



## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

JANUARY 5, 2025

**DPAA**—We have met our goal so all DPAA donations going forward will come directly back to St. Matthew Parish without any assessments from the Diocese. This is a great opportunity to give to the parish to make the most of your donations.

**CCD CLASSES**—CCD classes will be resuming on Jan. 6. Remember to sign up to bring snacks and drinks. The sign up sheet is in the back of church.

**VISITORS**—If you have been attending St. Matthew and think you would like to become a registered member of the parish, please fill out a form that can be found by the bulletins in the front of church. Return it to Father Straub and you will become registered as a member of St. Matthew. We would love to have you become a part of our parish family.

**MASS & THE WEATHER**—A regular reminder about attending Mass amid inclement weather. You are not obliged to attend Mass if the weather is too severe or if it is too dangerous for you to attend. A simple rule of thumb: if you can make it to the store, you can make it to Sunday Mass.

**LECTOR**— Jan. 5-Bernie Rawe, Jan. 12-Jesse Rawe

**CLEANING** – Jan-Kathy and Wanda Bach



*On entering the house  
they saw the child with Mary his mother.*

*They prostrated themselves  
and did him homage.*

*-Matthew 2:11*

## FROM THE PASTOR—THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

Traditional Formula: You shall not kill.

Commentary: We begin to see the poverty of the English language in dealing with this commandment. In the original Hebrew, the verb indicates that one was not to murder the innocent. This is not a prohibition of all death imposed by man. We are able to kill plants and animals for our sustenance. While regrettable, war at times becomes necessary for the attainment of peace. But one can never justify taking the life of the innocent for any reason.

While most people will never murder anyone and deprive them of life, we can kill in a more spiritual manner through the way we treat others. Our Lord expands this commandment beyond the physical act in the Sermon on the Mount, condemning even unjust anger against one's neighbor (see Mt. 5:21-22 and following). We must be careful of what we say and how we act towards others lest we kill them spiritually, and bring spiritual death upon ourselves in turn.

### Sins against the Fifth Commandment

-Abortion and Contraception: The destruction of a fetus is the murder of a human being, no matter their size. Many contraceptives fall under this category because they do not prevent conception but rather prevent the new embryo from remaining in the womb, thus killing the embryo. There is no moral justification for killing innocent human beings simply for desiring life. Those who assist with obtaining an abortion are just as guilty as those who receive it. This is such a severe crime that one must receive a special form of confession in order to be relieved of this sin (no matter the gender). Please speak privately with me if you are in need of this absolution.

-Euthanasia and Suicide: this is the practice of intentionally killing oneself. Euthanasia is when one seeks medical "assistance" to quicken this process. We are not the final arbiter of life for ourselves but are stewards of the gift of life. We cannot fall into despair and end our lives seeking something better but must accept the cross given to us in order to merit eternal life.

-Scandal: an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil. We cause the spiritual death of our neighbor when we commit some type of scandal, even if it does not involve them. The weight of authority is immense, and we must be careful not to draw others into sin by our actions or lack of action. Remember Christ called for scandalizers to receive the millstone (Mt. 18:6).

-Unjust Anger and Hatred: We should always be angry about sin, but avoid using that anger against the sinner in a harsh or hateful manner. Sin must be stopped, but not by committing further sin. Unjust anger and hatred works against charity, and we are commanded to love all, even our enemies.

Let us pray to the God of peace to grant us through His Son the gift of His peace, so that we may love as He commanded us to love.

*Fr. Jacob Straub*