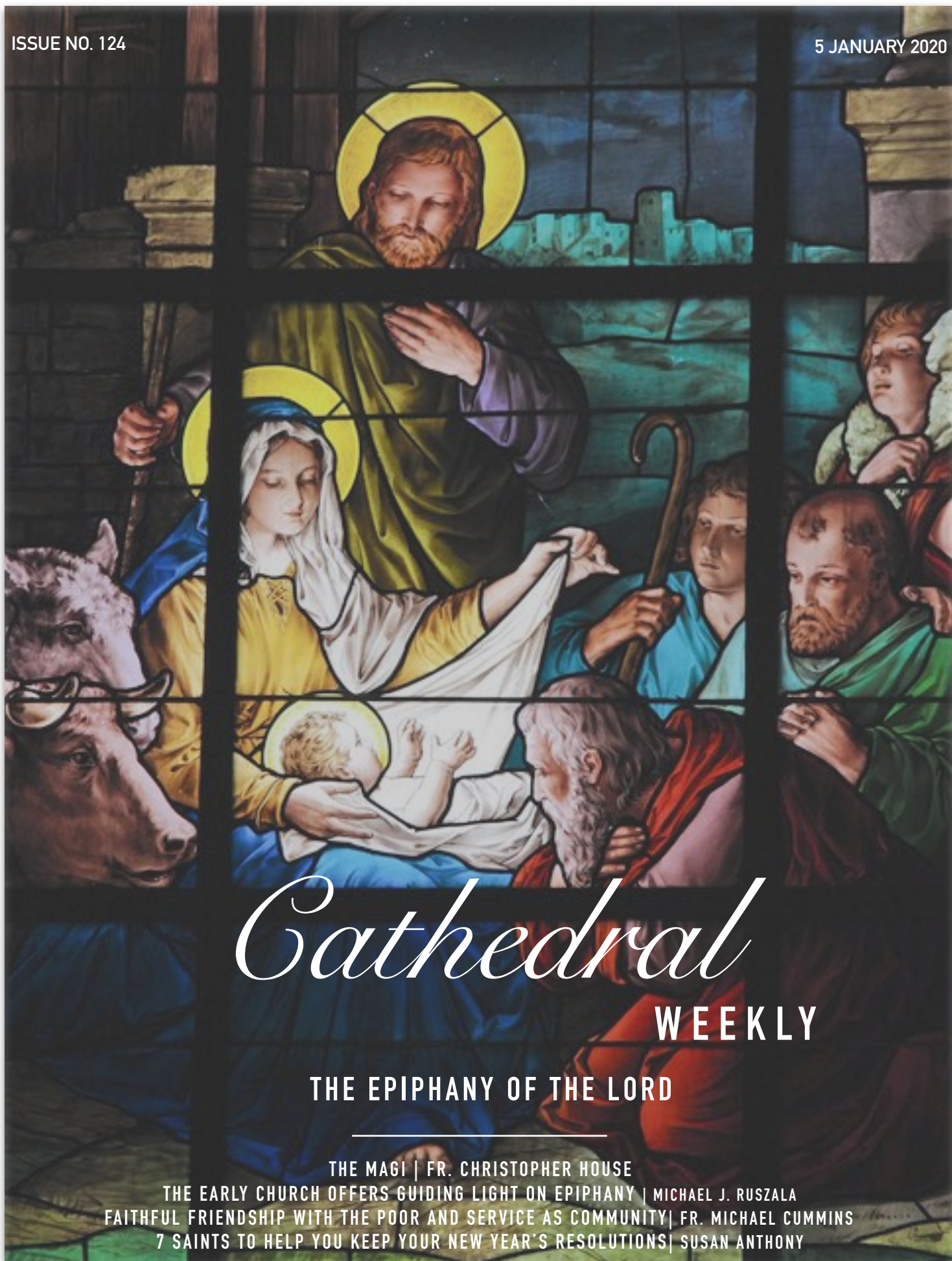


ISSUE NO. 124

5 JANUARY 2020



Cathedral WEEKLY

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

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Cathedral WEEKLY

THE MOST REVEREND THOMAS JOHN PAPROCKI
NINTH BISHOP
OF SPRINGFIELD IN ILLINOIS

THE VERY REVEREND CHRISTOPHER A. HOUSE, V.J.
RECTOR

THE REVEREND MICHAEL FRIEDEL
PAROCHIAL VICAR

THE REVEREND DOMINIC RANKIN
PAROCHIAL VICAR

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SPICATHEDRAL.ORG

Mass Times: SAT 4PM, SUN. 7AM, 10AM, 5PM
Weekday Masses: MON. thru FRI. 7AM, 5:15PM and SAT. 8AM
Reconciliation (Confessions): MON-FRI 4:15PM- 5PM, SAT. 9AM-10AM,
2:30PM-3:30PM, and SUN. 4PM-4:45PM
Adoration: Tuesdays & Thursdays 4PM to 5PM

Diocesan Victim Assistance is available. For the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, please contact: Patricia Kornfield at 321-1155.

Please remember that if you or a loved one is in the hospital, a nursing home or home-bound, to contact the Parish offices or Sr. Francella at 522-3342 x 142. Hospitals may know you are Catholic, but not know you are from Cathedral. We would be happy to visit.

Welcome to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception!

On behalf of our bishop, the Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki, our parishioners, deacons, and priests, I welcome you to the mother church of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

The seat of the diocese was moved to Springfield from Alton in 1923. In the same year, "Old St. Mary's" church of Immaculate Conception Parish was named as the pro-cathedral of the new diocese until this cathedral church was built and dedicated in 1928. Currently, our diocese comprises twenty-eight counties in central Illinois, serving over 140,000 members of the Catholic faithful.

I hope that your visit to our Cathedral is one of grace and beauty and that you feel at home in the mother church. I also hope that you will find this edition of the *Cathedral Weekly* to be both informative and spiritually enriching. May God bless you and yours!



Very Reverend Christopher A. House
Rector

Mass Intentions for the Upcoming Week

Monday – January 6

7 AM DORIS DREA (MIKE & KAREN RELLIHAN)
5:15 PM HELEN F. CALL (CINDY & RICHARD ALLENDER)

Tuesday – January 7

7 AM EDWARD DOMBROWSKI (JOHN BUSCIACCO)
5:15 PM SPECIAL INTENTION FOR ELLEN MATTOX
(SHANA GRAY)

Wednesday – January 8

7 AM LENNART ARNELL (FAMILY)
5:15 PM Katherine Muehl (Family)

Thursday – January 9

7 AM ANNA ELEYIDATH (FAMILY)
5:15 PM Helen F. Call (Ramona Metzger)

Friday – January 10

7 AM ANA ELEYIDATH (FAMILY)
5:15PM JOSEPH KLEIN
(ANDREW & CHERYL KLEIN & FAMILY)

Saturday – January 11

8 AM AUBREY ORSEN ROGERS
(BETTY & GLEN ROGERS)
4 PM JUDITH HUBBELL (FAMILY)

Sunday – January 12

7 AM DORIS MAE DREA (LEO & NORMA DOUGHERTY)
10 AM FOR THE PEOPLE
5 PM Teresa Savarado (David & Mary Beach)



The Magi

As I have shared in the past, ever since I was a kid I have had a fascination with the Magi and that fascination evolved into a religious devotion to these mysterious, sainted travelers. The Gospel of Matthew tells us little about them, and history and Tradition do not tell us much either. Matthew names three gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh and so developed the tradition of three individuals who have been given the names of Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar.

Popularly, we have called them kings and wise men; the former in an attempt to show fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and the latter being possibly more accurate. The Scriptures only give them the title of Magi, plural for mage. Another tradition says that they came representing Europe, Africa, and Asia, but that is probably not the case either. Most historians and Scripture scholars point to their origin as being from ancient Persia, modern day Iran. They were likely followers of Zoroastrianism, which, in its more ancient form, placed an emphasis on the study of the stars by its priests.

Matthew's Gospel tells us that they observed "the star at its rising." What they exactly saw we do not know. Modern day astronomers have suggested a possible supernova or an unusual alignment of planets. The fact that this may have been a natural phenomenon does not in

any way diminish the fact that this sign heralded a supernatural event on earth; after all, does not creation serve its master and creator? More fascinating still is that there is evidence that this astronomical event took place within the constellation of Aries which was the Zodiac sign for Judea and would have lead the Magi to Jerusalem its capital and then on to Bethlehem following their audience with Herod.



Following the star would not have been easy. The journey from Persia to Bethlehem would have been long, difficult and fraught with danger, yet the Magi made the journey. Why? God called them. On their hearts was placed the hope that something wonderful was waiting for them beneath that star. While they were guided by the star's light, it was actually faith and hope that moved them. They did not know where they were going, when the journey would end, or what they would find, but they were called and they went.

So what happened to the Magi? Neither Matthew's Gospel, nor any of the others, tell us anything more about the Magi. There are a few

traditions concerning them that say that they themselves became disciples and were eventually martyred for their faith in Christ. In the fourth century, St. Helena brought many relics from the Holy Land back to Rome and among those relics were the bones of the Magi, however, she took them to Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, not Rome. After a short time, the relics were transferred to Milan where they rested until being transferred to Cologne in 1164, where they remain to this day in its cathedral.

The story of the Magi remains relevant for us as disciples. God is always calling to us, many times through the natural realities of our lives, beckoning us to follow the light that leads to him. The path is not always easy, sometimes we do not know where we are going, and maybe we might ask ourselves at times is the journey worth it? The Magi did indeed find the journey worth it because in presenting their gifts to the Christ child they were given a special gift: the joy that comes from God alone.

Of course, there is a great tragedy in this story and that is Herod and his brutal decision to murder all boys in Bethlehem two years old and younger. God was calling Herod also, not through the star, but through the Magi when they came asking about the new born king. Herod was closed off to everyone but himself and was only concerned with following his own light. God was not seeking Herod's throne or his kingdom, just his faith.

May the grace of this wonderful Solemnity of the Epiphany teach us to guard against being self-referential and closed off, from thinking that life is all about us, and that we have all the answers. May the grace of God open our eyes in faith to behold the many and varied ways that He is seeking to lead us through the challenges and difficulties of this life, to the path that ultimately will lead us to true life in Christ and the joy that He alone gives.

Father Christopher House is the Rector of the Cathedral and serves in various leadership roles within the diocesan curia, namely Chancellor and Vicar Judicial.



The Early Church Offers Guiding Light on Epiphany

First the Son of God took on flesh and was born to the Blessed Virgin. Then his coming and his true identity had to be made known to the world. In a general way, that's what the Solemnity of the

Epiphany commemorates—the start of proclaiming the good news to every creature. More specifically, the solemnity commemorates Christ's manifestation to the wise men, the first Gentiles to believe in him and worship him. The practices of the early Church and the teachings of Pope Leo the Great shed light on the meaning of the Epiphany.

St. Paul writes in his Second Letter to Timothy that God's plan was *"made manifest through the appearance of our savior Christ Jesus"* (2 Timothy 1:10, emphasis added). The Greek for "appearance" comes into our language as "epiphany." The word "epiphany" is defined as "an illuminating discovery, realization, or disclosure" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Now in the work of the New Evangelization, we continue to participate in the wonder of those first epiphanies by making Christ known.

Celebrating Christ Being Made Known

If you were to attend a celebration of the Epiphany in the early local churches in the East, the gospel event actually celebrated would have differed from church to church. Some celebrated the birth of the Lord as the Epiphany. Others celebrated the message to the shepherds and the visit of the wise men. Many associated the Epiphany with the baptism of the Lord and some with his first public miracle at Cana. Some churches celebrated several of these events together as part of the Epiphany.

By the fifth century, the Church in the West had settled on the visit of the Wise Men as the main theme for the Solemnity of the Epiphany, since it is the first manifestation of Christ to the nations. The Epiphany was celebrated twelve days after Christmas on January 6, the date carried over from certain local churches in the East. The solemnity was celebrated for eight days, in what was called the Octave of the Epiphany.



Various cultures developed customs surrounding the Epiphany. In some countries, the Epiphany, rather than Christmas became the day children received their gifts, and they received them from the wise men rather than from Santa Claus. Some cultures developed traditions involving "kings' cake" that had a figurine of the Baby Jesus inside it. Others marked the solemnity by inscribing the traditional initials of the Wise Men together with the numerals of the new year with blessed chalk over the entrance door of the house. Today, following Pope Paul VI's revised calendar, the Epiphany is celebrated on the Sunday that falls between January 2 and January 8, toward the end of the Christmas Season.

Pope Leo the Great on the Epiphany of the Wise Men

Now let's look exclusively at the Solemnity of the Epiphany as celebrated in the early western Church, in continuity with our own celebration of it. Pope St. Leo the Great, who reigned from 440 to 461 as Bishop of Rome, wrote an insightful series of sermons on the Solemnity of the Epiphany. Pointing out that the Gospel of the day told the story of the Wise Men's visit, the Epiphany for Pope Leo was clearly on that theme and was a necessary follow-up to Christmas. Christ is not only born but revealed, and revealed not only to Israel but to the ends of the earth.

Like Leo, most of us are not in the bloodline of Abraham, the patriarch. The epiphany of the Wise Men, so early in Matthew's Gospel, shows that we too have become part of God's plan. God has fulfilled his word to the

prophet Isaiah:

"The Lord has laid bare His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the nations upon earth have seen the salvation which is from the Lord our God" (Isaiah 52:10, as quoted in Leo's Sermon 36 on NewAdvent.org).

In the visit of the Wise Men, Pope Leo also sees the fulfillment of God's covenant promises to Abraham. God promised Abraham that all peoples would be blessed through him (Genesis 12:3), that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky (Genesis 15:5), that he would be a father of many nations (Genesis 17:4), and that kings would come from him (Genesis 17:6).

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For the Wise Men, the appearance of the great star meant the birth of a king, and this king was a descendent of Abraham. Further, this great star was the mode of invitation to the first Gentile believers, opening the door to countless peoples to join the covenant family of Abraham. For Pope Leo, these countless believers—ourselves included—are called to likewise be a multitude of guiding stars to others. By the witness of a holy life, we are called to point the way to Christ for others (Sermon 33). Pope Leo teaches that such a great grace and wonder behooves us to come together to praise God in a special solemnity (Sermon 34).

This great star was an invitation to the first Gentile believers, opening the door to countless peoples to join the covenant family of Abraham.

Pope Leo was famous in history for his Tome, delivered by his emissary at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Upon hearing his words upholding the natures and person of Christ, the bishops at the council exclaimed, “Peter has spoken through Leo.” In his sermons on the Epiphany, Pope Leo shows confidence that the Holy Spirit revealed even to the Wise Men the truth of Christ being fully human and fully divine while united in (what future theologians would describe as) one divine person. Pope Leo teaches that we can perceive this from the gifts the Wise Men offered (Sermon 31).

The epiphany of the Wise Men shows God’s faithfulness to his promises of old and also prompts us to share his love with others. Pope Leo’s sermons are very conscious of God’s action in history. He connects the gospel both with the past and the present and teaches for transformation and conversion in Christ. He also stands with the Wise Men in awe of God’s power, love, mercy, and fidelity.

His approach must be ours as well for the Epiphany:

“Today those joys must be entertained in our hearts which existed in the breasts of the three magi, when, aroused by the sign and leading of a new star, which they believed to have been promised, they fell down in presence of the King of heaven and earth” (Sermon 36).

Michael J. Ruszala is the author of several religious books, including Lives of the Saints: Volume I and Who Created God? A Teacher’s Guidebook for Answering Children’s Tough Questions about God. He holds a master of arts degree in theology & Christian ministry from Franciscan University of Steubenville. He has served for a number of years as a parish director of religious education, parish music director in the Diocese of Buffalo, and adjunct lecturer in religious studies at Niagara University in Lewiston, NY. For more information about Michael and his books, visit michaelruszala.com.



Faithful Friendship with the Poor and Service as Community

How we do something is just as important as why we do it. As Christians, we are well aware of the injunction to serve the poorest and the most vulnerable. The

prophets of Israel continually challenged the Hebrew people with this message and berated them for ignoring it. Our Lord Jesus himself makes it the criteria for judgment and distinction between the “sheep” and the “goats” in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew’s Gospel. “...when I was hungry ... thirsty ... a stranger ... naked ... sick ... in prison ...”

In a general sense, we have the “why” down. It is important to serve the poor. God wants us to. We will be judged on how we treat others. Our awareness of the dignity of the human person calls us to service. We have received so we, in turn, must give. Christ has a love for the poor so we, as his

disciples, must also love the poor. There are blessings and life to be found in serving the poor. These and many more reasons make up the “why” of service.

The “how” is of more debate. Are the poor best served by advocating for justice, lobbying Congress, developing programs, volunteering at a soup kitchen, requiring service hours, helping people to help themselves, attending a fundraiser or adopting a child for a Christmas Angel Tree? Should we stick with just

immediate needs or, as the moral tale goes, head up-stream in order to determine the source and font of the unease and violence of poverty? When it comes to the “how” things seem to quickly get very complicated – even political and partisan.

I do not pretend a full answer to the “how” of serving the poor. But I would like to propose two helpful principles in guiding service to the poor that I, personally, have learned from the Community of Sant’Egidio; both of which, I believe, are firmly rooted in the gospel message. The first is faithful

friendship with the poor and the second is service as a community.



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It is a truism that there are unintended consequences to all actions we take, even the most altruistic and kind-hearted. More and more often, I find myself wondering if many of our common approaches to service to the poor might actually have the effect of highlighting the poor as a “means to an end” rather than as a person and therefore, a possible friend. We go to the nursing home to get our service hours. We participate in a Thanksgiving Day meal or a Christmas gift program in order to feel and understand what the season is about. We serve the poor to get God’s favor. Clubs, fraternities, schools, organizations and businesses get recognition for what they do for the disadvantaged.

I do not mean to downplay the great good that is occurring and also the sincere effort but I would like to raise a simple question: “Why not the possibility of simple friendship with the poor?” Is it so strange a concept? When the poor are viewed solely as a means to an end then, yes, it is a strange concept and one that a right thinking person would not even bother with. When it is recognized that friendship is possible well, then that changes things. Friends have expectations, friends make demands, true friendship takes time, commitment and faithful presence to grow yet friendship also fulfills a deep yearning of every human heart and true friendship affords a unique and important dynamic in helping oneself grow in authentic personhood. In the Community of Sant’Egidio it is said that the only thing the poor have to give is their desire that we return. Is this not the human condition before God?

Service to the poor that affords, encourages and even “structures in” the possibility of friendship should be a guiding principle of all Christian service. The term “structures in” might need some development. Let me do so by sharing an example. Every Christmas, the communities of Sant’Egidio are encouraged to offer a Christmas Day Meal or “Pranzo” for the poor. The community in Johnson City, TN has done this for a few years now. After the first year I proudly reported that we had offered a nice buffet style dinner for a good number of people. A little later Paola, the community president in the U.S., gently encouraged me to consider for the next year a sit-down style dinner with the poor being served as if they were at a restaurant – probably a common experience for many people but not so common for the poor. How we do things is important. Can we look at what we do, can we tweak it in such a way that dignity is acknowledged and therefore friendship is possible? It may take a little more effort, a little more creativity on our part to “structure in” for the possibility for friendship but this little bit extra does set a truly important tone and perspective.

As far as I know, Jesus never sent any person out alone on mission. When disciples went out on mission, sent by our Lord, they went out as at least two. There is value in community and there is value in serving the poor as a community. When I serve with others I have someone to share my thoughts with, I have someone to share a word or an insight when I might be lacking, I have another to share concern with and think new possibilities – other sets of eyes and ears, other hearts to care and minds to imagine. When I am alone in my service I have none of this. Recognizing how our Lord himself sent out his disciples in community, Sant’Egidio encourages service and friendship with the poor to be lived as community and not alone and individual. On our own we are too easily lost and too easily disillusioned. Service can easily become rigid and perfunctory. My experience is that a moment with the poor often has an Emmaus dynamic to it – the Lord is present but we often only recognize him in hindsight as our hearts burn within us and as we share together. It is good for disciples to serve together and it is good for disciples to share together. Apparently, Jesus thought so.

How we do something is just as important as why. Faithful friendship with the poor and serving as community are two truly important components of the “how” of Christian service.



Fr. Michael Cummins is a priest of the Diocese of Knoxville, TN.

Ordained in 1995, he has served in a variety of roles within his diocese. Currently he is serving as pastor of St. Dominic Church in Kingsport, TN. Fr. Cummins holds a Masters of Divinity and Licentiate in Sacred Theology from the University of St. Mary of the Lake (Mundelein Seminary) in Chicago. He has a deep interest in Christian Anthropology and the interaction between faith and culture. In 2004, Fr. Cummins encountered the Community of Sant’Egidio while leading a pilgrimage in Rome. Since then, he has been a member of this recognized lay ecclesial movement and draws much strength from the Community’s vision of prayer, faithful friendship with the poor and work for peace.



7 Saints to Help You Keep Your New Year's Resolutions

I confess: I've never been particularly successful at keeping New Year's resolutions because I'm more successful at finding excuses to ignore them. In years past I've been sidetracked by crowded gyms, the sniffles, and my general inability to resist temptation. This year, I decided I need some extra help, so I'm turning to the saints. I'm used to asking for the intercession of saints for big concerns, for example, laying my parenting woes at the feet of St. Monica, or asking for St. Peregrine's support for a friend battling cancer. But what about intercession for life's more mundane issues? Studies show we are more successful reaching goals when we enlist the help of a friend, and who better than our saint friends? Here are a few of my resolutions with the saints who will help me stay on track in 2019.

Getting in shape with St. Sebastian, Pope St. John Paul II, and St. Expeditus

Getting more exercise is a perennial New Year's resolution for me. I thought I'd turn to the patron of athletes, St. Sebastian, or Pope St. John Paul II, well known for his athleticism and love of the outdoors. But my gym time flailing doesn't quite rise to the level of athleticism and John Paul II surely has more important intercessions and Sebastian is also the patron of those wishing a saintly death. (While I feel like dying when I exercise, I don't think I'm likely to actually meet my demise and certainly not in a saintly way.) Honestly, my real issue is one of procrastination and lack of motivation. So, I think I need to turn to St. Expeditus, patron of procrastinators. In the early days of the Church, Roman soldier Expeditus, when about to convert to Christianity, was tempted by the devil (in the form of a crow) telling him to "wait until tomorrow." Expeditus wouldn't be swayed from his goal saying, "No. Today I will become a Christian." That's just the determination I need on those mornings when I'm tempted to say to myself, "Maybe I'll just go to the gym tomorrow."

Being more organized with St. Benedict and St. Zita

Another one of my resolutions this year is to finally get more organized. I've tried old-school to-do lists and digital solutions, but I still feel overwhelmed keeping up with my schedule, my responsibilities, and of course, the stacks of magazines and mail that threaten to swallow up my desk. While St. Expeditus can help with my general procrastination, I might need to consult an organizational expert on this one. I thought of St. Benedict, whose "rules" set out how to efficiently run a monastery. Then I read that Benedict was so strict in his organizational skills that some of his fellow brothers tried to poison him. Maybe I will ask for his help sparingly. St. Zita, the patron of homemakers and house cleaners might be a gentler and more accessible choice to support me. She managed to keep up with the daunting level of chores her demanding employer required while never missing Mass. And all in the days before dishwashers and washing machines.

Overcoming bad habits with St. Jude and St. Charles Borromeo

A brand new calendar year brings a sense of new possibilities. While your vision of the new-improved-you might not be the same as mine, we all crave the fresh start New Year's resolutions can bring. But if you're like me, after starting strong your enthusiasm and energy flag. Asking a saint to intercede on our behalf is like having an accountability partner, someone who either encountered the same challenges in life or is a role model for the goal we wish to achieve. So maybe you don't need the help of St. Expeditus or St. Zita, but St. Jude, the patron saint of hopeless causes, might be able to support you in your quest to finally quit smoking or St. Charles Borromeo, who was unable to eat what he liked due to stomach issues, can help in your struggle to lose weight. Ask them to intercede for you, trusting that they know the challenges you're facing. It's good to know you have a friend in heaven.

Susan Anthony is the mother emeritus to three grown sons and blogs with her lifelong friend Anne at www.yallneedjesusblog.com.

Stewardship Activity

Stewardship of Prayer:

What will you do this year to grow deeper in a relationship with Jesus through prayer? Make sure to write it down, share it with a loved one, or place it somewhere you will see the goal regularly!

Stewardship of Service:

Are you interested in joining the Cathedral or becoming more involved? Reach out to the parish offices to get connected!

Stewardship of Gifts

Stewardship of Treasure December 22nd & 23rd

Envelopes:	\$6,659.00
Loose:	\$2,467.16
Maintenance:	\$10.00

Total: \$9,136.16

Stewardship of Treasure December 28th & 29th

Envelopes:	\$4,986.00
Loose:	\$2,455.60
Maintenance:	\$

Total: \$7,441.60

November EFT: \$19,650.30