

# 4TH SUNDAY OF Advent

## Mission Statement

*Catholic Community of St. John Neumann*

*FOUNDED on the teachings of Jesus Christ,  
NOURISHED by the hospitality of the Califon Christian  
Communities,*

*FORMED with a commitment to Social Ministry, and  
STRENGTHENED by the Holy Spirit*

*The Catholic Community of St. John Neumann is  
a jubilant people on a continuing spiritual journey of hope:*

- TO CELEBRATE and DEEPEN our faith*
- TO SHARE our unique gifts, talents and treasures*
- TO CHERISH all life*
- TO LIVE in openness, acceptance and love.*

## Annual Parish Goal

*Growing in the Love of the Lord  
Through the Faith Formation of Each Member,  
We Will Give Witness To and  
Welcome All Segments of Our Larger Community*

## *A Christian Community of the Catholic Tradition*

Diocese of Metuchen  
Most Rev. Paul G. Bootkoski, Bishop  
www.diometuchen.org

Trustees:  
Mary Connolly  
Lyle Garcia

## *Our Parish*

Rev. Abraham Orapankal, Ph.D. ....  
..... Pastor  
Rev. J William Mickiewicz.....  
..... Founding Pastor Emeritus  
Earl Roberts ..... Deacon

**Mailing Address:**  
PO Box 455  
Califon, NJ 07830

**Office Center:**  
398 County Route 513  
Califon, NJ  
908-832-2513  
908-832-7618 fax  
www.ccsjn.org

**Worshipping at:**  
398 County Road 513  
(Church Center)

Saturday Vigil Mass ..... 5:30 p.m.  
Sunday ..... 8:00 a.m.  
Sunday ..... 10:30 a.m.  
First Friday Holy Hour ..... 7:00 p.m.

**Worshipping at:**  
\*Check the bulletin for any changes\*  
390 County Road 513  
(Neumann Residence)

**Weekday Masses:**  
Tuesday ..... 7:00 a.m.  
Friday ..... 7:00 a.m.

**Reconciliation:**  
Saturday ..... 5:00-5:25 p.m.

# This Week at Saint John's

## Mass Intentions

### Tuesday, December 22

7:00 a.m. John Aquino, req.  
Gary and Gloria Cucchiara

### Thursday, December 24

4:30 p.m. John McCabe, req.  
Eileen McCabe and Family  
7:00 p.m. Linnea Janks, req.  
Janks Family

### Friday, December 25

10:30 a.m. Maria Sepe, req.  
Maureen & Richard Sepe & Family

### Saturday, December 26

5:30 p.m. Josephine Phillips, req.  
Harrison Family

### Sunday, December 27

8:00 a.m. Bob Cerrato, req.  
Bennett Family  
10:30 a.m. Frank Schettino, req.  
St. John Neumann



## Mass Schedule—December 24/25/26/27

Thursday	Christmas Eve	4:30 p.m.
Celebrant .....	Rev. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader .....	Mike D'Avella	
Altar Server .....	Needed	
Music Eucharistic Minister .....	Mary D'Avella	
Eucharist Ministers.....	Marlene Milko, Joann Gardner, Eileen McCabe ..... Mary Connolly, Joan Eacovalle, Anthony DeStefano, 1 Needed	

Thursday	Christmas Eve	7:30 p.m.
Celebrant .....	Rev. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader .....	Bill Hunt	
Altar Server .....	Geerinck/Torczon Family	
Music Eucharistic Minister .....	Donna Lance	
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Sharon Janks, Shirley Pojedinec ..... Donna Torczon, 2 Needed	

Friday	Christmas Day	10:30 a.m.
Celebrant .....	Rev. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader .....	Needed	
Altar Server .....	Mastro Family	
Music Eucharistic Minister .....	Gloria Cucchiara	
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Barbara Gates, Donna Lance ..... Kathy Kelly Pagliuca, 2 needed	

Saturday		5:30 p.m.
Celebrant .....	Rev. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader .....	Josh Geerinck	
Altar Server .....	Geerinck/Torczon Family	
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Donna Torczon ..... Joan Eacovalle, 1 Needed	

Sunday		8:00 a.m.
Celebrant .....	Rev. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader .....	Jim Murray	
Altar Server .....	Stanski Family	
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Tom Klawunn ..... Jane Klawunn, Barbara Gates	

Sunday		10:30 a.m.
Celebrant .....	Rev. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader .....	Joann McNamara	
Altar Server .....	Bush Family	
Music Eucharistic Minister .....	Shirley Pojedinec	
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Ron Pojedinec, Mark Brisson ..... Anita Sawczuk, Gloria Cucchiara, Bob Sobey	

## Parish Calendar

### Sunday, Dec. 20 - Fourth Sunday of Advent / Christmas Flower Offering

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
9:00 a.m. K-6 Catechesis (Church & Office Center)  
10:30 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
11:30 a.m. Visit Santa (Narthex)  
6:00 p.m. Jr. High Catechesis (Church Center)

### Monday, Dec. 21 - Saint Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church

### Tuesday, Dec. 22 - Late Advent Weekday

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)  
7:30 p.m. Bell Practice (Church Center)

### Wednesday, Dec. 23 - Saint John of Kanty, Priest

5:00 p.m. Cleaning (Church Center)

### Thursday, Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve

OFFICE CLOSSES AT NOON

4:30 p.m. Mass (Church Center)  
7:30 p.m. Mass with Bells (Church Center)

### Friday, Dec. 25 - The Nativity of the Lord/Christmas

OFFICE CLOSED

10:30 a.m. Mass (Church Center)

### Saturday, Dec. 26 - Saint Stephen, The First Martyr

7:00 a.m. Men's Spirituality Breakfast (Office Center)  
5:30 p.m. Mass (Church Center)

### Sunday, Dec. 27 - The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph / In Pew Bishops Annual Appeal

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)  
10:30 a.m. Mass (Church Center)

### Remembered at Mass



We stand together in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. The following will be remembered in the Eucharistic Prayer: **Susan Gaydos, Sophie Goski, Austin Fisher, and Walter Menzie.**

**Deceased:** **Susan Gaydos**, friend of Cathy Bennett, **Sophie Goski**, sister of Ann King, **Austin Fisher**, student of Voorhees High School, and **Walter Menzie**, father and grandfather to the Menzie. May they find peace and comfort in the embrace of the Lord and may their families find strength in the Lord & comfort & support from family & friends.

**FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK...**

Dear Friends,

Have you thought of inviting someone to our Church this Christmas? Dr. Thom Rainer who conducted a national research "The Unchurched Next Door" concluded: "Eighty-two percent of the unchurched are at least somewhat likely to attend church if invited." But the problem is that "only two percent of church members invite an unchurched person to church. Ninety-eight percent of church-goers never extend an invitation in a given year." Thankfully that is not fully true about our parish! I have heard a number of stories of our parishioners joining us because of the invitation of another parishioner.

Many are looking for some good news, some hope, in their lives, because they are hurting in so many ways: families experience conflicts, devastating test results come back, and a host of other problems that make people scared at the thought of a bleak future. Yet on the first Christmas, those who were frightened and in desperate need of good news and great joy were addressed directly by the angel: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born..." (Luke 2:10-11) **Isn't that a good enough reason for us to invite someone to church this Christmas?**

Christmas is a time of giving gifts – to families, to charities, to church. But giving an invitation to church could be the best gift you can give to someone who really needs God's presence in their lives. You are acting as a disciple of Jesus (remember "Every Member A Minister!") by introducing those who are hurting to the same Savior. Our Church is that place where they can meet the God who loves them, understands their greatest fears, sees their deepest longings, and sent His Son to save us. From the testimonies of those joining us, we can be certain that, true to our mission statement, we are "a jubilant people on a continuing spiritual journey of hope ..." So see you at Christmas with your invited guest!

May your Christmas be filled with the wonder of "Emmanuel" (Mt.1:23: God-with-us). May his light shine upon you; may his peace and joy fill your hearts and your homes.

Merry Christmas!  
Your brother in Christ,  
Fr. Abraham Orapankal

**MERCY QUOTE OF POPE FRANCIS**

Jesus' attitude is striking: we do not hear the words of scorn, we do not hear words of condemnation, but only words of love, of mercy, which are an invitation to conversation. "Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again." Ah! Brothers and Sisters, God's face is the face of a merciful father who is always patient. Have you thought about God's patience, the patience He has with each one of us? That is His mercy. He always has patience, patience with us, He understands us, He waits for us, He does not tire of forgiving us if we are able to return to Him with a contrite heart. "Great is God's mercy," says the Psalm.

**Christmas Schedule 2015-2016**



**Christmas Eve Masses (There is No Midnight Mass)**

Thursday, December 24 ..... 4:30 p.m.  
(with Bell Choir) .....7:30 p.m.

**Christmas Day Masses**

Friday, December 25 .....10:30 a.m.

**Weekday Masses – Residence Chapel**

Tuesday, December 22 ..... 7:00 a.m.  
Tuesday, December 29 ..... 7:00 a.m.

**New Year's Eve (There is No Vigil Mass)**

**Solemnity of Mary - New Year's Day Mass**

Friday, January 1 .....10:30 a.m.

**PRAYER MINISTRY**

We must pray without ceasing, in every occurrence and employment of our lives - that prayer which is rather a habit of lifting up the heart to God as in a constant communication with Him. **Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton**

Please join us for the Quarterly Prayer Enrichment Session:  
Thursday, January 7th, 2016  
7:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.  
Church Center

**CHRISTMAS CASH RAFFLE**

**And the winners are**

Bonnie Garcia ..... \$1,438.75  
Veronica Upwood ..... \$863.25  
Karen Sansone ..... \$575.50

**Congratulations!**

*Santa Claus is coming to St. John's  
Sunday, December 20th  
Following the  
10:30 Mass*



**CONGRATULATIONS**  
Congratulations to the Simila Family on the Baptism of Grayson James Simila last weekend at the 10:30 Mass!



**Parish Contact Information**

**Church Center (weekend use) . 908-832-6343**  
**Office Center ..... 908-832-2513**  
Fax ..... 908-832-7618  
Email ..... sijn@ccsjn.org  
Rev. Abraham Orapankal ..... Pastor  
Email ..... abraham@ccsjn.org  
Earl Roberts ..... Deacon  
Email ..... earlr1@verizon.net  
Sharon Janks ..... Pastoral Administrator  
Email ..... sjanks@ccsjn.org  
France Kennedy ..... Pastoral Associate  
Email ..... fkennedy@ccsjn.org  
Kerri Caldaro ..... Financial Administrator  
Email ..... kcaldaro@ccsjn.org  
Wayne Infusino ..... Maintenance  
**Religious Education ..... 908-832-2162**  
Renee Ciszewski .Director of Religious Education  
Email ..... renee@ccsjn.org  
Jo Ann Jarvis ..... Office of Catechesis  
Email ..... jjarvis@ccsjn.org  
Social Ministry ..... socialministry@ccsjn.org  
Anne Germino and Greg Wilson  
Bulletin ..... bulletin@ccsjn.org  
Youth Ministry ..... sjnygroup@gmail.com

# Christian Formation - Catechesis

## **SHIP'S GALLEY SOUP KITCHEN**

Our next service to the SHIP's Galley Soup Kitchen in Somerville will take place on Monday, December 14 from 11am until 2pm. If you would like to help serve or provide food for the meal, please contact Anne Germino at [socialministry@ccsjn.org](mailto:socialministry@ccsjn.org).

## **GINGERBREAD HOUSES**

### ***You Be the Judge!***

The Youth Group will meet Saturday, December 19th after the 5:30 Mass and will compete to win a prize for decorating a Gingerbread House.

After each of the Morning Masses on Sunday, Dec 20 we need your help. Stop by in the Narthex and pick your favorite design. No Tasting required!



## **VETERANS' FURNITURE PROJECT**

Thanks for all the positive responses for VHN furniture and help with moving. However, we are UNABLE to accept donations at the present time due to the lack of storage space. We will notify you in the bulletin when our next delivery date comes up and it's OK to drop off donations. Thank you!

Suzanne & Sandra

## **ACQUIRE THE FIRE**



Acquire the Fire, the combined young adult group of Our Lady of Lourdes and St John Neumann, will be having their next meeting on Sunday, December 20th at 7 PM in the Old Church Hall of Our Lady of Lourdes (390 County Road 523, Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889). Join us for a night of fellowship, games, and snacks. Save the date for our next meeting on Sunday January 10th. To join the list serve please email Susan at [acquirethefire@ollwhs.org](mailto:acquirethefire@ollwhs.org).

## **HAPPY DURING FIRST RECONCILIATION**

Over a week ago, our second graders had their first experience of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Cathy Gagan, who has been faithfully and passionately doing this wonderful ministry for many years, prepared the children very well. They were taught that we all belong to the family of God who wants our happiness. Even when we go against God's plans through our wrong choices, we are still loved and forgiven by God. During the Communal Reconciliation Service, the children had the opportunity for individual reconciliation. The parents brought their child to the Reconciliation Room and after confession led the child back into the church, into the Eucharistic Chapel where the child knelt in front of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle, and said the prayers as part of the "penance." One parent who had two kids in the program said, "My boys came out with wings! That must have been a happy experience for them in the Confession room! But that was not my experience when I did my first confession years ago!"

## Parish News

### **FEEL RUSHED? THEN READ THIS TO SLOW DOWN!**

*"Take time to be aware that in the very midst of our busy preparations for the celebration of Christ's birth in ancient Bethlehem, Christ is reborn in the Bethlehems of our homes and daily lives. Take time, slow down, be still, be awake to the Divine Mystery that looks so common and so ordinary yet is wondrously present. "An old abbot was fond of saying, 'The devil is always the most active on the highest feast days.'*

*"The supreme trick of Old Scratch is to have us so busy decorating, preparing food, practicing music and cleaning in preparation for the feast of Christmas that we actually miss the coming of Christ. Hurt feelings, anger, impatience, injured egos—the list of clouds that busyness creates to blind us to the birth can be long, but it is familiar to us all."* Edward Hays, A Pilgrim's Almanac

### **NATIVITY PLAY - THANK YOU**

To all who participated in the making of a heart-warming Nativity Play last Sunday, a very special Thank You for that gift of joy that you gave to so many people. Your hard work in performing in honor of the Lord's special day was everything the Lord could expect! You all were wonderful, from the very smallest... that little infant, our baby Jesus, , , to the younger cast (Little Angels & Drummer Boys) to the older ones (Archangels, Shepherds, Wise Men, Mary & Joseph, Elizabeth, Innkeepers, Soldiers, Priests, and Kings) the 'hidden' cast (Stage Crew, Lighting Crew, Helpers, & Narrators), to the "oldest and wisest" (the adult leaders, crafters, helpers and staff at St. John's). And a special thank you to my 'guardian angel,' Bernadette Andrejco! A thank you also to our families, fellow parishioners, and friends for your support and love in attending our Play to honor the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. \*\*\*A BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO ALL\*\*\* Mary Sorgi

Our Cast and Crew: Kristen Abeles, Teddy Abeles, Kate Anderson, Megan Anderson, Brandon Aulert, Sean Bernard, Jessica Brynildsen, Victoria Brynildsen, Elijah Carey, Jacqueline Carey, Kate Cookson, Lina D'Andrea, Kyle Erz, Jordan Erz, Wendy King, Emilia Kuhn, Carsyn Loescher, Beatriz Mansim, Felipe Mansim, Colleen McCord, Jude McCormick, Hannah Nacamuli, Olivia Osborne, Anne Parsons, Edgar Rafael Proano, Ezequiel Proano, Rafael Proano, Casey Roskowski, Daphne Roskowski, Chris Saam, Matthew Saam, Sheridan Sieber, Peter Sorgi, Brennan Taylor, Daniel Uss.

## **DID YOU BRING A CARD FOR YOUR ADVENT FAMILY?**

Nice to see that many of you have brought a card for the family you prayed for during Advent. It seems to have been a happy experience for all, from what many are saying, to pray for another family of our parish. Some expressed the desire to meet with the family they have been praying for. It simply means there is that desire to know and be in fellowship with others of our family. Thank you for all who participated. Those of you who have not brought the card can still do it.

## **RETRouvaille – A LIFELINE FOR TROUBLED MARRIAGES**

Has your marriage become unloving or uncaring? Has your relationship grown cold, distant? Are you thinking about a separation or divorce? Are you already separated/divorced but (both of you) wish to try again? Then the Retrouvaille program can help you.

Retrouvaille (Rediscovery) sponsored by the Family Life Office of the Diocese of Metuchen consists of a weekend experience for couples (no group discussions) with six follow-up sessions.

The next program begins the weekend of February 5-7, 2016. All inquiries are confidential. For further information please call the Family Life office (days) 732-562-1990x1705; Rich & Annette Colasuonno 732-236-0671 (evenings), or Tom & Pat McTague 732-583-4468 (evenings).

## **ADVENT – A TIME OF PREPARATION**

### **PRAYING FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY**

We hope you have enjoyed praying for your fellow parish families. It is a small way to connect with others and good for us to remember that we don't know what others are going through and how helpful our prayers may be. Please write a Christmas card to your family and place it drop it in the basket in the narthex. You will be able to pick up the card from the person who prayed for you at Christmas! Won't it be nice to know or meet the person who had you in their prayers!



## **VALENTINE'S DINNER DANCE**

**Friday, Feb. 5, 7:00-10:30 (Snow date: Saturday, Feb. 6, 7:00-11:00)**

We'll offer a delicious homemade Italian dinner buffet, yummy dessert assortment, rockin' music from Mike Griffin's band, the GB's, and an interesting Silent Auction. Round up some friends and join us! The cost is \$35 per person, \$260 for a table of 8 and \$325 for a table of 10. We are happy to help you make up a table. Contact the office or Jim Murray at 832-5273 or [jmurray@eclipse.net](mailto:jmurray@eclipse.net).

This event benefits our teens' Catholic Heart Workcamp experience. This summer we have over 80 volunteers traveling to Richmond, VA. Our youth follow Pope Francis' call to service!

If you cannot attend the dance or would like to help in some other way, please consider:

- Sponsoring a teen (\$350)
- Helping with set up/wait staff/clean up
- Donating towards our transportation costs or partially sponsoring a teen
- Donating to our Silent Auction. We love gently used items or even re-gifted items!

For more information, contact Mary Connolly at [mandmconnolly@gmail.com](mailto:mandmconnolly@gmail.com) or 908-930-0784.



**Like us on Facebook! Find us as "St. John Neumann RC Church, Califon NJ" or follow the link from the home page of our website at [www.ccsjn.org](http://www.ccsjn.org)**

## **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**December 20, 2015**

***"For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy." (LUKE 1:44)***

When you hear the scripture readings and Gospel reading each Sunday, do you "leap for joy?" If not, don't blame the lecturer or priest, rather look inside yourself. Do you prepare for Mass each week or do you just show up and expect to be entertained?



## **BAPTISM**

For anyone who is expecting or wants to have a child baptized please contact France at the office. We will be having the Baptism Preparation Class in January which you attend prior to scheduling a baptism.

## **BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL BLESSING**

As Christmas nears, you are asked to make a special effort to remember the 2015 Bishop's Annual Appeal. It is a gift that brings the **Grace, Mercy & Peace** of Christ to thousands of people throughout the Diocese of Metuchen. Please consider making a gift today.

**To date the Diocese has received pledges or payments totaling \$16,868 from 71 families which represents 43.7% of our \$38,600 goal.**

## **VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES**

### **Store Cards**

**Dec. 19 & Dec. 20**

5:30 p.m. C. Crescenti  
8:00 a.m. K. Dabrowski  
10:30 a.m. S. Pojedinec

**Dec. 26 & Dec. 27**

5:30 p.m. J. Gardner  
8:00 a.m. M. Kearns  
10:30 a.m. G. Ambrosky

### **Church Center Plant Watering**

Week of 12/20 M. Cangelosi  
Week of 12/27 B. Sobey

### **Church Center Cleaning**

December 18 Team D  
December 25 Team E

## REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Virgilio Alves  
Eugene Cifranic  
Jean Crickenberger  
John D'Almeida  
Vicky Davids  
Tino DeSantis  
Sophia DeVita  
Neil Ercolano  
Paul Ferri  
Gordon Furlong  
Sophie Geist  
Fred Holub  
Diane Jackson  
Frank Kosteci  
Lou Livoti  
Jan McLeavey  
Christine Meyer  
Evelyn Murray  
Fran Miceli  
Beau (Bernice) Mills  
Michael James Nonestied  
Mary Lou O'Brien  
Floyd Opdyke  
Linda Owens  
Nilsa Perez Parsons  
John Pfeufer  
Anne & Joe Sacco  
Noah Skinner  
Michael Slivka  
Julie Suplee  
Brian Travis  
William Weimer  
Josh Wilkes  
Caden Zane  
Jill Zane  
Joey Zieba

## MILITARY PERSONNEL

If you have someone in the military that you would like us to remember in our prayers, call the office or drop the name into the collection basket. As military personnel leave the Service, please notify us so that we can remove them from the list. Please remember the following in your prayers:

Captain Baumann, Katherine, U.S. Army  
HM Bullis, Christopher, U.S. Navy  
Private, Linzer, Matthew, U.S. Army  
Seaman, Linzer, Stephanie, U.S. Navy  
SR O'Leary, Thomas, U.S. Navy  
Captain Royal, Benjamin P., USMC  
Ensign Simila, Nicole, U.S. Navy

## SUNDAY REFLECTION: Edith Stein's transforming "visitation"

*"Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb . . . "Luke 1: 39-45*

The journey of Edith Stein from atheism to God, from Jewish scholar to Carmelite nun, is one of the great odysseys of faith. The former Jewish-atheist scholar died as a Carmelite nun in the gas chamber of Auschwitz in 1942. Edith Stein - Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross - was canonized in 1998. One of the most influential people in Edith's life was the philosopher Adolf Reinach, her professor at the University of Gottingen. In Reinach's writings and teachings, Edith began to see the wisdom of God illuminating the philosophical wisdom of the ages. Both Professor Reinach and his wife, Anna, were unstinting in their friendship and support to Edith, one of the few women pursuing higher studies in the early days of the 20th century. Anna's friendship and counsel were especially valued by Edith.

At the outbreak of World War I, the wise and humble professor went off to fight for the German fatherland. Awarded the Iron Cross for his bravery, Reinach was killed in Flanders in 1917. When word of Reinach's death was received, the devastated Edith immediately went to comfort Reinach's young widow. Edith had no idea what to say. But it was Anna who provided hope and consolation to Edith. Despite her grief, Anna's trust in God and the meaning of the Cross seemed stronger than ever. Edith later wrote of that moment: "It was my first encounter with the Cross and the divine power it bestows in those who carry it. For the first time I was seeing with my very own eyes the Church, born from its Redeemer's sufferings, triumphant over the sting of death. That was the moment when my unbelief collapsed and Christ shone forth - in the mystery of the Cross."

**Edith and Anna's "visitation" was a turning point in Edith's own journey of faith, leading her to Christianity and baptism, to profession as a religious, and, finally, to the company of the saints. In today's Gospel, Mary travels "in haste" to be with her cousin Elizabeth. Luke never says exactly why she goes, but we can guess: Mary wants to be with her beloved cousin in the last months of what must have been a very difficult pregnancy, but also to seek the elder Elizabeth's counsel and support during her own tumultuous time. In Mary and Elizabeth's meeting and in our own similar "visitations," the Spirit of God is present in the healing, comfort and support we can extend to one another in such moments. In the stirring of the infant in Elizabeth's womb, God calls to humanity in every time and place: I am with you every step of the way. I am with you in every storm. I am with you when the night seems unending. In Christ's birth, the inexplicable love of God becomes real to us, the peace and justice of God become possible.**



## SMILE WITH YOUR FAMILY



Christmas telegram: The preacher and his pregnant wife had left for a conference in France, forgetting to give instructions for the banner which was to decorate the hall at the Christmas Carol Concert, the following weekend. The parish secretary was astonished to receive a telegram from France which read simply: UNTO US A SON IS BORN. NINE FEET LONG AND TWO FEET WIDE. REV. AND MRS. JOHNSON.

Christmas Stamps: A woman went to the Post Office to buy stamps for her Christmas cards. "What denomination?" asked the clerk? "Oh, good Heavens! Have we come to this?" said the woman. "Well, give me 20 Catholic stamps for me and 20 Baptist stamps for my husband."

# Parish & Community News



## **OPLATEK – THE CHRISTMAS WAFER**

### ***Start your own Family Tradition***

The word Bethlehem means “House of Bread”. The breaking of the bread is a sign of charity, unity, and friendship. Religious family traditions and customs bring the truths of Faith into the home. One of these beautiful Christmas customs is the Christmas Wafer. A Wafer bearing a simple design commemorative of Christ’s birth is broken by the head of the family and distributed to each member. With a simple prayer for God’s grace and the welfare of the present and absent members of the family, the head family member breaks the Wafer and distributes it, a piece to each one at the table. While doing so each member of the family is kissed and is wished a joyful feast. The other family members then greet one another in the same way.

The spiritual lesson in this age old custom is unity of the family—the main pillar of society. The bond of unity is the Christ-like charity that should exist amongst the members of the family. The father of the family is the link in the unbroken chain of One Body, One Bread, One Christ, and One Church. The family joins him in this eternal procession no matter where they are. The family joins him in this eternal procession no matter where they are. For there is a universal longing by men to be always with one another, with God.

All this brings to mind clearly out charity for one another, to seek salvation together. Family customs remind us that we seek and obtain salvation with the help of others at all times.

So try it with your family this year. There is Oplatek in the Narthex in envelopes. Take one and leave a donation

## **TASTING VENDORS - Extended Commission to St. John’s**

The following vendors have agreed to extend their commission to St. John’s until December 31, 2015 (some flyers are in the narthex):

- Cara London Silk Scarves (Cara London) [cara@caralondon.com](mailto:cara@caralondon.com)
- Laura Conrad Greeting Cards (Laura Conrad) [njlaura63@gmail.com](mailto:njlaura63@gmail.com)
- Dana’s Closet Clothing Accessories (Dana Cole) [danascloset@yahoo.com](mailto:danascloset@yahoo.com)
- Healthy Path Massage Therapy (Tara Mowry) 908-619-7747 or [tmourry@hotmail.com](mailto:tmourry@hotmail.com)
- Krunch Kitchen Granola (Janet Schwamm) [jschwamm@gmail.com](mailto:jschwamm@gmail.com)
- Lady J’s Vintage Jewelry (Kathy Jacobsen) 908-638-6246 or [ladyigems@comcast.net](mailto:ladyigems@comcast.net)
- Lunacy Botanicals Skin Care (Appolonia Cusmano) 908-832-6464
- Nerium Skin Care (Pam Terlizzi) [pamelaterlizzi@gmail.com](mailto:pamelaterlizzi@gmail.com)
- Pampered Chef (Lois Lindsay) [loistpc@yahoo.com](mailto:loistpc@yahoo.com)
- Silpada Jewelry (Maria Ferguson) 732-522-7870
- Tastefully Simple (Tracy Denkovic) 908-638-5145
- Wildtree (Bridgette Como) 908-832-5029 or [bmcomo@me.com](mailto:bmcomo@me.com)
- Young Living Essential Oils (Joann Ordille McNamara) 973-819-5950 or [joann\\_bicycles@yahoo.com](mailto:joann_bicycles@yahoo.com)

Please contact them and place an order, and be sure to mention St. John’s so we benefit!!

We are sorry if we may have missed your name, please know that your help is we truly appreciated. We couldn’t be successful without all of your help.

## ***Every Member A Minister Number of Families 291***

### ***Stewardship Responses***

Sample Serve .....	9
Time & Talent .....	61
Treasure.....	29
Automated Giving .....	7

## **STEWARDSHIP**

### ***“Every Member a Minister”***

We are grateful to those who have already responded. Please take a few minutes and fill out your forms. There are additional forms in the Narthex. If you think you might be interested in Automated Giving there are forms for that as well. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the office and if we will be happy to help.



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Thanks to **17 families** who purchased Shop Rite and Kings gift cards the last week, totaling **\$4,175.00**.

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83 Donors Weekly .....	\$6,232.00
61 Donors Yellow Brick Rd..	\$2,026.00

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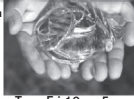
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