of the home page. There is a Christmas Day column by Maureen Dowd of *The New York Times*. Miss Dowd wrote much of her column about Father Kevin O'Neil, CSSR. Father O'Neil is a very dear friend of mine and will be coming to St. Martin's to give a mission. I found what he had to say very moving and helpful. For those of you who may not have access to a computer, you can come by the rectory and ask for a copy.

Father Pat, CSSR


Central Nassau Guidance & Counseling Services Inc.

950 S. Oyster Bay Rd, Hicksville, NY 11801

Tel. (516) 822-6111 x 267

Fax (516) 342- 2496

Helping You Recover From the Hurricane: Project HOPE

Project HOPE helps you move forward by offering free & confidential support that assists you and your families understand the emotional & physical reactions to the impact of Hurricane Sandy.

How we help:

- Group/ Individual Crisis Counseling
- Informational/ Educational Support
- Group Crisis Counseling
- Public Education
- Community Networking & Support
- Resource Linkage
- Assessment
- Referral

We are here for you and we will be in your community for the next year. We are available and are eager to assist our neighbors in any way possible to ease the burden left behind by Hurricane Sandy.

St. Joseph Renewal Center Schedule of Retreats and Presentations

Tuesday: January 8, 2013 – 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon/Women's Spiritual Gathering. Presenters: Tina Cafaro and Joan Vessio/Offering: \$15.00

Saturday: January 12, 2013 – 8:00 to 9:30 a.m.

Men's Spiritual Gathering. Presenters: Michael Dunne and participants from the gathering/Offering: \$20.00 includes breakfast.

Weekend of January 19 – 20, 2013 at 9 am

Saturday to Sunday after lunch

Men & Women's Overnight Retreat "Anger and Forgiveness"/Presenters: Jean Lynch, MS and Josephine Daspro, CSJ, D. Min./Offering: \$85.00 includes accommodations

Weekend of February 1 – 3, 2013 – Friday 4 pm – Sunday after lunch/Men & Women's Spirituality Retreat "Our One Great Act of Fidelity"/(Interfaith Christian Retreat)/Presenters: Doreen Beitter, Owen & Helen Farley, Josephine Daspro, CSJ/Offering: \$180.00 includes accommodations

All programs are held at St. Joseph Renewal Center, 1725 Brentwood Road, Brentwood, NY 11717 – or call for reservations 631-273-1187 x 123.

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

155 W. Roe Blvd, Patchogue NY 11772

The Institute for the Study of Religion in Community Life of St. Joseph's College series on *Vatican II Revisited: Perspectives from Fifty Years Later* continues on Thursday, January 31st at 7:30 p.m. in the McGann Conference Room on the Patchogue campus. Msgr. John Strykowski, S.T.D., Rector of the Cathedral Basilica of St. James, will be speaking on *Vatican II: Is It Finished?* No R.S.V.P. is required. This talk is free and open to the public. For further information, contact the Institute for the Study of Religion in Community Life at (631) 687-2689.

Letter from the Pastor

During my Christmas vacation, I went with my nephew to see the movie *Jack Reacher*. I had ordered the tickets online so I went right to the ticket machine in the lobby of the theatre, but I was having a hard time since my credit card did not seem to register. A New York City police officer came over to me. I was surprised to see a cop in a theatre but I guess that is the world of violence that we live in today. He said, "I want to show you something," and he opened his cell phone to show me a picture he had. "Oh no," I thought to myself, the police must have some kind of magical electronic tracker that must have caught me speeding or rolling through a stop sign. Instead, he showed me a picture he had of an original *Rudy* Notre Dame jacket of which he was very proud. I had my Notre Dame jacket on. We started talking about the big championship game on January 7, other games we had seen, and a trip to the campus that we had made. It was a delightful conversation, especially after thinking that I might be a contestant for *America's Most Wanted*. He saw my struggle with the machine and just waved me without my ticket. Full disclosure: I had already been charged for the ticket so there was no theft of service lest you be disappointed in the moral life of your pastor. It was a simple moment, but for me a moment of grace.

On Christmas Day, I read that the police officers of nearby Connecticut banded together to make sure that all the police officers of Newtown would not have to work on Christmas Day. These officers from other towns wanted to make sure that the police personnel, after all they had been through over the past weeks, could have Christmas Day with their families. Another story of grace.

I was having dinner with my family and Sean, the four year, when I asked him (teasingly) if I could have the last marshmallow on the sweet potatoes on his plate. He spelled out the word N-O. I was impressed. I asked him if he could spell yes, and he did, Y-E-S. I asked about cat and he did the same, C-A-T. I decided it was time to humble him so I asked him if he could spell Rutherford. He said, N-O. Everyone laughed since Sean had gotten the better of his harassing great-uncle. Another moment of grace.

All three of these moments are simple and ordinary. Unless I pause a bit, they would often go unnoticed and I could easily miss them. They were encounters that touched me in a very gentle way with the goodness of life and its preciousness. I thought of these moments as I think about the Feast of the Epiphany. The word *epiphany* means *manifestation*-to see something that you had not seen before. The great Irish writer, James Joyce, speaks about *epiphanies* as those times in your life when you see something in your past or your present in a new way - a kind of truth or insight breaks into your life that you had not seen before. Perhaps when you became a parent for the first time, and as you raised your child, you had *epiphanies* about your own childhood and how your parents raised you. Having a child of your own led you to see the actions of your parents in a new light. Sometimes we reflect on a conversation we had with someone an hour ago, or maybe ten years ago, and suddenly understand it in a way we never had before. Oftentimes, when we experience the loss of a loved one, we begin to understand and see their lives in new way long after they have gone home to God. I believe we all have epiphanies if we are attentive and reflective about our lives.

The wise men who come to visit Jesus studied the stars. They see one that they had never seen before and they follow it to Bethlehem and the newborn King with their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. God manifests himself to them in a star and in a baby in a manger. These wise men were from the East; they were not Jewish. The feast of the Epiphany is a powerful lesson in the truth that God has come to save all people. We are all God's chosen people - Jew and Gentile alike. God is always manifesting himself to us.

I began this letter with three simple stories of grace. I know that some parishioners are in difficult situations in their lives and it is not so easy to see God manifesting himself. They may be mourning the death of a loved one, dealing with a serious illness, having a serious struggle with their finances, struggling with a member of their family, or just feeling the post-Christmas blues. The wise man saw a star shining; you may feel there is only a dark night. I have no profound counsel to offer other than I believe God is with you in the darkness. He is Emmanuel-God with us. Sometimes suffering can be a place where God can show himself in a surprising way.

May this be a year when all of us have many *epiphanies*, a year we can see the workings of God in our lives and in the lives of others. Jesus is not only in stable in Bethlehem. We live and move and have our being in God.

Father Pat, CSSR
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