

The Epiphany of the Lord

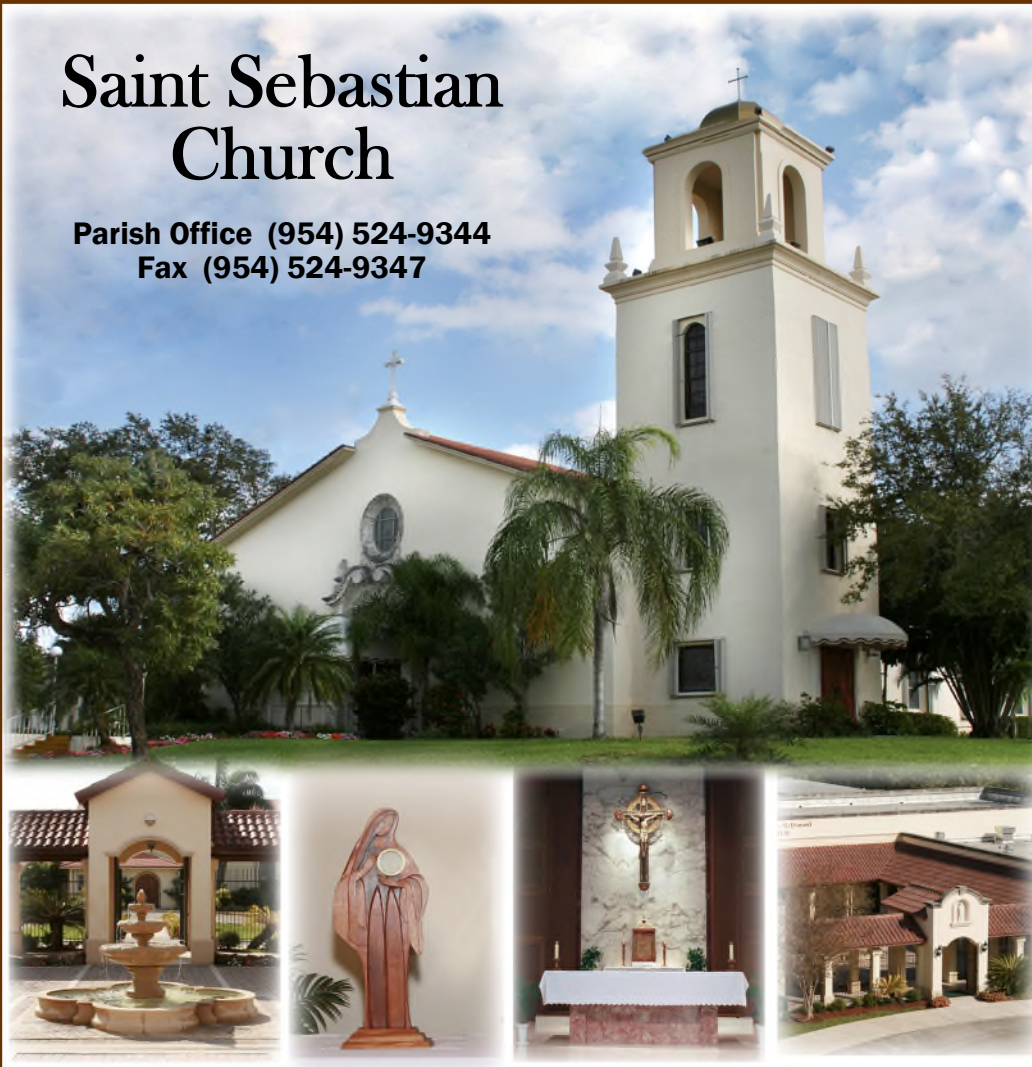
2000 Marietta (S.E. 25th) Avenue

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316

info@stsebastianfl.org

Saint Sebastian Church

Parish Office (954) 524-9344
Fax (954) 524-9347



MASSES

Saturday 5 pm
(Sunday Vigil)

Sunday 8:30 & 11 am

Weekdays 8:30 am
(Mon. through Fri.)

Holy Days
(Schedule varies)

PARISH STAFF

Rev. Ernest Biriruka
Pastor

Miss Anne M. Gardner
Pastoral Assistant

Ms. Judy Fisher
Office Assistant

Mr. Peter J. Manfredi, Jr.
Director of Music
(954) 868-6137

Ms. Cathy Spitzer
Vocalist

Mr. Patricio Diaz-Pizarro
Maintenance

PASTORAL COUNCIL

Nancy Adams
Elizabeth Calhoun
Judy Fisher
Rosemary Guerin
Frank Krauser
Richard Page
Connie Reed
Chuck Wobby

PARISH WEBSITE:

stsebastianfl.org

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

is arranged by appointment. Please call the office.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

(Confession) 4:00-4:45 pm on Saturday, or by appointment.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE SICK Please call the office as soon as anyone is seriously ill.

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY Please call the office at least six months in advance of the proposed wedding date.

PARISH REGISTRATION We invite anyone wishing to register in our Parish to visit or call the Parish Office, or stop by the Welcome table when you come for Sunday Mass to complete a census card and learn more about our Parish



Mission Statement

We, the family of St. Sebastian Parish, are a stewardship parish, sharing God's Gifts. We are the hands and feet of Christ on Earth. In union with the Universal Roman Catholic Church, we endeavor to become a prayerful and unified community deeply committed to Jesus Christ, and loving service in His name. We hope to be a welcoming, caring and friendly Parish Family, wherein the gifts and talents of all - young and old - are recognized, nurtured and used to build the Kingdom of God in the world.

From the desk of our Pastor, Father Ernest

THE EPIPHANY OF JESUS TO THE MAGI

(Extracts from “*Jesus of Nazareth*” by Pope Benedict XVI)

Who were the “Magi”?

First, though, we have to ask what sort of people they were, these “Magi” from the “land of sunrise,” as Mathew calls them. In the relevant sources, the concept of Magi encompasses a wide range of meanings, from the wholly positive to the wholly negative.

According to the first of the four principal meanings, Magi are understood to be members of the Persian priestly caste. In Hellenistic culture they were regarded as “rulers of a distinctive religion,” but at the same time their religious ideas were thought to be “strongly influenced by philosophy,” so that the Greek philosophers have often been portrayed as their pupils. No doubt this view contains some not easily definable element of truth: after all, Aristotle himself spoke of the philosophical work of the Magi.

If these wise men, led by the star to search for the king of the Jews, represent the movement of the Gentiles toward Christ, this implies that the cosmos speaks of Christ, even though its language is not yet fully intelligible to man in his present state. The language of creation provides a great many pointers. It gives man an intuition of the Creator. Moreover, it arouses the expectation, indeed the hope, that this God will one day reveal himself. And at the same time it elicits an awareness that man can and should approach him. But the knowledge that emerges from creation and acquires concrete form in the religions, can also become disoriented, so that it no longer prompts man to transcend himself, but induces him to lock himself into systems with which he believes he can, in some way, oppose the hidden powers of the world.

In our story both elements can be seen: in the first instance, the star leads the wise men as far as Judea. It is quite natural that their search for the newborn king of the Jews should take them to Israel’s royal city and to the king’s palace. That, surely, is where the future king must have been born. Then they need the direction provided by Israel’s sacred Scriptures - the words of the living God - in order to find the way once and for all to David’s true heir.

The Fathers have emphasized a further aspect. Gregory Nazianzen says that at the very moment when the Magi adored Jesus, astrology came to an end, as the stars from then on traced the orbit determined by Christ.

The wise men do a *proskynesis* before the royal child, that is to say they throw themselves onto the ground before him. This is the homage that is offered to a divine king. The gifts brought by the wise men may be explained in similar terms. They are not practical gifts, of a kind that the holy family might have had a use for at this moment. They express the same thing as the *proskynesis*: they acknowledge the royal dignity of him to whom they are offered. Gold and incense are also mentioned in Isaiah 60:6 as gifts of homage that the Gentiles will place before the God of Israel.

In the Church’s tradition - with certain variations - the three gifts have been thought to represent three aspects of the mystery of Christ: The gold points to Jesus’ kingship, the incense to his divine sonship, the myrrh to the mystery of his Passion.

The myrrh actually appears in Saint John’s Gospel after the death of Jesus: John tells us that Nicodemus had prepared myrrh, among other ointments, for the anointing of Jesus’ body (cf. John 19:39). Through the myrrh, then, the mystery of the Cross is once again associated with Jesus’ kingship and mysteriously proclaimed in the worship offered by the wise men. Anointing is an attempt to resist death, which only becomes definitive with decomposition. By the time the women came to the tomb to anoint the body on Easter morning - a task that could not be carried out on the evening of the crucifixion because of the approaching feast day - Jesus had already risen. He no longer needed myrrh as a protection against death, because God’s life itself had overcome death.

Mass Intentions

SAVE THE DATE

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Saturday 5:00 pm | January 6 For the People of Ukraine & the Middle East |
| Sunday 8:30 am | January 7 † Charles & Marie Maher, req. by Maher Family |
| 11:00 am | Living & Deceased of our Parish |
| Monday 8:30 am | January 8 Priests & Religious of our Archdiocese |
| Tuesday 8:30 am | January 9 For the People of Ukraine |
| Wednesday 8:30 am | January 10 Wellbeing of Marcia Hogan, req. by Barry Hogan |
| Thursday 8:30 am | January 11 For Peace in the Middle East |
| Friday 8:30 am | January 12 Priests & Religious of our Archdiocese |
| Saturday 5:00 pm | January 13 Living & Deceased of our Parish |
| Sunday 8:30 am | January 14 † Pat Cicci, req. by Anna Marie Pierotti |
| 11:00 am | For Peace in the World |

Friday, January 19 - Men's Club Italian Dinner

Saturday, January 20 - Father Ernest's 70th Birthday Celebration

Weekend of January 27-28 - St. Vincent de Paul truck here.

Friday, February 9 - Men's Club Dance Class

Let us be sure that among our New Year's resolutions, we include our continued support of the needy in our city with our donations of non-perishable food and hygiene items. This year, may we increase our donations so that our church shopping carts overflow with these items! To care is to share. **PLEASE REMEMBER:** The Pantry needs **plastic grocery bags** for food distribution and empty, clean (6 or 12) **egg cartons**. You can place these items in the shopping carts. Thank you!

If you know of anyone in need, please tell them that a drive thru grocery distribution takes place every Friday from 1:30-4 PM at Blessed Sacrament Church, 1701 E Oakland Park Blvd (entrance to parking lot on NE 33rd Street and closes at 3:15). First timers must provide proof of residency in Broward County.



SPECIAL COLLECTION NEXT WEEK

Next week our special collection supports the Church in Latin America. For many in Latin America and the Caribbean, a rising secular culture, difficult rural terrain, and a shortage of ministers make it difficult for people to practice the faith. Your donations fund catechesis, family life programs, and seminarian formation, so that people can grow closer to Christ. Please support our brothers and sisters in Latin America and the Caribbean, and use the specially designated envelopes for your gift to this appeal. Thank you

MEN'S CLUB ITALIAN DINNER

The Men's Club Italian Dinner is scheduled for Friday, January 19th. Tickets are \$40. per person and includes Italian Spaghetti with 2 meatballs, salad, bread, dessert, and beer & wine. Tickets are available at the church doors this weekend and next, and in the Parish Office during the week.

MEN'S CLUB MEETING

The Men's Club will meet next Sunday, January 14th, right after the 8:30 am Mass in the Parish Hall.

FATHER ERNEST'S 70TH BIRTHDAY!

Please join for dinner and dancing to help celebrate Father Ernest's 70th Birthday on Saturday, January 20th, beginning at 6:00 pm in our Parish Hall. R.S.V.P. to conchi0318@gmail.com by January 8, - **this Monday!**

BEWARE OF SCAMMERS!

Several of our parishioners have received emails - supposedly from Father Ernest - asking for gift cards. **THIS IS A SCAM!** No one associated with St. Sebastian will make this kind of request, so please do not be fooled. If you have doubt as to whether or not an email or text message, etc., has legitimately been sent through the Parish Office you should phone the office and speak with a "real live person" to check it out.

REMEMBER THE SICK

Mary Lou Mann, Suzanne Plum, Don Loughran, Jr., Sandy Rodrigues, John Harris, Stephen Black, Alvaro Arevalo, Paul Ristow, Matt Keyzers, Judy Flood, Sister Frances Voss, O.S.C., Tom Casey, Charles Benoit, Rob Messerschmidt, Mary Pat Connolly, Anne McCormick, Patricia Moss, Patty Marma, Diane Johnson, Jim Guerin, Susan Lochrie, Agnes McCauley, Teri Beth Gooch, Ray Wicklander, Kathy Mahoney, Lila Ferzacca, Cash Dugan, Harriette Sessa, Barry Hogan, Ann Maher

BIBLE SHARING

Come for coffee and Scripture Sharing each Thursday in the Parish Hall at 9:15 am. Everyone is invited. You may also join us online by dialing 848-777-1212. When prompted put in 1431434#. For more info, call Mary Kennedy at 954-290-1194. We will be sharing from the Book of Daniel with Miriam Rivas facilitating.

R.C.I.A.

Classes for those wishing to become Catholic as well as those wishing to learn more about our Faith meet on the first and third Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm. For more information and to register, please call the Parish Office.

MASS STIPENDS

As of January 1, 2024, we ask that a donation of \$10. be given when a Mass is requested at St. Sebastian. This should be done at the time the Mass is requested through the Parish Office.

REGISTRATION

If you attend Mass at St. Sebastian regularly, please become a registered member of our parish. Complete a registration form (found at the Welcome Table at the main entrance of the church or by calling the office). Thank you.



Men's Club of St. Sebastian Church Hosting Annual

SPAGHETTI  **DINNER**

Friday, January 19, 2024

Doors open 6:00 pm ~ Dinner at 6:30 pm



**Traditional
Italian Cuisine
and Live Entertainment**

\$\$ 50/50 Raffle \$\$

Reserved Tables Available

Tickets available in the Office or after all Masses

Advance Dinner Ticket: \$40

No Refunds Please

Call to reserve your Table or Individual Tickets (954) 524-9344

St. Sebastian Church * 2000 SE 25th Avenue, Ft. Laud. 33316