

HOMILY
THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
JANUARY 4, 2026

About 1 ½ months ago we had the public launch of the Restructuring of the Archdiocese of Detroit. We heard that this is necessary because of the priest shortage and the decreasing numbers of Catholics attending Mass regularly. The parishes were established at a time when there were many more Catholics in the AOD, and we now have many more buildings than we need or can maintain. You have not heard much about this since. They have been gathering information from the priests. In two weeks the priests will be meeting for three full days to work on the plan. The next thing to happen for you is the listening sessions in the parishes this spring. It looks like we will see some big changes.

Today we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany. The magi saw a star and they came to Jerusalem from the east to find the newborn king of the Jews. The star was a big event in their lives and it disrupted the magi's world and set them on a journey. When King Herod heard this, he was troubled and he assembled the chief priests and the scribes. Now the Jewish people had been waiting for the Messiah for many years. The prophets foretold the coming of the Messiah and they knew about the star, but they did not go to find Christ. Why do you think that was? I think they knew that their lives would change and they were comfortable where they were. They had the three years of Jesus' public ministry to accept him, but they were not able to do that. It took visitors from the east who were not so personally invested in what existed at the time to look for Christ. And I think they were particularly sensitive to the guidance they were receiving from God, who directed them in a dream not to return to Herod to protect Christ, and they followed that guidance.

We have stars that appear in our lives at times, things that shake up our lives and send us on a journey. I bring up the Restructuring of the Archdiocese of Detroit because this is something that may shake up all of our lives. Actually, I think the star that appeared was the priest shortage. We have been talking about this for at least 30 years but not much has been done about it yet. Why do you think this is? Because it may shake up our lives, cause us to change, and maybe we are too comfortable where we are. I think it took someone coming from the west, specifically Archbishop Weisenburger from Arizona. He is not so personally invested in what exists at this time in the AOD so he can more objectively and investigate changing things. The most recent star is the Restructuring. This could shake up our lives as well. I must admit I was troubled when I first heard about it. My intention was to stay at St. Edith until I no longer wanted to work full time, and this star, this Restructuring was threatening that. So I took it to prayer. God is telling me that I should just enjoy the time I have here, cooperate with the process, and if I need to make a change He will help me to do that. So can we all do that? Can we look beyond how it will affect us personally and do what is best for the Catholic Church in Detroit?

Many of us will have stars appear in our lives in the coming year, things that will happen that will potentially shake up our lives. This can be a person, an illness, a change of profession, a change in finances just to mention a few. Are you going to try and ignore it like the chief priests and the scribes did? Are you going to hold on to what exists now or are you going to start the journey? The stars usually do not go away. The problems just get bigger. It is best to start the journey with the hope that you will end up in a better place than you were when you started. You also have the hope that God will guide you along the way as he guided the magi. Try to be open to the guidance that God will give you along the way. God will help you.