

Sunday, Jan 11, 2026

Make the connection

In his birth (Christmas), his adoration by the Magi (Epiphany), and the coming of the Spirit upon him (Baptism of the Lord) Jesus is revealed to be the Son of God. These significant events in Jesus' life are so closely tied that the Eastern Orthodox Church observes the coming of the Magi and the Lord's Baptism on the same day. In the same way, our own births and Baptism signal that we are children of God and followers of Christ. As a new year begins, find ways to reconnect with your family of faith and make daily choices that reveal your divine heritage.

FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7; Acts 10:34-38; Matthew 3:13-17 (21). *"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

Monday, Jan 12, 2026

Listen up

The tech industry would have us believe that the most important connections we make are virtual. While it's true that tech devices are useful in today's world, there remains the crucial connection with that still, small voice within our own hearts that no computer or phone can reach. That voice, which is God's, can only be heard in stillness: in the bare branches of trees against a winter sky, the quiet of new-fallen snow, the starry brilliance in a winter night sky, our breathing in and breathing out. What is God calling you to do now? Spend some time today just listening.

1 Samuel 1:1-8; Mark 1:14-20 (305). *"Jesus said to them, 'Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.'"*

Tuesday, Jan 13, 2026

"I was a stranger"

Of all the lessons Jesus tried to teach us, the one that is perhaps hardest to believe—and therefore easiest to forget—is that we are all one. Jesus reminded us of this truth a number of times, most notably when he declared, "Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matt. 25:40). Take a few minutes today to reflect on what life would be like if you knew, with as much certainty as you know your own name, that there are no strangers among us; we are all one, united through Christ. What would be different? How would you act toward yourself? Toward others?

1 Samuel 1:9-20; Mark 1:21-28 (306). *"What is this? A new teaching with authority."*

Wednesday, Jan 14, 2026

Now appearing

You don't have to look very hard into Catholic tradition to find stories of supernatural appearances of Jesus, the saints, and especially Mary to believers through the centuries. These kinds of occurrences really go back to biblical times. In the New Testament the Holy Spirit "appeared" in the form of a dove at Jesus' Baptism, Jesus himself appeared to his disciples after his Resurrection, and the risen Christ made a decisive personal intervention in the life of Saint Paul, to name a few examples. Most of us will never have such an experience, but we can indeed learn to make ourselves aware of the presence and guidance of God.

1 Samuel 3:1-10, 19-20; Mark 1:29-39 (307). *"Speak, for your servant is listening."*

Thursday, Jan 15, 2026

Wanted: Good leaders

The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were the trusted priests of the ancient temple in Shiloh. But they were stealing from the temple and committing immoral acts. As a result, the army of Israel was cursed and got hammered by the Philistines. Hophni and Phinehas were slain and the Philistines took the ark of God captive. It is a cautionary tale about the faithful's need for good leaders. Pray for vocations, and very specifically for men and women to serve the Lord in truth and integrity.

1 Samuel 4:1-11; Mark 1:40-45 (308). *"The ark of God was captured, and Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were among the dead."*

Friday, Jan 16, 2026

Move on

There's a lot in life that can get us down. Sometimes they are things of our own making, and sometimes, well, it's life. It's not always easy to know what to do. We can stand still and try to figure it out, or we can backtrack to see what happened. At some point, however, it is time to move forward—to step out of what happened and to imagine something new. "Begin now," says Saint Jerome, "to be what you will be hereafter."

1 Samuel 8:4-7, 10-22a; Mark 2:1-12 (309). *"Rise, pick up your mat and walk."*

Saturday, Jan 17, 2026

Alone with the truth

Few of us would take aloneness to the extent of Saint Anthony of the Desert, who spent much of his 105 years in solitude. Stories of Anthony say he was besieged by all kinds of temptations in the desert night. At some level we know that silence forces us to confront the reality of who we are before God. But, as Saint Anthony explains, it is a worthy pursuit: "One who knows oneself, knows God . . . Therefore, my beloveds in the Lord, know yourselves." Opening up at such depth is indeed terrifying, but Jesus "gets" the weakness of being human. He calls each of us not for condemnation but friendship.

MEMORIAL OF ANTHONY, ABBOT

1 Samuel 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1; Mark 2:13-17 (310). *"Jesus said to him, 'Follow me.'"*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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