

Mass Intentions

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2020 *Matthew 21:23-27*

St. John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor of the Church

12:10pm Alicia Maria Escobar
Gerard G. Jean-Baptiste

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2020 *Matthew 21:28-32*

12:10pm John Evangelista (1st Anniversary in Heaven)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2020 *Luke 7:18b-23*

12:10pm Ruby Wehdeking
Milagros Valentin

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2020 *Matthew 1:1-17*

12:10pm Sr. Eileen McMahan
Kenny Mulhall
Mary Maini

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2020 *Matthew 1:18-25*

12:10pm Deceased Members of the Joyce, Quigley,
Murphy & Fuisting Families

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2020 *Luke 1:5-25*

5:00pm Peter Poulos
Thomas Martin
Thomas Yerou

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2020 *Luke 1:26-38*

Fourth Sunday of Advent

7:15am Antoinette Ferragamo (Birthday in Heaven)
9:00am Eric Ottochian
Richard O'Connell
In Thanksgiving
11:00am Anna & Michael Apollo
Eileen Camilleri
Olga Marina Santamaria (8 Months in Heaven)
Alvaro Carvajal (1st Month in Heaven)
Douglas Edwards
Gerard G. Jean-Baptiste (8th Anniversary)
1:00pm Parishioners of Holy Name of Mary

Gracious God, we pray for peace in our communities this day. We commit to you all who work for peace and an end to tensions and those who work to uphold law and justice.

We pray for an end to fear, for comfort and support to those who suffer. For calm in our streets and cities, that people may go about their lives in safety and peace. In your mercy, hear our prayers, now and always. Amen.

Next Sunday's Liturgy-December 20

Readings for Fourth Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 David proposes to build a house for God, and God returns the favor.

2nd Reading: Romans 16:25-27 The rules have not changed, but the greater truths are now revealed.

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38 The promise made to David is now fulfilled in the coming of the eternal king.

FOCUS: The Lord dwells among us.

Music for Fourth Sunday of Advent

Entrance Song: People Look East

Presentation of the Gifts: Sing Out Earth and Skies

Communion Song: O Come, O Come Immanuel

Mass of Creation

Entrance Antiphon: *Drop down dew from above, you heavens, and let the clouds rain down, the Just One; let the earth be opened and bring forth a Savior.*

St. Vincent de Paul Message

In today's Gospel, John the Baptist says, "I am the voice of one crying in the desert; make straight the way of the Lord." Let us ask for the grace to help others to know the love of the Lord. Christmas is a time of love and gift giving...please give to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that those who do not have clothes and food can share in the blessings of Christmas.

Pantry Needs: Paper towel, toilet tissue, cereal, rice, beans, canned vegetables and fruit, pancake mix/syrup, oatmeal, coffee, tea, condiments, muffin/cake mix

Please remember the poor boxes as you leave Church today. These generous offerings help the Society of St. Vincent de Paul assist families in need in our own parish. Thank you!

Presider Schedule for Next Weekend Masses

Saturday, December 19

5:00 pm Fr. David M. Regan

Sunday, December 20

7:15 am Fr. Fernando Echeverri

9:00 am Fr. Edmund Ani

11:00 am Fr. David M. Regan

1:00 pm Fr. Fernando Echeverri

*Presider
Subject
To
change*

Parish Mission

"The Source & Summit of Our Hope"

**All are invited to the
Holy Name of Mary Parish Mission**



presented by

Fr. Matthew Browne

**Associate Pastor of
Saint Dominic, Oyster Bay**

**Sunday, December 13
& Monday, December 14
7:00pm in the Church**

From the desk of Fr. David Regan

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son; in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man.
Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage, and defend us from every evil. Amen.*

This prayer is the concluding statement of the newest letter from Pope Francis as he inaugurated the “Year of St. Joseph.” With the Apostolic Letter “*Patris corde*” (“With a Father’s Heart”), Pope Francis recalls the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, the Holy Father has proclaimed a “Year of Saint Joseph” from, 8 December 2020, to 8 December 2021.

Considering global concerns, including the pandemic, the Holy Father demonstrates that St. Joseph helps us see the importance of ordinary people, who may not have a spotlight on them. These people exercise patience and hope every day. They resemble St. Joseph, the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence,” who nonetheless played “an incomparable role in the history of salvation.”

Pope Francis writes about St. Joseph as, 1) A beloved, tender, obedient father, 2) Welcoming the will of God, 3) A creatively courageous father, example of love, 4) A father who teaches the value, dignity and joy of work.

Most importantly, he addresses St. Joseph as a father who is Centered on Mary and Jesus. “Fathers are not born, but made,” says Pope Francis. “A man does not become a father simply by bringing a child into the world, but by taking up the responsibility to care for that child.” Unfortunately, in today’s society, children “often seem orphans, lacking fathers” who are able to introduce them “to life and reality.” Children, the Pope says, need fathers who will not try to dominate them, but instead raise them to be “capable of deciding for themselves, enjoying freedom and exploring new possibilities.”

This is the sense in which St Joseph is described as a “most chaste” father, which is the opposite of domineering possessiveness. Joseph, says Pope Francis, “knew how to love with extraordinary freedom. He never made himself the center of things. He did not think of himself, but focused instead on the lives of Mary and Jesus.”

Happiness for Joseph involved a true gift of self: “In him, we never see frustration, but only trust,” writes Pope Francis. “His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust.” Joseph stands out, therefore, as an exemplary figure for our time, in a world that “needs fathers,” and not “tyrants”; a society that “rejects those who confuse authority with authoritarianism, service with servility, discussion with oppression, charity with a welfare mentality, power with destruction.”

Being a father, the Pope emphasizes, “has nothing to do with possession, but is rather a ‘sign’ pointing to a greater fatherhood”: that of the “heavenly Father”...

St. Joseph Protector of the Holy Church, Guardian of the Holy Family, Terror of Demons, Patron of the Dying, Most Faithful, Most Chaste, Most Obedient, Most Strong, Pray for Us...

Desde el escritorio del P. David Regan

Salve, Guardián del Redentor, Esposa de la Santísima Virgen María.

A ti Dios te confió a su único Hijo; en ti María puso su confianza; contigo Cristo se hizo hombre.

Beato José, también para nosotros muéstrate padre y condúcenos por el camino de la vida.

Obtén para nosotros gracia, misericordia y valor, y defiéndenos de todo mal. Amén.

Esta oración es la declaración final de la carta más reciente del Papa Francisco al inaugurar el “Año de San José”. Con la carta apostólica “*Patris corde*” (“Con corazón de padre”), el Papa Francisco recuerda el 150 aniversario de la declaración de San José como Patrón de la Iglesia Universal. Para conmemorar la ocasión, el Santo Padre ha proclamado un “Año de San José” desde el 8 de diciembre de 2020 hasta el 8 de diciembre de 2021.

Teniendo en cuenta las preocupaciones mundiales, incluida la pandemia, el Santo Padre demuestra que San José nos ayuda a ver la importancia de la ordinaria personas, que pueden no tener un foco en ellos. Estas personas ejercen paciencia y esperanza todos los días. Se asemejan a San José, el hombre que pasa desapercibido, presencia cotidiana, discreta y escondida”, que sin embargo jugó “un papel incomparable en la historia de la salvación”.

El Papa Francisco escribe sobre San José como 1) Un padre amado, tierno y obediente, 2) Acogiendo con satisfacción la voluntad de Dios 3) Un padre creativamente valiente, ejemplo de amor, 4) Un padre que enseña el valor, la dignidad y la alegría del trabajo.

Lo más importante es que se dirige a San José como un padre centrado en María y Jesús. “Los padres no nacen, sino que se hacen”, dice el Papa Francisco. “Un hombre no se convierte en padre simplemente por traer un hijo al mundo, sino asumiendo la responsabilidad de cuidar de ese niño”. Desafortunadamente, en la sociedad actual, los niños “a menudo parecen huérfanos, sin padres” que sean capaces de presentarles “la vida y la realidad”. Los niños, dice el Papa, necesitan padres que no intenten dominarlos, sino que los eduquen para que sean “capaces de decidir por sí mismos, disfrutar de la libertad y explorar nuevas posibilidades”.

Este es el sentido en el que se describe a san José como un padre “casto”, que es lo opuesto a la posesividad dominante. José, dice el Papa Francisco, “supo amar con extraordinaria libertad. Nunca se convirtió en el centro de las cosas. No pensó en sí mismo, sino que se centró en la vida de María y Jesús”.

La felicidad para José implicaba un verdadero don de sí mismo: “En él, nunca vemos frustración, solo confianza”, escribe el Papa Francisco. “Su paciente silencio fue el preludio de expresiones concretas de confianza”. José se destaca, por tanto, como una figura ejemplar para nuestro tiempo, en un mundo que “necesita padres” y no “tiranos”; una sociedad que “rechaza a quienes confunden autoridad con autoritarismo, servicio con servilismo, discusión con opresión, caridad con mentalidad asistencial, poder con destrucción”.

Ser padre, subraya el Papa, “no tiene nada que ver con la posesión, sino que es un ‘signo’ que apunta a una mayor paternidad”: la del “Padre celestial” ... ”

San José Protector de la Santa Iglesia, Guardián de la Sagrada Familia, Terror de los Demonios, Patrón de los Moribundos, Más Fiel, Más Casto, Más Obediente, Más Fuerte, ruega por nosotros ...

HNM Parish Registration

If you or someone you know attends Mass regularly at Holy Name of Mary and is not a registered parishioner, we ask that you please come into the Parish Office and fill out a short Registration form. This will be helpful if you should need recommendation letters, certificates and, especially, sponsor certificates for Baptism or Confirmation. Registration is mandatory for these requests. All donations are recorded by your Church envelope that you receive in the mail. Loose checks will not be recorded.

Parish School Registration

Join in the Spirit at Holy Name of Mary School, an AdvancEd Accredited School. To register your child for Nursery (full day, age 3), Pre-K (full day, age 4), Kindergarten (full day, age 5) or Grade 1 through 8, contact our School Office to make an appointment at 516-825-4009, or visit www.hnomschool.org for registration materials and details. Before and after school care is available for all registered students. Follow Holy Name of Mary School on Instagram and Facebook @ hnomschoolvalleystream.

Parish Information

Mass Schedule: *(subject to change)*

Monday through Friday, 12:10pm; Saturday, 5:00pm
Sunday, 7:15am, 9:00am and 11:00am
1:00pm (in Spanish)

Confessions:

Saturday, 3:30pm-4:30pm

Parish Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday, 9am-12pm & 1pm-4pm
(Closed Friday), Saturday & Sunday, 9am-1pm

Parish Outreach

Call for appointment, 516-825-0177

Faith Direct

The best way to ensure our parish receives the support needed for our operating expenses and ministries is with eGiving through *Faith Direct!* Please enroll today by visiting www.faithdirect.net and use our Church code, NY78.

Baptism Restrictions

Because of the restrictions due to COVID-19, we can only schedule five Baptisms at a time. Baptisms in English are scheduled for the second & fourth Sunday of every month. Please call the Parish Office for available dates. The dates for Baptisms in Spanish are; December 26, January 9 and January 16.

Remember in Prayer

All Those Who Are Sick

Father of Goodness and love, hear our prayers for the sick members of our community and for all who are in need.

Louis Adduci, Harry Becket, Anthony Ippolito
Kevin Lynch, Theo Mahoney, Phillip Sassa
Michael Senerchia, Jojo Tan

All Those Who Have Died

For the souls of the faithful departed, may they be received into the eternal life and peace of heaven.

Charles T. Blouin, (Baby) Amelia Florencio



Safety During Covid

- *Stay at home if you don't feel well or have symptoms
- *Masks must be worn by all present**
- *Sanitize your hands when you enter & leave the Church
- *Keep social distancing in the pews, as indicated by the blue tape, on the Communion line & when you exit.
- Please do not remove any tape to make space to sit.**
- *Bathrooms will be locked. All hymnals have been removed. Holy water fonts are not available.
- *Please hold your hand out FLAT when receiving Communion. **As per Diocesan directives, you must not wear gloves.** Keep your face covering ON until right before your receive, then immediately put it back on after receiving Communion.
- If you must receive by mouth, wait till the end of the line. The priest will sanitize his hands after each person.
- *There are collection boxes placed in the main aisle where you can place your donation.
- *The Church will be sanitized daily at 2pm and after each weekend Mass.



2020 Christmas Mass Schedule

Sacrament of Reconciliation
 Every Saturday, 3:30-4:30pm
 After all weekend Masses for 30 minutes

Masses
Thursday, December 24, Christmas Eve
 4:00pm, 6:00pm, 8:00pm (Mass in Spanish), Midnight
 Christmas Carols, 11:30pm

Friday, December 25, Christmas Day
 7:15am, 9:00am, 11:00am, 1:00pm (Mass in Spanish)

Thursday, December 31, New Year's Eve
 5:00pm

Friday, January 1, 2021 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
 7:15am, 9:00am, 11:00am, 1:00pm (Mass in Spanish)

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Our priests will be available to hear Confessions after **all weekend Masses** for 30 minutes, following the 5pm, 7:15am, 9am, 11am and 1pm Mass. This will continue throughout the Season of Advent.

Msgr. Mulligan Memorial

There are many available dates to remember a loved one with the Msgr. Mulligan Memorial of ***Bread & Wine, Candles, or Flowers.***

These intentions begin on a Sunday and end on the following Saturday. Your loved one will be remembered at every Mass that is celebrated throughout the week. Please stop in the Parish Office to schedule a memorial.

Our 2020 calendars are now available and can be found around the Church. Our sincere thanks and gratitude to Lieber Funeral Home for providing these calendars every year both in English and Spanish! Please take one home today!



RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT COLLECTION

This weekend, there is a Diocesan collection for **Religious Retirement**. Elderly Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests need your help. Many served for years in Catholic schools, hospitals and parishes-often for little to no pay. Now there is a shortage in retirement savings. Your gift provides funding for medications, nursing care and more. Please give to those who have given a lifetime.



A Covid Christmas

Each year our parish collects gifts for people in need in our community. These gifts are carefully sorted and distributed by a huge number of Volunteers in the weeks before Christmas. Those who receive the gifts are always so very grateful and we are humbled by their expressions of THANKS.

This year, because of COVID, we needed to make a dramatic change in our Christmas Gifts Program. Because we cannot maintain social distancing and other safety precautions in the sorting and distribution process, we needed to make a difficult decision regarding THIS Christmas.

Though GIFT CARDS may not seem very personal, they will allow for a safe distribution and our clients will be able to make choices that will be the best for them.

We hope that many of our parishioners will consider helping us by getting **GIFT CARDS** in **ANY DENOMINATION**. The most helpful stores are Target, Walmart, Old Navy, the Children's Place and Sears.


If you wish to participate in our gift program, please do the following:

1. Purchase the gift cards
2. Put them in an envelope or a box and write PARISH OUTREACH on the front
3. Return them to
 - Parish Outreach, Monday – Friday from 10am-5pm.
 - the Parish Office
 - the box in front of the “CRY ROOM”

*****Please do not leave loose gift cards anywhere around the church!**
For more information, please call Parish Outreach at 516-825-0177.



ADVENT CALENDAR 2020

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
November 29 Buy or make an Advent wreath, light the first violet candle each night this week. Read Mark 13:33-37	November 30 Advent is about waiting for the Savior to come. Offer a prayer anytime you have to wait during Advent.	December 1 The presence of Jesus reminds us to hope in God's mercy. Make a list of reasons for your hope today.	December 2 Set up your Nativity scene. Picture yourself in the scene and think about how you would act if you were there.	December 3 Pick up one habit that is keeping you from holiness. Resolve to conquer it during Advent.	December 4 Add 20 minutes of daily prayer during Advent. Set an alarm to remind you to pray for 10 minutes each morning and night this month.	December 5 Perform an examination of conscience today. Then go to Confession to get ready to greet the Savior.
December 6 Light two violet candles in the Advent wreath each night this week. Sit in silence & enjoy the quiet. Read Mark 1:1-8	December 7 St. Nicholas was a generous man and a courageous bishop. Today, make one generous act of love in his honor.	December 8 The Feast of the Immaculate Conception celebrates Mary's freedom from Original Sin. Attend or stream Mass and pray a Rosary.	December 9 Today, let nothing discourage you in honor of St. Juan Diego. He never gave up, placing his trust in Jesus and His mother.	December 10 In your Christmas cards write a note about the blessings you received this year as a witness to God's love.	December 11 In gratitude that God provides for your needs, set aside gently used clothing and donate it to the poor.	December 12 To honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, place a rose in a vase in your home and pray a "Hail Mary" whenever you pass it.
December 13 Today is Gaudete Sunday-halfway point of Advent. Light two violet candles and the rose one for joy. Read John 1:6-8, 19-28	December 14 Spend time in silence today. Say "no" to unnecessary distractions. In silence and peace, you will be open to God's will.	December 15 Think of Biblical accounts of God's mercy to sinners. Ask forgiveness from someone you have hurt and forgive those who wronged you.	December 16 In honor of Las Posadas remembering the Holy Family's trek to Bethlehem, pray for those who have been forced from their homes.	December 17 Send a card to someone who lost a loved one in the last year. Offer your thoughts and prayers for healing and comfort.	December 18 Pray for the men and women in the armed services who won't be able to spend Christmas with their families.	December 19 Make time to feed the hungry. Not only those hungry for food, but also those hungry for kindness.
December 20 Light all four candles in the Advent wreath each night this week. Read Luke 1:26-38	December 21 This can be a sad time for those who are alone, especially in a pandemic. Pray for anyone you know who will be alone on Christmas.	December 22 As a gift to the coming Savior, repair a relationship with a friend or relative that needs healing.	December 23 Make an effort to share God's love today. Say a kind word or listen with compassion to someone who is suffering.	December 24 Even if you live alone, put up and decorate a Christmas tree. Light it as a symbol of Christ, the Light of the World.	December 25 Rejoice! Read the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2:1-20 and meditate on each miraculous detail. Think of how joyful it will be to meet Jesus when He comes again. 	

Holy Name of Mary School students are hoping for many things during Advent, the season of HOPE

My hope for Advent is to go to church and pray more often. The season of Advent inspires me to do these things more. I would like to go to church every Sunday and be as holy as I can.

Jasmine, Grade 7

During this Advent season, I hope for everyone that I know to stay safe and happy in the hands of God. Advent is a time that I want to spend with friends and family because they mean a lot to me. I really hope my Grandma is safe as she is old and can get sick more easily.

Dylan, Grade 8

My hope for Advent is to become a better person. I want to be kinder so I can help people who are sad and mad.

Lindsay, Grade 3

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I hope that the Corona Virus gets better and that less people die and that we all stay safe.

I hope that families are able to get together and spend time with each other this season without having to stay away and be on their own. I hope that the people out there who are less fortunate are able to have food and a place to sleep. I hope that all of my family, friends and teachers stay safe during these tough times. The last thing I hope for is for people to stop the violence and for peace to be spread and for people to realize that everyone should be treated as equals.

Madison, Grade 6

I hope that Covid-19 dies down and becomes an easily preventable sickness like the flu. I hope we get a good vaccine that lasts a considerable amount of time, so we won't have to take as many precautions, like wearing masks all the time.

William, Grade 8

My hope in the season of Advent is that the world will be peaceful. I hope that I can see my parents and that they will stay happy and joyful. I hope I will see snow for the first time. I hope that we could have a lot less hate in the world and that God will bless us with his love.

Kyara, Grade 7

I hope for everyone to stay safe and hope for the best. I hope for everyone to be happy and proud of themselves. I also hope for covid-19 to end for good and for no one to get sick. And lastly, for everyone to have a happy Advent season and a merry Christmas!

Dominick, Grade 6

My hope for Advent is for the poor to have money, food and a home. I also hope to see Jesus come back to earth and I hope we can get the earth to live in peace.

Jose - Grade 3

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During the season of Advent some things I hope for is for the coronavirus to end or a vaccine to be produced before the holiday season. I miss my grandparents. They are all I have left other than my parents. I need them and if this didn't happen, I would be able to make holiday memories such as making cookies and decorating the tree with them. I hope the front-line workers get the help they need; they didn't ask for this and they are doing their best out there. I hope that people who are hungry get the food they need and the homeless have a place to stay in the harsh cold weather. My hope is that change happens, and it gets better in this world. It just needs to get better, that's what I hope.

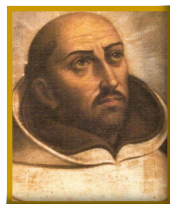
Charlotte - Grade 6

Get to Know the Advent Saints!



ST. LUCY
December 13

St. Lucy was a brave young woman who was zealous to give her life to God. She was ready to give her eyes and even her life, but stood strong in her faith at a time where Christians were persecuted for their faith. This is why Saint Lucy is venerated as a virgin and martyr. Lucy sets a good example to our young people today who are persecuted for their faith at school, at universities and work places. Her message would be to stand strong in your faith, no matter how hard the situation may be.



ST. JOHN of the CROSS
December 14

After John joined the Carmelite order, some members kidnapped him because they didn't agree with his reforms. He was locked in a cell six feet by ten feet and beaten three times a week by the monks. There was only one tiny window high up near the ceiling. Yet in that unbearable dark, cold, and desolation, his love and faith were like fire and light. He had nothing left but God -- and God brought John his greatest joys in that tiny cell. His life of poverty and persecution could have produced a bitter cynic. Instead it gave birth to a compassionate mystic, who lived by the beliefs that "Where there is no love, put love -- and you will find love."



ST. PETER CANISIUS
December 21

St. Peter Canistius studied art, law, and theology. He was ordained in 1546 and became a member of the Society of Jesus, (the Jesuits). St. Peter taught at several universities and established colleges and seminaries. He also wrote a catechism for lay people which was easy to understand. It was translated into twelve languages. He was an eloquent preacher, renewing the faith in southern Germany. He also led reform in Austria, Bavaria and Bohemia. After Mass one day, he received a vision of the Sacred Heart. Afterward, he offered his work to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.



The Shepherd's Candle or The Candle of Joy





Meditations

Holiday advice

The holiday season is an important time in the Church but, in the midst of a pandemic, it can also be

a time when health worries, money worries, family worries, and every kind of worry intrudes. Instead, try to follow this advice from St. Paul, *"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."* (Philippians 4:8)



Unborn joy

"When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb ..." (Luke 1:40). Even in the womb, John was filled with joy to serve God. With the coming of Christmas, look for ways to do God's will and then leap for joy as you fulfill His plan.



"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21)

God is Love

We call God "Creator," "Savior," "Father," yet when we really want to understand who He is, one word is enough. God is love.

"Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love." (1 John 4:8). Love is the very nature and essence of God Himself. He doesn't just love, He is love. In fact, that's why He created us, so we can have a share in that love.

We are not simply swept up in the good will God has toward all his creations. He loves each of us as individuals and that love is never-ending and unconditional. *"Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you. See, upon*

the palms of my hands I have written your name" (Isaiah 49:15-16). This is not necessarily because we are good; we can't possibly earn the vast love He has for us. But the good news is we can't lose it either.

Because He loves us so much, He denies us nothing that will draw us closer to him and to life in Heaven. *"For God so loved the world," Jesus declared, "that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16).



Why do Catholics Do That



Why do Catholics believe in a "virgin birth"?

Before Jesus was born, Isaiah was told, *"the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel"* (Isaiah 7:14). The virgin birth was documented in Luke 1:34. Had Jesus been conceived like the rest of us, He could not have been a perfect

sacrifice for our sins. *"And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth"* (John 1:14).



Awaken to the presence of God on Christmas morning

“And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). An amazing truth occurred at the first Christmas; God came and lived among us. Even more amazing, He continues to live among us. During Advent, take steps to become more aware of His presence. **Begin each day in His presence.** Before you get out of bed in the morning, place yourself in His presence. Take a few minutes to focus on a sacred picture that will help you to “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10).

Seek God’s word. Start your day with Scriptures such as the daily Mass readings (found on www.usccb.org) or any other reading you choose. Ask God to teach you from that selection during the day.

Speak to Him throughout the day. Picture the Lord next to you throughout your day and talk with Him as you experience the day together. Brother Lawrence, a 17th century monk, suggested prayer shouldn’t be confined to formal times.

from Scripture

Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23,
God chooses each of us
in a special way.

Mary and Joseph were forced to travel in the last stages of her pregnancy from Nazareth to Bethlehem. On foot or donkey, it was a dirty and exhausting journey. Once there, they had no option for decent housing and had to stay in a stable with animals. Young Mary gave birth in crude conditions with no friend or family to help. After a short time, they -ed to Egypt with their newborn to escape threats from the government, and stayed there for several years. There were no friendly faces to greet the family once they arrived and they had to make their own way in an unfamiliar land. Refugees all over the world flee violence like the Holy Family. Catholics have a special charge to protect them and those who are vulnerable: children, elderly, and poor. Like Mary’s and Joseph’s, God has a special place for each of us in his plan of salvation. Prayerfully ask God what he wants you to do for him and his kingdom.

FEASTS & CELEBRATIONS

Dec. 21 – St. Peter Canisius (1597). Born in Holland, he was ordained into the Society of Jesus and vigorously safeguarded the Catholic faith through writings and teaching. His work, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, is still used today.

Dec. 26 – St. Stephen (1st century). A deacon of the early Church, St. Stephen preached that God can be found everywhere, not just in one place like the temple. He angered the Jewish authorities and became the first martyr of the Catholic Church.

Dec. 27 – The Holy Family (1st century). On the feast of the Holy Family, we celebrate the family life of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. By their love and support of one another, the Holy Family is a model for all Christian families.

Dec. 29 - St. Thomas Becket (1120). Becket was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1162, the most important position in the church in Medieval England.

Q & A

How do Catholics benefit from praying the Rosary?

The Rosary is a simple prayer adapted from the complex prayers of medieval monks. It’s a powerful prayer because in it, we ask Mary—whose prayers are never refused—to pray for us. In addition, the mysteries of the Rosary introduce us to the lives of Jesus and Mary. Each mystery is associated with a fruit. For example, the fruit of the mystery of the Annunciation is humility. Praying the Rosary opens us to the graces to be more Christ-like. A prayer with roots in Scripture, the Rosary begins with the Apostles’ Creed, which summarizes the great mysteries of the Catholic Faith. The Our Father that introduces each mystery is from the Gospels. The first part of the Hail Mary that follows is from the angel’s words announcing Christ’s birth and Elizabeth’s greeting to Mary. St. Pius V officially added the second part of the Hail Mary. The repetition in the Rosary is meant to lead one into restful and contemplative prayer related to each Mystery. The gentle repetition of the words helps us to enter into the silence of our hearts, where Christ’s spirit dwells. The Rosary can be said privately or with a group.

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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PENITENTIAL ACT

**I confess to almighty God
And to you, my brothers and sisters,
That I have greatly sinned,
In my thoughts and in my words,
In what I have done and
In what I have failed to do,**

(Pray while striking the breast three times)
**through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;
Therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
All the Angels and Saints,
And you, my brothers and sisters,
To pray for me to the Lord our God.**

GLORIA

**Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand
of the Father,
have mercy on us.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

NICENE CREED

**I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,**

*(At the words that follow, up to and including
and became man, bow your head)*
**and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary, and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins, and I look forward to the
resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**