The Epiphany of the Lord

Mass Intention

SUNDAY, January 7 –The Epiphany of the Lord
8:00 A.M. For the People of St. Francis
9:30 A.M. Connie Azzopardi
11:00 A.M. Alexis Scott
12:30 P.M. Rino Del Carro
Franco Primante

MONDAY, January 8– The Baptism of the Lord
9:00 A.M. Stefanos Stefanakis

TUESDAY, January 9–Weekday
9:00 A.M. Emeric Arus

WEDNESDAY, January 10– Weekday
9:00A.M. Katina Kordonouris

THURSDAY, January 11– Weekday
9:00 A.M. Alberta Andrew

FRIDAY, January 12 – Weekday
9:00 A.M. Joseph Wonzy

SATURDAY, January 13– Weekday
9:00 A.M. Purgatorial Society
Nina Cassar

5:00P.M. For the People of St. Francis

SUNDAY, January 14– The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
8:00 A.M. Holy Name
9:30 A.M. Joseph A. Otero
11:00 A.M. Mrs. Grace Fulop
12:30 P.M. Yolanda Palazzolo
Alfonso Calogero Annibale
Rino Del Carro
Mario Andreani
Alfonso Calogero Annibale

Today's Readings

The Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6
Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6
Matthew 2:1-12

Readings for the Week

MONDAY: Isaiah 55:1-11
Mark 1:7-11

TUESDAY: 1 Samuel 1:9-20
Mark 1:21-28

WEDNESDAY 1 Samuel 3:1-10, 19-20
Mark 1:29-39

THURSDAY: 1 Samuel 4:1-11
Mark 1:40-45

FRIDAY: 1 Samuel 8:4-7, 10-22a
Mark 2:1-12

SATURDAY: 1 Samuel 9:1-4
Mark 2:13-17

The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19
1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20
John 1:35-42

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

My Dear Parishioners,

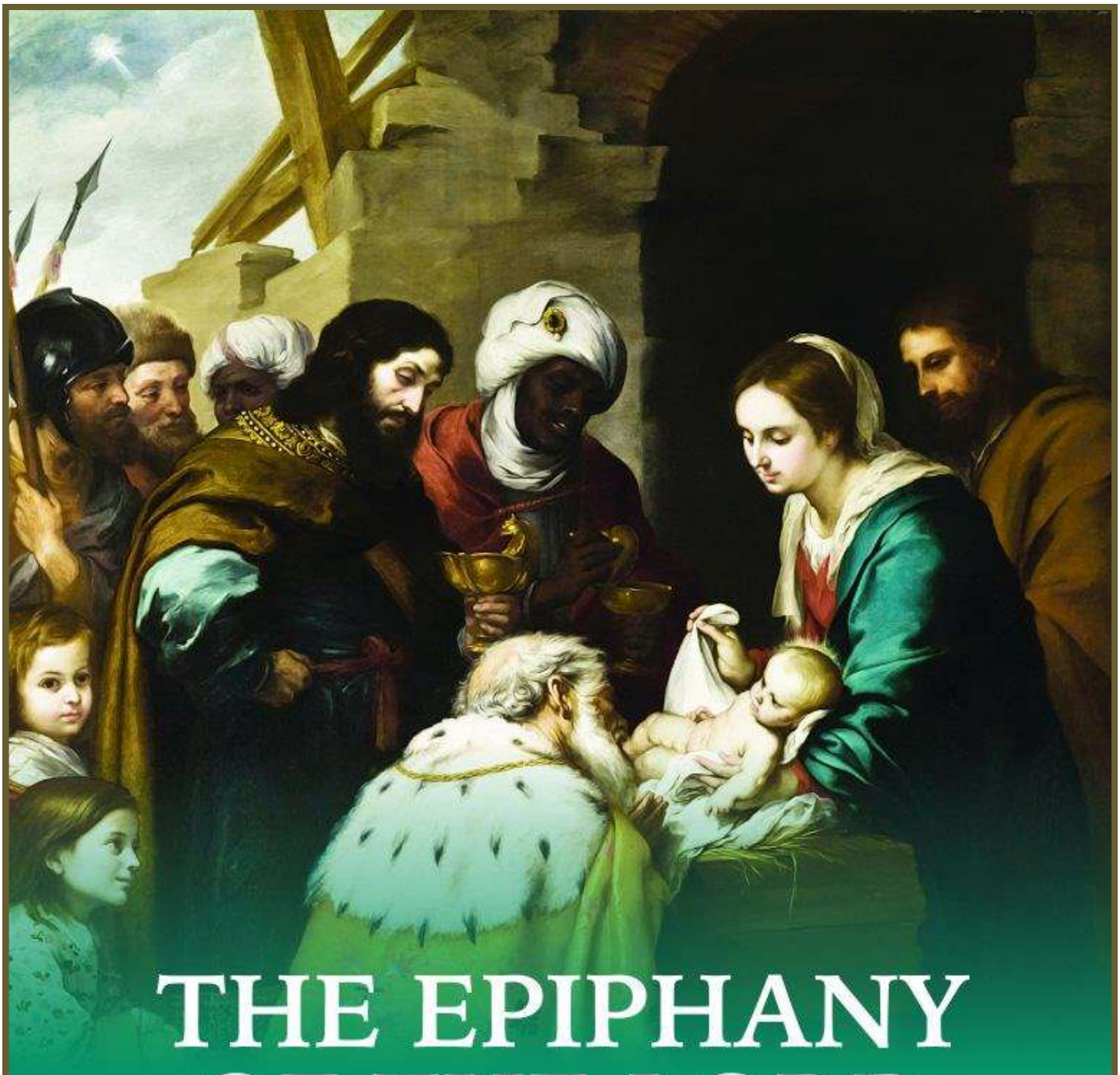
Today we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. This feast speaks to our minds and hearts in a variety of ways. It speaks of the power of the stars in the sky. It speaks of how God worked through the guidance of one particular star to reveal Jesus as both Messiah and Savior to the world. It speaks of how the Magi who by means of a miracle were able to recognize the appearance of a new star. And as our Gospel reading for today tells us, the Magi seem to have understood the appearance of this new star as a sign that a new and great king had been born. They set out on a long journey, bearing gifts, to go and pay this new born king homage.

When the Magi set out on their journey, led by the light of a star, they probably never expected that the new born king they were coming to pay homage to was the true Light of the World. The long-promised Messiah and Savior who had come to dispel the darkness of sin and evil in the world and open the way to salvation. It also seems easy to surmise that the Magi probably felt surprised upon finding the new born king of the Jews, whom they had traveled many miles to pay homage to, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. Despite this fact the Magi did what they had come to do as they prostrated themselves before the infant Jesus, did him homage, and then presented their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. After their encounter with the child Jesus, the Magi then departed for their country by means of a different route with their lives most likely forever changed.

The pilgrim journey that the Magi made to pay homage to Jesus reminds us similarly that each of us are pilgrims on a journey striving to grow in our knowledge and love for the Lord, Jesus, so that we might one day reach our true home which is heaven. The good news is that we do not walk our pilgrim journey of faith alone. Rather, we have the teachings of Jesus in Sacred Scripture, the teachings of the Church, the sacraments, the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us, the prayers and support of one another, so we may live more faithfully as a disciple of Jesus and keep our feet firmly planted on the path that leads to eternal life in heaven.

Finally, the way the Magi humbly prostrated themselves before the child Jesus and presented him with their gifts, reminds us that each and every day we should prostrate ourselves before the Lord and offer him the greatest gift we can give him, that of our lives. And then after doing this with hearts grateful for the new life and promise of salvation we have received in and through Christ, we are then to go forward offering all that we have and are in love and service to God and our neighbor. If we do these things, we will truly lead lives which will help lead others to Jesus, so they too may know the joy, peace, hope, and salvation we have found in Him.

All God's Blessings,
Msgr. Maresca



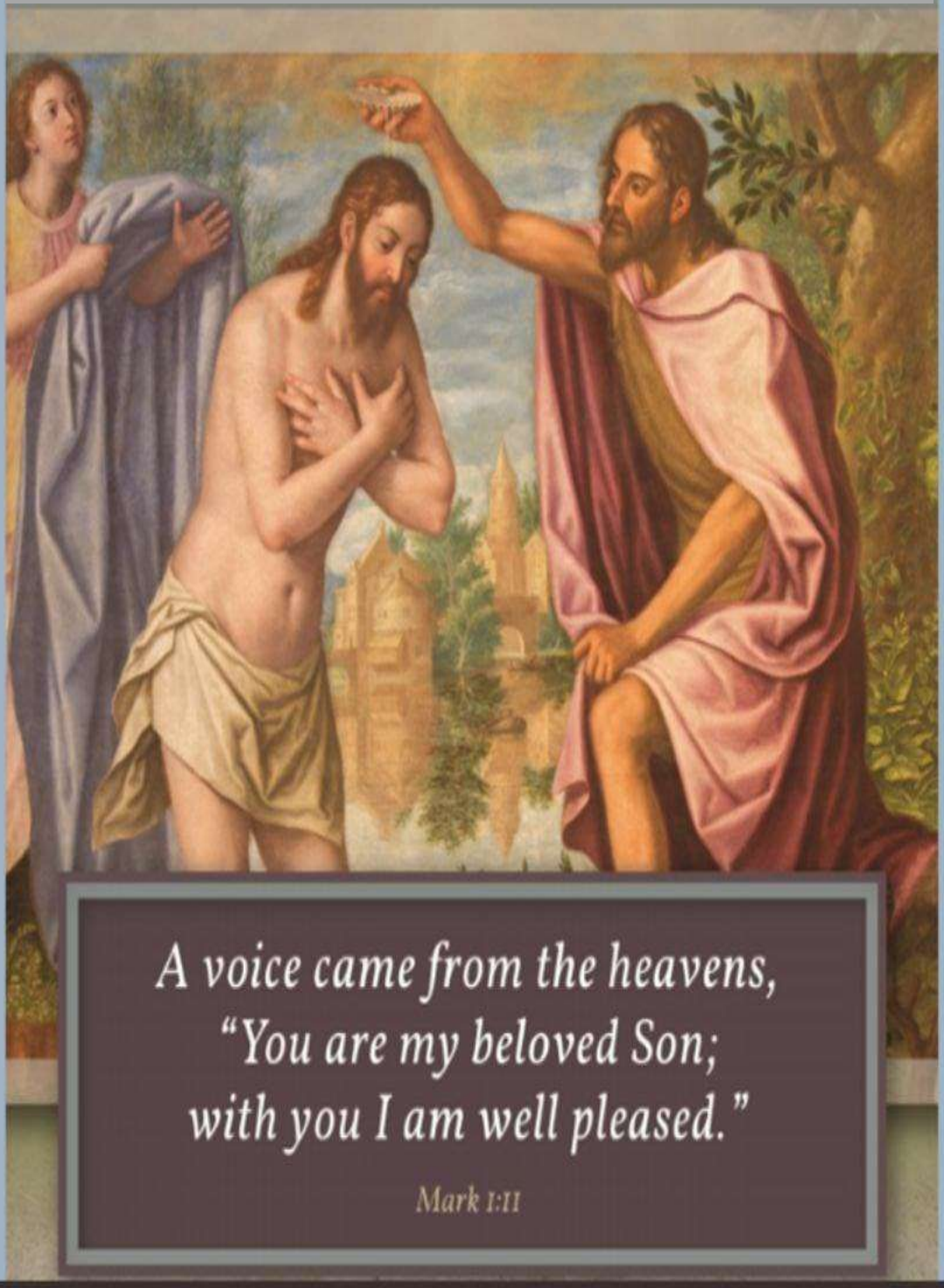
THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. - Mt 2:10-11

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

The Baptism of the Lord

January 8, 2024



Remember in your prayers all those in our parish who are sick, that they may find health and comfort:

Jack Orlando, Steven Joyce, Judy Hanley-Brickner, John Wrenn, Augustin Cisneros, Thomas Leiter, James Nunez, Vincent Wytak, John & Carol Ross, Jeffrey Hyans, Marie LoVolpe, Jessica St. Preux, Al Ciani, Alesha Moses, Nancy McCaffrey, Connie Fontana Christopher Wojtalik, Theresa Pacheco, William Goss, Luke Pacheco, Vincenza Papa, Jim Schneggenburger, Anthony Criscuolo, Samantha O'Sullivan, Marilyn Miller, Pat Gravino, John Carmody, Rosario Duran, Vivian Papa, Joel Steinmann, Anna Governali, Tim Graham, Antonio Postiglione, Mario Tamburello, Christopher Araimo, Charles Principato, Jim Kreitler, Humberto Cordova, John Schakir, Margaret Culhane, Benedicto Randazzo, Angelo Niakas, Peter Lopez, Catherine Caravana, Alex Human, and Aubrey Madden.

Also remember in your prayers all the deceased of the Parish. Please remember to continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood, religious life, diaconate, and married life.

Pray for Vocations

The Epiphany of the Lord

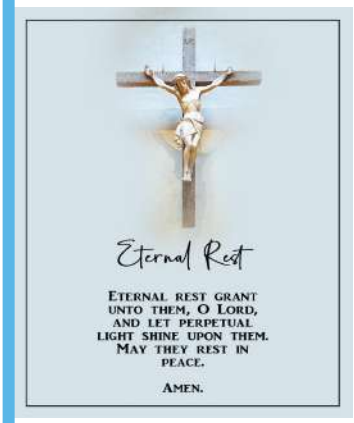
January 7, 2024

"My sheep hear my voice says the Lord"

Consider a vocation as a priest, deacon or in the consecrated life.

Contact the Vocation Office at (718) 827-2454 or email:vocations@diobrook.org

Recently Deceased



The following have passed away during the month of December 2023. We continue to pray for the recently deceased members of our parish.

George J. Tedaldi
Alfonso Carolini
Vincent J. Daniele

FOCUS:

With Christ's help we can be His light for others.

We are not the source of the light that a world in darkness needs desperately. Instead, we must *receive* Jesus, the Light of the World, so that we can in turn share it. And as we heard in the first reading: *Then you shall be radiant … your heart shall throb and overflow.* Jesus has come to give all the love we need, all the wisdom called for, all the virtue necessary to be the light to others.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place before the 9:00AM Mass. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed at 8:00AM each morning, Monday through Saturday, giving parishioners an opportunity for private prayer before the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. At 8:30AM the rosary will be prayed by parishioners before the Blessed Sacrament. At 8:50AM the Blessed Sacrament will be reposed. Jesus calls us to perseverance in prayer. "Pray without ceasing." "Watch and pray." Eucharistic adoration helps us discover the Real Presence of Christ.

What a wonderful way to begin our day praying before the Blessed Sacrament in silence or praying the Holy Rosary.

Please make every effort to take advantage of this time with the Lord. We are living in challenging times and we all need the Lord to strengthen our faith and give us the courage to live each day.

National Association of the
HOLY NAME SOCIETY
Confraternity of the Catholic Church

Spreading Devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus: Yesterday, Today and Forever

The Holy Name Mass will be on Sunday, January 14, 2024 at 8:00am. After Mass we will meet in the school basement with a presentation of "Abortion and the Pro-Life Movement in NYS and the USA in the post-Roe era." All parishioners are invited to attend. A continental breakfast will be served.

Mass Attendance

Mass Attendance for the Weekend of December 23rd and 24th, 2023:

5:00pm	98
8:00am	43
9:30am	141
11:00am	95
12:30pm	50

Total in Attendance: **341**

Mass Attendance Christmas Eve and Christmas Day:

4:00pm	598
6:00pm	150
8:00am	35
9:30am	68
11:00am	152
12:30pm	76

Total in Attendance: **1,079**

Mass Attendance for the Weekend of December 30th and 31st, 2023:

5:00pm	91
8:00am	43
9:30am	80
11:00am	93
12:30pm	58

Total in Attendance: **365**

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCRIPTURE STUDY

"The Words I have spoken to you are spirit and life." John 6:64

Dear SFA Friends and Family

The Scripture Study group will meet on Thursday, January 11th from 7:20-8:50pm in the St. Joseph Room of the Rectory. We will begin a new study with The Letters to the Romans and to the Galatians. Join us as we **Grow in Knowledge and Love of Scripture**.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation, and saying to Zion"Your God is King." **(Isaiah 52:7)**

HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Gospel readings and study will be conducted using the Little Rock Scripture Study program. Study booklets will be provided.

If you are interested in joining the study group or would like further information, please contact us through the Rectory at **(718) 728-7801.** Please be sure to leave your name and contact information.

Grow in Knowledge and Love of Scripture.

All are Invited … ALL ARE WELCOME!

Parish Mission Statement

St. Francis of Assisi Parish is a Catholic community that is centered in Jesus, gathers in worship and witnesses the Gospel message. The parish values and welcomes each person's gift of time, talent and treasure. As a faith-filled community, we are committed to minister to the spiritual, educational and material needs of all people.

St. Francis of Assisi Parish Weekly Offering

Thank you for your continued generosity of giving each week. Your weekly offering helps us pay our monthly bills.

Sunday 12/24/23:	**$3,520.00**
2nd Collection-Fuel	***$1,350.00***
Christmas Day	**$6,826.00**
2nd Collection-Catholic Charity	***$987.00***
Sunday, 12/31/23	**$3,279.00**

School parents must use church envelopes.

Knights of Columbus

Charitable & Benevolent Program

2023 Raffle Winners

Grand Prize ($25,000) Carmine Bartoli
2nd Prize ($10,000) Joe Ingarra
3rd Prize ($5,000) Maureen Metzger
$1,000 Prize William Busch
$1,000 Prize Marie Kruczlnicki
$1,000 Prize Cristina Celono
$1,000 Prize Sanet (no last name)
$1,000 Prize OLBS Catholic Academy
$1,000 Prize Daniel Marengo
$1,000 Prize Robert H. Koch (*)
$1,000 Prize Jeff Cadge
$1,000 Prize Michael A. Patti
$1,000 Prize Mike Hoffman

* Bob Koch is the grand knight of Colon-Msgr. Higgins Council 309.

Welcome to Our Church

If you wish to register as a parishioner of St. Francis of Assisi Church, please stop by the Rectory Office during regular business hours. There you can pick up a census card which can be filled out at that time or returned by mail or in the Sunday Collection Basket. You can even download the census card on line. Just check our website at: ***stfrancisofassisiastoria.org***
You will then begin to receive weekly offering envelopes.

Annual Catholic Appeal 2023
DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN

Thank you to all who gave to this years Annual Catholic Appeal. Our goal was $41,679 and as of Monday, December 18th, we have pledges amounting to $42,467. Paid is $40,356.72. this amount is from 106 families in our parish.
I realize everyone has financial responsibilities, but your generosity to support this appeal is truly a sign of your love for our parish.
Also, all monies received over goal will come back to our parish and placed in the operating account of the parish.
Please know you are remembered each day in prayer.

Msgr. Maresca

Associated Vincentian Charities of Brooklyn
Money goes back to your local parish
My Car Went To Heaven
DONATE YOUR AUTO
Running or Not
• IRS Tax Deduction • Free Towing
• Any Condition • Any Model
718-491-2525
Visit Us at svdpauto-brooklynqueens.org

Dear Fellow Parishioners,
Since 2014 alone, the Associated Vincentian Charities of Brooklyn Donation Program has given back over $400,000 to local parishes throughout the New York Metropolitan Area. Your donation has helped many individuals in need in your neighborhood. Only through the generosity of countless parishioners are we able to make a difference. Please help us to continue to make a difference by spreading the word to anyone you know that would like to donate a vehicle, running or not leaving a review on Google, and liking us on Social Media. Together we can continue our mission in helping the less fortunate.

Help Spread the Word to help Those in Need!

Please Visit Us at svdpauto-brooklynqueens.org
Leave a Review on Google &
Like us on
Follow us on
With Much Thanks and Many Blessings,
Jim Shea
Associated Vincentian Charities Car Program Coordinator

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THIS WEEK

January 7—January 13

Sunday, January 7
9:30AM Pre-Communion Mass
10:40AM-12 Noon CCD

Monday, January 8
12:00-3:30PM-Golden Age
3:00-3:45PM Children's Choir
7:00PM Adult Choir

Tuesday, January 9
6:30PM AA Meeting

Wednesday, January 10
7:00PM Baptism Class

Thursday, January 11
10:00-11:30AM-Legion of Mary
6:00PM-I.A.C.A.
7:20PM Scripture Study

Friday, January 12
6:00-8:00PM Winter Blast-Grades 3-5

Saturday, January 13

NEXT WEEK

January 14—January 20

Sunday, January 14
8:00AM Holy Name Mass

Monday, January 15
Martin Luther King Day
Rectory Office & School Closed

Tuesday, January 16
6:30PM AA Meeting

Wednesday, January 17

Thursday, January 18
10:00-11:30AM-Legion of Mary
6:00PM-I.A.C.A.
7:20PM Scripture Study

Friday, January 19
3:00-8:00PM—Girl Scout Father/Daughter
Raingutter Regatta—MCH

Saturday, January 20

JANUARY 2024
LECTOR SCHEDULE

	THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD	SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
	JANUARY 6 -7	JANUARY 13-14	JANUARY 20 - 21	JANUARY 27- 28
Saturday 5:00 P.M.	Dolores Ratkowski	Dolores Ratkowski	Edward Kubina	Dolores Ratkowski
Sunday 8:00 A.M.	Rob Laucella	Andrew Soltesz	Andrew Soltesz	Andrew Soltesz
Sunday 9:30 A.M.	Josephine Corso	Martha O'Toole	Maria Brooks	Patrick O'Toole
Sunday 11:00 A.M.	Carol Hickey	Jane Di Donato	Carol Hickey	Jane Di Donato
Sunday 12:30 P.M.	Anna Maria Del Carro	Eterna Bruno	Jackie Machia	Anna Maria Tenaglia

***** REMINDER *****
Once you are scheduled, if you cannot fulfill your assignment, please make every effort to call and get a replacement. Thank you

Growing in FAITH™

Discovering **hope and joy** in the Catholic faith.

January 2024

St. Francis of Assisi Parish
Msgr. Ralph J. Maresca V.F., Pastor

One Minute Meditations

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys

Born at Troyes, France in 1620, St. Marguerite consecrated herself to God and became a missionary.

A friend introduced her to the mayor of Ville Marie (now Montreal) in Canada and, on his invitation, traveled to the New World to teach. With several others, she founded the Congregation of Notre-Dame de Montreal – a non-cloistered teaching order that was formally approved in 1676. By her death in 1700, she was called "Mother of the Colony."

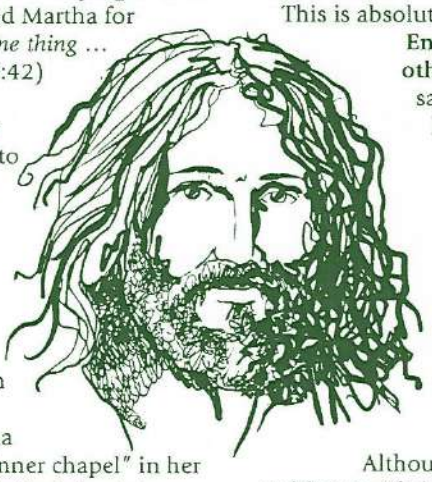
Celebrate life

January is the month during which our Church celebrates life. This is when we take time to recognize that we are all reflections of God and have great value in His eyes from the moment of conception to a natural death. Celebrating life means being pro-human every day of the year.

"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind" (Isaiah 65:17).

This year, don't neglect "the one thing needful"

When St. Martha complained to Jesus that her sister, Mary, was sitting at His feet instead of helping to host Him, He corrected Martha for neglecting the *"one thing … needful"* (Luke 10:42) – intimacy with Him. In the New Year, resolve not to neglect the "one thing needful" and remain intimate with Him.



Build an "inner chapel." While on mission in the world, St. Catherine of Siena maintained an "inner chapel" in her soul to speak with God, heart to heart. Jesus urged us to do the same (Matthew 6:6). Shut out the world for a while and take refuge in your inner chapel every day.

Sit at His feet. Mary believed in Jesus and gave Him her best. He must be our hope, our salvation, our all. This is absolutely necessary.

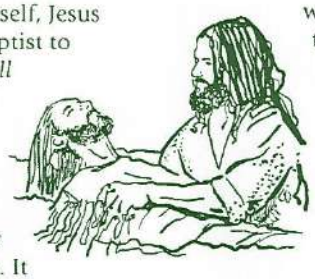
Encounter Him in others. Mother Teresa said, "Until you can hear Jesus in the silence of your own heart, you will not be able to hear Him saying 'I thirst' in the hearts of the poor." The closer we grow to God, the better we'll "see" and love Him in others.

Serve Him. Although Mary wasn't waiting on Christ like Martha, she was ministering to him in a deeper and truer sense. No one serves Christ better than by hearing His Words and doing His will.

Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why was Jesus was baptized?

Although sinless Himself, Jesus allowed St. John the Baptist to baptize Him to *"fulfill all righteousness"* (Matthew 3:15). By this action, Jesus signaled His willingness to take away our sins by His death and bring us new life by His Resurrection. It was also by His baptism that Jesus instituted Baptism as a Sacrament – the Sacrament by which we're sanctified and recreated as children of God. We are mystically baptized into Jesus' death, to be raised by Him in glory.



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Reclaim the Name

January is the month traditionally devoted to honoring the holy name of Jesus. What can we do to reclaim reverence for His name in a culture that considers it to be just another word?

Bow your head. *"At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth"* (Philippians 2:10). Make a slight, reverent nod whenever you hear Jesus' name in public, in conversation, on TV or in movies.

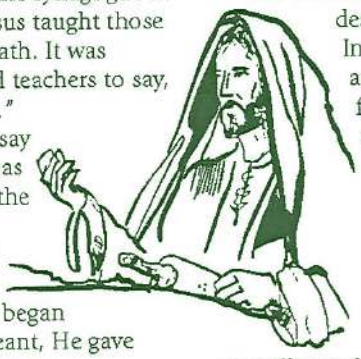
Offer a prayer. Don't hesitate to ask others not to misuse God's or Jesus' names. If they don't respond, offer a prayer of reparation: "I kneel before Thee and offer Thee reparation; I would make amends for all the blasphemies uttered against Thy holy name."

Don't normalize blasphemy. Curate the media you watch, listen to, or sing along with. Avoid songs, shows, or movies in which Jesus's name is disrespected. We are called to strive for holiness, not worldliness. More importantly, it's a way to give Christ the reverence and love He is due.

from Scripture

Mark 1:21-28, What God says happens

In this Gospel passage, Jesus and His apostles entered the synagogue at Capernaum where Jesus taught those gathered on the Sabbath. It was customary for learned teachers to say, "Thus says the Lord..." Instead Jesus said, "I say to you ..." He taught as one who spoke with the authority of God.



His calm authority astounded Jesus' listeners. Just as they began to wonder what it meant, He gave them a sign. He further demonstrated His authority by performing an exorcism. Spirits that bedeviled an unfortunate man at the synagogue recognized who Jesus was. They were forced to obey Him when He commanded them to depart, despite their reluctance. In fact, God's power and authority isn't just a formality. What God says, happens.

Our kind and gentle Savior is also our powerful and awesome Lord. As the Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus has supreme majesty and we will one day appear before Him to be judged. Yes, He is our divine savior and mediator. But if we say, "Jesus is Lord," then we give Him our loyalty and obedience.

Feasts & Celebrations

January 1 – Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. When we celebrate this feast, we honor Mary, but also acknowledge Jesus as true God and true Man.

January 8 – Baptism of the Lord (1st Century). Jesus began His public ministry by getting baptized by St. John the Baptist. Jesus was to be baptized to "fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). This was also when God reveals Jesus as His "beloved Son" (Matthew 3:17).

January 26 – St. Paula (404). After her husband – a Roman senator named Toxotius – died, St. Paula gave up her wealthy lifestyle for the Gospel, devoting herself to prayer, poverty, and charitable works. She also befriended and supported St. Jerome in translating the Vulgate.

January 31 – St. John Bosco (1888). Moved by the plight of the young, abandoned boys in Rome, St. John opened the Oratory of St. Francis de Sales and provided workshops for them in shoemaking and tailoring. In 1859, he founded the Salesians who were committed to education and mission work.

Q & A What to do when prayer feels flat.

"I just don't feel close to God." "Is He really listening?" In fact, God is constantly pursuing us in love, wanting to share His joy with us (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1). Yet, even the most passionate prayer life can feel flat sometimes. Try these tips to keep prayer fresh:

Cultivate gratitude. Although God never abandons us, factors like health or mood can affect our prayer. St. Alphonsus Liguori recommended, "Often recall the loving way in which [God] has acted toward you." Reviewing our blessings helps us appreciate God's love for us over time.

Don't wait to ask for help. God's heart is always opened to us. "Good" prayer happens when we're honest with Him. This is an exercise of faith, which He generously rewards.

Treat Him with love. God wants a relationship of love, respect, and faithfulness with each of us. If prayer feels empty, try treating God with the love, consideration, and tenderness you give and receive from those closest to you. It will make a difference!

Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.

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(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible)

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THANK YOU to all who decorated our Church and Altar. I want to especially thank Laura Calabro and Diane Verde for the beautifully decorated Christmas Trees in the sanctuary.

Also, I am grateful to Nancy Annunziata, Maureen Mullaney, and our sacristans, Gianna, Rocco, Chris and John for their time in helping to decorate.

In addition, Andrea and Mario who decorated the Church and set up the Nativity on the rectory lawn.

All of you helped make our Church beautiful for the Christmas Season.

2023 TAX CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

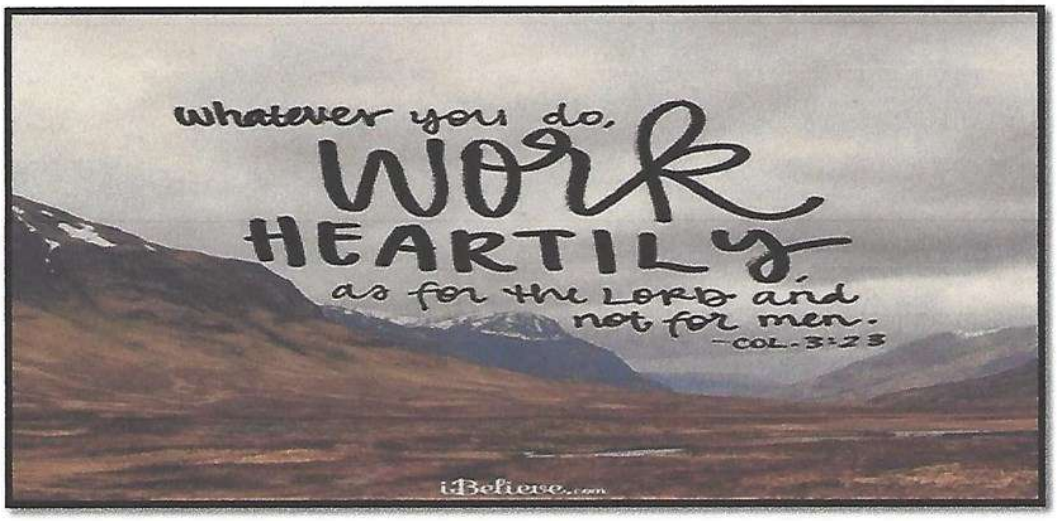
All Parishioners who wish to receive a copy of their 2023 Tax Contribution statement must complete the attached form.

The forms can be returned by dropping them in the contribution basket during Mass or they can be dropped in the box on the front door of the rectory. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE #: _____

ENVELOPE # _____