

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 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:

390 County Road 513
(Neumann Residence)

Check the bulletin for any changes

Weekday Masses:

Tuesday 8:00 a.m.
Friday 7:00 a.m.

Reconciliation:

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

This Week at Saint John's

Mass Intentions

Tuesday, December 19

8:00 a.m. George Sekela, req. St. John Neumann

Friday, December 22

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

Saturday, December 23

5:30 p.m. Bob Simms, req. Claire & Gary Drzewiecki

Sunday, December 24

8:00 a.m. Luiz Alberto Frenandez Fernandez, req. Elizondo Family

4:30 p.m. John McCabe, req. Eileen McCabe

7:30 p.m. Linnea Janks, Joseph & Lucy Pojedinec, Joseph & Ann Kalafut and Kyle Hargadon req. The Pojedinec and Janks Families

Monday, December 25

10:30 a.m. Frank Felitti, req. Diane Lehnert and Dorothy, Mary & Gordon Byrne & Sollesx Family, req. Byrne and Brisson Families

*Santa Claus is coming to St. John's
This Sunday Dec. 17th, Following
10:30 Mass (bring your cameras)*



Parish Calendar

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

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)
8:00 a.m. Family Faith Formation (Valley View)
9:00 a.m. Christmas Flower Order Pickup (Narthex)
10:30 a.m. Mass-Baptism Abeles & Osborne (Church Ctr.)
11:30 a.m. Visit with Santa (Narthex)
11:30 a.m. Christmas Flower Order Pickup (Narthex)
6:00 p.m. Jr. High Formation (Church Center)

Monday, December 18 - Advent Weekday

6:00 p.m. Family Faith Formation (CC & DR/SR/VR/OCK)
7:30 p.m. Pastoral Council Meeting (Upper Room)

Tuesday, December 19 - Advent Weekday

8:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)
6:00 p.m. Christmas Decorating Party (Church Center)

Wednesday, December 20 - Advent Weekday

7:00 p.m. Music Rehearsal (Church Center)
7:30 p.m. Book Club (Seton Room)

Thursday, December 21 - Saint Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church

10:00 a.m. Caroling at Little Brook Nursing Home
5:00 p.m. Cleaning (Church Center)
7:30 p.m. Music/Bells (Church Center)

Friday, December 22 - Advent Weekday Office Closes at 12:00 Noon

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)

Saturday, December 23 - Saint John of Kanty, Priest

5:30 p.m. Mass - Youth (Church Center)

Mass Schedule - December 23/24/25

Saturday	Weekly Mass	5:30 p.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader	David Geerinck	
Altar Server	Geerinck/Torczon Family	
Ministers of the Eucharist	Donna Torczon	
	Mary Connolly, Mary D'Avella	
Sunday	Weekly Mass	8:00 a.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader	Jim Murray	
Altar Server	Needed	
Ministers of the Eucharist	Barbara Gates	
	2 Needed	
Sunday	Christmas Mass	4:30 p.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader	Anthony DeStefano	
Altar Server	Needed	
Music Eucharistic Minister	Needed	
Ministers of the Eucharist	Lyle Garcia, Jim Oelkers	
	Mary Connolly, Bonnie Garcia, Eileen McCabe, 2 Needed	
Sunday	Christmas Mass with Bells	7:30 p.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader	Mary Sorgi	
Altar Server	Stanski Family	
Music Eucharistic Minister	Gloria Cucchiara	
Ministers of the Eucharist	Sharon Janks, Shirley Pojedinec	
	Joan Eacovalle, 2 Needed	
Monday	Christmas Mass	10:30 a.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal	
Reader	Jane Albert	
Altar Server	Kucharski Family	
Music Eucharistic Minister	Barbara Gates	
Ministers of the Eucharist	Debbie Kelemen, Diane Lehnert	
	Gail Battell, Phyllis Baker, 2 Needed	

Sunday, December 24 - Fourth Sunday of Advent


8:00 a.m. Weekly Mass (Church Center)

Sunday, December 24 - Christmas Masses

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

Monday, December 25 - The Nativity of the Lord / Christmas Office Closed

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 during the Holy Eucharist: Joseph Sacco , and Frank Panek .

Deceased: **Jospeh 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,

Next Sunday is the 4th Sunday of Advent but it is also the eve of Christmas! Such proximity happens rarely. That means Christmas is just one week away! Too sudden, we might feel. Not ready, we might cry out! But let us not panic! Instead, we can take hold of the situation, in the words of Julian of Norwich, the medieval Christian mystic who said, "All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well."

There are many different activities that we have both at home and here in the Church that help us live the Advent and Christmas experience. But how we wish for more people to join us! One special intention we had been praying for during our First Friday Holy Hour is for God to touch the hearts of our friends and family members to return to Church. Together with prayer, God needs our active help in this matter. That can be done by our personal invitation. Now is the right time to invite to Church someone you care about. How do you invite? Asking a question would work, "Would you like to come to our church for Christmas Mass?" That simple question may provide motivation for someone who may be missing a parish community. You could offer to accompany them to any of the Christmas Masses. Or even just hand them an invitation card that we have provided in the Narthex to make it nice and simple. Christmas is a wonderful time to reach out to others.

So please take a card or two from the Narthex if you have someone in mind to invite to our Church. By this small gesture, you are doing your part. Leave the rest to God.

Don't think that you will come across as being self-righteous by inviting them. Remember this advice of St. Paul the untiring missionary: "He who started a good work in you will see it to completion on the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:6). Isn't your desire to have a loved one return to God's family a good thing? Yes it is. So let us do our part and leave it to God to bring that good desire to its completion in God's time!

Your brother in Christ,
Fr. Abraham Orapankal

ARE YOU A HAPPY CHRISTIAN?

There is a story told about a man from Louisville, Kentucky, who had to travel to St. Louis on business. This was years ago when Christians kept Sunday as a very special day. For this man, "keeping the Sabbath," also meant not riding the trains on Sunday. Thus, after he finished up his business late Saturday night, he had to stay over in St. Louis until the following Monday morning. On Sunday morning, he left the hotel looking for a place to worship. The streets were quite deserted, but finally he saw a policeman and asked him for directions to the nearest Church. The stranger thanked the policeman for the information and was about to walk off when he turned and asked the policeman: "Why have you recommended that particular Church? It looks like a Catholic Church. There must be several Churches nearby that you could have recommended." The policeman smiled and replied: "I'm not a Church man myself, but the people who come out of that Church are the happiest looking Church-people in St. Louis and they claim that they have received Jesus and they are happily taking him to their homes. I thought that would be the kind of Church you would like to attend." The Scripture for today reminds us that every Sunday in every Christian church must be a *Gaudete Sunday* or "Rejoice Sunday."

RITE OF WELCOME TO PARISHIONERS BECOMING CATHOLIC

Three parishioners currently meet weekly in our parish's Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) process in their journey to enter into the Catholic faith. Jennifer Anderson Klacik, Chris Sepe and Shannon Heimall received a Rite of Welcome this past weekend. Through the process they are having a great time of enrichment and happy fellowship as they discuss and learn about the Catholic Church while discerning how to deepen their relationship with God and how to actively live their faith in their daily life.

If you have thoughts about becoming Catholic or have any questions about the Catholic faith please feel free to talk to our RCIA team, Father Abraham, Annette Schettino or France Kennedy who can be reached after Mass or thru the office. 908-832-2513, rcia@ccsjn.org

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 17, 2017

"Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18

This scripture reading sums up Stewardship. "Rejoice always" means place your trust in God; He will provide all that you need. "Pray constantly" means prayer should be a running conversation with God throughout the whole day, every day. "Give thanks in all circumstances" means even in bad situations, thank God. Suffering a little bit helps build empathy for others in similar situations.



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.

MASS WITH BELLS



We will be celebrating Mass on Christmas Eve with the wonderful sound of the Bells.

December 24th at 7:30

p.m.

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 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

Project Earth Garden... projectearth@ccsjn.org

Bulletin bulletin@ccsjn.org

Youth Ministry sjnygroup@gmail.com

Parish News & Christian Formation

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.

PARENTING TUNE-UP

Where does God live? Ask your child. Perhaps each of you can draw a picture of God's home. Is God in the sky, in nature, inside you, even in your enemy? YES. Help your children recognize God as an omnipresent Holy Spirit who makes everything they see, hear, and touch sacred. You too! (Susan Vogt)

MARRIAGE TUNE-UP

Ways to Turn Your Beloved Off! The busyness of Christmas preparations can blind you to the gift of your relationship. So, don't let shopping or decorating or worries keep you from treasuring the presence of your beloved.

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.

CALLING ALL SINGERS AND MUSICIANS!



The Christmas Masses are at 4:30pm and 7:30pm on Christmas Eve and 10:30am 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 7:00pm 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!



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.

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!

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.

Parish News

YOUTH GROUP GINGERBREAD HOUSES

Our Youth Group had lots of fun last Saturday evening as they made gingerbread houses. Even though it was not as publicized or attended as the annual National Gingerbread House competition in Asheville, NC, the high school youth made attractive and delicious looking houses. You can see the display in the narthex or on the parish facebook page and vote for your favorite. They had lots of fun and fellowship as well as some spiritual enrichment time.

TAI CHI FOR MEDITATION AND HEALTH

In January we will start a six week series entitled "Tai Chi for Meditation". The sessions will include the Eight Brocades of Silk, a sequence which encompasses eight posture positions, helpful in promoting health, relaxation, personal meditation, and breathing techniques. In addition we will introduce the "24 Form", a set of movements which encourage more physically active meditation. Space is limited; sign up early by contacting Bonnie Garcia at 908-975-3003 or bonniegarci-a210@yahoo.com. There will be a \$5 charge per session.

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

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.
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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 Mass

Monday, January 1	10:30 a.m.
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First Friday (The Feast of St. John Neumann)

Friday, January 5	7:00 a.m.
First Friday Holy Hour	7:00 p.m.

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.



SMILE WITH YOUR FAMILY



Christian home!: After the Baptism of his baby brother in Church one Sunday, little Johnny sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That priest said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, but I want to stay with you guys!" Father got the message and they began to go to Church regularly... Needless to say, the family had a bit of catching up to do!"

Vow of silence!: You now that story about the four young monks who take a vow of silence? They're sitting in the meditation hall, when one of them complains out loud about something. Then the second one says "be quiet!" then the third one says, "you are both talking!" then the last one says, proudly, "I am the only one who has not spoken!"

MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA & ADVENT JOY

Through her ministry in Jesus' name, Mother Teresa brought untold blessings and joy to the poor who lay unattended and forgotten on our streets. When asked the source of her joy, Mother Teresa replied: "Joy is prayer - joy is strength -- joy is love -- joy is a net of love. . . A joyful heart is the normal result of a heart burning with love . . . loving as He loves, helping as He helps, giving as He gives, serving as He serves, rescuing as He rescues, being with Him twenty-four hours, touching Him in His distressing disguise." (Malcolm Muggeridge, *Something Beautiful for God*, Harper and Row, San Francisco: 1971). When Advent arrived every year, Mother Teresa's life, continued to witness the joy which is true hallmark of every Christian and the rightful inheritance of all the poor.

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.

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
Cindy Feighan
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
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: He Excelled in Forgery!

John was sent from God . . . to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. **John 1: 6-8, 19-28**

Thousands of French Jews during World War II owe their lives to a dry cleaner's teenage apprentice. Adolfo Kaminsky was 18. Barely escaping internment in a French concentration camp, his father had arranged for his family to adopt false identities and go underground. He sent Adolfo to pick up their new papers from a member of the French resistance. When the resistance member learned that Adolfo had worked at a dry cleaner's, he asked Adolfo if he knew how to "bleach" ink. Adolfo said he did: with lactic acid. Adolfo showed him how to erase the permanent blue ink that marked official documents with the word "Jew." And so began the career of one of the greatest forgers in France during the war. Kaminsky forged perfect identity cards, passports, food ration cards, and birth and marriage certificates. Kaminsky went on to form a team of forgers who created a lab right under the nose of the Nazis in narrow attic in Paris. The neighbors thought they were all painters.

Kaminsky proved to be a genius at using everyday items to create documents that fooled even the most suspicious Nazi official: sewing machines to make "official" looking perforations, salvaged metal to fabricate perfect rubber stamps and watermarks. But there was little joy in it for Kaminsky and his colleagues: "The smallest error and you send someone to prison or death. It's a great responsibility. It's heavy. It's not at all a pleasure." It is estimated that Adolfo Kaminsky's forgeries saved the lives of as many as 14,000 Jewish men, women and children. After the war, Kaminsky spent the next 30 years forging documents for those fleeing every major conflict of the mid-20th century, from the Algerian war of independence to the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa.

Adolfo Kaminsky never took any payment for his forgeries. He earned a modest living as a photographer. Now 92 years old, Kaminsky is only now telling his story, at his daughter's urging. He says what drove him was his hatred of oppression and injustice against the innocent. He is humbled and happy his work brought freedom and life to so many: "I saved lives because I cannot deal with unnecessary deaths. All humans are equal, whatever their origins, their beliefs, their skin color. There are no superiors, no inferiors . . . "I did what I had to do when I had to . . . and I was lucky to be able to do it."

A young man uses what he learned working at a dry cleaner to "make straight" a horribly crooked path; he risks his life to use his skill to "cry out" against the "desert" of injustice and oppression destroying his country and killing his people. We are all called to this kind of "prophetic" work: to use whatever skills and resources we possess to bring hope into prisons of despair, joy into deserts of sadness, love into hearts and spirits of stone.

WHY IS TODAY "GAUDETE SUNDAY?"

Today is called "*Gaudete Sunday*" because today's Mass (in its Latin, pre-Vatican II form), began with the opening antiphon: "*Gaudete in Domino semper*" --"Rejoice in the Lord always." In the past, when Advent was a season of penance, the celebrant of the liturgy used to wear vestments with the penitential color of purple or violet. In order to remind the people that they were preparing for the very joyful occasion of the birth of Jesus, the celebrant wore rose-colored vestments on the third Sunday. (By the way, we have a similar break--*Laetare Sunday*- during the Lenten season). Today we light the rose candle, and the priest may wear rose vestments, to express our joy in the coming of Jesus, our Savior. The primary common theme running through today's readings is that of encouraging joy as we meet our need for the preparation required of us who await the rebirth of Jesus in our hearts and lives. The second common theme is that of bearing witness. The prophet Isaiah, Mary and John the Baptizer all bear joyful witness to what God has done and will do for His people.

WHY IS IT CALLED THE MASS?

The word Mass comes from the Latin word *missa*, which means to send. The Mass prepares us spiritually and sends us out to live as authentic followers of Jesus Christ in our everyday lives.

Parish and Community News

SPIRITUALITY BREAKFAST

In spite of snow in the forecast last Saturday, over forty parishioners and non-parishioners met and enjoyed a tasty breakfast, a short spiritual discussion and a great speaker who strengthened our own faith. Dr. Timothy Gales, an Anglican priest who converted to the Catholic faith, shared his own faith journey and the reasons he has "come home" to the Catholic Church to live his faith, inspiring all present. The Men's and Women's Spirituality groups combined for this event and welcomed many newcomers. Both groups meet monthly; contact the office for more information.



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!

You can also access the Amazon link on our **Facebook Page** by using the 'SHOP NOW' button. This will take you directly to the Amazon Link for ST. John's and you would just login as yourself.



OPLATEK – THE CHRISTMAS WAFER

Start your own Family Tradition

A beautiful Christmas custom is the Christmas Wafer. On Christmas Eve or Christmas, the wafer 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 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 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. Try it with your family this year. There is Oplatek in the Narthex in envelopes. Take one and leave a donation.

PASTORAL COUNCIL MINUTES - November 27, 2017

After the Lectio Divina Opening prayer, Pastoral Council had the following items:

- The Council listened to Greg Wilson who spoke about his years in social ministry. Greg shared some of his insights about the ministry and expressed the need for systematic change in helping many of the clients, rather than simply supplying a band aid for their problems. Our good works, in his experience, can be turned into moments of evangelization, especially for our own young people. The Pastoral Council presented him with a gift as a token of appreciation for his service to the community.
- Five Year Plan of the Social Ministry was presented by Co-chairs Susie Donovan and Suzanne Erz. The 5 year plan reflected the changed roles of leadership which will be rotated periodically. Money is always a concern and the ministry would consider fundraising to increase income. We have been very fortunate that the Top of the Barn has been our main source of financial help.
- The parish survey is still on schedule for January end or February.
- The response to the All Souls Mass was that it was very touching and very personalized.
- We are still looking for a family to take over the Christmas Luminaries from the Patterson family.
- Evangelization is a major topic in our parish. We will continue to pray during Holy Hour each month for people to return to the church.
- The Deanery has invited Father James Martin, to speak at The Lady of Lourdes on February 15th 7PM

The meeting concluded with a short prayer.

#WHERE THE WISE MEN ARE

Have you seen the Wise Men as they journey around the property. Follow them on Facebook and guess their location and share it. Spread the fun and encourage others to be looking for what's important this Christmas.

Christmas begins with Christ.

DON'T JOURNEY ALONE THIS CHRISTMAS

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VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES

Office Angels

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

Store Cards

December 16 and 17

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

December 23 and 24

5:30 p.m. B. Cestone
8:00 a.m. C. Bennett

Church Center Plant Watering

Week of Dec. 17 C. Fortenbacher
Week of Dec. 24 B. Lee

Church Center Cleaning

December 21 Team A
December 28 Team B

Altar Flowers

Advent

Counting

Dec. 18 Malone/Bauernfeind
Dec. 27 Kucharski/McCabe

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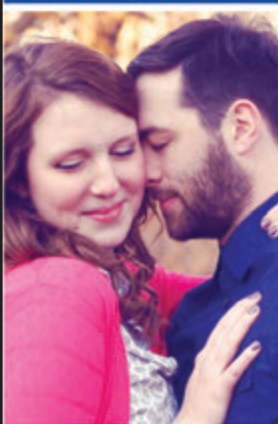
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