

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2020
THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

5:00PM Vera Dragas
10:00AM Police Officer Stephen John Petruzzello
Ivan Picinic "Jivonic"
12:00PM Nicolangelo, Antoinette & Maria Pallotta

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28

THE HOLY INNOCENTS

11:00AM Helen Brown
Ivan Picinic "Jivonic"

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29

ST. THOMAS BECKET

11:00AM Anton Jadrosic
Cosimo Pepe

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30

11:00AM Tommaso & Maria Morin
Mary Donato

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

11:00AM Nedelko Radovic
5:00PM John, Rose & Joseph Ferrara

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1, 2021

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

10:00AM Glenn Rome
12:00PM Marilyn Lochner

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2

STS. BASIL THE GREAT & GREGORY NAZIANZEN

11:00AM Henry Fernandez & Espie Estuar

5:00PM Ints. of Maryann Mattessich

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3, 2021

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

10:00AM Kim Pun Ssing
12:00PM Cappadona & Giancola Families

ALTAR BREAD

In Memory of

John Mattessich

SANCTUARY LAMP

In Memory of

Dec'd Mbrs. Ferrara & Pellegrino Families

MASS CANDLES

In Memory of

Tommaso & Maria Morin

PREPARING FOR MASS

The readings for this Sunday are:

Gn 15:1-6, 21:1-3

We must trust in the Lord so our families might prosper

Ps. 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9

The Lord remembers his covenant forever.

Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

Faith, trust, and prayer bring forth God's miracles in our lives.

Luke 2:22-40

Joseph & Mary took Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

FULLY BOOKED FOR THE LORD AT CHRISTMAS

There are indeed many interesting and instructive events surrounding the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ however, our reflection today is focused on the report of Luke (2:7). The passage says: "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn..." Our attention is focused on the later part which says: "because there was no room for them in the inn." The simple fact here is that the Saviour had no place among the people he came to free from their slavery to sin; nobody was kind and charitable enough to give him a space except a shepherd who made provision within the animal's facility. This situation could have been a very dismantling one for Mary and Joseph. Like in my story, they moved from one house to another, from one inn to another, from one location to another but the reply was all still the same: "We are fully booked!" This continued until they got the animal's accommodation which is today painted in the most beautiful and enticing way when in actual sense it was not a pleasant place at all; but the savior had to be born in there. In life, where you were born does not matter but what for what you were born is the most honorable point to consider.

Sometimes I imagine what could have been going on in the minds of Mary and Joseph. "Why would God allow them to pass through such a harrowing experience when they were at the same time carrying out what He had established?" Often working for God and with Him comes with great trials but they are not meant to break us; they are set to strengthen us.

There are two ways of understanding the phrase "fully booked". The first refers to the fact of not having a space left hence access is totally denied. The other way is applicable to mostly bookstores or libraries that are stocked with every kind of book from all disciplines to the extent that nothing is left out. The library of Congress in USA can be said to be fully booked. From the above explanation we can identify being fully booked from the negative angle and from the positive angle and this will characterize our reflection in what follows.

The way and manner Christmas is being celebrated in our day and age points to the fact that we are often fully booked from the negative points of view. We make room for new clothes, shoes, cars, decorations, and many other things that bear the sight and sound of xmas not Christmas (there is a difference between the two; the first is without Christ but the second bears Christ) but not the Saviour who is to be born in us. Like the people at the from desk at the inns we pitilessly announce to our Lord that we are fully booked forgetting that he is not coming for his own good and comfort but for our own life and our salvation. Very much the proverbial biting of the finger that is feeding us.

We become fully booked in the negative way when we think only about ourselves and what would come to us this season. We become fully booked negatively at this time when we create space only for material gains. We become fully booked negatively at this time when it is all about our comfort and the discomfort of other people. We become fully booked negatively when we fail to activate charity. Today many people will have more than enough to eat and to throw away while a great number of people will not have access to a modest meal. We become fully booked when we are so much concerned about the body and not the spirit. We are fully negatively booked this season when we remember to do all other things apart from preparing a room for him as Isaac Watts would suggest in his epochal song "Joy to the World".

There is a recommendation today for us to be fully booked in the positive and helpful way. This means being fully at the service of the divine and leaving no space for any other preoccupation. It means being packed with all the needed virtues of Christmas which includes love, peace, joy, kindness, forgiving heart and a giving hand. From the Christmas narrative we can identify those who were positively booked for God like Mary, Joseph, the angels, the shepherds, and the wise men from the east. On the other hand, we can identify those who were fully booked negatively like Herod and his household.

As you step out for the celebration of Christmas today, there is need for you to identify if you are fully booked and on which side of the divide; that is positively or negatively. There is no doubt that so many people in our world today are negatively booked and this can be seen in so many manifest ways. Many celebrate Christmas without Christ, while others simply celebrate themselves. The truth we need to identify with this season is that if we do not make a room for him, he will not be born in us. And if he is not born in us, we stand to lose the blessings of Christmas which is set to help us to get into the New Year.

Merry Christmas and have a great celebration as you get yourself fully booked for the Lord.

Fr. Bonnie

PARISH SUPPORT

Thank you for sharing the gift of your treasure so that we can continue to do God's work here.

December 20, 2020

Due to the submission of an early bulletin, we will print the collection in a future bulletin.

"...as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must forgive." – Colossians 3:13

Forgiving is one of the hardest things for people to do. We can't give what we don't have. We need to receive God's mercy and forgiveness first before we can give it to others. Go to the sacrament of Reconciliation and receive God's mercy and forgiveness. Then, share the gift of forgiveness with someone – a family member, a friend, or a co-worker. Pick up the phone or text someone right now.



MISSALETTES FOR ADVENT-LENT

New Missalettes for Advent through Lent are on sale at the rectory for \$3.00 each. We will not be able to put the books into the pews during this pandemic. If you wish to have a book to follow along with the mass, please purchase your own. All books contain weekday and Sunday readings.

SUNDAY MASSES

Sunday Masses will be at 5:00PM on Saturday and on Sunday at 10:00AM and 12 Noon. We can now accommodate up to 150 persons at each mass. When you attend mass, you must wear a mask before you enter the Church and leave it on for the whole mass. Also, please sanitize your hands when entering the Church with the hand sanitizers found at the elevator entrance. Please do not take off or lower your mask when you approach the priest for Holy Communion. Take the Communion in your hand and step aside and lift your mask as you return to your seat.

Once again, please consider whether you are “at risk” and make a good choice about whether or not to attend mass. I remind you that the Archbishop has indefinitely dispensed all Catholics from their “Sunday obligation” so do NOT feel compelled to attend mass out of fear. If any of you is feeling “under the weather” or running a fever, we ask you please DO NOT come to the church. You may be jeopardizing the life and health of others.

RIGHT TO LIFE

The Catholic Church believes and teaches that all human life is sacred from conception to natural death. For that reason, we, the Bishops of each of the dioceses in New Jersey, join in voicing the strongest possible opposition to the “Reproductive Freedom Act.”

Without minimizing other serious threats to human life and dignity evident in contemporary American society, the Catholic Church consistently maintains that “the threat of abortion remains our preeminent priority because it directly attacks life itself, because it takes place within the sanctuary of the family, and because of the number of lives destroyed” (USCCB Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, “Introductory Letter” 2020).

When informed of the text of the USCCB document early in 2020, Pope Francis observed that the right to life of the unborn “is the most fundamental right. This is not first a religious issue; it is a human rights issue. (Pope Francis to American Catholic Bishops, USCCB Region IX, January 16, 2020).”

As the Catholic Bishops of New Jersey, we urge all Catholics and people of good will to reject this proposed legislative initiative in our state and to contact your States legislators to vigorously express opposition to its passage.

CORONA VIRUS PRAYER

Keep us good Lord,
Under the shadow of your mercy,
In this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
And lift up all who are brought low;
That we may rejoice in your comfort
Knowing that nothing can separate us from
Your love.
In Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen

**“TAKE TIME TO COUNT YOUR
BLESSINGS AND WELCOME THE
OPPORTUNITY FOR ANOTHER YEAR
AHEAD!”**

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

NEW YEAR’S EVE MASS

Thursday, December 31st.....5:00PM

NEW YEAR’S DAY MASSES

Friday, January 1st.....10:00AM & 12 Noon

PATRONAL FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Saturday, January 2nd.....5:00PM

Sunday, January 3rd10:00AM & 12 Noon

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK OF THE PARISH

Ann Callagher, Caroline Craven, Felicia Martello, Arianna Cappola, Cindy Simeone Reynolds, Baby Juliette Payne, Brian Hone, Cora Shaffer, Baby Michael, Cesar Valdecantos, Kay Tak, Michele Spino, Evelyn Rodriguez, Barbara Snow, Mary Iannaccone, Doris Portillo, Teresita Zafra-Santos, Ann Marie Applegate, Tatiana Flores, Christopher Nash, Pat Romano, Tony Martello, Little Gabriel, Rachel Rocks, Sean O’Connor, Vladimir Drobikov, Louanne Mitchell, Colleen Meyers, Domenick Deodino, Rosemarie Liversidge, Christine Caruso, Patrick Bove, Camille Moglia, John Keegan, Kay O’Connor, Anthony Martini, Pantaleon Domingo, Conrado Trinidad, Joanne Kaiser, Patricia Warren, Ramon Villavicencio, Danilo Bonifacio, Daniel Johnson, Ryan Cariddi, Laura Cipullo, Richard Allen, Anthony Martello, Jr., Miguel Madera, Joe Villani, Lisa Mutchler, Elizabeth Chan, Benjamin Yap, Henry Yap, Anthony McCluskey, Jane Kim Estantino, Mike Hromin, Nancy Manto, Roy Regaspi, Gloria Marquez, David Barmore, Drew Johnson, Kunaim Emelyanesko, Kathy Santiago, Vinny Franco, Baby Grayson DiNatale, Kathie Gumb, Michael O’Connor, Patrick Shanley, Perry Bonaguaro, Rev. John Renard, Louise O’Connor, Cathleen McLaughlin, Fran Barbato, Jared Lanzaloto, Joel Rivera, Angelica Colavito, Jennifer Van Dam, Angelina Cozzitorto, Dawn Troll, Joseph Kirincich, Guy DiNapoli, Lucy D’Ambrosio, Marc DePasquale, Steven Skific, Baby Luca.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE DECEASED OF THE PARISH

Carla Koss.

A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

***Lord, whether we are leaving behind a
year of joy and blessing or trials and
difficulties, we pause to give thanks.
We thank you that you are always with
us every single day of every single year.
Please remind us of your presence in
the year ahead, even when life is busy.
We are so thankful that we serve a God
who makes things new and gives us the
grace of fresh starts and new
beginnings.
Be glorified in our lives this year in
Jesus’ name. Amen.***

