



# ST. CATHARINE'S PARISH

*523 Western Highway  
Blauvelt, New York 10913*

*Rev. Msgr. Francis J. McAree, S.T.D.*



## NEW YEAR SPIRITUAL RESOLUTIONS

It's not too late to make your 2024 New Year Resolutions!  
Here are some wonderful *spiritual* suggestions ...

Love and honor God above all other things.

Love and honor your neighbor as yourself.

Attend Mass every Sunday, especially with your family.

Try to attend a weekday morning Mass, 6:45 or 8:30 AM.

Pray more often, every day, throughout the day.

Pray the Rosary.

Pray for the names listed in our Military Shrine.

Share your time and talent with others.

Give regularly and generously to a charity.

Forgive someone.

Ask forgiveness of someone.

Ask forgiveness from God in Confession.

Have more patience.

Remember to smile often – it goes a long way.

Comfort someone who is mourning.

Visit someone who is lonely.

Offer a ride to someone who can no longer drive.

Offer to shop for someone who can no longer get out.

Call someone you haven't spoken with in a while.

Do your best in school. Read, study, do your homework.

Read your Bible.

Tune in to EWTN and other Catholic broadcasting.

Volunteer your time on behalf of your Parish Family.

Stop by and pay a visit to Church more often.

Attend Eucharistic Adoration every First Friday.

Volunteer as a Eucharistic Minister, Lector, Usher, etc.

Join the Choir.

We have many ministries here – join one of them!

Pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Pray for the protection of all human life.

Pray for the protection of our religious freedoms.

Say “I love you” to loved ones more often.

Best wishes for a Happy and Holy New Year  
from all of us at St. Catharine's Church!

## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



The splendid Magi, all sparkle and dash and solemnity, march right up off the pages of Matthew's Gospel and into our Church today. You can almost picture them, elaborately dressed with jeweled boxes containing precious gifts.

We are invited to become part of the story of the Epiphany of the Lord – to accompany the Wise Men and to participate in the manifestation, or *epiphany*, of Jesus in Bethlehem. It is such a beautiful story filled with drama of Wise Men following a Star, traveling at night, discovering Jesus, offering gold, frankincense and myrrh to Him, worshipping Him.

The treasure each of the Magi brought to Jesus was not as precious as what they received from Him. Their encounter with the baby Jesus changed them forever. As *any* genuine encounter with the Lord will always change us in some major way!

Matthew alone tells us this grand story so that we might see the light and know that the Child these Magi visited is the fulfillment of prophecy, the King of the World that stretches to the Magi's home country and beyond, right down the ages to us.

We are asked to come away from this festive season renewed and awake to the presence of God among us. We are asked to find God where God is to be found, to be attentive and surprised and ready to bow down in adoration and to offer our gifts to Him.

The Wise Men were not of the Jewish faith, but represent all of us who are ready to follow our star in order to find the fullness of life only Jesus can give. All share in the promise. At the start of the New Year, it is an inspirational story prompting us to follow that Star throughout 2024.

*All Kings shall pay Him homage,  
all nations shall serve Him.  
— Psalm 72:11*

## PETITION OF THE WEEK

*"We saw His Star in the East and have come to worship Him." O Lord, let all those who may have lost their way, follow the beautiful guiding Star back to You ... Lord, hear our prayer.*

*The Star of Hope has to appear again, but it will come only when our hearts seek it, when there is a passion for it – a sighing, a striving, an aching for the great mercy to come.*

*Yes, the Star will return, and then it will shine not just for a few, but it will quickly spread its brilliance over the whole world.*  
– Christoph Blumhardt

*And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary His Mother, and they fell down and worshipped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. (Matthew 2:11)*

The Three Kings were fearless. They stepped out in faith, and with the promise of the prophecy they followed the Star and they encountered Heaven. *"They fell down and worshipped Him."*

These distinguished, wealthy, and educated men *fell down* at the feet of a young child and worshipped Him! Their expectations were exceeded beyond anything they could have dreamed of. The sacrifices of comfort, the lengthy separation from home, running from Herod – in an instant it was all worth it.

They were able to worship the Savior of the World.

Courage in *our own personal* journey and pursuit of God can be a hard thing. But, if we truly long for an encounter with Jesus, He will always exceed our expectations.

If we take the leap of faith and with trust and abandonment say – *"Your Will not mine,"* we can experience a glimpse of Heaven.

And, it will all be worth it.

## TODAY'S READINGS

**First Reading**

Jerusalem is extolled as a place of glory and splendor because the Lord has come to His own city. Isaiah 60:1-6

**Psalm**

Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13

**Second Reading**

Paul tells the Ephesians that his special mission is to make the Gentiles co-heirs with the Jews in Christ – "Members of the same body and sharers of the promise." Ephesians 3:2-3A, 5-6

**Gospel**

Herod learns that Wise Men from the East are searching for the newly born Christ Child. He instructs them to find the Child and to report His whereabouts to him. The Wise Men follow a star to the place where Mary and Jesus are and offer the Child gold, frankincense and myrrh. They do not return to Herod but follow another route to their own country. Matthew 2:1-12



**WHERE CAN WE FIND JESUS?**

Today we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord. We are in the depths of winter and its dark, chilly days. Yet, today, is a *feast of light*.

The word “*epiphany*” means a moment in which we suddenly see or understand something in a new or very clear way. The light has come into the darkness and revealed the essential nature of Christ.

The Magi are the prime examples of people who search for the light and for things to be revealed to them. They travelled on a long journey to get close to the baby Jesus ... and they eventually got there. They should infuse us with hope as we continue on our own journey (often long, winding and hard) to get closer to Christ.

And, what drove them to keep going? A simple question at the beginning of our Reading – “*Where is the infant King of the Jews?*” This is the question that pushed them along.

We must ask ourselves the same question in our spiritual lives – where can we find Jesus? This question helps us to look deeper into our souls and find Jesus all around us.

Just as the Star guided the Magi towards Bethlehem, so God puts people on our path to be the stars in our own lives, pointing us towards God.

These friends we have are important and we should surround ourselves with such people. They may be part of our parish congregation, our office colleagues, teachers, priests, etc. These are the stars who help us draw nearer to God.

Treasure them.

**THE FOURTH MAGI**

We all know the story of the Three Magi who journeyed to find the newborn Christ Child.

But, have you heard of the Fourth Magi named Artaban? It was arranged that he would travel and meet the other three at an appointed place and together they would follow the Star, hoping it would lead them to the Child.

As Artaban began his journey, he was immediately delayed upon encountering a man close to death on the road. He could not abandon this dying stranger and began to carefully tend to him with water and medicinal herbs since Magi were often physicians, as well as, astrologers.

This delay caused him to miss his connection and so he continued alone on his journey to find the Child.

But, Artaban’s acts of mercy continued to distract him on his search. Beginning in Egypt, and among the people, he saw in them hunger and famine, plague-stricken cities, imprisoned and enslaved. In all the great chaos of humanity, he found none to worship, but many to help.

Artaban’s compassion for others became integral to his journey to find Christ. He fed the hungry, clothed the naked, healed the sick, and comforted the captive.

It was only as he lay dying many years later that he heard a voice say, “*Inasmuch as you have done to the least of these, you have done it unto me.*”

Artaban had found Christ in death.

**THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM**

What does the Star of Bethlehem mean for us?

The Star reminds us of Jesus’ birth, of His Kingship, of His divine nature.

However, it also reminds us of something we may miss in the Christmas story.

Jesus’ birth wasn’t announced to those we would have expected. The host of angels didn’t come to the high priests or the leaders of the Jews; they appeared to shepherds (Luke 2:8-20).

Also, the Star didn’t appear to the scholars and scribes of Jerusalem. Instead, it was shown to *Gentile* Magi, outsiders who would have been scorned by devout Jews..

The Father announced His Son’s birth to the most unlikely candidates, showing His love for *all* of humanity, His desire for *all* to know Him.

The Star reminds us that the Gospel isn’t just for the religious. It is for everyone, and we have the honor, the joy, and the sacred duty to share it.

**FINDING YOUR BIBLE “LIFE VERSE”**

What is a Life Verse? Simply put, a “life verse” is a Bible verse, or even a small passage of inspirational Scripture, that speaks to your heart directly.

It’s one of those verses that you feel was written just for you and jumps off the page whenever you read it. It may be a guiding force for you over the years, giving you hope and strength during tough times.

Have you ever wondered about your own life verse? Here are five steps to help you choose.

**1. Write Down Your Favorite Bible Verses**

Start a list of options for your personal Bible verse. Think about verses that have encouraged you in the past, or ones that you have been drawn to during stormy times. Here are a few favorite Bible verses that come to mind:

*“For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.”* Philippians 4:13

*“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”* John 14:6

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”* Jeremiah 29:11

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”* Proverbs 3:5-6

*“Be still and know that I am God.”* Psalm 46:10

**2. Reflect on the Scripture**

Ask yourself: Is this a verse that encourages me? Does this verse leave me with a sense of peace and hope whenever I read it? Can this message help guide me as I seek direction for my life?

(kindly, continue ...)

**3. Narrow Down Your Choices**


Select three or four of the Scriptures from your list and write them down. When you need encouragement, which one do you turn to first? Is there one verse in particular that really makes your heart sing?

**4. Take Your Time in His Word**

Be patient! Your life verse choice may vary depending on whatever season of life you're in. Bear in mind that any time we spend in the Word is time well spent.

**5. Ask God for His Guidance**

Finally, pray over these verses. God always has a way of pointing us to the message that we need most at any given time, a message that will have a lasting impact on our heart and decisions, that breathes new life into you. Let Him lead you through this process.




*The Altar Flowers were donated  
In Loving Memory of  
Joyce Woods*

*From  
Aunt Jane*

*The Tabernacle Candle will burn before the  
Blessed Sacrament the week of January 7*

*In Loving Memory of  
Geraldine Foley & Darren Hudson*

*From  
The Moriarty Family*



**JUST BREATHE!**

For many, the post-holiday blues can leave you feeling exhausted and in need of much-needed rest.

Whatever the holiday transition looks like to you – boxes of ornaments to put away, heading back to school or work – try giving yourself a little time to stop, right in the middle of whatever you're doing – stand, sit, or lie still and just breathe in God's peace. Remind yourself that whatever's making your life feel hectic today, will get done eventually. It will all be ok!!

Here are 4 scriptures on rest and restoration to help guide you in the coming days ...

*Be still and know that I am God. Psalm 46:10*

*If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Romans 12-18*

*Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28*

*This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24*

**IN 2023**

St. Catharine's continues to carry on our mission and ministry. In 2023,

*We welcomed 41 precious little ones into St. Catharine's Church through the Sacrament of Baptism.*

*66 Souls were welcomed home by God. Our love, thoughts, and prayers are with their families.*

*We joined 10 happy couples in the sacred bond of Matrimony.*

*30 four year old children graduated from our Early Childhood Center and happily headed off to Kindergarten.*

*We had 46 boys and girls from our Parish Religious Education Program receive the Sacrament of First Holy Communion.*

*And, we had 41 young men and women from our Parish Religious Education Program receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.*

*"For everything there is a season  
and a time for every purpose under Heaven."  
"A time to heal"*

We pray for God's tender mercy and loving kindness upon all of our loved ones who have experienced health issues.

*Walter Cahill, Helen O'Brien, Matthew Mencher,  
Lucy Decilla, Rory Tinston, Gary Baisley, Geraldine Moloney,  
Jim Grimm, Brandon Hernandez,  
Billy Keenan, Diana Colon, Colleen Kusy, Amanda Lynch,  
Brian Domitrovits, II, Christian Perez,  
Nicholas Guiliano, Matilda Quinn, Nicholas Corbi,  
Liam Frawley, Noreen Larsen, Molly McGovern,  
Danny Newkirk, Cali Jhené Pritchard,  
Emmet Horvath, Darianna DeLise, David O'Hanlon,  
James Cunningham, Liam McLaughlin, Tom Collins,  
Rob Incognoli, Rose Cahill, Teresita Dural,  
Keira Cunningham, Gary Haley, Heather Mekkinosson,  
Jude DePalma, Gerald Spagnolo, Gabriella Larsen,  
Anne Marie Herman, Patricia Duffy, Justin Duffy,  
Fiona Moran, Carol Crane, Carol McGrath,  
Lisa Morehead, Vincent Fyfe, June Hudson, Colton Martin,  
Ed Walsh, Jacqueline Tracey, Christopher O'Brien,  
Andrew Padilla, Paulette Maurice, Jack Bermingham,  
Maureen Matthews, Margaret Brosnan, Jim Deremeik,  
Sr. Maureen Bradshaw, Peggy Finn, Ann Donohue,  
Heather Hovorka Plunkett, Edward Fitzpatrick, James Racca,  
Dr. Jose and Celia Botet, Mary Jane Knapp, Corona Balin,  
Judy Donohue, Frank Parisi, Colleen Scarry, Marion O'Leary,  
Judith Ferrara, Patrick Armstrong, Patty Neier, Anna Stellwag,  
Janet Kopac, Marjorie Tobin, Michael McManamon,  
Kevin Kearney, Neil McDermott*

*"A time to mourn"*

*Well done, good and faithful servant.  
Come and share your Master's joy.*

*John P. "Jack" Flynn, Alexander Petersen, Anne Gilroy,  
Patricia Finley, Jeanette Bonardi, Jim McLaughlin, Jean Arcieri  
John D'Andrea*

*"A time for war and a time for peace"*

Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need, and bring them home safely. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord and Savior. *Amen.*

**ST. CATHARINE'S PARISH REGISTRATION**

We respectfully request that all of our regular Mass-goers make sure they are officially registered with our Parish, use the envelope system, or *WeShare*, our online giving program, sign up for *Flocknotes*, our email communication system, and get as involved as they can in our Parish organizations, ministries, and activities.

We are always in need of volunteers to step forward and serve our Parish as Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Ushers, Choir Members, Altar Servers, PREP Catechists, CYO Coaches, etc.

Please make a resolution this New Year to become more involved in our wonderful Parish!

*One Church.*

*Many ways to serve.*

**PARISH BLOOD DRIVE**

**THIS SUNDAY, JANUARY 7<sup>th</sup>, 8:30-2:30 PM**  
**IN THE CAFETERIA**

Please join your fellow parishioners, and our co-sponsors, the St. Dominic's Knights of Columbus, in donating this gift of life to those who may be in need.

This is a very important effort as blood supply is low and demand can be high during these winter months.

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**TODAY'S SECOND COLLECTION FOR  
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will provide funding for academic scholarships at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., as well as, for the Catholic Communications Campaign.

The collection for the Catholic University of America underwrites scholarships to assist financially deserving Students in completing their education.

Through websites, social networks, television, radio, and print the Catholic Communications Campaign helps the Church spread the Gospel message through the media locally and nationally.

**MASS INTENTIONS****SATURDAY, JANUARY 6**

**5:00** Rosemary D'Andrea

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 7**

**8:00** Kathleen Lukens

**9:30** Robert Tortorello

**11:00** Carmine Piemonte – *10 Year Anniversary*

**12:30** John Vance

**4:30** Peter Fegan

**MONDAY, JANUARY 8**

**6:45** John D'Andrea

**8:30** Justine D'Zmura

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 9**

**6:45** Conrado Castro

**8:30** Sarah Anne Kivlehan

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10**

**6:45** Joseph and Muriel Greeley

**8:30** Brian Handley

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 11**

**6:45** Art Flew

**8:30** *The People of St. Catharine's Church*

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 12**

**6:45** Billy Coulter

**8:30** Carmen Duboc

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 13**

**8:30** James Tomelden – *7 Year Anniversary*

**5:00** Thomas F. Sullivan

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 14**

**8:00** John O'Looney

**9:30** Michael McManamon – *Living*

**11:00** The Scaringe Family

**12:30** Eugene Demers

**4:30** Joyce Woods





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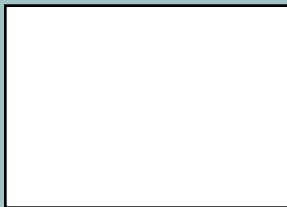
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