



St. Gerard Catholic Church

640 Edrie Street, NE
Aiken, SC 29801
803 649-3203

Rev. Emmanuel O. Andinam, Pastor
Deacon Dr. Charles Cooper, Retired

Mission Statement

Anchored by faith, hope and love in Jesus Christ, we strive to be active disciples, serving each other and all God's people by welcoming and embracing the enriching diversity of our community of faith.

The Epiphany of The Lord *January 4, 2026*

Mass Schedule

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday – 8:15 AM

Saturday Vigil - 4:00 PM

Sunday - 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM

First Friday: Benediction & Divine Mercy Chaplet following 8:15 AM Mass.

Confessions: Tuesday & Thursday after Mass and by appointment

Baptisms, Marriages, Funerals: By appointment

Religious Education: Contact office for information

OCIA: Contact office 803-649-3203

Bible Study: Fridays 10:00 AM in the church hall

Website: www.stgerardinaiken.org

Readings for The Week

Sunday:

Isa 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-2,7-8,10-11,12-13; Eph 3:2-3a,5-6; Mt 2:1-12

Monday: St. John Neumann, Bishop

1 Jn 3:22-4:6; Ps 2:7bc-8,10-12a; Mt 4:12-17,23-25

Tuesday:

1 Jn 4:7-10; Ps 72:1-2,3-4,7-8; Mk 6:34-44

Wednesday:

1 Jn 4:11-18; Ps 72:1-2,10,12-13; Mk 6:45-52

Thursday:

1 Jn 4:19-5:4; Ps 72:1-2,14 & 15bc,17; Lk 4:14-22

Friday:

1 Jn 5:5-13; Ps 147:12-13,14-15,19-20; Lk 5:12-16

Saturday:

1 Jn 5:14-21; Ps 149:1-2,3-4,5-6a & 9b; Jn 3:22-30

Mass Intentions

Saturday, January 3

4:00 PM - For our Parish

Sunday, January 4

8:00 AM - Brian Karahalios

10:00 AM - For our Parish

Tuesday, January 6

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Thursday, January 8

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Friday, January 9

8:15 AM - For our Parish

Ministers

<u>January 10</u>	<u>January 11</u>	<u>January 11</u>
4:00 PM Vigil	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Michele Bullington	Denise Gelinis	Pat Hayes
Cindy McHale	Betsy Kenney	Wayman Johnson
Joan Hesik	Betsy Kenney	

Pray for our sick

Rosa Johnson, Paula Thurston, Ellen Heim, Rich Borst, Betty Hyslop, Jeffrey Hesik, Angelo Perrino, John Burke, Krystal Ortiz, Michell Novotny, Nancy Gardzina, Joan Lacombe, Casey Bay, Dennis HooChung, Joe Monahon

Anointing of the Sick

The Rite of Anointing tells us there is no need to wait until a person is at the point of death to receive the Sacrament. In this Sacrament, the Holy Spirit gives us peace and courage to deal with the difficulties that accompany serious illness and our frailty. To receive the Sacrament of Anointing, contact the church office.

Communion for Hospital/Homebound

If you would like Holy Communion brought to someone in the hospital or confined to home, please contact the church office: 803-649-3203

Legion of Mary

Active members meet Tuesdays at 2:00 PM in the church Conference Room. Auxiliary members can pray at home. If you are interested in becoming an active or auxiliary member of the Legion of Mary, contact the church office.

Weekly Collection 12/27-12/28/25

Budget	\$3,799.00
Collected	\$5,029.00
Short/Over	+\$1,230.00
YTD+/-	+\$671.66

Tabernacle Candle

A special candle should burn continuously near the tabernacle to indicate the presence of Christ and honor it. If you would like to donate in honor or memory of a loved one, please call the church office. The donation is \$25. The candle for January: Lisa Solenberger birthday.

Our Lady of the Valley Food Pantry

Our collection for the OLV food pantry is the third weekend of the month. Food donations are welcome at any time during the month; however, our focused collection is the third weekend of the month. The focus food for the weekend of January 17-18 is Peanut Butter.

Monthly After Mass Social

The Monthly After Mass Social is the first Saturday of the month after the 4:00 p.m. Mass. If you would like to host a social, contact the office: 803-649-3203. The hosts for January 3rd are the Beckert and Welsh families.

Christmas Memorials

Margaret & Howard Hadlock
Viola & Bill Beckert
John & Mae Cassidy
Edith & John J Cassidy
Catherine & Arthur Norton
Jack Norton & Jeanne Cooper
Kenny Mucker
Joy Freeman
Jimmie Bowes
Anna & Don Dawson
Norm & Muriel Ekeland
Mr. & Mrs. James Ellis
Rose Halupa
Patricia Hayes
George Heim & family
John Holder
Herbert & Evelyn Houser
Bill Hyslop & Brian Karahalios
McHale & Moore Families
Curtis Williams

Deacon Chuck's Corner

A Reflection on The Epiphany of the Lord

The word epiphany means an appearance or manifestation, particularly of a divine being—or an illuminating discovery, especially one that comes unexpectedly. Epiphany marks the first manifestation of Jesus to the Gentiles. It signals that God loves Gentiles as well as Jews and that God's plan of salvation includes Gentiles too.

The Epiphany story is colorful, dramatic, and full of mystery. Jesus is the Messiah or Savior long expected by the people of Israel. Although we group shepherds and wise men together around the manger scene, the shepherds came from nearby and the wise men from afar. The wise men's visit probably took place long after the shepherds had departed. The holy family probably remained in the vicinity of Bethlehem and resided in a house now, Joseph working again and the child possibly a year old.

Jesus may be a small child, but we learn from Matthew that God is very much in charge. He guides the wise men by a star and warns them later in a dream to return home another way (away from Herod). These Magi, three pilgrim astrologers of the East, follow a star in search of the divine. They represent all the peoples on the face of the earth. So here Jesus is revealed not only as 'infant king of the Jews', but as Lord of the whole earth. The wise men fall to their knees in adoration, and offer him royal tribute. They bring highly symbolic gifts, gold for a king, frankincense for a priest and myrrh for anointing the dead – prophetic insights regarding Jesus for Mary to ponder in her heart.

This passage calls us to recognize the temptations present in our lives, to be cognizant of who and what will lead us to stray away from the path which leads to Christ and to reflect on what we can do to grow closer to God in this coming year.

Prayer: From every corner of our bustling planet Earth we are drawn to you, Savior and Lord, brother and companion, who touch even the least valued of God's children with the healing power of love. The comfortable and established did not recognize Jesus but the travelers and strangers appreciated who he was. I ask that I be open to the voices of the stranger and to wisdom from other traditions. Amen.

The Epiphany of the Lord

The Epiphany reminds us that Jesus is shown to be the promised Messiah for which the Jews had been waiting.

The Epiphany honors and recognizes the magi making the trip from the East to find Jesus and worship him.

The wise men were likely from Persia and made the 1,000-1,200 mile trip to Jerusalem by camel to bring gifts to the Lord and adore Him. The Bible does not tell us there were three wise men. The number three is taken from the number of gifts they brought to the Lord, but we are not told exactly how many there were on the journey. Throughout the centuries and different cultures, there have been a variety of beliefs in how many magi there actually were that night. In the Eastern tradition you will find an adherence to 12 magi. Some of the early fathers, as well as in the West, hold to three magi. The names of the magi we have today are Caspar (Gaspar), Melchior, and Balthasar and are taken from the writings of St. Bede. The number of magi is not as important as the meanings of the gifts they brought and the fact that they made the journey at all.

Since the magi would have been traveling in a desert climate on camel, it is presumed they only traveled about 15-20 miles per day due to the limitations of the camel's ability to travel long distances in that climate. As a result, it would have taken an estimated 60 days for the magi to make it to Jesus.

The coming of the magi also shows that pagans can indeed come to Jesus and those outside the Jewish religion can come to God the Father through Jesus Christ. It reminds us that Jesus did not come just for the Jews, but He came for the entire world. He came to be a light in the darkness of sin. He came to show the world the way to God and eternal life. He came to live so that we might live.

The Epiphany directs our focus to the times Jesus manifested to the world who He was and therefore calls us to follow Him. It reminds us that the light of Christ draws all men to repentance and salvation through Jesus.



Catechesis of the Holy Father Leo XIV in the General Audience

Wednesday, 31 December 2025

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

We are gathering for this moment of reflection on the last day of the calendar year, close to the end of the Jubilee, and at the heart of Christmas time. Significant events have certainly marked the past year: some joyful, such as the pilgrimage of so many of the faithful on the Holy Year; others painful, such as the passing of the late Pope Francis and the ongoing wars that continue to convulse the planet. At its end, the Church invites us to place everything before the Lord, entrusting ourselves to his Providence, and asking him to renew, in us and around us, in the coming days, the wonders of his grace and mercy.

It is in this dynamic that the tradition of the solemn singing of the *Te Deum*, with which we will thank the Lord this evening for the blessings we have received, finds its place. We will sing, “You are God: we praise you,” “In you, Lord, is our hope,” “Have mercy on us.” In this regard, Pope Francis observed that while “worldly gratitude, worldly hope are evident ... they are focused on the self, on its interests ... Instead, in this Liturgy ... one breathes an entirely different atmosphere: one of praise, of wonder, of gratitude” (*Homily of First Vespers of the Solemnity of Mary Mother of God*, 31 December 2023).

It is with these attitudes that we are called upon to reflect on what the Lord has done for us over the past year, as well as to examine our consciences honestly, to evaluate our response to his gifts and to ask forgiveness for all the times we have failed to treasure his inspirations and invest the talents he has entrusted to us in the best possible way.

This leads us to reflect on another great sign that has accompanied us in recent months: that of the “journey” and the “destination.” This year, countless pilgrims have come from all over the world to pray at the Tomb of Peter and to confirm their adherence to Christ. This reminds us that our whole life is a journey, whose destination transcends space and time, to be fulfilled in the encounter with God and in full and eternal communion with Him (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1024). We will also ask for this in the *Te Deum* prayer, when we say: “Bring us with your saints to glory everlasting”. It is no coincidence that Saint Paul VI defined the Jubilee as a great act of faith in “anticipation of future destinies ... which we already foretaste and ... prepare for” (*General Audience*, 17 December 1975).

And in this eschatological light of the encounter between the finite and the infinite, a third sign can be seen: the passage through the Holy Door, which so many of us have made, praying and imploring forgiveness for ourselves and our loved ones. It expresses our “yes” to God, who with his forgiveness invites us to cross the threshold of a new life, animated by grace, modelled on the Gospel, inflamed by “love for that neighbor, in whose definition ... every man is included ... in need of understanding, help, comfort, sacrifice, even if personally unknown to us, even if bothersome and hostile, but endowed with the incomparable dignity of a brother” (Saint Paul VI, *Homily on the occasion of the closing of the Holy Year*, 25 December 1975; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1826-1827). It is our “yes” to a life lived with commitment in the present and oriented towards eternity.

Dear friends, we meditate on these signs in the light of Christmas. Saint Leo the Great, in this regard, saw the feast of the Birth of Jesus as the proclamation of a joy that is for everyone: “Let the saint rejoice”, he exclaimed, “because he is approaching his reward; let the sinner rejoice, because he is offered forgiveness; let the pagan take courage, because he is called to life” (*First Discourse on the Nativity of the Lord*, 1).

His invitation is addressed today to all of us, holy by Baptism, because God has become our companion on the journey towards true Life; to us sinners, because, forgiven, with his grace we can stand up and set off again; and finally, to us, poor and fragile, because the Lord, making our weakness his own, has redeemed it and shown us the beauty and strength of his perfect humanity (cf. *Jn* 1:14).

I want to conclude by remembering the words with which Saint Paul VI, at the end of the Jubilee of 1975, described its fundamental message. It is contained, he said, in one word: “love.” And he added, “God is Love! This is the ineffable revelation with which the Jubilee, through its teaching, its indulgence, its forgiveness, and its peace, full of tears and joy, has sought to fill our spirit today and our lives tomorrow: God is Love! God loves me! God awaited me, and I have found him! God is mercy! God is forgiveness! God is salvation! God, yes, God is life!” (*General Audience*, 17 December 1975). May these thoughts accompany us in the passage from the old to the new year, and then always, in our lives.