

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

*We, as ministers, will foster
an inviting and spiritual Catholic community for all,
especially to those away from the Church,
by growing in and witnessing to our faith in the mercy of God.*

A Christian Community of the Catholic Tradition

Diocese of Metuchen

Most Rev. James F. Checchio,
JCD, MBA
Bishop of Metuchen

Most Rev. Paul G. Bootkoski, DD
Bishop Emeritus

www.diometuchen.org

Our Parish

Rev. Abraham Orapankal, PhD
..... Pastor
Rev. J William Mickiewicz.....
..... Founding Pastor Emeritus
Earl Roberts.....Deacon
Mary Cangelosi.....Trustee
Fred Heimall.....Trustee

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 Mass5:30 p.m.
Sunday8:00 a.m.
Sunday10:30 a.m.
First Friday Holy Hour7:00 p.m.

Worshipping at:

390 County Road 513
(Neumann Residence)

Check the bulletin for any changes

Weekday Masses:

Tuesday8:00 a.m.
Friday7:00 a.m.

Reconciliation:

Saturday.....5:00 p.m.
Or anytime by appointment.

This Week at Saint John's

Mass Intentions

Tuesday, December 12

8:00 a.m. Bob Simms, req.
St. John Neumann Church

Friday, December 15

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

Saturday, December 16

5:30 p.m. Leonard Handy, req.
The Gardner Family

Sunday, December 17

8:00 a.m. Sharon Sutton, req.
Maggie Baumann
10:30 a.m. Henry Edson Drucker, req.
Diane Lehnert

MASS WITH BELLS



Besides this Sunday we will be celebrating Mass on Christmas Eve with the wonderful sound of the Bells.

December 24th..... 7:30 p.m.

Parish Calendar

Sunday, December 10 - Second Sunday of Advent Retirement Fund for Religious Christmas Giving Tree Due

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)
10:30 a.m. Mass - RCIA Rite of Welcome (Church Center)
10:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word (Narthex)

Monday, December 11 - Saint Damascus I, Pope

10:00 a.m. S.H.I.P. (Office and Church Kitchens)

Tuesday, December 12 - Our Lady of Guadalupe

8:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)
7:00 p.m. Bereavement Session (Upper Room)
7:00 p.m. Budget Meeting (Drexel Room)
7:30 p.m. Stewardship Meeting (Seton Room)

Wednesday, December 13 - Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

12:00 p.m. OFFICE CLOSED
12:30 p.m. Staff Luncheon (Away)
7:00 p.m. Community Reconciliation (Church Center)
Followed by Individual Confessions

Thursday, December 14 - Saint John of the Cross, Priest and and Doctor of the Church

5:00 p.m. Cleaning (Church Center)
7:00 p.m. Set up Boxes for Food Pack Up (Church Center)
7:30 p.m. Music/Bells (Church Center)

Friday, December 15 - Advent Weekday

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)
7:00 p.m. Food Pack Up (Church Center)
7:00 p.m. Narthex Christmas Tree Setup (Narthex)

Mass Schedule - December 16/17

Saturday	5:30 p.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Reader	Jim Murray
Altar Server	Lowary Family
Ministers of the Eucharist	Joan Eacovalle
.....	Anita Sawczuk, Donna Torczon
Sunday	8:00 a.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Reader	Brent Herrig
Altar Server	Stanski Family
Ministers of the Eucharist	Tom Klawunn
.....	Bob Martalus, Barbara Martalus
Sunday	10:30 a.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Reader	Jane Albert
Altar Server	Bush Family
Music Eucharistic Minister	Gloria Cucchiara
Ministers of the Eucharist	Marlene Milko, Doris Royal
.....	Peter Royal, Mark Brisson, Sheena Carew

Prepare the way of the Lord... " MARK 1:3

We are all called to live a holy life. We are all called to invite others to live holy lives. Living a stewardship lifestyle, being grateful and generous with our gifts, does just that it puts us on the path to holiness and it invites others to be holy, too. (Archbishop Carlson)

Saturday, December 16 - Advent Weekday

8:00 a.m. Food Basket Deliveries (Church Center)
5:30 p.m. Mass - Youth (Church Center)
6:30 p.m. Pick up Christmas Flower Orders (Narthex)

Sunday, December 17 - Third Sunday of Advent Christmas Flower Memorial Offering

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)
9:00 a.m. Christmas Flower Order Pickup (Narthex)
8:00 a.m. Family Faith Formation (Valley View)
10:30 a.m. Mass-Baptism Abeles & Osborne (Church Center)
10:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word (Narthex)
11:30 a.m. Christmas Flower Order Pickup (Narthex)
6:00 p.m. Jr. High Formation (Church Center)

Remembered at Mass



We stand together in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. The following will be remembered during the Holy Eucharist: **Joseph Sacco**, and **Frank Panek**.

Deceased: Joseph Sacco, husband of Anne and father of Barbara Pannone, and **Frank Panek**, husband of Marlene. May they find peace and comfort in the embrace of the Lord and may their families find strength in the Lord and comfort and support from family and friends.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK....

Dear Friends,

Recently we upgraded our wireless microphone system in the Church. Have you noticed the difference? The reason for upgrading was the Federal Government's decision known as the "FCC Incentive Auction" meant to align the use of broadcast airwaves with 21st century consumer demands for video and broadband services. The use of wireless microphones and personal monitor systems in the 600 MHz Band eventually will be prohibited by law. The "600 MHz Band" refers to frequency ranges 616–653 MHz and 663–698 MHz. This is what we use and hence we would have been affected if not for the upgrade.

Our Property Management Committee took this matter seriously and held discussions and consultations and decided to go for the upgrade as there was an incentive of a \$750 if we did it before January 1, 2018. The price of the upgrade was \$5,947.00 and we successfully transitioned to another range of spectrum, and we did receive a \$750 Rebate because we did the work before Jan. 1, 2018.

I believe this is important to communicate to you, dear parishioners, because sometimes the investment of money and efforts we do in the parish may not be very easily visible unless made known. The Finance Council oversees the judicious use of our resources and hence every decision to spend significant amount of your sacrificial offering to Church must be also communicated to you. Thus you will have the satisfaction of knowing where or how your contribution is put to good use.

As we enter into the 2nd Sunday of Advent, we will realize that the countdown to Christmas has already begun! And so we will hear many speak about being hurried and harried, about being overwhelmed and overtired, that they are not ready for Christmas, etc. That's why today's First Reading from Isaiah is very helpful: "Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God." (Is 40:1) Drop everything for a minute each time you feel overwhelmed and repeat this beautiful line from God: "Comfort, give comfort to my people." You will immediately feel a sense of calm coming over your body, mind and soul. That is the presence of a caring God who is enveloping you with love.

Happy Advent!
Your brother in Christ,
Fr. Abraham Orapankal



SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 10, 2017

"Prepare the way of the Lord..."

MARK 1:3

We are all called to live a holy life. We are all called to invite others to live holy lives. Living a stewardship lifestyle, being grateful and generous with our gifts, does just that – it puts us on the path to holiness and it invites others to be holy, too.



CONGRATULATIONS

RAY AND JENNIFER!

Congratulations to parishioners, Ray Klacik and Jennifer Anderson, who celebrated the Sacrament of Marriage here on November 25th. May God bless them as they start their new life together.



BAPTISM

BAPTISM

Quarterly we hold Baptism Preparation for families who are looking to baptize their child. Anyone who is expecting a birth of a child or have a child to be baptized should call France Kennedy at the office (908-832-2513) to register for the preparation program and discuss arrangements.



Parish Contact Information

Office Center 908-832-2513

Fax 908-832-7618

Email sjn@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 kaldaro@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

Project Earth Garden... projectearth@ccsjn.org

Bulletin..... bulletin@ccsjn.org

Youth Ministry..... sjnygroup@gmail.com



CALLING ALL SINGERS AND MUSICIANS!

The Christmas Masses are at 4:30, 7:30 PM on Christmas Eve and 10:30 AM on Christmas Day. The music ministry would like to reach out to the congregation to invite you to join us and sing at one of these Masses.

This year Becky Germino and Maggie Baumann invite you to join us on Wednesday December 20th at 7:00 PM for a rehearsal of the music which will be sung at the 7:30PM and 10:30AM Masses. This rehearsal will be held in the Church.

Please RSVP to Becky Germino as soon as possible at 908-644-9268. We hope to see you on Wednesday the 20th!



EXPERIENCE GOD'S LOVE IN RECONCILIATION

Advent is a wonderful time to celebrate the reconciling love and the healing graces our Lord offers us. **Please join us for a Community Reconciliation Service at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 13th.** This communal service is an opportunity to join our sisters and brothers in asking for forgiveness and healing during this important time of the year. Following this short service, Fr. Anthony from Hackettstown, besides Fr. Abraham will be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. As we begin the new liturgical year in the Church, we invite all to begin anew with souls nourished from the gifts of divine mercy and forgiveness God has for everyone.

Parish News & Christian Formation

WRAP PRESENTS AND BE PRESENT!

Advent is the season we prepare for Christmas. We shop, bake, decorate, shop, cook, and visit till we are ready to drop. This is all part of the season, but at its heart, Advent is about getting ready to encounter Jesus. A free email program from Dynamic Catholic will help you slow down and focus on what really matters during this busy season. Sign up at: BestAdventEver.com

CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

Children's Liturgy of the Word takes place 2 times a month during the 10:30 Mass in the Narthex for children aged 5 to 11 years old. Please bring your children and encourage them to attend.

amazon SHOPPING?

Christmas SHOPPING???? Don't forget to use the 'SHOP NOW' button on our Facebook page in order to go directly to the Amazon link that benefits St. John Neumann Church! You will see 'tag=ccsjn-20' embedded in the link address. On top of that commission, you can also come to the Narthex or contact the office to purchase Amazon gift cards...and even use them to complete your Amazon purchase, then we'll receive twice the benefits.

Or you can use the Amazon Link button on the website.

Merry Christmas from all of us on the SJN Fundraising Committee!!

NARTHEX CHRISTMAS TREE SETUP

Friday, Dec. 15th, 7:00pm

If you are available to help set up the Narthex Christmas tree please join us on Friday, Dec. 15 at 7pm. Call the office if you have any questions.

Santa Claus is coming to St. John's

Sunday, December 17th

Following the 10:30 Mass

(bring your cameras)



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS YOU ARE INVITED!! PUT DOWN YOUR BOOKS AND JOIN US FOR PIZZA!

December 17, 2017 - 6:00PM-8:00PM - Church Center



We will enjoy pizza, make a holiday craft and play a few rounds of Wheel of Faith.

Please RSVP attendance for food and craft count renee@ccsjn.org.

Hope to see you!



CPI DAY OF DISCERNMENT

Our 6th grade students and parents enjoyed a Day of Discernment retreat on Saturday. The theme was Faith, Hope and Charity – How will I know and share these virtues as I prepare for Confirmation. The retreat was followed by Mass, where the parents presented each child with a wooden cross, after the children made their Rite of Entrance. These crosses will serve as a reminder that God is with them on this journey to Confirmation. Thank you parents and students for your participation.

GIFT ADULT FORMATION- WHAT'S NEW?



Recent history bears witness that if adults are not well-formed in the Faith, the younger generations will lack formation as well. A solid and vibrant adult faith formation provides all adults an opportunity to learn about the church and develop a personal relationship with Christ. The Sacraments begin to take on more relevance to everyday life. Simply put, the benefits are incalculable!

Consider joining us for the adult formation session of the GIFT program. These sessions will be lead by Fr. Abraham and this year's sessions focus on: **What we celebrate-Sacraments and What we believe-beatitudes/moral life.** and meet monthly on Sunday mornings at 9AM in Valley View School and Monday evenings at 6:15PM in the Church Center. Next sessions are **Sunday December 17 and Monday, December 18.** Please contact Renee Ciszewski with any questions at renee@ccsjn.org. Hope to see you at our next session.

Social Ministry

CHRISTMAS CAROLING LITTLE BROOK NURSING HOME



Join us Thursday, December 21 at 10am as we bring Christmas cheer to the residents of Little Brook Nursing Home in Califon. All ages are welcome--bring the little ones! If you can provide a tray of Christmas cookies to share that would be very much appreciated. For more information contact Nancy 908-832-7548.

CHRISTMAS FOOD - PACKUP & DELIVERY



We are helping 29 households and will continue to collect food for Christmas. If you're interested there are many opportunities to help, please contact socialministry@ccsjn.org.

Sign up sheets for Christmas pack up and delivery are in the Narthex. Pack Up is Friday, December 15th at 7:00 pm and deliveries are Saturday, December 16th at 8:00 a.m.

HAND STAMPED CARDS



Buy your greeting cards and support the St. John's Food Pantry. Hand Stamped Cards are located at Social Concerns table in Narthex on a card rack. Cost is \$3.00 per card. \$10 for 4. Put money in the cash box found near the rack. Checks get made out to St. John's.

Parish News

CHRISTMAS DECORATING PARTY - Dec. 19th - 6pm



Everyone is invited to the St. John's Christmas Decorating Party. Adults and kids are welcome. While we enjoy socializing with fellow parishioners, with music, appetizers and desserts, we have something fun to do: decorate the church! You can bring a goodie to share- cookies, sweets, appetizers or any kind of drink. It is not required to bring food – there is always too much – we are just happy to enjoy Christmas merriment with everyone! So please join us even for just an hour.

An Invitation to All New Families !



Please bring in a Christmas Ornament to represent your family to place on the Narthex Christmas Tree.



To All Our Parishioners: If your family hasn't put an ornament on the tree yet, please bring one in this year to be added with the rest of the families past and present here at St. John's.

Christmas Season & New Year's - Mass Schedule - 2017-2018

Community Reconciliation

followed by Individual Confessions

Wednesday, December 13 7:00 p.m.

Weekday Masses - Residence Chapel

Tuesday, December 19 8:00 a.m.

Friday, December 22 7:00 a.m.

Tuesday, December 26 NO MASS

Friday, December 29 7:00 a.m.

Weekend Masses / 4th Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 23 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 24 8:00 a.m.

Please Note: NO 10:30 a.m. MASS

Christmas Eve Masses

Sunday, December 24 4:30 p.m.

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

Christmas Day Mass

Monday, December 25 10:30 a.m.

Weekend Masses

Saturday, December 30 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 31 8:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 31 10:30 a.m.

Solemnity of Mary - New Year's Day Masses

Monday, January 1 10:30 a.m.

First Friday (The Feast of St. John Neumann)

Friday, January 5 7:00 a.m.

First Friday Holy Hour 7:00 p.m.



SMILE WITH YOUR FAMILY



I did not send you! A man who thought he was John the Baptist was disturbing the neighborhood. So, for public safety, he was forcefully taken to the psychiatric ward of a hospital. He was put in a room with another crazy patient. He immediately began his routine, "I am John the Baptist! The Lord has sent me as the forerunner of Christ the Messiah!" The other guy looked at him and declared, "I am the Lord your God. I did not send you!"

A woman approached the minister after the sermon, and thanked him for his discourse. "I found it so helpful," she said. The minister replied: "I hope it will not prove as helpful as the last sermon you heard me preach." "Why, what do you mean?" asked the astonished woman. "Well," said the minister, "that sermon lasted you three months."

FAREWELL

MARY & MIKE MASTRO

Devoted parishioners, Mary and Mike Mastro are moving to Virginia to be nearer to family. We wish them good luck and God blessings as they go forth as disciples. All of us at St. Johns will miss their stewardship, dedication and faith over the last thirty years.



PARENTING TUNE-UP

What does it mean to conceive a child? Whether you are the mother or father, it means your life is forever changed. It is the start of enduring love and sacrifice for another being put in your care. Pause today and ponder your creative role. (Susan Vogt)

MARRIAGE TUNE-UP

Are you ready? It's a common question as Christmas approaches, but these are sobering times with natural disasters multiplying and the threat of nuclear war present. Being ready depends on how you live today. Make today a day worthy of your life. Talk this over with your beloved.

ST. JOHN'S LABYRINTH



Immortalize your family, friends, yourself - purchase a stone to honor those you love, mark a birthday, anniversary -- the possibilities are endless.

Thanksgiving or Christmas - such a perfect time to honor your family's Special Events with an engraved stone at the Labyrinth of the Catholic Community of St. John Neumann. The pavers measure 5"X9" and can have 3 lines of engraving, or an 11"X11" which can be engraved with 5 lines. See the brochure in the Narthex for prices. Commemorative pavers will serve as a permanent acknowledgment of your commitment to the Catholic Community of St. John Neumann.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Joseph Angeline
Pete Cangelosi
Linda Caprio
Joan Cardierre
Jean Crickenberger
John D'Almeida
Barbara DelPiano
Sophia DeVita
Jennifer Bennett Duckworth
Paul Ferri
Sophie Geist
Father Luigi Hargen
Liz Harmon
Jay Heyman
Fred Holub
Manuel Jimenez, Sr.
Miriam Jiminian
Bonnie Lieberwirth
Lou Livoti
Dick McCall
Maggie McKeon
Jan McLeavey
Christine Meyer
Fran Miceli
Joan & Megan Myers
Mary Lou O'Brien
Nancy Patterson
Nilsa Perez Parsons
John Pfeufer
Ali Redling
Roy Rittman
Anne Sacco
Richard Sepe
Noah Skinner
Michael Slivka
Dick Slusher
Nicholas Troiano
Don Velli
William Weimer
Josh Wilkes
Dana & Greg Wilson
Mari Wilson
Caden & Jill Zane
Joey Zieba

MILITARY PERSONNEL

Please remember the following in your prayers:

Captain Baumann, Katherine, U.S. Army
HM Bullis, Christopher, U.S. Navy
Cavallo, Chris, USMC
C2C, Geerinck, Joshua, U.S. Air Force
Seaman, Jenkinson, Devin, U.S. Air Force
Spec. Jablonski, Jon Tyler, U.S. Army
Private, Linzer, Matthew, U.S. Army
Seaman, Linzer, Stephanie, U.S. Navy
SR O'Leary, Thomas, U.S. Navy
Lieutenant JG Simila, Nicole, U.S. Navy
Airman, Vardian, Justin, U.S. Air Force
Ensign, Webster, Justine, U.S. Navy

ADVENT SUNDAY REFLECTION: Make A Friend, Collect a Robe!

John the Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **Mark 1: 1-8**

Daryl Davis is an African American blues musician who has an interesting hobby. He collects Ku Klux Klan robes. He's got about 200 of them. How he gets them is the story. Davis got his first robe 30 years ago while playing in a bar in Frederick, Maryland. After his set, a white gentleman approached him. "I really enjoy your all's music," he said. "You know this is the first time I ever heard a black man play piano like Jerry Lee Lewis." Davis thanked him and then asked, "Where do you think Jerry Lee Lewis learned how to play that kind of style?" And then the musician explained the roots of rock 'n roll in the black blues tradition, that the rockabilly style he liked was not invented by Jerry Lee Lewis but developed by black artists like Fats Domino and Little Richard.

The two talked for some time. As the conversation went on, the man said, "You know, this is the first time I ever sat down and had a drink with a black man." He then said he was a member of the Ku Klux Klan. Davis laughed at first, not believing him - but he man pulled out pictures and produced his Klan card. Davis immediately stopped laughing. But the man was very friendly and asked Davis to call him the next time he played at the bar. "The fact that a Klansman and black person could sit down at the same table and enjoy the same music, that was a seed planted," Davis recalls. "So what do you do when you plant a seed? You nourish it." Davis decided to go around the country and meet and talk to as many Klan members as he could - music always being the entrée. First he learned all he could about the Klan to understand what they really think - that enabled Davis to sit down and talk with people who instinctively hated him. Davis deflated the racial stereotypes that fueled their anger and hatred. "How can you hate me when you don't know me?" he asks.

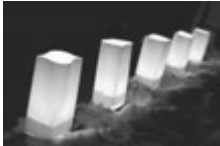
"If you spend five minutes with your worst enemy - it doesn't have to be about race, it could be about anything . . . you will find that you both have something in common. As you build upon those commonalities, you're forming a relationship and as you build upon that relationship, you're forming a friendship. That's what would happen. I didn't convert anybody They saw the light and converted themselves." Once the friendship and trust blossom, the Klansmen realize that their hate may be misguided. When they renounce their membership, Davis collects the robes and keeps them in his home as a reminder of the dent he has made in racism by simply sitting down and having dinner with people. Daryl Davis has been having those conversations for three decades now. And he has their robes as testimonies. [NPR, August 20, 2017.]

A black blues musician reduces the ranks of the Ku Klux Klan by his message of music and kindness; he straightens a very crooked path by his courage to sit down and talk with those whose initial reaction is to see him destroyed. Daryl Davis is a prophet in the spirit of John the Baptizer. In baptism, each one of us has been called by God to the work of "prophet": using whatever talents and skills we possess to transform the wastelands around us into harvests of justice and forgiveness, to create highways for our God to enter and re-create our world in his compassion and peace.

250 YEARS OF WAITING FOR THE NEW CLASS!!

At the 250th anniversary of the founding of Harvard University, the students marched in a torchlight procession. The most memorable group was the Freshman Class, one month old, which emerged with a gigantic banner reading, "The University Has Been Waiting 250 Years for Us." The New Testament presents Jesus Christ and exclaims that all the ages have been waiting for His arrival, that all history has been preparing for His coming. We are invited by the Church to prepare for Christmas. Christmas is the time for reflection and personal renewal in preparation for the coming of Jesus into our lives. Through the section of his letter which we read today, St. Peter reminds us, on the one hand, of God's great desire to come into our lives and, on the other, of our need to be prepared for that event when it happens. We want God's help and comfort, but we are not always prepared to change our ways to enhance genuine conversion. For God to come to us, we also need to go to Him. We need to let every day become Christmas and the "Day of the Lord" for each one of us.

Parish and Community News



CHRISTMAS LUMINARIES

We need your help!

The wonder of Christmas touches us as we come to Mass Christmas Eve by the beautiful light of the luminaries lining the church drive. This year we need a few people to light the candles Christmas Eve. Please contact the office so we can continue to enjoy this wonderful parish tradition.

HOW ARE WE WISE MEN FOR OTHERS

The three wise men, also known as magi, were men of noble birth, educated, wealthy, and influential. They were philosophers, counselors of rulers, learned in all the wisdom of the ancient East. The wise men who came seeking the Christ child were not idolaters; they were upright men of integrity. They had apparently studied the Hebrew Scriptures and found these prophecies about a messiah: "A Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel" (Numbers 24:17, NKJV); "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel" (Micah 5:2, NKJV; see also Matthew 2:5, 6). They probably also knew and understood the time prophecy of Daniel regarding the appearance of the Messiah (see Daniel 9:25, 26) and came to the conclusion that His coming was near.

On the night of Christ's birth, a mysterious light appeared in the sky which became a luminous star that persisted in the western heavens (see Matthew 2:1, 2). Impressed with its import from the sacred scrolls, they determined to go in search of the Messiah. Like Abraham, they knew not at first where they were to go, but followed as the guiding star led them on their way.

Are we not like these wise men, not knowing fully about our faith journey? Don't we feel that we do not know what to say to others who don't have a foundation of faith in their life? A simple invitation is the first step. No matter what their response is, we have done our part. This Advent let us pray for others to be open to find the Truth and the Light in the dauntingly over-full lives we live. Let us help them find where to start this Christmas.



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.

All this brings to mind clearly our 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



DON'T FORGET TO USE LINK WHEN CHRISTMAS SHOPPING ON AMAZON

We are set up with a wonderful way for you to donate to the parish without costing you anything! You just do your Christmas shopping on Amazon using our parish link. When you click on this link it takes you to the Amazon home page, and the only clue that St. John's is getting a commission on your purchase is the small phrase "ccsjn-20" that you will see in the middle of the Amazon URL address, everything else is transparent to the user. <http://tinyurl.com/lx7c83s>

The parish will receive a donation for every dollar you spend!

STEWARDSHIP RESPONSES

316 Families

52..... Commitment Cards
21 Automated Giving

STORE CARDS



Thanks to the **33 families** who purchased **\$4,100.00** in grocery and store cards last week. The stores gave us **\$75.76**.

WEEKLY COLLECTION

December 3, 2017

88 Donors Weekly\$5,034.00
50 Donors Yellow Brick Rd . \$1,471.00

December 4, 2016

99 Donors Weekly \$5,373.50
52 Donors Yellow Brick Rd. \$1,620.00

MASS BOOK DEDICATION



Would you like to dedicate one of our Mass Books to a loved one? This is a nice way to honor someone you love.

You can either dedicate it in honor of or in memory of someone who is important to you. If you are interested please contact the office. \$50 per book.

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES

Office Angels

Wed., Dec. 13	C. Behrens
Tues., Dec. 19	A. Sawczuk
Wed., Dec. 20	M. D'Avella

Store Cards

December 9 and 10

5:30 p.m.	J. Gardner
8:00 a.m.	V. Hoffart
10:30 a.m.	G. Cucchiara

December 16 and 17

5:30 p.m.	C. Crescenti
8:00 a.m.	M. Kearns
10:30 a.m.	H. Quigley

Church Center Plant Watering

Week of Dec. 10	M. Proano
Week of Dec. 17	C. Fortenbacher

Church Center Cleaning

December 14	Team F
December 21	Team A

Altar Flowers Advent

Counting

Dec. 11	Kucharski/McCabe
Dec. 18	Malone/Bauernfiend

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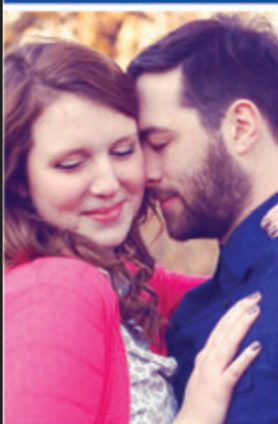
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