

December 25, 2016

# CHRISTMAS

## THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



### *The Word: The True Light Come Into The World*

**This is what Christ's coming means: God's own glory has come to earth, offering us the chance to become children of God. The reading also sets before us the awful possibility of rejection. Those to whom Christ came – "his own" did not receive him. The light of Christ yet shines out and has not been overcome by the darkness. This hope sustains Christians. It is our sure foundation in times of trial. It is the Good News!**

### MASS INTENTIONS



Saturday, December 31  
4:30 p.m. The Welfare of All Parishioners  
Sunday, January 1  
8:00 a.m. Benefactors of the Parish

### Full, Conscious and Active Participation in the Liturgy



Next weekend is *The Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God*. Prepare for the liturgy by reflecting on these passages from your Bible.

**First Reading: Numbers 6:22-27**

**Responsorial Psalm: 67**

**Second Reading: Galatians 4:4-7**

**Gospel: Luke 2:16-21**

Remember the sick in your prayers this week, especially Frances Anderle.

### A BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO EVERYONE

Dear friends,

Merry Christmas to you! Thanks to God, we celebrate another Christmas and usher in another year. We can only count our blessings. God has been good to us. What may seem to be a misfortune for the world, for us through the eyes of faith is part of God's dream for us. With sadness we let go of our loved ones we lost during the year, but in hope we wait to see them again. We welcome the newly born in our community and wish them God's blessing

It has been a great year, hectic as it may have seemed we survived it all. I pray that God continues to smile on you and keep you safe. I thank all my friends who remembered me with cards and gifts. I really do appreciate your thoughtfulness and kindness.

Again, may you have a blessed Christmas and may you experience God's presence among us in a special way this Christmas.

God bless,

### 2016 DIOCESAN SERVICES APPEAL

2016 Assessment .....	\$7,618.00
Contributions So Far .....	\$5,745.00
Amount Yet to be Contributed .....	\$1,873.00

We thank the following for their recent contributions:

<i>Timothy Pospisil</i>	<i>Pat Masek</i>
<i>Pam &amp; Nathan Vrazel</i>	<i>Ollie Pospisil</i>
<i>Frances &amp; Leon Kubenka</i>	

*We thank all those who have contributed towards our 2016 D.S.A. assessment so far. We are close to paying off our debt to the diocese. We are counting on you to make our quota for the year.*

### St. Mary's Restoration Endowment Fund Maintaining & Preserving Matıcka Praha



We thank the following for their recent contributions:

***In Memory of Sophie E. & Frank G. Olsovsky***  
*Georgia L. Matusek, Houston, TX - \$2,000*

***Elyse & Eugene Chaloupka - \$200***  
*(pledged payment)*

***Melvin Hutzler - \$200***  
*(pledged payment)*

To make a tax deductible donation towards *St. Mary's Restoration Endowment Fund Maintaining & Preserving Matıcka Praha* contact Fr. Gabriel at 361-596-4674.

## REFLECTION

### *The New Covenant*

Christmas raises us to the heights of heaven, not just to fill our minds with lofty things, rather, it is meant to free us from any narrow perspective we might have of those things that may be too much with us.

The child born in Bethlehem in an obscure stable is the Word of God, the Light of the world. To really understand this paradox and its significance, we must return to “the beginning,” in the presence of the God who is now made man that all might become children of God. A new relationship has been instituted between God and humanity. This new covenant is gained through the person of Jesus. It is available to everyone who seeks such a relationship.

Everything is acted out “in this, the final age.” It is in this world that the Light confronts darkness in a gigantic battle. No one can remain neutral. We must choose sides. The message of the Good News is spread throughout the world, announcing peace and salvation.

The Lord’s nativity and its celebration cannot be dissociated from the rest of the mystery of salvation. The prophets, “in fragmentary and varied ways,” announce the decisive intervention of God. The birth in flesh of his own Son strikes these promises home to us. God’s Son is born to make known to us the unseen God. He is to die on the cross, be gloriously resurrected, and communicate to us the fullness of life.

To grasp the meaning and importance of the Christmas event and to enter into its dynamism, we must try to encompass, in one great overview, the whole history of salvation, from the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, to the end, when all who are saved will be assembled in the heavenly Jerusalem.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



December 25 – Sidney Kubenka  
December 26 – Dennis Olsovsky  
December 27 – Diane Decker  
December 28 – Leon Kubenka

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



December 29 – Carol & Gene Patalik, Jr.

## CHRISTMAS COLLECTION FOR THE POOR

In the spirit of sharing blessings with our less fortunate brothers and sisters, a collection will be taken up at the Christmas Masses. *We encourage you to be generous.*

### CHRISTMAS: THE MEANING

If asked what Christmas means, the average person would probably give a sentimental answer: “Christmas is for children,” or “Christmas is about giving.” “Tis the season to be jolly,” announces a popular carol, or, in the words of another, “It’s the most wonderful time of the year.” In the long slide down the slippery slope of secular culture, these sentiments are now applied to “the holidays” in a general sort of way, and the word *Christmas* is suppressed, along with the lingering religious content that the word might carry with it.



In the hearts of the faithful, however, Christmas is and always has been a celebration of the birth of the Savior. It is a time we hold sacred because it is about the Lord whom we love. It is the feast of his Incarnation. It is a celebration of the mystery of God becoming man, so that human beings could share in the life of God.

The season of Christmas embraces both the Nativity and the Epiphany. The Nativity centers on Jesus’ birth and the events immediately surrounding it. The Epiphany in turn celebrates three episodes of his early public manifestation: the visit of the magi, the baptism of the Lord, and the first miracle of Jesus – at the wedding at Cana, when he changed water into wine.

The Christmas season is a time when we retell some of our most cherished stories as a faith community. Not only do Christians meditate upon the marvelous infancy narratives, they also discern in these stories rich symbols of Christ’s identity. He is the suffering Messiah, the light to the nations, the glory of Israel, the one promised to the humble faithful, to name just a few themes that Christmas touches.

Thus, the myrrh of the magi prepares for the death of the Messiah, the ox and the ass of the manger scene symbolize Jews and Gentiles alike, “feeding” at the trough of the divine revelation: and the Holy Family’s search for shelter dramatizes the personal faith question, Who will take Christ into their homes and make him welcome?

