

St. Mary of the Rosary, Chewelah

Mass: Saturday 4:00 PM and Sunday 10:00 AM
Sunday 4:30 PM (NOT 12/25/16 or 01/01/17)
Reconciliation: Sat. 2:30—3:30 PM and by appt.

Holy Ghost, Valley

St. Joseph, Jump Off Joe

Mass: Sunday 8:00 AM (at Holy Ghost)
Reconciliation: Tuesday 6:00—7:00 PM at HG

Sacred Heart, Springdale

Mass: Saturday, 6:00 PM
Reconciliation: 1st Fridays, 5:00—5:30 PM

Mass Intentions

Dec. 31, 4:00 PM Marietta Linke +

Weekday Mass Schedule

No weekday Masses the week between Christmas and New Year's. Fr. Jeff will be taking time off. Call this week for office hours.

Ski Season Mass Schedule

The Ski Season Mass will run through December and January. For these two months, there will be a 4:30 PM Mass at St. Mary of the Rosary every Sunday afternoon except Christmas Day and New Year's Day to attract the skiers and snowboarders to Mass on their way down the mountain.

Advent Sock Drive

St. Mary of the Rosary is once again holding its annual sock drive for the homeless men and women at the House of Charity. New or gently used warm socks will be collected from now until early January, and around Epiphany they will be delivered to the House of Charity for distribution to those in need.

Catholic Charities Christmas Collection

Without the faithful and generous support of our parishes, we could not continue to transform lives and bring compassion and dignity to over 70,000 vulnerable individuals each year. This Christmas, please donate to the Catholic Charities Collection. Your gift matters!

Merry Christmas!

Fr. Jeff and Brenda extend their wishes to all parishioners, guests, and visitors for a very happy and holy Christmas season.

Holy Day of Obligation

January 1 is a Holy Day of Obligation celebrating the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. Considering the holy day falls on a Sunday this year, Masses will follow the normal weekend liturgy schedule.

Christmas Mass Schedule

- ♦ Saturday, 12/24, 4:00 PM, St. Mary of the Rosary (family Mass; youth group choir and ministers)
- ♦ Saturday, 12/24, 7:00 PM, Sacred Heart
- ♦ Saturday, 12/24, 10:00 PM, St. Mary of Rosary
- ♦ MIDNIGHT MASS, St. Joseph (Jump Off Joe)
- ♦ Sunday, 12/25, 9:00 AM, Holy Ghost

Food for the Poor

Our parishes are still collecting donations to provide a house and a well for an impoverished family in a third world country (probably Haiti). Through "Food for the Poor", this can be done for only \$3,885 (\$3,600 for the house and \$285 for the well). Thus far, we have raised a total of \$2,240, which is 57.6% of our goal. Please keep donating!

Holy Ghost Altar Society Meeting

The Altar Society of Holy Ghost will meet after the 8 AM Mass on Sunday, **January 1st**. Also, the monthly collection for the Valley Food Pantry will be taken up. Thank you for your generosity.

St. Mary's Ladies Auxiliary

All women of the parish are invited to gather at the church hall every Wednesday morning from 9—11 AM beginning January 4. At our first social, we will begin with a short Bible study and then brainstorm for ideas for future activities. Please come! Kids are welcome. Coffee and a light snack will be available. Call Kellie at (509) 993-4150 if you have any questions.

With Sincere Thanks

We wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to Fr. Jeff and Fr. Jose, the 4th Degree Knights of Columbus, and the Musicians for making the liturgy for Frank's funeral Mass so beautiful. Thanks also to everyone who prayed for him, either at the rosary, the Mass, or privately in your hearts. Your support has carried us through this difficult time. Sincerely,

The family of Frank Femling

- ♦ Next K.C. breakfast will be January 8.
- ♦ Mardi Gras Dinner/Dessert Auction - Jan. 28

Hearts on Fire

Men, you are invited to attend the 7th annual Heart on Fire Catholic Men's Conference, "Into the Breach," January 28 at St. Thomas More, beginning at 8:00 AM and concluding with Mass at 4:30 PM, with Bishop Thomas Daly as the celebrant. Hear some of the nation's most dynamic Catholic speakers addressing some of the most challenging issues facing Catholic men in this modern world. Register online at www.dioceseofspokane.org/mens. Contact Rich Hanson at 466-2209 for more information.

Retrouvaille

You Can Help Your Marriage! Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue . . . or have you just stopped talking to each other? Does talking about it only make it worse? Retrouvaille helps couples through difficult times in their marriages and is for any couple who would like to rediscover their marriage and improve communication. For confidential information or to register for the February 10-12, 2017 Spokane weekend, call (509) 520-4118 or (800) 470-2230 or visit the website at www.Retrouvaille.org.

Parish Campus Renewal Presentation

Last spring, Fr. Jeff gave a presentation on the progress we had made on our parish campus renewal for St. Mary of the Rosary. It is time again for another update, and everyone from our three parishes is invited to attend. Fr. Jeff will make his presentation Sunday, January 8, after the 10:00 AM Mass. It will be during the tail end of the K.C. breakfast, so please come for the food and stay for the talk! Everyone is invited.

Family Faith Formation:

Christmas Break

We are going to take a two-week Christmas break from Family Faith Formation. No Home Lesson packets or meetings, so enjoy your much deserved Christmas break! Our next Home Lesson packet will be for the week of Sunday, Jan. 8, and our next Large-Group Gathering will be Wednesday, Jan. 11, so we will see you then! God bless you all!

Why Celebrate Christmas on December 25?

Even though the date of Christ's birth is not given to us in Sacred Scripture, there is documented evidence that December 25 was already of some significance to Christians prior to the year 354 AD. One example can be found in the writings of Hyppolytus of Rome, who explains in his *Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (c. 204 AD) that the Lord's birth was believed to have occurred on that day: "For the first advent of our Lord in the flesh, when He was born in Bethlehem, was December 25, Wednesday, while Augustus was in his forty-second year, but from Adam, five thousand and five hundred years. He suffered in the thirty-third year, March 25, Friday, the eighteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, while Rufus and Roubellion were Consuls."

The reference to Adam can be understood in light of another of Hyppolytus' writings, the *Chronicon*, where he explains that Jesus was born nine months after the anniversary of Creation. According to his calculations, the world was created on the vernal equinox, March 25, which would mean Jesus was born nine months later, on December 25.

Louis Duchesne (a 19th Century liturgical scholar) explains that "towards the end of the third century, the custom of celebrating the birthday of Christ had spread throughout the whole Church, but that it was not observed everywhere on the same day."

In the West, the birth of Christ was celebrated on December 25, and in the East on January 6 (now celebrated as the Solemnity of the Epiphany). In time, when the East and the West came to be more united, the December 25 option became dominant, but January 6 is still given an important place in the calendar; it is, after all, the 12th Day of the Twelve Days of Christmas. Evidently, then, the date of Christ's birth was decided by using as a starting point the same day on which He was believed to have died.

That the Christians chose a date so close to the winter solstice is because the solstice was important to everyone for agricultural reasons in the same way that water is important to the survival of human beings, and so we see rituals involving water showing up in various religions, including Christianity (e.g. Baptism). As for the winter solstice, the days start getting longer; the sun is, as it were, returning. Christ Himself is the true Light, born for us on Christmas, the Light coming to us in the darkest time of the year.

Sacrament of Baptism: Parents contact Rev. Jeffrey Lewis for information.

Sacrament of Holy Matrimony: Couples contact Rev. Jeffrey Lewis at least four months prior to marriage.

Tri-Parish Office
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Pastor : Rev. Jeffrey Lewis
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Parish Office Hours: Monday & Friday: 10:00—11:30 AM, 1:45—5:00 PM; Tuesday & Thursday, 10 AM-5 PM