



## You're a Star!

The agnostic British philosopher Bertrand Russell (who died in 1970), once spoke of what he would say if it turned out that there was a God after all. He would ask God: 'If you wanted me to believe in you, you should have given me more evidence.' Russell's comment may appear to be smug, but it is a cry from the heart. A yearning to see and to believe that God is real, that life is not meaningless.

It is hard to believe today. A child who is dying of an incurable illness, the plight of refugees, wars that seem to be motivated by religion and natural disasters that so violently and indiscriminately claim the lives of thousands. If our world really was created by a good and loving creator, then how could this god, allow all this to happen. We might say to God, 'you're making it awfully hard to believe in you.' It is a question that we have all asked at some time.

Today, the Church celebrates the feast of the Epiphany. The Greek word *epiphaneia* means manifestation: led by a star, God was manifested in the flesh to the Magi and to the world. For our Orthodox brothers and sisters today is their proper celebration of the Birth of Christ.

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Perhaps we could phrase Russell's question in another way. 'Lord, if you wanted me to find you, why did you not show me a star?' It seems that our world today is short of 'stars.' Herein lies the paradox of our faith. God truly is Emmanuel - God is with us. But God can only be experienced and become real for others if we choose to be the presence of God to them.

The Gospel today contrasts the actions of the Magi and Herod. The Magi sought the presence of God with an open heart and mind. They searched for signs and followed them until they found Christ. Herod, on the other hand, cares only for himself. Herod has the children killed, expecting to rid the world of God's manifestation and remain in power. It is precisely these kinds of actions that cause people to doubt the reality and the presence of God.

In today's world, the actions of many sow the seeds of doubt and unbelief. But the vast majority, are still searching for the presence of God in their lives. They are pleading with God to show them a star.

By the conduct and witness of your life, by sharing with others how you have experienced salvation in Christ, by accompanying people in their journey of faith and life, - you lead people to Jesus. You are the Star.

**Reflection by Gerard Louis, CSSR**

# Novena notes



Epiphany Of The Lord  
 Year C  
 6<sup>th</sup> January 2019

## Readings & Responses for the Week

Sun, 6 January Epiphany Of The Lord	Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3,5-6; Mt 2:1-12 All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.
Mon, 7 January St. Raymond of Penyafort, Priest	1 Jn 3:22-4:6; Mt 4:12-17,23-25 I will give you the nations for your heritage.
Tue, 8 January	1 Jn 4:7-10; Mk 6:34-44 All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.
Wed, 9 January	1 Jn 4:11-18; Mk 6:45-52 All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.
Thu, 10 January	1 Jn 4:19-5:4; Lk 4:14-22 All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.
Fri, 11 January	1 Jn 5:5-13; Lk 5:12-16 O praise the Lord, Jerusalem!
Sat, 12 January	1 Jn 5:14-21; Jn 3:22-30 The Lord takes delight in his people.

WEEKDAY MASS (MON - FRI)  
 Time: 6.30am, 12.15pm, 6.30pm  
 Confession: Half an hour before Mass

SUNSET MASS (SAT)  
 Time: 6.30pm

SUNDAY MASS  
 Time: 8am, 10am, 12noon, 5.30pm

PUBLIC HOLIDAY  
 Time: 8am, 6.30pm

SATURDAY MORNING MASS  
 Time: 7am

SATURDAY NOVENA DEVOTION  
 English: 8am, 9.30am, 11am, 1pm, 4pm, 5.30pm  
 Mandarin: 2.30pm  
 Confession: After every Novena Service except after the 11am service.

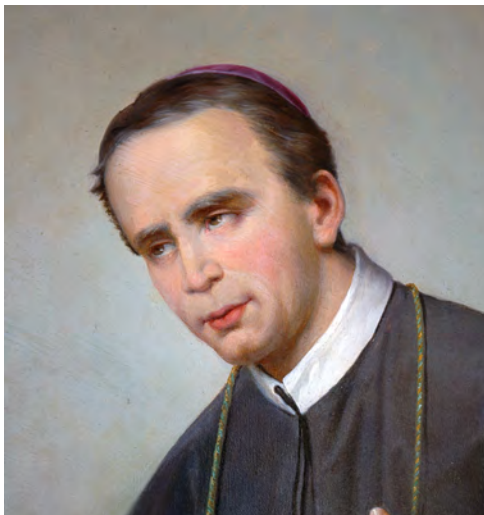
DAYS OF OBLIGATION  
 Time: 7pm (Eve of Day of Obligation)  
 6.30am, 12.15pm, 7pm

# Novena notes

## 5 January, Feast of St. John Nepomucene Neumann, Bishop

John Neumann was born in Prachatitz in Bohemia (Czech Republic) on March 28, 1811. He studied theology at the seminary of Budweis. Zealous for the missionary life and wanting to lead souls to Christ, he decided to leave his homeland to dedicate himself to the European immigrants in America, who were deprived of spiritual support.

He was ordained a priest by the bishop of New York, and gave himself to the pastoral care of people in the vast area around Niagara Falls. Since he wanted to live in a religious community that corresponded more closely to his missionary vocation, he entered the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. He was professed on January 16, 1842.



He filled the role of vice-provincial of the Redemptorists from 1846 to 1849, after which he became the parish priest of St. Alphonsus Church in Baltimore. In 1852, at the age of forty-two, he was named bishop of Philadelphia.

As a worthy son of St. Alphonsus, he made a vow never to lose a minute of time. As a bishop, he was holy and tireless. He visited his vast diocese, on one occasion travelling more than twenty-five miles of mountain roads by mule in order to confirm a young boy who was sick.

On January 5, 1860, he died suddenly of a heart attack on a street in Philadelphia. He was beatified during the Second Vatican Council on October 13, 1963, and was canonized on June 19, 1977. In the homily on the occasion of his canonization, Paul VI summarized the activity of the new saint in these words: "He was close to the sick, he loved to be with the poor, he was a friend of sinners, and now he is the glory of all emigrants."

## Tagalog Mass

Please take note there will be a Tagalog Mass on 13<sup>th</sup> January at 12 noon.

## Donations

We have now made cashless donations to the Church possible for your ease and convenience.

You may use the following steps if you would like to make a donation electronically or via a cashless method.



You may wish to donate to the following:

Please scan the QR-Code that corresponds with your intention:

Maintenance Fund



Redemptorist Seminary



Redemptorist Community



## Novena Church Altar Servers Annual Recruitment Drive 2019

The Novena Church Altar Servers are recruiting new members to the ministry. There is no minimum age to join but there are basic requirements. Interested parties may pick up a form from the reception office. Registration closes on 30<sup>th</sup> January.

Please note that the next recruitment drive will only take place in January 2020.



## Catholic Junior College Open House 2019

Inviting all interested students, especially those who have sat for their 'O' Level Exams to the CJC Open House. It will take place one day after the release of the 'O' Level results.

Time: 10am to 4pm