

## EPIPHANY + 2022

January 6th is the twelfth day of Christmas and the traditional date for the Epiphany.

In many cultures, Epiphany is the day that gifts are exchanged in remembrance of the presentation of gifts to Jesus by the three kings.

I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the gifts I received from many of you during the Christmas season. Thank you for your kindness.

Just as we commemorate this day the Magi bringing their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the Christ child ...

... Jesus wants each of us to present our own particular gifts to him and to others in his name.

The three gifts brought by the Magi are very symbolic:

Gold honors Christ as a king, and represents the generous stewardship of our time, talent, and treasure.

Frankincense honors Christ as God, and represents the gift of our prayer and worship.

Myrrh foreshadows the Passion of Christ, and represents the offering up of our struggles, hardships, and suffering.

Today I suggest that we see ourselves as gifts to those around us and those we meet each day.

There are many ways in which we can share our gifts with others, including the various ministries in the parish

Our various liturgical ministries, Friends in Christ, our Faith Formation Program ... these are important opportunities for us to share our gifts with others.

What a difference it makes to the bereaved when we have people singing in the funeral choir.

The lives of those who receive a visit and Holy Communion brought by a Minister of Care are made so much brighter because of that expression of compassion and concern.

A friendly smile given at the doors of the church can be the reason someone returns again to worship with us.

Your participation in a faith-sharing group can make a lasting difference not only in your own life, but also in the lives of those with whom you gather.

The gifts we offer to others in the name of Jesus are unwrapped by God's grace in ways we may never know.

Our acts of kindness and generosity can be beacons of hope that can shine with the brightness of the star of Bethlehem, leading other seekers to find their way to faith in Christ.

Gold, frankincense, and myrrh ... our treasure, our prayer, and our sacrifices ... these as well as our acts of service are the gifts most precious to God representing as they do the gift to God of our lives.