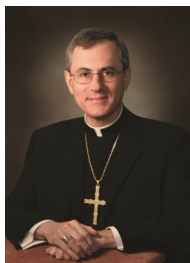


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EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

JANUARY 3, 2021



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Bishop of London

PARISH STAFF

Fr. Jim Mockler, *Rector*
ext. 228 • jmockler@dol.ca

Fr. Peter Amszej, *Parochial Vicar*
ext. 224 • pamszej@dol.ca

Deacon Len Hughes
ext. 223 • lhughes@dol.ca

Deacon Rudy Pflanzner
ext. 227 • rpflanzner@dol.ca

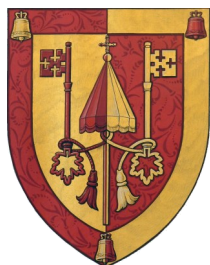
Cathryn Hall, *Pastoral Minister*
ext. 225 • chall@dol.ca

Brian Galea, *Business Manager*
ext. 226 • bgalea@dol.ca

RoseMary Cleary, *Financial Secretary*
ext. 222 • rcleary@dol.ca

Vianca Kmet, *Receptionist/Secretary*
ext. 221 • vkmet@dol.ca

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King Herod and the Wise Men-The Christmas Challenge

"The Christmas story is surely one of the greatest stories ever told. Inside its great narrative there are multiple mini-narratives, each of which comes laden with its own archetypal symbols. One of these mini-narratives, rich in archetypal imagery, is the story of King Herod and the wise men.

We are all familiar with this story since it has been much celebrated in song, icon, and legend. Jesus is born inside of a religious tradition, Judaism, and his birth is announced to that faith-community in a manner that befits religion, namely, by the angels, by supernatural revelation. But those outside of that faith-tradition need another way to get to know of his birth, and so his birth is announced to them through nature, astrology, through the stars. The wise men see a special star appear in the sky and begin to follow it, not knowing exactly to where or to what it will lead. They meet King Herod who, upon learning that a new king has supposedly been born, has his own evil interest in matter. He asks the wise men to find the child and bring him back information so that he, too, can go and worship the newborn. We know the rest of story:

The wise men follow the star, find the new king, and, upon seeing him, place their gifts at his feet. What happens to them afterwards? We do not know what happened to them afterwards and that is exactly the point. Their slipping away into anonymity is a crucial part of their gift. The idea is that they now disappear because they can now disappear. They have placed their gifts at the feet of the young king and can now leave everything safely in his hands. His star has eclipsed theirs. Far from fighting for their former place, they now happily cede it to him.

And Herod, how much to the contrary! The news that a new king has been born threatens him at his core since he is himself a king. The glory and light that will now shine upon the new king will no longer shine on him. So what is his reaction? Far from laying his resources at the feet of the new king, he sets out to kill him. But the real point is the contrast between the wise men and Herod: The former see new life as promise and they bless it; the latter sees new life as threat and he curses it.

This is a rich story with a powerful challenge: Can I, like the wise men, lay my gifts at the feet of the young and move towards anonymity and eventual death, content that the world is in good hands, even though those hands are not my hands? Or, like Herod, will I feel that life as a threat and I try somehow to kill it, lest its star somehow diminish my own?

To bless another person is to give away some of one's own life so that the other might be more resourced for his or her journey. Good parents do that for their children. Good teachers do that for their students, good mentors do that for their protégés, good pastors do that for their parishioners, good politicians do that for their countries, and good elders do that for the young. They give away some of their own lives to resource the other. The wise men did that for Jesus."

*Excerpt from Fr. Ronald Rolheiser, Feast of the Epiphany, 2012;
<https://ronrolheiser.com/king-herod-and-the-wise-men-a-christmas-challenge/#.X-v5zppKiRw>*

Mobile Giving at St. Peter's Cathedral

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1. Place your device in camera mode or open the QR Code Reader.
2. Hold your device over the full QR Code.
3. Your camera will scan the QR Code.



Trusting in His Love for Us

"I recently read a transcript of a radio message from Pope Pius XII, given in Rome on The Solemnity of The Apostles Peter and Paul in 1941. It was a dark period in the middle of World War II when there was great uncertainty about the outcome of the war and often very little hope. The Pope said: "The Heavenly Father continues and will continue to guide our child-like steps with firmness and tenderness, only if we allow ourselves to be led by Him and trust in the power and wisdom of His love for us." These words of this great Pope during the dark days of war, can apply very well to our lives today as we celebrate Christmas this year under the shadow of COVID-19. The reality of uncertainty, vulnerability and fear that has been part of our lives, is not the whole story because there is another reality that is also present. This reality is the experience of determination to move forward



without knowing all the answers. It has been nine months of living our faith in new ways, of reflecting on our family life, our personal lives and relationships with others and a time for building up our Christian families, our domestic church, through prayer and reflection on the Word of God. It has also been a time that has allowed us to gain a greater appreciation for

the faith of the many "hidden Christians" we do not often see at church and how an opportunity is opening up for us in rebuilding our Church in new ways with the Father's unfailing help."

Excerpt from The Most Rev. Richard Gagnon, Archbishop of Winnipeg and President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops' Christmas Message, 2020.

Click [here](#) to read Archbishop Gagnon's full message.

Parish Visitation Ministry at St. Peter's Cathedral Basilica

The Ministry of Visitation brings the support of the Cathedral community to parishioners living at home or in institutional care whose Mass attendance or involvement in parish activities is limited by illness or advancing age. The Parish Visitation Ministry serves individuals who are homebound, as well as, individuals residing at Extendicare London, Queen's Village and Maple View Terrace Retirement Residence. During these visits each volunteer visitor spends about an hour a week with the individual engaging in conversation, listening to music, doing a puzzle, reading the newspaper, a magazine article, or part of a book such as the Bible, or praying in a manner favoured by the person being visited, etc. Sometimes the volunteer visitor will bring the Eucharist if it is requested by the individual.

During this time of COVID-19, there are restrictions that are limiting our face-to-face contact with the individuals. However, many of our volunteers continue to maintain regular contact with the individuals through telephone calls and sending greeting cards filled with well wishes. These gestures have been greatly appreciated!

If you would like to be a volunteer with the Parish Visitation Ministry please contact Donna Sousa, donnasousa@bell.net.

2021 CWL Memberships

St. Peter's CWL memberships are available, please contact Jo Guth. at 519-672-7479 for further information. Reminder for those members renewing that the renewal form was inserted in your October newsletter, please complete and submit to the Parish Office.

Christmas Flowers

Thank you to all who made donations towards our flowers for our Christmas celebrations in memory of and for the intentions of loved ones and friends. Though their time in our worship space was shortened due to our closure, our volunteers delivered them to Maple View Terrace Retirement Residence, St. Joseph's Hospice, and the Sisters of the Precious Blood Monastery to be enjoyed for the remainder of the Christmas Season.

THANK YOU to our Volunteers

Since our re-opening in July, over 70 volunteers have come forward to assist in our re-opening efforts. A huge thank-you to all of them for their time, dedication, and commitment to safely open our doors each weekend for our parishioners as well as our other celebrations of Baptism, 1st Communion, Weddings, and Funerals. We could not have done any of this without them!

Continuing the Christmas Season at Home

As we celebrate the Christmas Season at home this year, we can continue to explore our faith through various resources available to you and your family. Here are just a few (click on the underlined webpage):

[Creighton University Online Ministries](#)

[Sacred Space](#)

[Seeds of Faith Blog \(Novalis\)](#)

[The Kids Bulletin](#)



From the Desk of the Rector

A new year has arrived and while we would like to just turn off a switch to darken the past year and put it out of our minds we can't – and we shouldn't. Bear with me a minute. Recently a post on social media reminded readers "You don't *lose* a battle with cancer. You live with dignity and grace and you die with dignity and grace." Fr. Dan Zorzi, a friend, colleague and associate at the Cathedral from 2010-2013 taught me that. He lived and served as best he could with all the strength he had for any given day. Supported by a practical faith and quiet prayer he didn't fold. Even his death was a natural part of the journey as it was time. He was an example of hope in the midst of a situation he didn't wish for or choose. Sure, there were common, understandable moments of discouragement, anxiety and anger but he owned them, embraced them and placed them before God looking for light in the darkness.

Isn't that what we are doing during this time of pandemic? We need light. We need hope. We may not easily understand or accept God's presence in this time of COVID-19 but we trust that God will take care of us and assist us in our search for a calm that comes from faith and prayer when everything else is in disarray. As a gift we have been presented with various opportunities to witness how the Spirit of God works. Communities have come together in mutual support. People have given up going on vacations, attending events and connecting in person so we can all remain

safe. We have experienced responses to the pandemic that have been creative – responses motivated by love, compassion and selfless giving. These are small but significant examples of light in the darkness. Moving forward, how can we be signs of hope in 2021? Who needs me to be that for them? Where do I need hope in my life? We may not know exactly when things will calm down but we have learned, through this crisis, that we are all interconnected. We are the people of God called to serve. We celebrate the hope brought by the birth of Jesus. While we mourn our losses and struggle through reality, we remind ourselves we are not alone. We are unconditionally loved. We are offered compassion and mercy. We can find rest. Someone accompanies us in our suffering. We are invited into a relationship with the source of hope and joy. We can look beyond the noise of the world and let the good news of Christmas inspire us to support one another in the dignity of being brothers and sisters.

We will get through these difficult times. We have already realized the importance of life, the dignity of our neighbours, the value of love. In the days ahead I'm certain we will be renewed as a community sharing hope with far more compassion and care.

So, let's move into 2021. Let's stay safe, remain open, assume goodwill, be accountable, be receptive in prayer, and enlarge our hearts.

Happy New Year!

Fr. Jim Mockler

We remember in prayer all those who are sick. We also pray for those who have died including Hugo Karrasch, husband of Masako, father and father-in-law of Mika and Kevin Flynn; and comfort those who mourn.

We pray for those serving in pastoral ministry throughout our diocese:

Rev. Canon Mitchell Kaminski; Rev. Frank Leslie; Deacon Gaston Mabaya; Deacon Gary Flewelling; Rev. Lawrence Pare; Rev. Michael O'Brien; Sister Marija Ivic; S.F.B.Z., Pastoral Minister

Come Pray With Us

Join us each Sunday for our Sunday Prayer Service online. The service invites us into the Sunday scriptures and celebrates a time of prayer, music, and reflection led by members of our Pastoral Team. The service will be available at the following [link](#) each Sunday morning.

READINGS - SUNDAY JANUARY 10, 2021

BAPTISM OF THE LORD

First Reading - Isaiah 42. 1-4, 6-7

Here is my chosen servant in whom my soul delights.

Responsorial - Ps 29. 1-2, 3ac-4, 3b+9c-10 (R. 11b)

The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Second Reading - Acts 10.34-38

The Lord anointed him with the Holy Spirit.

Gospel - Matthew 3.13-17

When Jesus had been baptized,

He saw the Spirit of God coming upon him.



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