



*Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel*  
*627 East 187<sup>th</sup> Street*  
*Bronx, New York 10458*  
*718.295.3770*

**FROM THE DESK OF FATHER JONATHAN**

**January 6, 2019**

In our Catholic liturgy, the Christmas Season continues! Just as we used Advent to increase our prayer and fasting, this is the time to give thanks to God for his coming and to celebrate that in our families and parish.

The Christmas season comes to an end on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, this year on January 13th.

This weekend we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. Our Lord revealed himself as messiah and redeemer of all the nations, represented by the kings or “magi” who had come from the East. Below is a short description of the meaning and traditions of this great feast.

But before that, just a reminder that we will be giving our gifts to hundreds of children today in Fatima Hall at 3:00pm. Thank you all for generously donating these gifts which are so meaningful for the children and so appreciated by their hardworking parents.

“Epiphany is commonly known as Three Kings’ Day or the Feast of the Epiphany. It means “manifestation” or “showing forth”. It is also called Theophany (“manifestation of God”), especially by Eastern Christians. Epiphany refers not only to the day itself but to the church season that follows it – a season that has a varied length because it ends when Lent begins, and this depends on the date of Easter.

It commemorates the first two occasions on which Jesus’ divinity, according to Christian belief, was manifested: when the three kings (also known as wise men or Magi) visited infant Jesus in Bethlehem, and when John the Baptist baptized him in the River Jordan. The Roman Catholic and Protestant churches emphasize the visit of the Magi when they celebrate the Epiphany. The Eastern Orthodox churches focus on Jesus’ baptism.

Epiphany is one of the oldest Christian feasts. It was celebrated since the end of the second century, before the Christmas holiday was established. Like other Christian seasons, the church appropriated Epiphany from an old pagan festival. As early as 1996 BCE, the Egyptians celebrated the winter solstice (which then occurred on January 6) with a tribute to Aeon, the Virgin. It is important to note that the holiday was established prior to the Gregorian calendar’s introduction.”

God bless, Father Jonathan