

Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) Newsletter

Issue: January 2018 at St. Mary Magdalen Church



Caspar Melchior Balthazar
The Three Kings (Wise Men)

REMINDERS

If you haven't started your family days yet, it's time to get moving! January 14th will be our family day on Angels, and it will begin that morning in the GYM. If you haven't already, sign up at

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0c49aea82aa0ff2-angels>

As I write this, it is the coldest day we've had yet – and just a sign of things to come!

Remember that emergency information about closings for weather, etc. will be on WDEL Snowwatch (101.7FM or 1150AM on your radio), on the phone message in the office, and **IF YOU HAVE SIGNED UP TO RECEIVE REMIND TEXTS, YOU WILL GET A TEXT TELLING YOU!** I use this system rarely, but it is good for last minute reminders – so if you would like to be part

of the list, the easiest way is to text the message “@smmprep” to the number **81010**. That is the signup for PREP classes; there are separate signups for sacraments.

If you would rather receive email notifications, go to

<https://help.remind.com/hc/en-us/articles/203179887-How-do-I-join-a-class->

From the Director's Desk

We return to class this year on the date the Church celebrates the Epiphany – the Feast of the Three Kings, or Wise Men, depending on what you read. It is believed that the men were very learned, probably astronomers or astrologers who studied the skies. They saw a combination of planets and stars that told them that something major was happening; that a great King was to be born, and that he would change the world as they knew it. They came from different countries, and their pictures represent the peoples known at that time. The gifts they brought were symbolic as well.

Gold, to show that they were there to meet a king.

Frankincense, to show that they knew he was more than a king, he was divine; frankincense was used in the temple to carry prayers up to God as its smoke rose to the skies. And finally myrrh, a resin used to prepare a body for burial, symbolizing his humanity. They went first to King Herod, believing that he too would want to know of this birth; but from the very beginning of time jealousy has brought sorrow to our world.

Can we start the new year a different way? Can we ask for the wisdom to be better people? A friend of mine carries a tattered piece of paper in his wallet. One of his high school teachers read the story of Jesus healing the paralytic; the man whose friends wanted so much for him to be healed that they took part of the roof down so they could lower him to Jesus. After talking about what good friends they were, the teacher gave them all a card and said, “Now write down the names of those who carry you to Christ.” We all have those friends; the ones who lift us up, who remind us of the good things in our lives, who help us to see the light. Maybe this year, I'll begin by writing down their names on a card, and carrying it with me as a reminder of the blessings in my life – and of how I need to be that blessing for others too. May your new year be filled with peace, joy, and the blessings of good friends to carry you when you need to be brought to Christ!

- Karen Yasik



JANUARY FAMILY DAY INFO



Sunday January 14th is the family day on Angels!
 Kindergarten class will meet as usual in their classroom, while the rest of us will begin in the GYM.
 After some time together, we will break out into different rooms for activities geared to the age brackets. Parents should always go with their youngest; if you have more than one child in the program and both parents are coming, one can go with each! Often there will be crafts or activities where the children need an adult's help – so you are an important part of the day! We'll finish around 11:30AM. Signup info on page 1!

BRUNCH

For those new to the program, each year we all get together after class on Sunday. We reserve space in the church so we can all sit together (although you and your family are welcome to sit in your usual spot!) After Mass we all go down to the CHURCH HALL to share fellowship together! The parish provides a main course, but we ask all of you to bring either a dessert or favorite brunch item, or to give a free will offering. As part of the morning we recognize those teachers who've achieved a certain level of certification (many of our teachers have Advanced training in religious studies) or who are celebrating special anniversaries (5, 10, 15 years or more!) This year we have lots of teachers in the "off" years – between 15 and 20! It's a fun time when your children can be with the friends they've made and you can all get to know both their parents and their teachers. If you would like to attend, please email karen.yasik@smmchurch.org with the number who will be there! And P.S. – this is the Feast of St. Agnes, my patron saint. Snowflakes are often called St. Agnes flowers because they are often "blooming" at this time of year!

RSVP

[Karen.yasik@smmchurch.org](mailto:karen.yasik@smmchurch.org)

"Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset."

St. Francis de Sales

JANUARY CALENDAR

January 6th – Youth and Family Mass at the 5PM with a family social afterwards – it's also the traditional date of the Epiphany!

January 10th – Confirmation orientation for all parents of 8th graders at 9:30AM and repeated at 7PM in the CHURCH HALL. This is an important meeting because students who begin their requirements afterwards are often done with most of them by March !

January 14th – FAMILY DAY ON ANGELS

January 21st – PREP families brunch – SEE

January 24th - First Communion gathering for parents of 2nd graders at 9:30AM and repeated at 7PM in the CHURCH HALL. Information about the retreat and the sacrament will be discussed!

January 28th – NO PREP THIS WEEKEND – the school holds an open house and with people coming in and out of classrooms it's too hard to hold a class. I will be on a retreat in Emmitsburg, MD near the shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, a local saint!

LOOKING AHEAD

February will have a family day on Reconciliation (a good topic for Lent!); Ash Wednesday is on Valentine's Day this year, too! The next First Communion gathering will be on the 21st, and the retreat on the 24th. Be sure to keep those dates open!