

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord
January 8, 2023



Saint Augustine of Hippo

Now this is proof that Christ is God, the Word and Power of God. For whereas human things cease and the fact of Christ remains, it is clear to all that the things which cease are temporary, but that He Who remains is God and very Son of God, the sole-begotten Word.

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass: (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

Weekend Masses: Saturday: 4:00pm - Sunday: 7:30am & 4:00pm

Holy day Mass Schedule: afternoon prior at 4:00pm

Holy day proper at 12 noon and 4:00pm

Confessions: First Saturday of every month at 3:30pm

Department Telephone: 508.363.6246

Chapel Website: www.ourladyofprovidence.net

MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday, January 7 *Vigil of the Epiphany of the Lord*

4:00pm For good health and God's blessings upon the Aluede family

Sunday, January 8 *Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord—Visit of the Magi*

7:30am For the particular intentions of an SVH employee

4:00pm Seeking God's assistance for various members of a particular anonymous family

Monday, January 9 *Feast of the Baptism of the Lord*

12:00nn For God's blessings & protection on the Aleude family

Tuesday, January 10 *Ordinary Time Begins — 1st Week*

12:00nn +Margaret Riggieri by the alumnae of former SVH School of Nursing

Wednesday, January 11

12:00nn For the deceased parents of priests

Thursday, January 12

12:00nn +Sr. Mary Luisa Dallari, MMX by a friend

Friday, January 13 *Saint Hilary of Poitiers, bishop & doctor* ²

12:00nn +Theresa Mckinnon by the alumnae of former SVH School of Nursing

Saturday, January 14 *Vigil of the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time*

4:00pm +Louise Granger

Sunday, January 15 *Second Sunday in Ordinary Time*

7:30am +Siu Be Go-Osirio remembering the day of birth

4:00pm +Pearl M. Beaulieu —25th anniversary—by her sons and daughters

The Key to Understanding the Day's Liturgical Significance: **Sunday** is the day that the Church celebrates the Paschal mystery—the Lord's Day—which, according to apostolic tradition, is the day of Christ's Resurrection. The Sundays of Advent, Lent, and during the Easter Season take precedence over other celebrations. **Solemnities** honor significant religious events, beliefs or saints of the greatest importance and universal in their observance that begin at Vespers (or Evening Prayer) the day before. **Feasts** must be observed, though, less important than solemnities, hence, feasts are only observed on the natural day. **Memorials** are of two types: Either the observance is an **obligatory memorial**¹ or an **optional memorial**².

Toward a Better Understanding of This Week's Gospel

In his version of the Infancy Narrative of the Lord, found in the first two chapters of Saint Matthew's Gospel, following the evangelist's account of the genealogy of Jesus (Mt 1:1-17), the subsequent material is comprised of five episodes that refer to five prophecies of the Old Testament. The episode of the Adoration of the Magi (Mt 2:1-12), which is unique to Saint Matthew, correlates with the prophecy of Micah: "But you, Bethlehem-Ephrathaha least among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel; whose origin is from of old, from ancient times. Therefore the Lord will give them up, until the time when she who is to give birth has borne; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the children of Israel. He shall take his place as shepherd by the strength of the Lord, by the majestic name of the Lord, his God; and they shall dwell securely, for now his greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth: he shall be peace" (Mi 5:1-4). Matthew adapts the text from Micah in distinctive ways. Instead of Bethlehem-Ephrathah, he indicates that it was *Bethlehem of Judea*. The redaction could be merely to distinguish between two villages in Galilee with the same name or to call attention to Bethlehem as the city of David, symbol of the Messiah. In Micah, the Messiah's birth place is described as "least among the clans of Judah." The village's smallness is contrasted by the prophecy with the immensity of its mission, "From you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel." The name Bethlehem, according to Saint Gregory the Great, means "house of bread." Then, at the end of the quotation from Micah, Saint Matthew modifies the last few words (i.e., one who is to be ruler in Israel) into "from [Bethlehem] shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel." The title shepherd my people Israel is found in the Second Book of Samuel, after the tribes of Israel had rallied to David's side, seeking to capture Jerusalem. The tribes reminded David that even when Saul was King, the God of Israel had told David, "You shall shepherd my people Israel; you shall be ruler over Israel" (2 Sam 5:2). Thus, Jesus is the new David and the Magi had come to Jerusalem in search of "the newborn king of the Jews." Then, King Herod heard from "all the chief priests and the scribes" that the Messiah was prophesied to be born in Bethlehem. According to Saint Augustine, "The New [Testament] is in the old concealed; the Old [Testament] is in the new revealed" (*Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* 2.73 PL 34 623). The Magi (Gk. μάγοι, who came first to Jerusalem from the East, did so in order to render homage to the newborn King. Tradition has it that they were kings and how many of them came remains a subject of debate. The number three likely arose due to the three gifts that were brought and their royal dignity appears to be derived from one of the Psalms, "May the kings of Tarshish and the islands bring tribute, the kings of Sheba and Seba offer

Saint Augustine of Hippo - *Sermo 203*

For the Greek word Epiphania we say Manifestatio in Latin. On this day, then, the *manifested* Redeemer of all nations has made a solemn feast for all nations. And so we are celebrating today the Manifestation of Him whose Nativity we celebrated only a few days ago. Now tradition has it that our Lord Jesus Christ, born twelve days ago, was adored by the Magi on this day. That they adored Him is a truth spoken by the Gospel; on what day they did so, is proclaimed by the fact that this glorious feast is observed everywhere. For, inasmuch as the Magi were the first among the Gentiles to learn of Christ the Lord; and because they, not yet benefitting from His speech, followed the star which appeared to them and which, in place of the Infant Word, spoke to their sight — like a tongue of heaven. It is but right, and right it truly is that the Gentiles should gratefully acknowledge the day of the first fruits of their salvation, and with thanksgiving and solemn homage dedicate it to Christ the Lord. Obviously, the first fruits of the faith and revelation of Christ among the Jews were the shepherds who, coming from the immediate vicinity, saw Him on the very day He was born. The news was given to them by the angels, to the others by the star. Glory to God in the highest was said to them; in the others there was fulfilled. The heavens tell of the glory of God. Indeed, like the beginnings of two walls coming from different directions—the circumcised and the uncircumcised—both have met at the Cornerstone, so that He might be their Peace, making both one.

gifts” (Ps 72:10) – Tarshish designated the far west and Sheba (Arabia) as the far south. As Magi or Magians, one of a sacred caste, originally Median, who seem to have conformed to the Persian religion, while retaining some of their old beliefs. If so, then, as Persian in their origin, they were conceivably part of the Zoroastrian religion, which believed in the coming of the Messiah and also were astrologers. The Magi or Wise Men had been guided by the Star which denoted the Birth of the newborn King of the Jews, even before they arrived in Jerusalem. Traditionally, the Star of Bethlehem is linked with the Star of Prophecy, “I see him, though not now; I observe him, though not near: A star shall advance from Jacob, and a scepter shall rise from Israel that will crush the brows of Moab, and the skull of the Sethites” (Num 24:17). In Rome’s Catacombs of Saint Priscilla, you find the first known depiction of an image of Mary, who is holding the Child Jesus on her knees. Beside her, there is a man pointing to a star and art scholars believe the image to be that of Isaiah, dressed in a cloak that distinguishes him as a philosopher of distinction; Isaiah who prophesied about the future birth of Emmanuel (Is 7:14). Others believe it is the image of the prophet Balaam (Num 24:17). Reaching out over the prophet and Mary is a blossoming tree branch that refers to the Old Testament prophecy “The Rock of Jesse has blossomed; the Virgin has brought forth Love and Man.” The Magi bring three gifts – gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The Child’s royal lineage as king of the Jews is confirmed by the nature of those gifts: myrrh symbolizes the mortality of humanity and that the Child would die and be buried; gold testifies to Christ’s eternal reign; and incense reveals that this Child was God who was made manifest not only in Judea but eventually to all those who never even sought the King as the Magi had. Ultimately, though, those offerings express the fulfillment of various messianic prophecies found in Isaiah (Is 60:5-6) and also foretold by the psalmist (Ps 72:10-11). After their distinct privilege to behold the Savior, in a dream, they were told not to return to Herod and Jerusalem and go home by another route, evading the tyrant who sought to destroy the Child destined to be King of the Jews.

Eucharistic Revival - 19 June 2022 to the National Eucharistic Congress, Indianapolis 17-21 July 2024

You have given them bread from heaven - Panem de caelo praestitisti eis

“[The Magi] prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh” (Mt 2:11). In the oil painting on wood of the Adoration of the Magi by Hieronymus Bosch, in an easily overlooked detail, the Moorish King Gaspar has large figures embroidered on the sleeve of the doublet that he wore, depicting the Gathering of the Manna, which is a foreshadowing of the Eucharist. Manna, once given to the Israelites in the desert, is a graphic allusion to Christ as the true Bread from heaven (Jn 6:32). In a homily for Epiphany (January 6, 2019), Pope Francis said, “It is not enough to know where Jesus was born, as the scribes did, if we do not go there. It is not enough to know that Jesus was born, like Herod, if we do not encounter him. When his place becomes our place, when his time becomes our time, when his person becomes our life, then the prophecies come to fulfillment in us. Then Jesus is born within us. He becomes the living God for me. Today we are asked to imitate the Magi. They do not debate; they set out. They do not stop to look, but enter the house of Jesus. They do not put themselves at the center, but bow down before the One who is the center.”

Ordinary Time—Tempus per annum - Resumes on January 10

Ordinary Time (Lat. *Tempus per annum*) is divided into two distinct periods. The season’s first period begins after the Baptism of the Lord and continues until the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. Pentecost Sunday begins the second and longer period of Ordinary Time, which continues until the Advent season begins anew. This is a time of conversion, maturation, and quiet growth when “the mystery of Christ itself is honored in its fullness” (*GNYC*, n. 43) and, so, it is the time when the faithful consider what Jesus taught and did while on this earth. The second season of Ordinary Time follows the Feast of Pentecost; the gift of the Holy Spirit moves all believers to do God’s work. The Spirit does for individuals and the Church what Jesus did for His disciples — He left them with His love, fire, and Spirit to share those gifts with the world. Trinity Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday after Pentecost. The Holy Trinity, gives us Christ in His fullness — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The following Sunday is Corpus Christi, which commemorates the Body and Blood of Jesus in the Eucharist. The final Sunday in Ordinary Time is the feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, traditionally called Christ the King. On the last Sunday in Ordinary Time, we reverence the Lord as the King of All Nations as we look forward to living with Him eternally in heaven forever.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS & ISAIAH'S SUFFERING SERVANT

Introduction - The Baptism of the Lord

The Baptism of the Lord Jesus, as it is recorded in the three Synoptic Gospels (Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21-22; Mt 3:13-17) and those passages have this one common element – the Spirit came over Jesus and that a heavenly voice was heard. This annual feast commemorates the manifestation of the divinity of Jesus as He was baptized in the Jordan River. Christ's baptism is meant to be understood as a theophany or a manifestation of God to the world, because it was the beginning of our Lord's public ministry. This particular theophany also constituted a revelation of the Holy Trinity. All three divine Persons were manifested together: the Father testified from on high to the divine Sonship of Jesus; the Son received His Father's testimony; and the Spirit was seen in the form of a dove, descending from the Father and resting upon the Son. The moment when Jesus was baptized is one of the only times in the New Testament when the presence of the Blessed Trinity is made visible. Consider the biblical account itself: the Son stands in the river, the Spirit descends like a dove, and the Father speaks from heaven. This Epiphany moment reveals yet another aspect of Jesus' identity: His place as the second Person of the Blessed Trinity. At this time in His life, Jesus was living in Nazareth and had to travel around 80 miles to reach the Jordan where John was baptizing. It had to have been a well-planned journey that was meant to be an integral part of Jesus' mission. Long before, the Israelites had crossed the Jordan before entering the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua (Dt 30:18-20). Every biblical entry that was accomplished through water implied a washing away of the old life of rebellion and sin and, then, embarking upon a spiritual renewal. The Great Flood during the time of Noah and the crossing of the Red Sea under Moses were the previous experiences of the people giving up the old sinful ways and taking up a renewed form of life. The baptism that John undertook was not like the Baptism which Christ would eventually institute. John's baptism was not an initiation into any religion but an act of penitence and preparation that was needed to receive the Messiah. Judaism had never engaged in baptism for themselves and only used it for converts. At the preaching of John, though, the Israelites began to seek his baptism as a sign of repentance and preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Thus, being a theophany (Gk. θεοφάνεια), the Baptism of Jesus manifests God who was present in an observable manner and that accounts for why the Eastern Church commemorates the Lord's Baptism on Epiphany. The earliest Fathers of the Church acknowledged a significance in this explicit incident in the unfolding history of salvation. First, the Lord's Baptism reveals the divine Sonship of Jesus by the voice from heaven. In addition, due to the presence of the Spirit, in the form of a dove, which descends on Jesus, the descent of the Spirit is the real anointing of Jesus as Messiah before His public life was to begin in

earnest. Then, by undergoing John's baptism of repentance, though sinless, Jesus reveals His divine origins. Almost from the day it happened, learned scholars have wondered why Jesus underwent John's baptism. According to Saint Matthew's Gospel, the Baptist had his doubts too: "John tried to prevent him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?'" (Mt 3:14). Then, according to Saint Luke, it is revealed that John's baptism "was a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Lk 3:3). Since Jesus had no sin, why would He go to John to be baptized? What does Jesus' baptism reveal about His mission and identity? The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* offers these insights into that seeming dilemma, "The baptism of Jesus is on his part the acceptance and inauguration of his mission as God's suffering Servant. He allows himself to be numbered among sinners; he is already 'the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world'" (CCC, n. 536). Jesus' act of humble submission to John's baptism constitutes a sign of the Lord's submission and total acceptance of the Father's mission given to Him. We will see this total submission to the will of the Father in its beautiful climax in the garden of Gethsemane later in Jesus' life. This reference to the suffering Servant serves as an invitation to view the baptism that Jesus freely underwent in light of His passion and death. The figure of the suffering Servant is meant to be the interpretive key leading to the answer to another question, in regard to what this incident reveals about Christ's mission and His identity? There are multiple references to this Servant in the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; and 52:13-53:12). The fourth or last of those Servant songs brings together many of the strands in the previous three and it makes it patently obvious that the Servant's victory will be achieved through suffering: he will bear our infirmities (v. 4), take our guilt upon himself (v. 6), be like a lamb led to the slaughter (v. 7), even though he had done no wrong (v. 9), and surrender himself to death and be counted among the wicked (v. 12). Now consider Jesus' choice to be baptized by John in light of these descriptions of the Servant in Isaiah 53. Jesus takes on the identity of the suffering Servant beginning with His baptism. He chooses to be associated with the wicked who come to John for baptism and freely takes upon Himself our guilt. John the Baptist is the one who first makes this connection between Jesus and the suffering Servant. He explicitly proclaims Jesus as "the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). John makes the connection for his own disciples that Jesus is the suffering Servant predicted to arrive in Isaiah 53. The Baptist, filled with the Holy Spirit from birth, has the prophetic insight to understand what took place when he baptized Jesus. He shares this insight with his soon to be former disciples, who now leave John the Baptist and begin to follow Jesus at his instruction.
