This week we celebrated what I like to call the Gentile Christmas. ‘Gentile’ refers to people who are not Jewish. That would make this week Christmas for the non-Jewish people like the Wise Men. This is the feast of the Epiphany. Epiphany means revelation. It’s the feast that reveals to us what St Paul refers to as ‘God’s great secret.’ It’s the festival of God’s revelation of Jesus as the baby born King of the Jews and King of the Gentiles, the non-Jews; and, that while God’s salvation was sent first to the Jews through the Babe of Bethlehem, he was not sent to the Jews exclusively but rather to all the peoples of the world as represented by the Wise Men who were definitely not of the house of Israel.

According to Matthew: “…. during the time of Herod the King, behold, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem. …” The magi were very educated astrologers, with great knowledge and high positions in their society. They specialized in the interpretation of dreams and omens. They also saw symbolism and signs in the stars.

But you may ask, what made these Wise Men “wise?” Well, you know, there’s a big difference between “wisdom” and “knowledge.” “Knowledge” has to do with acquiring information and details; but “wisdom” productively and successfully applies those facts to your own life for happiness and satisfaction. For instance, knowledge is knowing the tomato is a fruit; wisdom is not putting the tomato into the fruit salad!

In Matthew’s Gospel Gentile men, non-Jewish magi, follow a star, which they understood to be a sign in the heavens; and so they travel some 200 - 300 miles seeking, as they told Herod, the Jewish King, “…. to worship the ‘King of the Jews.’ And oh, by the way, Herod, could you please tell us where he is?” Now this is ironic because the Jews in Jerusalem, particularly the chief priests and teachers of the Law, already had the knowledge that he would be born “in Bethlehem of Judea.” But they themselves never made the short schlep to Bethlehem! But these Gentiles were truly “wise men” because they applied to their own lives, all the knowledge they gathered from the heavens, the stars and the Jewish prophecies. And as a result, they were the ones, and not the Jews who “…. saw the Child … [and they] bowed down and [they] worshiped Him and [they] presented Him with gifts” (Mt 2:11-12). And back home, they shared this wonderful news with many other Gentiles!

Would you have done what these Wise Men did? Leave your “comfort zone” for a strange culture to follow a heavenly sign, “a star,” without your GPS, and be wise enough – and this one’s for us, guys – be wise enough to stop to ask for directions? Well these Gentiles did!

Many back home probably thought these guys were nuts, their journey being a great sacrifice: such an expensive trip and, Oy, those expensive gifts! Yet they did it because they, too, were a part of God’s plan of salvation, involved in ‘God’s great secret’!

True wisdom comes from God’s Word, like this one: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Ps 111:10). And St Paul also teaches in his second letter to Timothy that “the Holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (3:15). And it’s only by God’s gift of faith that we, like the Wise Men, also worship the Christ Child.

The Wise Men “bowed down and worshiped Him.” That’s why the first action whenever we worship must always include the humility of the Wise Men. Only with true humility can we acknowledge our sinfulness within confession and recognize the great privilege it is for us to be in Christ’s presence.

Then, these wise men “opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts.” They brought only the best for this “newborn King.” So you, too, have to present your best offerings of time, abilities and money to Jesus and his work through his Church. This is also how “Wise men, women and children worship the Christ Child.”

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You are made ‘wise’ through your faith in Jesus Christ who leads you to live your life fully through your baptism, through your receiving Holy Communion and through your hearing and studying God’s Word.

So like the Wise Men of old, I need you to continue to live your lives worshiping Jesus, the King by “bowing down in worship of him;” by “presenting gifts” worthy of Jesus; and then joyfully receiving the blessings of “[him who was] born King of kings and Lord of lords.”

Bishop Bernard

**Prepare Ye the Way!**

This year on November 30th, the Scranton Seniorate held the Penitential Service for Advent here at St. Stanislaus. Services began in the lower chapel with Prime Bishop Mikovsky, Bishop Nowicki, Fr. Senior Dawid and Fr. Lucarz in the sanctuary. Prime Bishop Emeritus Swantek, Fr. Senior Chromey, Fr. Bolock and Fr. Placek were also in attendance.

The theme of our Advent Service was “God Has Visited His People.” Many parishioners from St. Stanislaus plus those from the surrounding churches in our Seniorate participated in this penitential service in preparation for the upcoming season of the Birth of Our Lord.

After services, a light lunch was served coordinated by Sue Techmanski and the ladies of the ANS Catering.

Thank you to all who took part in this uplifting service in preparation for Advent and the Birth of Christ.

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**Welcome New Member**

We wish to extend a warm welcome to Zachary Stankowski as a “new” member of St. Stanislaus Cathedral. Zach grew up at St. Stanislaus and was very involved in the Youth activities of the church.

Zach was officially accepted as a “new” member at the November meeting of the Parish Committee.

Congratulations Zachary Stankowski.
Breakfast with Santa

On Sunday, December 8th, The YMS of R along with the Cathedral Youth Group served a scrumptious breakfast buffet with everything from scrambled eggs and ham, pancakes and sausage, to home fries and much more.

After everyone was full, Santa arrived to the delight of the little ones. The Cathedral UYA provided the goodies and pictures for the young children and the young at heart. Everyone had a great time.

Santa went back to the North Pole but he will return for breakfast again next year on December 6th, so keep that date in your calendar.

Wreaths Across America

For the second year, on Saturday, December 14th at noon, at St. Stanislaus Cathedral Cemetery, in conjunction with more than 14,000 memorial sites including Arlington National Cemetery, we gathered as one nation to “Remember, Honor and Teach.”

The Cathedral UYA with the assistance of Don Blackledge and Maria Hughes sponsored “Wreaths Across America” at our Cathedral Cemetery.

Despite the cold and rainy weather, a large number of participants from the UYA, parishioners and those from our local community, gathered to help place wreaths on over 520 graves of the veterans at our cemetery. As each wreath is placed, the participants are to say the name of each veteran, so their service and name are never forgotten.

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Before the wreaths were placed on the individual graves, 7 wreaths were placed in front of the Grotto in memory of those who served in the six branches of the military and on wreath for those who were listed as Prisoners of War or Missing in Action.

May God bless those veterans who gave the ultimate sacrifice, all veterans past and present and all service men and women today who are still working to keep our country free.

Festival of Lessons and Carols

The Advent season has been a busy one at St. Stanislaus. One of the many spiritual events was a Festival of Lesson’s and Carols presented on Sunday, December 15th in the evening.

The Cathedral Chorale under the direction of our organist and Director of Music, Beth Howden, along with the St. Stanislaus Handbell Choir under the direction of Mary Stankowski, provided a beautiful and varied selection of Advent music. Integrated with the musical selection were scriptural lessons chosen for the season. Lectors included Prime Bishop Mikovsky, Prime Bishop Emeritus Swantek, Bishop Nowicki, Father Lucarz, Father Bolock, Joan Schueneman, Lisa McConlogue and Eve Hughes.

After the service, attendees were treated to some sweet treats and coffee.

2019 Offering Envelope

The 2019 Offering envelopes have arrived. You may pick up your yearly envelopes on the table in the church hall after mass on Sunday. They are in alphabetical order.

You can also pick them up during the week from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. by coming to the Parish Office door next to the rectory. Please call 570-961-9231 so we know when you are coming.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us! John 1:14

Thank you to all who attended and hope that this service inspired your hearts and minds in preparations for our Lord’s Nativity.
SOCL News – Happy Birthday Jesus!

The combined classes of the School of Christian Living celebrated Jesus’ Birthday on the Sunday before Christmas.

The children first learned about the Christian symbolism of the candy cane by listening to the book “The Legend of the Candy Cane” written by Lori Walbur. The students then proceeded to make a beaded candy cane ornament for their Christmas trees with a poem attached to remind them that the upside down cane is a J for Jesus; turned around it is a staff for the shepherd; the red stripes are for the blood Jesus shed for us and the white stripes are for the purity of Jesus.

After their projects were done, the children sang “Happy Birthday” to Jesus and enjoyed cupcakes and donuts.

Merry Christmas from the students and teachers of the SOCL and remember both the children’s class and Adult Forum are always welcoming new members at any time. Please come and join us!

Decorating the Church for Christmas

On the last Sunday of Advent after Mass, volunteers both young and old got together to pull out all the Christmas trappings and helped Mary and Joseph move into their new dwelling along with the shepherds and wise men.

Several parishioners had a good time decorating the church for the Christmas season as you can tell from the pictures.

Thanks to all who came out, from those who set up the trees, lights, moved the statues, and helped clean up to those who played a supervisory role. The church looked beautiful for Christmas!!
Christmas at the Cathedral

Christmas services began with Christmas Eve Vigil Mass at 4:00 p.m. which included the Living Nativity re-enacted by the members of the Cathedral UYA.

Mary and Joseph were portrayed by Braelyn Reed and Lucas Stankowski. The rest of the members were Ethan Stankowski – Prophet; Ryan Notari – Innkeeper; Olivia Pfohl – Lead Angel; Celeste Gingerlowski and Cecelia Thomas – Angels; Austin Stankowski, Gabriel and Angelo Rossi, and Alex Meleski – Shepherds; Matthew Pfohl, Brandon Reed and Jacob Stankowski – Kings; Lydia Howden and Brielle Reed – Narrators.

The St. Stanislaus Bell Choir under the direction of Mary Stankowski added to the solemnity of the Mass with beautiful renditions of Do You Hear What I Hear, Go Tell It on the Mountain and On a Quiet Christmas Night.

Before the Pasterka, the Shepherds' Mass at 10:30 p.m. a prelude of Still, Still, Still, What Child Is This, Good Christian Men, Rejoice and An English Christmas was played by Josh Stankowski on viola and Adrianna Howden on oboe with Beth Howden at the organ.

The Clergy and the Cathedral Chorale began the Mass with procession to and the blessing of the manger singing the Polish Carols, Wśród Nocnej Ciszy, Pójdźmy Wszyscy do Stajenka, and Cicha Noc. Justin Ambrosia added to the first hymn with accompaniment on the French Horn and did an interlude of In a Manger, He is Lying after the blessing.

During the incensing of the altar, Jack Ostroski sang O, Holy Night in Polish. For the Offertory Hymn, the Cathedral Chorale sang an inspiring anthem, Jesus Came to Dwell Among Us, with French Horn and Viola and Organ accompaniment.

For Post Communion, the Choral and congregation sang The First Noel with Adrianna and Josh accompanying on Oboe and Viola.

On Christmas Day, there was a glorious prelude of Christmas Carols performed by Jack Partyka on the trumpet and Beth accompanying on the organ. Barbara Nowicki and Gary Richards sang O Little Town of Bethlehem at the Offertory.

The music of all three masses enhanced the liturgy of the season to make Christmas a spiritual experience.
Basketball Has Begun
St. Stanislaus Basketball League begins their new season on Friday, January 10th, starting at 6:30 p.m. with the Pre-K and Kindergarten ages and end with the last game at 9:15 p.m. featuring the High School age players.

Scheduled practice times for the league start on Thursday, January 9th, 2020.
- PreK- 2nd grades……..6:30-7:00pm
- 3rd – 8th grades……..7:00-7:45 pm
- 9th – 11th grades……..7:45-8:30 pm

Games will begin on Friday, January 10th, 2020.
- PreK & Kdg Group………..6:30-7:00pm
- 1st & 2nd Grades…………7:00-7:45pm
- 3rd, 4th & 5th Grades……..7:45-8:30pm
- 6th, 7th & 8th Grades……..8:30-9:15pm
- 9th, 10th & 11th Grades…..9:15-10:00pm

We are happy to welcome 80 participants into the league this year. We are also hopeful to have a great season as we continue to work towards supporting the youth in our church community as well as welcome some new faces into our great facility.

Thank you, Jake Stankowski & Art Golembeski

Life Line Screening
There is a simple, convenient way for you to get preventive health screenings and learn your risk for stroke, heart disease and other chronic conditions.

These painless screenings go beyond your regular checkup to identify dangerous plaque buildup or blockage, a major risk factor for stroke and heart disease. The screenings are accurate, affordable and will give you valuable information about your health that you can share with your doctor.

We are pleased to host Life Line Screening, who will be on site on 1/23/2020 at St. Stanislaus Polish National Catholic Cathedral to conduct these valuable screenings.

These 5 vital screenings are offered for only $149 and take 60-90 minutes to complete. If you register today, you will receive a $10 discount.

Register by calling toll free 1-888-653-6441, visit www.lifelinescreening.com/communitycircle, or text the word "circle" to 797979.

Valentine Dance
The YMS of R will be hosting the Valentine Dance on Saturday, February 8, 2020. Cost for this event is $37.50/person or $75.00/couple. A buffet dinner from 7:00-8:00 pm is served. The ladies from the ANS Catering are already preparing this luscious buffet which will include some Polish favorites. The event is B.Y.O.B. (beer and soda provided), with music and dancing by “The Wanabees” until 12:00a.m. For tickets, information, and reservations please contact Jake Stankowski @ 570-341-0986
Mark Your Calendars!

Here are some of the upcoming events, so mark your calendars to keep them in mind.

**January 1st** - Circumcision of Our Lord
10:00 am - Holy Mass, lower chapel

**January 2nd** - Holy Name of Jesus
8:30 am - Holy Mass, lower chapel

**January 4th** - One Hot Meal 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Youth Center
Come enjoy a meal or be a volunteer.

**January 5th** - Feast of the Epiphany (anticipated)

**January 9th** - Basketball Practice starting at 6:30 p.m.

**January 10th** - Basketball starts in the Youth Center 6:30 p.m.

**January 16th** - Basketball Practice starting at 6:30 p.m.

**January 17th** - Basketball in the Youth Center starting at 6:30 p.m.

**January 18th** - 25th - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

**January 23rd** - Life Line Screening in the Youth Center.
Basketball Practice starting at 6:30 p.m.

**January 24th** - Basketball in the Youth Center starting at 6:30 p.m.

**January 26th** - Music Scholarship Sunday

**January 30th** - Basketball Practice starting at 6:30 p.m.

**January 31st** - Basketball in the Youth Center starting at 6:30 p.m.

**February 1st** - One Hot Meal 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Youth Center
Come enjoy a meal or be a volunteer.

**February 2nd** - Presentation of the Lord - Candlemas Day
8:00 am - Holy Mass, Cathedral
9:30 am - Holy Mass, Cathedral
11:15 M - Holy Mass, Tripp Park Chapel

**February 8th** - Valentine Day Dance in the Youth Center

**February 16th**—Anniversary of the Death of Bishop Hodur

**February 26th** - Ash Wednesday Distribution of Ashes at Noon and 7:00 p.m. Masses

**During Lent**
Fridays - 12 noon - Stations of the Cross, chapel, lower Cathedral

**Wednesdays** - 7:00 pm - Stations of the Cross with Benediction, Cathedral

**March 1st** - Annual Meeting following 9:30 a.m. Mass

**March 7th** - One Hot Meal 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Youth Center
Come enjoy a meal or be a volunteer.

**March 8th** - 123rd Anniversary of the Polish National Catholic Church

**January Anniversaries**
Jan 3 - Carl & Lu Ann Kaszuba
Jan 20 - Bruce and Shirley Melesky

**January Birthdays**
Jan 1 - Chad Oliver
Nicole Karcheski
Paul Cimino
Jan 2 - Joann Valvano
Jan 4 - Julie Orzell
Mary Berezinsky
Jan 6 - Marie Jarocha
Jan 8 - Kevin P. McConlogue
Jan 9 - Jocelyn Herrera
Jan 11 - Paul Gorgol
Lydia McConlogue
Lucas Stankowski
Jan 12 - Michael Fick
Jan 13 - Christopher Stankowski
Jan 14 - Austin & Ethan Stankowski
Jan 15 - Kathleen Michalina
Jan 17 - Carol Olster
Jan 19 - Kevin Karsnak
Ralph Crispino
Jan 20 - Vienna Piazza
Randy Crispino
Jan 21 - Vito Gerardi
Anna El Abid
Jan. 23 - Jillian Aebli
Brielle Reed
Jan 28 - Darlene Navarra
Jan 29 - Joseph R. Ross
Madison Matylewicz
PJ Cimino

New Year Begins, let us pray,
That is Will Be a Year
With New Peace,
New Happiness,
And Abundance of New Friends,
God Bless You Through
Out The New Year!
Happy New Year!