

FR. JOHN'S DIGITAL QUILL FOR SPIRITUAL MUSINGS AND PARISH NEWS

About the Epiphany Chalk

This Sunday at Mass, we will bless the chalk for the Feast Day of the Epiphany. This blessed chalk extends a blessing to our homes. When we write the Epiphany formula above the main door of our homes, we ask for God's blessings.

The formula for this year is 20+C+M+B+23. The 20 and 23 at either end of the formula stand for this year, 2023. The letters C, M, and B stand for two things. They first represent the traditional names of the wise men: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. Just as these wise men journeyed many miles to visit Christ, we ask God that, as our families and friends pass through our doors, they may always find Christ there.

The second meaning of CMB originates in Latin. CMB stands for three Latin words, *Christus Mansionem Benedicat*, which means, "May Christ bless this home."

After we bless the chalk during Mass, we invite you to take a plastic bag from its place by the church doors. Inside, you will find an instruction sheet and the chalk. Use it to write the blessing above the main door of your home and say the prayer on the sheet. If your children would like the blessing written above their doors, please do that as well.

Let's start the year off right by asking God's blessing over our homes and inviting His peace to dwell there all year. We will make the chalk available in the parish office and in the church all week should anyone need more.

Epiphany

This Sunday is the unofficial end of the Christmas Season. Tomorrow, Monday, January 9, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, is the official end of the Christmas Season.

With the end of the season upon us, we will take down decorations after the 10:00am Mass. Afterwards, please feel free to take home a poinsettia.

In Gratitude

First, on behalf of Msgr. Stehly, Deacon Bob, and Deacon Jerry, I thank you for the many Christmas cards and greetings we have received over the past weeks! These notes are truly blessings and we are

grateful for them.

Thank you to Terri Borowiak and her many volunteers who helped decorate the church. Thank you, too, to Mr. Bob for his extra work in decorating the outside of the rectory and in setting up things for the Christmas decorators. An additional word of gratitude to Qi Franz for making sure the church was clean and ready for Christmas and the new year.

Thank you to Ray and Mary Anne Braun and our choir for many hours of practice and for singing at Masses over the Christmas holidays.

Thank you, as well, to our lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, and servers for their help in making our celebrations so special.

Thank you to Lynne Tustanowsky for repairing and painting our statues.

May the Lord reward all those who helped to make our observance of Christmas this year so edifying!

School Open House

Please start spreading the word for our school Open House, which will be held on Sunday, January 29.

Thanks to the Archdiocesan announcement in November, we expect to open our school for the 2023-2024 academic year. In the coming weeks, we will announce our rates for tuition for the upcoming school year. These revised tuition rates will help fund a \$5,000 pay raise for our faculty and staff, which is well-deserved and long overdue.

We are hopeful to have sufficient enrollment by the end of February to offer teacher contracts, and we are optimistic for a positive faculty response to ensure that our school will be open for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Like all Archdiocesan schools, while we cannot say much about the following years, we are grateful to God for the opportunity to have a school for the coming year. We ask for your continued vocal and financial support to make this vision a reality.

Offerings to Begin 2023

In this new year, I am happy to announce that we will offer some new parish programs, and return some opportunities that have unfortunately lapsed over the last few months.

Prayer Groups

This Advent, our parish began a series of prayer groups that allowed time for prayerful reflection on Scripture and implementation of the ARRR prayer.

After conversation with these groups, I am happy to announce that they will continue to meet. The plan right now is that they will meet every two weeks until Lent, when they will start meeting each week.

Please know that, while these groups were formed in Advent, they are still open and available to everyone!

Pam Hager will meet with her prayer group on January 17, at 9:30am. I will meet with my group on January 16, at 2:00pm. Deacon Bob will reach out to his group this week and hopes to have more information next week.

“Bother Father”

This was an offering that I began in the fall, but life got a bit busy and time got away from me. I want to begin offering this opportunity again for people to be able to visit me to discuss anything in their lives, to ask questions of faith or spirituality, or to raise questions or concerns about the parish or All Things New.

We will have two sessions for “Bother Father” in January. The first will be on January 17, from 3:00-5:00pm. The second will be on January 24, from 9:00-11:00am.

A helpful suggestion was to create a Signup Genius so people could register for a slot. That was sent out this past Wednesday. If you would like help signing up, please contact the parish office.

Parish Rosary Program

I received an e-mail from a person asking us to consider starting a Parish Rosary Program. It is very simple...each week people commit to pray a decade or more of the Rosary. We will unite in praying for the intentions of our parish, but in particular each week, I will propose an intention.

There are many reasons why this is needed now in our community:

- Our Lady has promised that the Rosary will bring peace to our world and to our communities when it is prayed.
- With the end of 2022, until May of 2023, we are now in a bit of a holding pattern regarding All Things New. This is a way for us to continue to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide this process until the data are crunched and the final recommendations are made.
- We can pray for the future of our school for next year and beyond.
- We can pray for an increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, which are so needed in this time.
- We can pray for the strengthening of Christian family life.
- We can pray that individuals and families who have fallen away from the Church will return.

These are just a few of the many reasons why we need this program right now.

I invite you to commit to praying with us. Next week, I will put our first intention in the bulletin. Please share with us your intentions so we can know how many people and decades/Rosaries are being offered. Please place this intention card in the Ofertory basket.

I Commit to Participating in the Parish Rosary Program	I will pray...	Every:
(Name Optional)	_____ Decade(s)	_____ Day
_____	_____ Rosary(ies)	_____ Week