

January 1 & 3, 2021

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT! FROM FEAR TO PEACE! FROM GLOOM TO JOY!

I hope you all had a most blessed Christmas and that despite the ongoing challenges in your daily lives you could find the JOY OF THE NEWBORN KING in your hearts! Together, let us GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE JOY OF THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON: THE PRINCE OF PEACE has come down from heaven and joined us on earth. We can proclaim with the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 9:1-6):

*"The people who walked in darkness have seen a GREAT LIGHT; upon those who dwelt in the LAND OF GLOOM A LIGHT HAS SHONE. You have brought them ABUNDANT JOY AND GREAT REJOICING...For a child is born to us, a son is given us...They name him... PRINCE OF PEACE. His dominion is vast and forever peaceful."*

Through this Christmas Season lasting until January 10, the Baptism of the Lord, and including the three celebrations of the Holy Family, of Mary Mother of God, and of the Epiphany of the Lord, let us keep walking together with the Prince of Peace, let us keep moving from Darkness to Light, from Fear to Peace, from Gloom to Joy!

With the "multitude of Angels" who appeared to the Shepherds at Bethlehem, let us keep praising God and singing with abundance of JOY:

*"Glory to God in the highest and on earth Peace to those on whom his favor rests."* (Luke 2:14).

We believe that God loves each one of us and wants His Favor, His Grace to rest upon each one of us. Are we allowing His Love, His Grace to enter and rest into our hearts? Or are we so preoccupied with every day's worries that we forget God? Are we ready to pray with the Psalmist (Psalm 95):

*"Come, let us sing with the Lord and shout with JOY to the ROCK who SAVES us (Jesus). Let us approach Him with PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING and sing JOYFUL SONGS to the Lord...Come, then, let us bow down and worship, bending the knee before the Lord, our maker. For He is our God, and we are His people, the flock He shepherds."*

Like the humble SHEPHERDS, do we come to Bethlehem with JOY to find Mary, Joseph and adore the infant lying in the manger, and then do we proclaim to everyone the good news of our having encountered the Son of God, God Himself (Luke 2:16-21, Gospel for the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, we celebrate this Friday January 1st, 2021, a Holy Day of Obligation)? Whenever we enter our Church, the House of God, do we bend the knee to adore and worship HIM as HE is always present in the Tabernacle (the favorite golden box for our little children)? or are we distracted by worldly matters, worldly attachments?

Like MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD (Theotokos, in Greek meaning Bearer of God), do we ponder, do we reflect with humility and faith on the real presence of God within us? Since our baptism, God is within us: Emmanuel (God within us). The Holy Spirit, the triune God is within us. Like

Mary, we too are a bearer (with a small "b") of God, we too are a living tabernacle, we too are a temple of God, we too are a house of the HOLY SPIRIT. This is particularly true when after going to Confession and being in a state of grace, we receive Jesus in the Holy Communion. I will never get tired of repeating the mantra: *"Go to confession regularly to receive the Holy Communion in a state of grace"*.

Like the MAGI, are we OVERJOYED at seeing the star and on entering the HOUSE where the child Jesus was with MARY HIS MOTHER? (Matthew 2:1-12, Gospel for the Epiphany of the Lord we will celebrate Sunday January 3rd, 2021)? Like the Magi, are we prostrating ourselves and offering Gifts of Love to the newborn King? When we come to spend one Holy Hour of Adoration of the Lord exposed in the Blessed Sacrament on the altar, are we overjoyed to come and contemplate God like the Shepherds and the Magi?

Let us pray that the Joy of Christmas will stay in our hearts throughout the entire Christmas Season and beyond. Let us pray that in the coming days and weeks, we will all be able to get closer to God and closer to our own family, friends and fellow parishioners... despite the ongoing restrictions of social distancing.

As we entered this Christmas a Season, we have never seen an external environment like this in our own lifetime. We continue to face the multiple challenges that began ten months ago, including: the continuation of the worst pandemic in 100 years, friends or relatives suffering the direct impact of Covid-19 (including loss of lives, loss of jobs), our children unable to be in schools (having to stay at home for virtual learning), most-at-risk parishioners unable to attend Mass in church, increased fears of death and anxiety, increased sense of loneliness and isolation. So why should we be joyful, hopeful and grateful to God?

We believe in the continuing miracle of Christmas. We believe that the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ transforms the world once for all. At Christmas, "God became man so that man can become God". We came from God, we are to return to Him. Through Jesus both man and God, we can share His divinity while on earth (especially through the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation). Heaven begins on earth. Jesus is our only Light, He is our only Hope, only with Him can we find Peace and Joy!

Together we have ENTERED A NEW BEGINNING. Together we have entered the Christmas Season WITH RENEWED HOPE! Together we can reflect on our personal experience of this Christmas and look forward to a NEW BEGINNING. May the LIGHT and JOY OF THE NEWBORN KING continue to fill our hearts with HOPE, PEACE and LOVE throughout the Christmas Season and the entire NEW YEAR 2021!

One in Christ,  
Fr. Alain

## The Solemnity of Mary, and The Epiphany of the Lord



### Religious Education News

CCD classes resume today, January 3, 2021. Please continue to work on any classes you have missed. If you have any questions, please contact Nereida Tellechea at (301)645-7112, or email cre@olhoc.org

### Community Outreach

On Dec. 17th the ladies of "Mary's Helping Hands" sponsored a traditional turkey dinner for over 150 people at Shepherd's Table. A special thank you to all who participated in the planning and preparation of this wonderful way to help those in need and brighten the Holidays for all involved! Thank you also to Honey Baked Hams for their generosity to this event!

On Dec. 20th the OLHOC Outreach distributed 50 bags of food to families in need. The bags contained all the fixings for a Christmas ham dinner.

Thank you everyone who contributed with cash or food, helped prepare and then deliver the bags. Our youth group spent a Saturday morning packing the bags!

Thank you all for this beautiful Christmas message sent to the community from OLHOC!

The next Outreach meeting will be on Jan. 6, 2021 at 7 p.m.

### Prayer for the New Year

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.

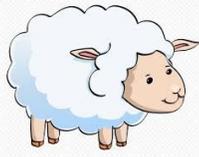
O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

R/. Amen.

—Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi



### Are you a lost sheep?

If you miss some of the things happening at Our Lady Help of Christians, you might be missing out of flocknotes.

Flocknotes is an online tool we use to communicate with all our parishioners. You can read Father Alain's weekly column, find out Mass times, or any current events happening in our parish. The information is always up-to-date.

Flocknotes comes directly to your email inbox on Fridays. Never miss any more news at OLHOC!

Sign up on our webpage (just look for the lamb) [www.olhoc.com](http://www.olhoc.com), or call the office and someone will assist you to get the latest information.

### \*\*\*REMINDER\*\*\*\*\*

**-Sanitize your hands before coming into church**

**-Masks are mandatory**

**-Maintain at least a 6 ft distance**

**-If you feel ill, stay home and watch Mass on [www.olhoc.com](http://www.olhoc.com) -10 am on Sundays**

**The Youth Support Team** is an integral part of our Youth ministry at OLHOC. It consists of different components utilizing diverse gifts and time commitments of parents and other interested volunteers from our parish. These volunteer opportunities can range from assisting with special events (hospitality, chaperones, fundraisers, prayer team..), confirmation mentors, or joining the core team and work directly with the youth. Together we can help lead our youth closer to Christ! For more information please visit the website [www.olhoc.org/ymteam](http://www.olhoc.org/ymteam) or talk to Marlen Coles [marlen@olhoc.org](mailto:marlen@olhoc.org)

### CA/RCIA

Interested in joining and learning about the Catholic Church for the first time? Want to complete a Sacrament (Baptism, Eucharist, and/or Confirmation)? Classes meet on Wednesday, from 7 pm –9 pm. You may chose to come to the Father Martin Hall or virtually via Zoom. For more information, or to sign up, please contact Deacon Rich at [deacon@olhoc.org](mailto:deacon@olhoc.org) or Diane and Mike Spurgeon at [RCIA.olhoc@gmail.com](mailto:RCIA.olhoc@gmail.com)

We hope you will join us!

**We are asked to pray for:**

Julissa Bariantos  
 Brandon Mack  
 Ana Maria Delmira Sibrian Escobar  
 Nestor Ermelindo Molina  
 James Thompson  
 Rebecca (Tess) Franch  
 Joseph Albrittitan  
 Sid and Suzanna Marcus  
 Aleli Puzon  
 Patricia Delgado  
 Ann Marie Hobart  
 Larry McGraw  
 Ilene Custer  
 Derrick Webster  
 Julie Davis  
 David DeMarr  
 Dinnie Proctor  
 Amelia Vinceguerra  
 Lorraine Celijewski  
 Cren Wolden

Tabitha Barton  
 Maria Townsend  
 Chrystal Beauregard  
 Sheryl Carter  
 Alex Leon  
 Sharketer Butler  
 Steven Bowling  
 Edna Yarngo  
 Kathy Grimes  
 Sheny Padilla  
 Richard White  
 Victor Cordero  
 Georgiana Norgren  
 Marie Marie Bottorf  
 Dorian Webster  
 Dionne Gause  
 Billy Dexter  
 Trena Price  
 Erick M. Knapp  
 Norm Green

The Dixons  
 Grace Albrittain  
 Elaine Moses  
 Yvonne Buford  
 Karen Zimmerman  
 Steve Wyloge  
 Terri Elizabeth McAllister Burnette  
 Joanne Johnson  
 John Hoza  
 Mike Spurgeon  
 Mary A. Dyson  
 Kevin Viel Sr.

and all our military and civilians serving in harm's way.

*Please pray for the soul of Antoine Kanhonou.*



**Mass Intentions this Week**

**Saturday, January 2, 9:00AM: Michael Etamane (+)**  
**Saturday, January 2, 5:00 PM: Cesar Roberto Sajche Valladarres & Leopold Rosalio Sajche Sosa (+)**  
**Sunday, January 3, 8:30 AM: OLHOC Parishioners**  
**Sunday, January 3, 10:00 AM: Gil & Bonnie Castro**  
**Sunday, January 3, 11:30 AM: Liam Wachsuth**  
**Sunday, January 3, 7:00 PM: Antoine Kanhonou (+)**  
**Monday, January 4, 9:00 AM: Eduardo Sinense**  
**Tuesday, January 4, 9:00 AM: Giannina Gonzalez**  
**Wednesday, January 5, 9:00 AM: Simone Parker**  
**Wednesday, January 5, 7:00 PM: Antonio Leon Luiz (+)**  
**Thursday, January 6, 9:00 AM: Bill & Fran Bryner**

**Mass intentions**

If you would like to have a Mass said in 2021, the calendar is open in the office. Sign up for the Mass you would like so as to assure the date you want is available. Suggested stipend is \$10

**Tuesday Scripture Study**- Join us on Tuesday mornings after the 9 am Mass to study the readings for the next Sunday.

**Friday Scripture Study**- The Friday night scripture study is now online. Please call the office for information on how to join us.

**First Friday**- The first Friday of each month the evening Mass is dedicated to promoting the Priesthood. Following evening Mass, devotion to the Alliance of the two Hearts.

**First Saturday**-Join members of the Marian Group on the first Saturday of the month after the 9 am Mass. Learn more about consecrating your life to Jesus through Mary.

**Divine Mercy**- Join us on the first Saturday of each month as we pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet as a community at 3 PM.

**OLHOC Prayer Chain**

If you have a prayer request, please call the parish office or send email to [office@olhoc.org](mailto:office@olhoc.org).

**Mass Readings for January 10, 2021**

***The Baptism of the Lord***

**\*First Reading**

**Isaiah 55:1-11**

**\*Second Reading**

**1 John 5:1-9**

**\*Gospel**

**Mark 1:7-11**

**[www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org)**

