



# ST. ROMUALD CATHOLIC CHURCH

394 N HWY 259 · HARDINSBURG KY 40143

December 31, 2017 - Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

## dear Padre

### Parish Office:

Phone: 756-2356

Fax: 756-2099

Hours: Monday - Friday

8:00am - Noon, 1:00 - 3:00pm

Email: [stromuald@bbtel.com](mailto:stromuald@bbtel.com)

[www.stromuald.org](http://www.stromuald.org)

### Pastoral Staff:

*Pastor*, Father Brian Johnson

Email: [Brian.Johnson@pastoral.org](mailto:Brian.Johnson@pastoral.org)

*Deacon*, Tony Anthony

*Deacon*, Mike Wiedemer

*Administrative Asst*, Jane Haynes

*CRE: Adult*, Rosa Hockenberry

*CRE: RCIA*, Marie Rose

*CRE: 7-12*, Gayle Poole

*CRE: K-6*, Kim Brumfield

### Pastoral Council:

Dana Bland, Kevin Oelze,

Janet Bland, Danny O'Reilly

Chris Brumfield, Don Payne,

Gera Jarboe, Gail Pollock

Harry Mattingly, Pam Pollock

Joellen McGary, Mark Rhodes

### St. Romuald

#### Interparochial School:

Phone: 756-5504

[www.stromualdschool.org](http://www.stromualdschool.org)

Principal, Rob Cox

#### School Board

#### Representatives:

Jamie Barr, Amy Flood,

Jennifer Payne

***I worry that I'm cramming too much of my Catholic devotions down my children's throats. Should they have more freedom to choose the faith on their own?***

Many of us can connect our faith to our mothers. It was most likely their constancy, love, and devotion that gave us the first hints that faith is important in one's life. When a woman chooses to be a mother, she commits to handing on to her children that which is most powerful and most profound in her own life. Over the years, the children will take what is given, sift through it, and finally add it in some way to their own personalities. But the gift first has to be given, and the commitment of motherhood is giving that gift.

Mary, the patron of the Church and of mothers around the world, is first represented in the Gospels as the one "who believed" (Luke 1:45). It was this deep capacity for faith that became the well that cradled and fed Jesus.

"Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2226).

The sincerity and reverence of a mother's faith can become a fountain of living water that will naturally overflow, and her children can choose to drink of it. Renew your commitment to handing on your faith to your children freely and without limits!



THE HOLY  
FAMILY

©LPI

# Masses for the Week

## January 1st - 7th

Mon	9:00 am	Lorena Bland
Tues		No Mass
Wed	5:00 pm	Joann Bruington (RD)
Thurs	9:30 am	Colin Whitfill (Medco)
Fri	9:00 am	Katie Collard (MHG)
Sat	8:00 am	Bob Hale (JL)
	5:00 pm	Tommy Himmelhaver (JF)
Sun	7:00 am	Tom Winchell & Family (KofC)
	10:00 am	Doris Priest

# Stewardship of Finance

## December 17th Collection

Sunday Collection.....	\$9,523.00
Building Fund.....	\$55.00
Children.....	\$0.00
Loose change for the Poor.....	\$39.00
Funeral Meals .....	\$446.00

### Parish Financial Summary

July-November, 2017

<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$217,800</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$211,700</b>
	<b>\$ 6,100</b>

**Thank you for your financial stewardship!**

# Worship and Sacrament

**Anointing of the Sick:** Anointing of the Sick is celebrated with the parish community every first Wednesday at 5:00 pm Mass. Yet, anytime, anointing is available for illness, preparation for surgery or for recovery, by calling Fr Brian.

**Baptism:** Congratulations on the birth of your child! Your Church Family is excited about your family growing and our family growing! We look forward to celebrating your child's baptism! Preparation for new parents or those new to the parish is held by appointment. Call Fr Brian.

**Marriage:** Congratulations on your engagement! Your Church Family wishes to help you fully prepare spiritually and walk with you into this lifetime commitment to each other. In order to allow sufficient time, couples must contact the parish office at least 6 months before the anticipated wedding date.

**Confession/Reconciliation:** Every Wednesday 4:00-5:00 pm; every Saturday 4:00-5:00 pm, every first Saturday after 8:00 am Mass, or anytime by simply asking or calling Fr Brian for appointment.

**Visitation of the Sick:** Please notify Father or the office upon admission of a family member into nursing homes or hospital. Often we rely upon word from the family about illnesses of a member. Please call.

**RCIA:** Interested in the Catholic Faith? The RCIA process is a "spiritual journey" that fully initiates those who are not baptized or who have baptism from another tradition and wish to join fully the Catholic Church. Classes are offered through the year culminating at Easter! Please call the office for details!

**Membership in the Parish:** Welcome to all new families or persons moving into our parish. We are glad that you are joining the parish community. We want to visit with you and help you settle into the church. Please register in the parish office as soon as possible.

# Ministers of the Liturgy - January 6th & 7th

	Eucharistic Ministers	Lectors	Ushers	Servers	Rosary Leaders	Music Ministers
5:00 pm	Whitney Roach Millie Whittler	Lynn Tuell Brenda Wheatley	C-John Roach* C-Carroll Whitfill S-Matthew Whitfill S-David Basham	Aubrey Tabor Lily Tabor	Dayle Riley	Shannon
7:00 am	Amelia Anthony Cara Wilson	Buddy Payne	C-Scott Wilson* C-Bobby Joe Rhodes S-Tom Winchell S-Cody Mingus	Gabe Carwile Luke Carwile	Mary Vessels	
10:00 am	Tabetha Walz LaDonna Barton Ort Critchelow Cindy Payne	Barbara Critchelow Kathy Kiper	C-Zack Payne* C-Patrick Critchelow S-Noah Matthews S-Jim Sills	Logan Walz Tori Barton	Barbara Critchelow	P.J./Choir Cantor/Alison
Radio Minister: Chuck Robbins      Children's Liturgy: NO CHILDREN'S LITURGY						



**Over and Out!** We hear the prophet Simeon say 'Mission Accomplished' in today's gospel as he signs off, "*Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation*" (Luke 2:29-30). Simeon's long watch and prophetic waiting in the Temple has come to a conclusion as Joseph and Mary bring the newborn child Jesus to the Temple. What a grace to receive, for Simeon to know that satisfaction coming from a vocation fully completed! Perhaps the only

other dramatic expression of closure and such completion comes from the very lips of Jesus hanging upon the cross, when he proclaims the perfect fulfillment of the Father's Will by his salvific death by uttering, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

Remember that the Blessed Mother shared in that 'finishing' surrender of Jesus for our salvation. She was also faithfully waiting 'til the end, at the foot of the cross (John 19:26). Earlier, she had similarly placed herself completely at the service of the Father's Will back at the Annunciation event. Using some more CB/Radio speak, after the angel Gabriel delivered the message, Mary said, "**Roger-that-Wilco**", telling God, 'Message **R**eceived, and **W**ill **C**omply!' Or in her own words, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Mary was responding, "I hear you, I trust you and I will follow through."

The music group 'Foo-Fighters' have an old song titled 'Over and Out' from their 2005 *In Your Honor* album that brings to mind today's gospel scene of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. At the Presentation, Mary hands the child Jesus to the Prophet Simeon and Simeon looks upon Jesus with graced satisfaction, realizing that his own salvation will come from the hands of the baby Jesus he is holding! In the Foo Fighter's song, Dave Grohl sings, "Restless **little one**, Comfortable and warm, Let me fall apart, Crippled in **your** arms". His lyrics sound a lot like the Christmas Carol "What child is this?" when it says, "The King of Kings Salvation brings, **Let loving hearts enthrone Him**". To 'enthroned Jesus in one's heart' means to me, holding Jesus in our hearts, and holding Him closely. Christmas is about opening our hearts and surrendering our wills to the healing salvation that Jesus accomplishes. When we open ourselves to others, trusting & risking such a vulnerable sensitivity, we are placing ourselves in their hands. They may judge us, they may even reject us. But not Christ, because he became one with us through his birth, life and death to lift us up and heal us. Comparing again the Foo-Fighters song and today's gospel, Mary even comes into the song, when we hear Dave Grohl sing, "Chase me through the dark, Ready on your mark, First to reach the stars, **Wins a broken heart**, One that broke apart, **Shattered from the start**". I hear that as 'original sin', and what we need saving from, our original human brokenness. Now listen to Simeon's prophecy about Mary's wounded-ness to come, when he tells her that a sword will pierce her heart. He means that Mary will have a full share in Christ's Passion, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, a sign that will be contradicted, and **you yourself a sword will pierce**" (Luke 2:34-35). We see this suffering to come for Mary often represented in statues or stained glass images of Mary's Immaculate Heart, by the detail of a sword piercing Mary's heart. As the Blessed Mother of Jesus, Mary's closeness to Jesus means she hurts and suffers along with her Son in His Passion. So I surely see this whole Presentation of Jesus scene from the Bible in the Foo

Fighters song! I hear it saying how life is fulfilled in the sacrificing of one's own self for the good of other persons; identifying with them & accepting with them their 'hurt' position in order to lift them out of it or to strengthen them in it! Putting others ahead of ourselves! There goes my hero!

I appreciate Simeon's song of farewell on another level, too. I find him expressing the contentment and satisfaction of knowing that his work is done! Like the contentment felt when you have repainted a room. You can walk into the room, look around and smell the fresh paint and say, 'Done! Look at that!' Now of course, that only happens after the tape is pulled back, the brushes washed and the furniture all moved back into place. But, what peace comes from realizing, that from start to finish **the task is now completed!** That is what Simeon is expressing in his song of God's praise! His life's work is completed when he recognizes the Christ child in his presence! I used to love that result in seminary after working hard on a research paper at the end of the term. Often the research process meant collecting nearly every library book on the subject into my cluttered room. But what a sense of completion when the end came! After turning in the paper to the professor, I would go back to my room, carefully thumbing through the books to remove the 'post it' notes or notecards, and then carry the books back to the library and lay them on the librarian's desk. (I am sure he didn't appreciate seeing me come, because his work of re-shelving them all was just starting!) But to me, that was the last step, turning those books back in, and feeling that 'lightness and joy' of being able to say 'I am done!' (Now when the grade was posted, maybe my mood changed!) Well, that is Simeon! After all those years of waiting and working, showing up at the Temple and dutifully attending to daily tasks, then comes that one morning when he looks up at the door and in walks Mary, Joseph and THE AWAITED ONE-the Child Messiah. Now, Simeon can say, "I am done; discharge me in peace! Blessed be God forever." We all pray for that sense of accomplishment with our lives, according to God's will! In the meantime though we keep joyfully showing up, serving God, and daily working away at the details leading to that peace God will bring to us one day!

Here are some daily questions to consider in our prayer time!

**Sunday:** What word from God stayed with me after Mass today? Did any word really strike me (cut me to the heart?) today?

**Monday:** Going back to work, how am I different because of Mass and my experience of worship and thanks to God?

**Tuesday:** Before I begin any task, do I ask God's guidance and blessing? Do I take time to thank God after completing it?

**Wednesday:** Christmas continues through and past Epiphany. Take some time to listen to some more Christmas carols!

**Thursday:** Have I taken time to visit others through the holidays, especially someone I haven't seen for a while?

**Friday:** Perform an act of sacrifice or penance for someone today in thanksgiving for Christ's sacrifice for us!

**Saturday:** For what am I especially thankful for as I prepare to celebrate Mass this weekend? Come early and pray a rosary.

Peace and Prayers, Fr Brian Johnson

# PARISH NEWS & EVENTS



**Are you or someone you know interested in knowing more about the Catholic faith or considering becoming a Catholic???**

If yes, please contact Fr. Brian, Deacon Mike, Deacon Tony or Marie Rose at 756-2356 anytime throughout the year!

**Youth Mark your Calendars:**  
**Youth 2000 Conference March 9-11, 2008 Brescia University Campus**

**Parish Council & Finance Committee Reports:**

At their last meeting, parish council discussed how best to communicate with the parish matters that are discussed at meetings. Please find multiple copies of their meeting minutes in addition to the detailed monthly financial reports posted on the bulletin boards. They will be always be available there or just take a copy with you.

**Please take note of the new arrival of different titles on the CD rack.** Check them out and listen to the great topics on apologetics, prayer and spirituality.

**Eucharistic Adoration First Friday 24-hour Adoration:**

Following the 8:00 am Mass on January 5th we begin the 24 hour adoration until Saturday morning mass at 8:00 am. We are blessed with dedicated adorers for each hour, but can use extra people for some hours. Please call Minnie Nimmo 270-617-0297 or Patsy Whitfill 270-617-2557 to volunteer spending an hour in prayer with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

**Good Samaritan Center** is in need of diapers sizes 3, 4, 5, and 6. Please put in baskets at the doors of the church. Thank you.

**Celebration**

**BIRTHDAY:** Mack Mattingly, January 1st, Ginna Thornsberry, January 1st, Helen O'Reilly, January 3rd and Bob Jackey, January 5th.

**Parish Hall Keys:** If you have rented the parish hall in the last few months and still have not returned the key, please return as soon as possible.

**Funeral Meal Dishes:** We are very grateful to all the ladies of the parish who provide food for the funeral meals. There are several dishes that have not been picked up. The parish hall is open Monday thru Friday from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm daily for you to pick up any dishes you may have left. Thank You!

**Anointing of the Sick-First Wednesdays of Month:** Father Brian will offer the sacrament of the sick, 'Anointing for Healing' at the Wednesday evening mass (5:00pm) on January 3rd. The Catechism specifies that those who can be anointed include 'anyone in danger of death from sickness or old age' yet also includes anyone 'prior to a serious operation', or 'for the elderly whose frailty becomes more pronounced' (Catechism #1514-1515).



## This Week at St. Romuald

Mon	9:00 am	New Year's Day Mass
Tues	4:00 pm	Rosary
	6:00 pm	St. Vincent de Paul
Wed	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Mass
Thur	9:30 am	Mass at Medco
	6:00 pm	Men's Jail Ministry
Fri	9:00 am	First Friday Mass
	10:00 am	24 Hour Eucharistic Adoration
Sat	8:00 am	First Saturday Mass
Sun	11:30 am	High School Religious Ed Classes
	6:00 pm	Women's Jail Ministry

**UPCOMING:**

Jan 20 6:15 pm Family Movie Night

## PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY

### **A Word from Pope Francis:**

"People migrate for many reasons, principally because they desire a better life, and not infrequently try to leave behind the hopelessness of an unpromising future. They set out to reunite with families or to seek professional or educational opportunities. For those who cannot enjoy these rights of opportunity do not live in peace. Even another reason to migrate, as I noted in my Encyclical 'Laudato Si', there has been "a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation". Most people migrate through regular channels. Some, however, take different routes, mainly out of desperation, when their own countries offer neither safety nor opportunity, and every legal pathway appears impractical, blocked or too slow. Many destination countries have spread the exaggerated rhetoric decrying risks posed to national security or the high cost of welcoming new arrivals, and thus they demean the human dignity due to all of us, as sons and daughters of God. Those who, for what may be political reasons, foment fear of migrants instead of building peace are sowing violence, racial discrimination and xenophobia, which are matters of great concern for all those concerned for the safety of every human being. All global indicators suggest that worldwide migration will continue for the future. ***Some consider this a threat.*** For my part, I ask you to view it with confidence as an opportunity to build peace. (World Day of Peace 1-1-2018)

**February Men's Conference:** Mark your calendars-February 17<sup>th</sup> at RiverPark Center, Owensboro 8:30-4:30. Speakers will be national catholic evangelists Christopher West and Doug Barry, to order tickets visit [www.kycatholic.com](http://www.kycatholic.com) or email [msullivan@smsmlaw.com](mailto:msullivan@smsmlaw.com)

**Pray to end abortion:** Join other Catholics and those from other faiths that gather each Saturday at 2nd and Market in Louisville from 7:00-8:00 am (EST) to pray for families entering the abortion clinic. Many children have been saved and mothers spared future grief by this prayer action and support. With God, all things are possible! Archbishop Kurtz is known to show up and pray with everyone too!

**Abortion Update:** Last week 73 women went into EMW Clinic for abortions at 2nd and Market Street in Louisville. **Please pray to end abortion.**

**Need Marriage Help-Try Retrouvaille:** The word 'Retrouvaille' (pronounced Retro- Vie' is a French word meaning rediscovery. The program offers tools needed to rediscover a loving marriage relationship. Thousands of couples headed for cold, unloving relationships or divorce have successfully overcome their marriage problems by attending the program. Next Program is January 12-14, 2018 5:00 pm at Maple Mount, St Joseph. Please call Joe Bland in Family Life Office to register, 270-683-1545.

## Readings for the Week

### READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Nm 6:22-27; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21

Tuesday: 1 Jn 2:22-28; Ps 98:1-4; Jn 1:19-28

Wednesday: 1 Jn 2:29 — 3:6; Ps 98:1, 3cd-6; Jn 1:29-34

Thursday: 1 Jn 3:7-10; Ps 98:1, 7-9; Jn 1:35-42

Friday: 1 Jn 3:11-21; Ps 100:1b-5; Jn 1:43-51

Saturday: 1 Jn 5:5-13; Ps 147:12-15, 19-20; Mk 1:7-11

Sunday: Is 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12

### **DRF Update for St. Romuald, Hardinsburg:**

Thank you for your generosity toward our parish goal target: as of **12/12/2017**  
St Romuald Parish Target Amount: \$12,069.67  
Pledged for year: \$9,467  
Paid Contributions so far: \$5,834.50

## Knights of Columbus News

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Breakfast at St Anthony's** on the 31<sup>st</sup> Dec after the 6:30 Mass. KofC members please let Pat O'Reilly know if you can help at this breakfast.

### **Basketball Slam Sweepstake Tickets:**

Parishioners: the Knights of Columbus are selling Basketball Slam Sweepstake tickets. They are \$10.00 each (buy two and get the third one free). By purchasing two tickets you get a FREE ticket online! Go to [www.basketball.com/free](http://www.basketball.com/free) to redeem. Free tickets will be emailed to you. TEAMS: There are 24 teams, the ticket holder scratches off the box on front of the ticket to reveal their four teams for the entire tournament. Team codes are listed on back of the ticket. If any team(s) do not make it into the tournament, alternate teams will be assigned and posted on [www.basketballsweeps.com](http://www.basketballsweeps.com) by March 15, 2018. PRIZES; \$2600 Total Cash Prizes will be awarded. Prizes are based on the total cumulative score of each 4-team combination. HIGHEST and LOWEST 4-Team totals win prizes! In case of ties, prizes are combined and split. WINNERS are posted after the tournament and prizes are mailed out to the winners. It makes no difference on how many games your 4-teams play, or whether teams win or lose. Go to the website to check results starting April 4<sup>th</sup>. Ticket sale monies support the Knights of Columbus Disaster Relief Program. Deadline for ticket sales are **Mar 1<sup>st</sup>**. Contact me at 1-270-617-0754 for ticket purchases and more info. Pat O'Reilly, Grand Knight

## PRAYER REQUESTS

### We Pray For:

Don Alexander, Paula Anthony, Baby Barr, Gene Bennett, Joe Bennett, Roy Bennett, Lorena Bland, Becky Brown, Mary Brown, Ava Bruner, Juanita Burch, Brian Butler, Billy Carwile, Jerry Carwile, Kayla Christian, Mallorie Collins, Debbie Critchelow, Rick Dale, Vonda Decker, Amanda Douthitt, Marolyn Dowell, Kenneth Dowell, Treyten Drake, Debbie Dubree, Davye Duggins, Sammy Duggins, Tijuana Duncan, Lottie Eauer, Tessa Farris, Carroll Ferguson, Ginny Flood, Cindy Getz, Jenny Ginn, Dorothy Greenwell, Bill Greenwood, Linda Greenwood, Susan Griffin, Janet Hallway, Kay Harris, JoAnn Henning, Lisa Henning, **Tommy Henning**, Joe Hess, Kitty Himmelhaver, Bill Hinton, Doug Hinton, Johnny Howard, Lori Howard, Rick Hurley, Merri Hurt, Braddock Inman, Robert Jackey, Virginia Jeffries, Mary Ann Johnson, Brenda Kelly, Louise Kennedy, Angie Lawrence, Parker Leslie, Annette Lucas, Junior Lucas, Margaret Lyons, Walter Manning, Bevan Michael Miller, Elaine Miller, Richard Miller, Blaise Mills, Sharon Morgan, Emma Nottingham, Don O'Donoghue, Joe Oelze, Patsy Oelze, Earl O'Reilly, Janet O'Reilly, Libby Osborne, Martha Payne, Brian Phillips, Peggy Phillips, Joe Priest, Robert Priest, Sandy Priest, Stella Prewitt, Jack Purcell, **Tracy Ralston**, Kay Ray, Melvin Roach, Rita Roach, Shirley Robbins, Lincoln Roberts, Suzanne Rose, Carri Roth, Eric Severs, Rex Lee Sheets, Haley Sloan, Beth Smith, Steve Smith, Jerry Sosh, Virginia Stanford, Lucye Stupak, Pam Sturgeon, Phillip Sturgeon, Loretta Swink, Adalee Taul, Gina Thornsberry, Rufus Tivitt, Calla Stith, Tessa Wadsworth, Fallon Wen, Greg Wethington, Raymond Wethington, Jimmy Whitworth, Mary Rita Whitworth, Carolyn Wilcheck, Kevin Wilcheck, Robert D. Wilson, Anne Wolfe, Sandra Zanone. **Serving in the Armed Forces:** Mandie Adams, Kevin Arnold, Fred Barham, Austin Brown, Timothy Cashen, Ryan Critchelow, Cody Garst, Parker Findlay, James Hanor, Christian Hansen, Jack Hayes, James Howard, Charles Kuhlman, Bradford O'Reilly, Jordan Pate, Liana Tindle, Chase Upchurch, Garrett Wadsworth



**Kick the new year off right** with a public reading of God's word on the Court House lawn! January 1-4, there will be teams to recite the Word of God, over 90 straight hours. Teams from different churches will take on a three hour watch shift (a total of 30 watches) to ensure the proclamation of the Bible starting with Genesis and ending with Revelation. If you are interested in taking a reading shift or being a 3hour team captain, please let Fr Brian know as we try to assemble a reading team.



## Happy Birthday, Jesus!

## AROUND AND ABOUT

**Catholic Faith Information:** Please check out and pick up any of the free pamphlets and booklets in the back of church about Catholic teaching and practices. They are excellent resources from the Knights of Columbus about our faith beliefs!

**Called by Name Program:** Every young Catholic man should consider all vocations, including whether or not God is calling him to priesthood. However, if not invited or encouraged to think about priesthood, it may never be considered. Many young men may have the burning question within of God calling them to priesthood, but they may be waiting for a confirmation from someone else, to nudge them into seriously pursuing God's priestly call for them. Do you know a faithful young man who may have a vocation to the priesthood? We believe that our future priests will come from our own parishes and schools, but we need your help to identify them. We're looking for high school students and older. Any man you recommend will receive good information from the Vocation Office about discerning his vocation, as well as invitations to discernment retreats and other events. Tell Fr Brian, Deacon Mike or Deacon Tony, to approach them or to invite the vocation director to reach out to them.

**Al-Anon Meeting:** Mondays 7:00 pm St Romuald Parish Hall. Come find support and understanding to recover a sense of serenity in your life.

**Thank you St Romuald:** Thank you so much for the prayer and support through our recent loss and funeral of our dear Angie Medley. Thank you for the help planning the funeral, for all of the ministers, for the wonderful ladies serving the funeral meal, and PJ O'Donoghue and Angie's cousins for the beautiful music. Your support was such a comfort through a difficult time. The Family of Angie Medley

**Christian Unity Prayer Week:** We at St Romuald will be hosting the Ministerial Association's Christian unity Prayer Service, **Sunday January 21 at 5:00 pm**. Plan to come, pray with others for greater cooperation and unity among all Christians!





**Sunday, Dec 31, 2017**

**FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH**

**Endings and beginnings**

The generations need each other. Young people seek heroes to look up to and aspire toward. Older folk need the fresh eye, courage, and idealism of newcomers at the table of decision-making. When we work together across generations, we take our surest steps into a future of hope. Elders like Simeon and Anna still haunt sacred places, waiting on God to fulfill old promises. Young families continue to present themselves, bearing their joys and uncertainties. This happy intersection is both consolation and challenge. Let's find out together what it means to be church!

TODAY'S READINGS: *Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 or Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3; Colossians 3:12-21 or Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Luke 2:22-40 (17). "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace . . . for my eyes have seen your salvation."*

**Monday, Jan 01, 2018**

**OCTAVE DAY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD; SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD**

**Share the true gift of the season**

Christianity is not a new philosophy or new morality, says Pope Benedict XVI. It is an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ: "We ourselves must be personally involved in an intimate and profound relationship with Jesus." Mary, the Mother of God, whom we honor today, was instrumental in bringing the person of Jesus to us and showing us how to fully embrace a life in Christ. Resolve to deepen your relationship with Jesus and, like Mary, find ways to bring Christ to others.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Numbers 6:22-27; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:16-21 (18). "He was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb."*

**Tuesday, Jan 02, 2018**

**MEMORIAL OF BASIL THE GREAT AND GREGORY NAZIANZUS, BISHOPS, DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH**

**Faith begins at home**

Several giants of the early church, including today's Saints Basil and Gregory Nazianzus, were inspired by Basil's older sister Macrina (whose brothers also included two other saints, Gregory of Nyssa and Peter of Sebaste). Macrina deeply influenced her family with her asceticism. With the help of her younger brother, Peter, Macrina turned the family estate into a monastery and convent, providing a peaceful shelter for study and meditation. What inspiration can you draw from family members as you resolve to deepen your commitment to Christ in this New Year?

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 2:22-28; John 1:19-28 (205). "I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Make straight the way of the Lord.'"*

**Wednesday, Jan 03, 2018**

**MEMORIAL OF THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS**

**Dig a little deeper**

As Christians, we believe we are called by name to follow Jesus. Do we accept what that belief implies: that Jesus knows us personally and considers us to be an essential part of his ministry? And as we call on Jesus, just how confident are we that we know who he is and what he wants out of the relationship? John the Baptist knew who Jesus was, but such knowledge took rigorous prayer and questioning. Perhaps you need to do the same to discover why Jesus counts you among

his friends.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 2:29—3:6; John 1:29-34 (206). "And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God."*

**Thursday, Jan 04, 2018**

**MEMORIAL OF ELIZABETH ANN SETON, RELIGIOUS**

**Work with what you have**

And you thought you were busy? Consider Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first native-born citizen of the United States to be canonized. Mother Seton founded the first American religious community for women, the Sisters of Charity. She opened the first American parish school, nursed sick and dying family, friends, and neighbors, and established the first American Catholic orphanage—all while raising five children as a widow! Next time your own responsibilities get you down, remember that you don't have to start out a saint to do some good in the world.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 3:7-10; John 1:35-42 (207). "Let no one deceive you. The person who acts in righteousness is righteous."*

**Friday, Jan 05, 2018**

**MEMORIAL OF JOHN NEUMANN, BISHOP**

**Stick it out for the long haul**

Ever feel like you don't really belong—not even in the church? John Neumann (1811-60) must have had days like that. Born in Bohemia, his bishop didn't ordain him after seminary because the Hapsburg Empire had too many priests. So he came to America and was ordained within a month but always felt like an outsider. Later, when he was installed as bishop of Philadelphia, not one bishop showed up to support him. Stick around the church long enough, and you will be rewarded for hanging in there.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 3:11-21; John 1:43-51 (208). "Nathanael said to Philip, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip replied, 'Come and see.'"*

**Saturday, Jan 06, 2018**

**MEMORIAL OF ANDRÉ BESSETTE, RELIGIOUS**

**Do the ordinary with extraordinary faith**

When Brother André tried to enter his religious community, his superiors thought him too sickly and undereducated to amount to much. So they made him the community doorman. In addition to answering the door, he directed visitors, delivered packages and mail, awakened the community, ran errands, cut hair, sewed, fixed things, maintained the wine cellar, swept up, and—yes—he also did windows. When he died after decades of counseling and bringing God's healing to hundreds of thousands of people, a million mourners attended his funeral. Quite a switch for a person who didn't show much "promise." We recognize God's presence when we do our everyday tasks with generosity, love, and devotion.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 5:5-13; Mark 1:7-11 or Luke 23-38 (209). "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me."*

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