



*St. Mary Magdala Spiritual Center is the ministry center of The Community of the Cross, an intentional community of Christians affiliated with the Orthodox-Catholic Church of America. ALL ARE WELCOME.*



# FIRST SUNDAY

JAN 2017, Volume 11, Issue 1

2800 Rolston Street, Fort Wayne, IN

## Inside this Issue

- 1 EPIPHANY - Be the Light!
- 1 Board & Clergy Contact Info
- 2 Remember in your prayers
- 3 Readings for January
- 3 Clergy Schedule/January
- 3 Some Thoughts from Fr. Richard Rohr
- 4 Indiana Center for Middle East Peace Announcement
- 4 Joan Chittister - You Are the Light of the World

WANT MORE? Send me some news to print - +John

[www.stmarymagdala.org](http://www.stmarymagdala.org)

Editor: +John Newbauer  
E-mail: [jfn3253@aol.com](mailto:jfn3253@aol.com)  
phone: 260-615-0156

## Liturgy Schedule

10:00 AM Sunday  
St. Mary Magdala  
2800 Rolston Street  
Fort Wayne, IN 46805

## EPIPHANY - BE THE LIGHT!

Epiphany - a manifestation of divinity. We now enter into the season of Epiphany which celebrates many of the ways that Jesus was shown to be God in human flesh, incarnate. This season is a long one this year and goes to the end of February. Yes, Easter will be late this year as the week after the end of Epiphany begins Lent.

The feast of Epiphany is the 12th day of Christmas, January 6, and is celebrated on the following Sunday in many churches. It commemorates the coming of the magi, the wise men from the East who came to honor the new born king of the Jews. Of course, as one commentator said, they may have been learned and wise but they lacked street-smarts or they never would have visited Herod to ask him where this newborn king was located. The Jews who heard this story more than likely rolled around with laughter when Matthew called them "wise men" - as they knew Herod had already killed one of his wives and two of his sons for fear that they would try to usurp his throne. Herod was not friendly to anyone who was seen as a threat to him, especially a newborn king of the Jews. And then, of course, he sent out a party of soldiers, Matthew tells us, to make sure all the 2-year-old and younger boys in Bethlehem were killed. Some argue it never happened because there isn't any external history validation of it but let's face it, Bethlehem at that time was a small town and probably only had 20 or 30 males between 0 and 2 years of age so it wasn't going to make Josephus' news (Josephus was one of the major historians of the age).

Herod is a great character and as with many characters in biblical stories, represents a contemporary issue as well as a historical event. There is a little bit of Herod in a lot of us, perhaps all of us. Is it any different today when power is threatened? When our power is threatened? Today we do hear of people killing babies who threaten them or whose parents threaten them. Muslim babies in Syria, Iraq and other parts of the world. Christian babies in the Sudan and Somalia and Syria and Iraq and Afghanistan. Even parents murdering their own children in our own country. We are complacent to let this murder happen because of our fear of losing power or because

## Community of the Cross Board\* & Clergy Contact Info

Fr. Cliff Polubinsky\*, President, 260-433-1971; e-mail: [c.polubinsky@gmail.com](mailto:c.polubinsky@gmail.com)  
Bishop John Newbauer\*, Treasurer, 260-615-0156 email: [jfn3253@aol.com](mailto:jfn3253@aol.com)  
Sherry Camp\*, Secretary, email: [sgiantcamp@yahoo.com](mailto:sgiantcamp@yahoo.com)  
Anita Carter\* - 486-3178

Bill Hoot\* - 497-0627

Bishop Peter (Robert) Zahrt (Retired Archbishop), 471-6573

Bishop (Ret) Vince Cuestas, 260-797-8123

Mother Joan North (Ret), 413-4306

we feel powerless perhaps.

Bruce Sanguin, in *The Advance of Love: Reading the Bible with An Evolutionary Heart* talks about Herod as being the part of us, each of us, that lives in fear, that is afraid. "Herod, you see, is not crazy. He is or she is merely acting in our defence, or in the gospel story, in the defence of Caesar's kingdom. He (or she) believes that the birth of this Christ child is genuinely a threat to the throne. Likewise, my inner Herod is doing its best to make sure that I don't get hurt, embarrassed, or shamed. It doesn't want me to be put in a position where I might be seen as a fraud, or fail at a calling that is beyond my ego's capacity. So, we need to surface our deepest fears and squarely face how our defence system is keeping us from growing. We need to deal with Herod, not as an evil enemy, but as a frightened defender of the kingdom of the little self."

The Magi, on the other hand, symbolize the presence of sacred Wisdom within. We all have that indwelling, sacred Wisdom, and we need to use it. We just need to outsmart our inner Herod, which is what the Magi do in the story.

Sanguin talks about this being his vision for congregations: "to create an evolutionary culture in which people learn to go beyond fear-based personalities and to increasingly identify with the soul - our Christ self. Think of the soul as the deepest aspect of our identity before it becomes totally identified with Spirit. It forms a bridge between the little self and Spirit. As you move into this transpersonal realm, two things happen simultaneously. At the level of the individual, your unique identity begins to emerge. This is your unique, creative expression and contribution that God or the universe needs from you, the "you" who stands trembling at the evolutionary edge where Spirit has led you. You discover your deep joy. At the same time, your sense of self becomes, paradoxically, more collective. The membrane between you and other people, creatures, plants, stars becomes more permeable as you experience yourself as one part of a much larger whole. You are the part that manifests the whole— a perfect representation of all that is, gathered up in you. This unity of your most creative, unique self and your identification with the whole of reality is your soul."

We are called to Bethlehem, to come to Joy itself. As the angels told the shepherds, "Fear not!" Trust the inner Magi that you have and they will lead you to Bethlehem and you can co-create the world anew. The final detail of the Magi's story is that they left for their own country by another road. That "other road" is pretty much what it means to be Church. Do not give in to fear, be filled with joy! For unto us is born a Savior, a Healer, a new King!  
+John

## REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Pray for Retired Archbishop Peter as he recovers from his third surgery this month. Also remember Bill Hoot and Marilyn Tobolski in your prayers as they deal with their knee problems and possible surgeries as well.

Pray for those who are unemployed or underemployed and for those without homes or heat this winter. Pray for all who depend on the food banks and the charity of others and pray for us to be charitable and generous in our giving.

Pray for those in harm's way, especially the children, in Syria, Palestine and in all places around the world and in our own city. Let us also pray for the victims of domestic violence, of terrorism and gun violence. Jesus also reminds us to pray for our enemies, no matter how difficult that may be.

Let us pray for a sense of outrage at violence of all kinds. Instead of burying domestic violence, let us be outraged about it. Pray for strength to speak out against all forms of violence in our community whether it be gang violence that is killing so many of our people or some other type of violence. Pray for a sense of outrage rather than acceptance and then get involved and direct that outrage at the source.

Pray for our many and varied citizens and those who live here from other countries, whether temporary guests or legal or illegal immigrants. We are all God's children, varied and different though we may be. Keep in mind that in differences we find strengths. This is a basic law of biology and eco-systems. Help us learn from each other the things that help us become better human beings.

Pray for an end to genocide, apartheid and the displacement of people all over the globe. Let go of any form of racism, sexism, homophobia, agism, and any other form of hatred. Pray that we may grow stronger as witnesses for the gospel.

Remember all those who have lost loved ones in recent days and years, especially around this holiday season. Pray for the underemployed, those who need assistance and are having trouble finding it.

Be especially mindful of those who have no one to pray for them, and for those who are alone and lonely.

## READINGS FOR JANUARY

### *Epiphany of the Lord*

#### *January 6, 2017*

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-18

### *Second Sunday after the Epiphany*

#### *January 15, 2017*

Isaiah 49:1-7

Psalm 40:1-11

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

John 1:29-42

### *Third Sunday after the Epiphany*

#### *January 22, 2017*

Isaiah 9:1-4

Psalm 27:1, 4-9

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Matthew 4:12-23

### *Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany*

#### *January 29, 2017*

Micah 6:1-8

Psalm 15

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Matthew 5:1-12

### *Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany*

#### *February 5, 2017*

Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12)

Psalm 112:1-9 (10)

1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)

Matthew 5:13-20

### CLERGY SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY

Date	Sunday	Celebrant
Jan 8	Epiphany	+John
Jan 15	2nd Epiphany	+John
Jan 22	3rd Epiphany	Cliff+
Jan 29	4th Epiphany	+John
Feb 5	5th Epiphany	Cliff+

Radiant Morning Star,  
 you are both guidance and mystery,  
 Visit our rest with disturbing dreams,  
 and our journeys with strange companions.  
 Grace us with the hospitality  
 to open our hearts and homes  
 to visitors filled with unfamiliar wisdom  
 bearing profound and unusual gifts. Amen.

## Some Thoughts from Fr. Richard Rohr

The mystery of Christ is revealed whenever you are able to see the psychic and the physical co-existing, in any moment, in any event, and in any person. God's hope for history seems to be that humanity will one day be able to recognize its own dignity as the divine dwelling place, which it also shares with the rest of creation. (If we cannot honor our own human dignity, how could we possibly recognize and honor the inherent dignity of warblers, winter wheat, or water itself?)

God creates things that create themselves, and we are called to be co-creators with God (Romans 8:28). Rather than Jesus coming to fulfill us, we have come to fulfill the Cosmic Christ (Colossians 1:17-20, 24). Evolution, the idea that something is unfolding and coming to a fullness, is an active, ongoing process. We are all a part of this movement from the ever-growing Cosmic Christ that is coming to be in this one great act of giving birth (Romans 8:22).

I don't know when it will happen or what it will look like to reach the tipping point, for the Christ Mystery to come to fullness. All I know is that this meaning, planted in the middle of things, gives us direction, purpose, hope, and immense self-confidence.

We're still living in the in-between, slowly edging forward, with much resistance and push back. Creation is "groaning in anticipation . . . standing on tiptoe waiting for the revelation of the sons and daughters of God" (Romans 8:22-23). As I write in CAC's recent issue of Oneing, "Evolutionary Thinking":

*Foundational hope demands a foundational belief in a world that is still and always unfolding. . . . To stay on the ride, to trust the trajectory, to know it is moving, and moving somewhere always better, is just another way to describe faith.*

This is the Good News the angels gave Mary and the shepherds in a very specific and concrete way. We can now trust that history - and our small roles within the larger story - is moving in a positive direction. We who know the end from the beginning, who trust the Christ Mystery, must participate in the movement toward union. We **are** the Second Coming of Christ!

*From Fr. Rohr's Advent Letter*



**Indiana Center** *for*  
**Middle East Peace**

**Donald Trump, Islam and the Middle East**

**Thursday, January 12, 6:30pm**  
**Plymouth Congregational Church**  
**501 West Berry Street**  
260.423.9424

A new administration. A promised ban on Muslims and refugees, especially from Syria, to the US. The appointment of a supporter of settlers as Senior Advisor on Israel and a promise to move the US Embassy to Jerusalem. Increased nationalism in the EU, Brexit in England, and growing evidence of Russian involvement in our elections. A threat to “bomb the shit out of ISIS.” The President-Elect has brought with him a number of very alarming issues, but particularly those issues central to the mission of ICMEP.

We’ve assembled an all-star line-up to help us sort through the goals of the new administration and how we can, how we must respond. There will be ample time for Q&A.

The panel will feature the following speakers, with their topics:

**Dr. Carl Jylland Halverson, “Donald Trump on the Home Front: Islam and Refugees”**

Carl is Program Director of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling and Pastoral Counseling Programs at University of Saint Francis. He has recently returned from Jordan where he was volunteering with the Syrian American Medical Society in their work with refugees.

**Dr. Andrew Spath, “Donald Trump and the Middle East”**

Andrew is a Lecturer in Political Science and Middle East Studies at American University in Washington, DC. He teaches courses in “Contemporary Middle East Politics,” “Comparative Authoritarianism,” “Arab-Israeli Relations,” and Arab Politics and Societies.”

**Dr. David Waas, “Donald Trump, Russia, and the EU”**

David is the retired Chair of the Department of History at Manchester University, and a very popular commentator on international relations throughout NE Indiana. Until recently, he held weekly adult classes on contemporary global political issues.

INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TO JOIN YOU FOR THIS IMPORTANT EVENT!!!

We hope you’ll join us on Thursday, January 12, at Plymouth Church, 6:30pm.

**You are the light of the world.**  
**(Sr. Joan Chittister)**

All of life is a paradox, one thing in contest with another, both of them real, both of them true. For instance, to bring light to darkness is not easy. And yet, ironically, it is only darkness that makes light, light. It is only light shined in dark places that pushes back against a horizon full of nothingness and brings new insight to where only blackness had been. This interplay of opposites constitutes the dance of life against death, of meaning against mere routine, of the stretching of boundaries so we may all “have life and have it more abundantly.”

Life itself is the gift of light, a veritable call to dispel darkness. To refuse to give in to darkness is the essence of courage. To be the bearer of light in gloom is salvific. To bear the weight of darkness until it turns to dawn is the universal biography of the human soul. The beauty of these opposites is that no matter how distant the interplay of light and darkness seems to be at any moment in time, no matter how lost we feel in an abyss of pain or loneliness, of fear or anger, of hopelessness or despair, one small beam of light can penetrate and break down the walls of dark and isolated despair.

Most amazing of all, the power of such light is everywhere, is always. Blackness comes gradually but light comes instantly. All that is necessary is that one person ignite it—a match in a cave, a beam on a mountaintop, a flicker in the wind—and the whole world changes. Which is why one act of light can save the world. For when one person sees, we can all see as well. If we only look. If we only watch for the flame of it. If we ourselves will only give the light we were born to share.

We are called in this life to do only one thing and that is to continue the work of creation: to bring light everywhere we go. . . .

The message is clear: Do you want life? Do you want a good life? Do you want the fullness of life for others? Then, you must remember that “you are the light of the world,” called to maintain the Light that shines in darkness, meant to be the Light of Christ in a dark and darkening time.