

OUR LADY OF *Mercy*

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The Celebration of the HOLY EUCHARIST

Sunday Vigil (Saturday): 4:00pm – Sunday: 8:30am and 10:30am
Daily Mass: 8:00am (No morning Mass on Wednesdays)

The Sacrament of RECONCILIATION (Confession)

Saturday: 12 Noon or by appointment

Reverend Raymond Smialowski, *Pastor*
Deacon Robert A. Berube, *Senior Deacon*
Sandra DeBlois, *Bookkeeper*

Jo-Ann Blanchette-Silverio, *Administrative Assistant*
Susan Van Cott, *Coordinator for Faith Formation for Children*
Donna Marotto, *Coordinator of Faith Formation for Youth*
Eric Hoffman, *Organist and Music Director*
Robert DeBlois, *Maintenance*

Parish and Cemetery Office: 19 South Canal Street
Telephone: 860-747-6825 – Fax: 860-747-5407
Hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm
Parish e-mail: olmct@sbcglobal – Parish webmail: www.olmct.org
Facebook®: OurLadyOfMercyChurchCT

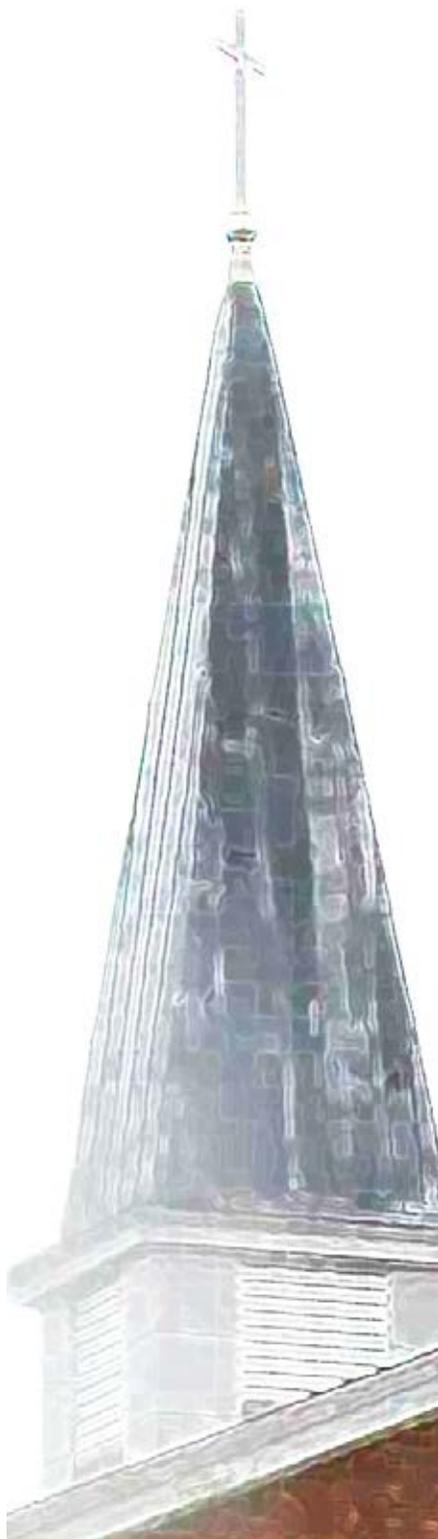
*Born as a Mission of Bristol in 1864 and
Established as an Independent Parish in 1881*

WELCOME TO OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH! If you are new to the area or just visiting, please stop and introduce yourself. We are pleased to have you share in our celebration of the Eucharist. We invite you to become part of our parish family. To register or to update your address or phone number, please complete this form and mail it to the Parish Office or place in the collection basket.

New Parishioner Address/Phone Number Change
Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

“Do whatever He tells you.”

– Mary to the disciples of Jesus
(John 2:5)



Sunday January 5, Epiphany of the Lord

8:30a For the Intentions of all Parishioners

10:30a *Children's Mass – Grade 8*

Brian Hebert Req. His Mother

Monday January 6, St. Andre Bessette, Religious

8:00a William Bergenty Req. Bryan Knorr

Tuesday January 7, St. Raymond of Penafort, Priest

8:00a Michael Hybner Req. Daughter

Wednesday January 8, Christmas Weekday

8:00a No Mass

Thursday January 9, Christmas Weekday

8:00a Lena Gawrys Req. Jo Forcella Family

Friday January 10, Christmas Weekday

8:00a Richard McGann, Sr. Req. Family

8:30a Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Saturday January 11, Christmas Weekday

8:00a John Egri Month Anniv.

Roland Dumont 1st Anniv.

Saturday January 11, Vigil Baptism of the Lord

Noon Confession

4:00p Helen Corriveau Req. Jim & Maryann Davis

Sunday January 12, Baptism of the Lord

8:30a For the Intentions of all Parishioners

10:30a Angela & Ralph Scheidel Req. Sandy & Bob

Michalik



Welcome to Our Lady of Mercy!

We welcome all who gather here to worship with us. You are most welcome if you are visiting with us today. If you are new to



our parish and wish to become a member of OLM, we invite you to introduce yourself to our pastor, Fr. Raymond Smialowski, and to register.

Registration can be completed by stopping by the parish office, filling out the short form on the front page of our bulletin, or completing a short registration form which can be found on our home page at www.olmct.org under the heading "New to Our Parish?" Please return the form to the office by dropping it in the collection basket or mailing it to 19 S. Canal St., Plainville.



The Tabernacle Lamp...

is lighted for the Greater Glory of God and in recognition of the Real Presence of Christ. This week the candle is flickering *in memory of Sister Thelma Bouchard*. The Tabernacle Lamp is available as a memorial for a \$5 donation per week. Consider having the lamp burn in memory of or the intentions of a loved one. Please call the office to schedule at 860.747.6825.

Church Support

Due to an earlier than usual deadline for this week's bulletin, the offertory will be printed January 12, 2020.

*

Thank You for Your Generous Support!

Christmas Day Nativity Presentation

The following children participated in the Living Nativity presentation on Christmas morning during the 10am Mass:

Dilana Krpata - Mary

Samuel Hormoz - Joseph

Aleena Krpata - Angel

Joanna Tompkins - Angel

Julie Tompkins - Angel

Addison Valentine - Angel

Carolina Vidal - Angel

Halina Vidal - Angel

Garrison Cuisson - Shepherd

Zachary Krpata - Shepherd

Jack Valentine - Shepherd



We are grateful to the children who participated and the parents who helped.

This Week This Week This Week This Week

Sunday January 5

10:30a Men's AA Meeting, *Rm 107*

9 – 10:15a Rel. Ed. Classes, *Parish Center*

Monday January 6

9:30a Legion of Mary, *Parish Center*

4:45 – 6p Valley United Basketball, *Gym*

6 – 8:45p Farmington Boys Basketball, *Gym*

Tuesday January 7

3 – 5:45p St. Joseph Basketball, *Gym*

6 – 8:30p Valley United Basketball, *Gym*

7 – 8:15p NA Meeting, *Rm 106*

Wednesday January 8

2 – 3p Rel. Ed. Classes, *Parish Center*

3 – 3:45p Children's Choir, *Rm 101*

6 – 8p Talented Basketball, *Gym*

7 – 8:15p Confirmation Class I & II, *Parish Center*

Thursday January 9

3 – 5:45p St. Joseph Basketball, *Gym*

6 – 8:45p Farmington Boys Basketball, *Gym*

Friday January 10

6 – 8p Talented Basketball, *Gym*

Saturday January 11

7p AA Meeting, *Rm 107*

Sunday January 12

8 – 10:30a OLM Breakfast, *Parish Center*

10:30a Men's AA Meeting, *Rm 107*

Religious Education News



Sundaes on Sunday...

Will be held on January 19th after the 10:30am Mass in the Parish Center. We will be brainstorming ideas for outings, service projects

and fundraising events while having ice cream sundaes. Please bring a friend.

Questions - contact Donna at (860) 952-4005 or olmctre@sbcglobal.net

Students of the Month for December

Congratulations to the following students in our Religious Education Program!



Older Children Sacramental Prep – Sophia Ripley

1st Grade Wednesday – Gianna Onisto

2nd Grade Wednesday – Mya Paznokas

2nd Grade Sunday – Ali Saucier

3rd Grade Wednesday – Aiden Nichisti

3rd Grade Sunday – Emily Barnes

4th Grade Sunday – Madison Bohn

4th Grade Wednesday – Annina Consalvo

5th Grade – Dilana Krpata

6th Grade – Paige Weimer

7th Grade - Nathaniel Cranson

8th Grade - Rachel Diaz

9th Grade - Devon Nanowski

10th Grade - Katherine Gibson

Faith Formation Committee Meeting

The committee will meet *THIS* Monday, January 6th in the parish center at 7pm. All are invited who are interested in forming the faith journey of our parish youth.



Three Kings

Tradition tells us that the names of the Three Kings were Casper, Balthasar, & Melchior.

Ancient Christian Tradition invites us to mark our doors with the initials of the 3 Kings on this day as such 20 + C + M + B + 20. The purpose of this marking is to remind us that as we come and go from our homes and look at the initials, that we, like the Magi, are called to seek Christ in our daily lives. Blessed chalk for this marking will be available following the 10:30 am Mass today.

A Huge Thank You

Thank you to everyone who gave so unselfishly to the Giving Tree this year.

It was our biggest collection of gifts! Thank you for sharing the gifts

that God has given you with others in need and helping others to have a very Merry Christmas.



Our Deepest Longing

The men of our parish are invited to attend retreat at Holy Family in West Hartford, Jan. 17 - 19, 2020. What is it that we are longing for in the deepest way?

What is our passion in life? This year at Holy Family, we will explore that deep longing planted in our hearts by God - a longing for peace, for wholeness, and for relationships that give us joy and lift us up. Our parish Men's Retreat Coordinator is Bill Fasciano. Please call Bill (860.919.3950) with any questions and information about registration. *There's still time to sign up.* For those attending retreat for the first time, a scholarship is available. A women's retreat will be held with the same theme *NEXT* weekend, January 10 - 12. All women of the parish are invited. Please visit www.holyfamilyretreat.org more information.



Is a Vocation Right for You?

Having little, if any, knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Magi rely on their study of heavenly signs to discover meaning for the earth. The Magi brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh on their journey. What treasures do I have to give to the Lord? Is he calling me to be a priest, brother, or sister? If so call



Fr. Michael Casey, Director of

Vocations, Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, 860-761-7456, e-mail vocations@aohct.org, or visit the web at www.hartfordpriest.com.

Women's Retreat at Our Lady of Calvary, January 17-19, 2020

On the weekend of January 17-19, 2020, the women of our parish are invited to Our Lady of Calvary Retreat Center in Farmington, CT. Experience a weekend filled with rest, relaxation and spiritual renewal. You'll have the opportunity to participate in the sacraments, to hear conference talks, to

share with other women and to reflect on this year's theme. For more information about our Women's Retreat and to register call Our Lady of Calvary Retreat Center at (860) 677-8519 or visit our website at www.ourladyofcalvary.net.





You are Invited to Breakfast

The OLM Breakfast will be served **NEXT** Sunday, Jan. 12th from 8 – 10:30am in the Parish Center. \$4 adults, \$1 ages 7 – 18, Free 6 and younger. Eggs, toast, hash browns, yum!

Retrouvaille Weekend for Troubled Marriages

If your marriage has become troubled and stressed, unloving or uncaring, even if you are divorced or separated but want to try again, the Retrouvaille program can help. Retrouvaille provides tools to: communicate better, resolve conflicts fairly, and re-discover why you fell in love. The next upcoming weekend is January 17-19, 2020. For information, call [1-800-470-2230](tel:1-800-470-2230), or email cherylandsteve@cox.net, or visit our website www.helpourmarriage.com.



Reflection by Rev. Leonard N. Peterson

“Tis the season” of beautifully wrapped boxes encasing treasures specially chosen by the givers. They are meant to express many things, above all love, but also friendship, forgiveness for perceived failures, or just plain joy for the present and the future.

“Tis the season” for receiving gifts, presumably given by loved ones or recent acquaintances, or even perhaps a co-worker from the wider reaches of our “people circle” wishing to acquire or strengthen a relationship. Or they may be expressions of thanks for favors received.

“Tis the season” of a brand-new year, its number 2020 often used to define perfect eyesight, thereby giving a hint that this may be the perfect year to look for a “new vision” to permeate our outlook.

“Tis the season” of Winter’s apex, when ever so slowly the daylight lasts longer with each new day, calling for us to live the hope we invest in Spring.

“Tis the season” above all to recognize that Jesus Christ is Himself our greatest gift. His unchanging love for us is no prisoner of time or whim. He is “the Light of the World” for all men and women anywhere and everywhere.

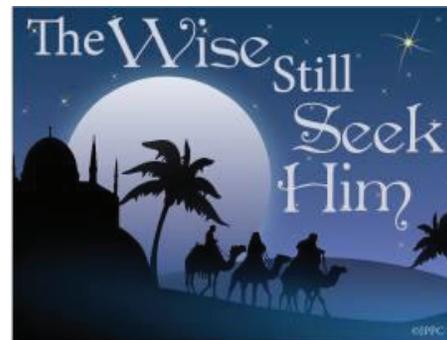
“Tis the season,” finally, of Epiphany, which is Christmas for many Eastern Christians. That marks the time when Christ burst out of the confines of a Bethlehem stable to be a Gift, beautifully wrapped but eager to be opened for all nations.

All of this expanded meaning for the season underscores why we love it as being so special. True, it shakes us up a bit, especially if we have commercialized it, or limited its invitation to love God and our neighbor, or unconsciously made our Christianity into some kind of private possession, not to be shared with people who don’t look like us or speak our language. It tells us each year that we share this blue ball we live in with billions of others, all created by the one God and Father. There are no strangers here.

The poets of our world have a way of stating the truth that makes us pause and rehearse their words with our inner ears. We need them more desperately than we sometimes acknowledge. They open us up on this Epiphany day so that we can ponder and grow. Here is one of them with the lilting name of Edna St. Vincent Millay. This is what she wrote:

*“The world stands out on either side,
No wider than the heart is wide.
Above the world is stretched the sky,
No higher than the soul is high.”*

Peace to you and yours this New Year of the Lord 2020!



GIFT VOLUNTEER MEETING

THERE WILL BE A GIFT VOLUNTEER MEETING ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 14TH AT 6:30PM IN ROOM 102. SEE YOU THEN!

The Artist's Way

Tuesdays, January 21 to March 31, 2020, 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Holy Family Monastery, West Hartford, 860.521.0440, Join us for this 13-week course and recover your



creative spirit through techniques and exercises to gain self-confidence in harnessing your creative talents and skills. No experience necessary. This program is sponsored by the Monastery Gallery of Art. *Offering: \$130.00 (includes materials, textbook and a light meal each evening)*

Presenter Profile - Kathy Parulski

Kathy Parulski is co-curator of the Monastery Gallery of Art and an accomplished bookbinder and book artist. Her work ranges from the restoration of family Bibles to original book works using metal edge binding and recycled materials. She has taught adults and children throughout New England and has exhibited extensively in Connecticut. A

certified Zentangle teacher and former newspaper publisher, she holds a graduate certificate in women's spirituality from the Women's Leadership Institute at Hartford Seminary.

Christmas and the Flight into Egypt

[ELIZABETH SCALIA](#)

A few years ago, the U.S. Postal Service did something different with its religiously themed Christmas stamps. I'm not sure whether the change came about as a nod to non-Catholic Christians who were averse to using the images of the Madonna and Child offered each year, or simply because someone at the USPS felt bored and needed a change, but I loved the new stamp.

It featured a silhouette of the Holy Family against a bright orange sky and a dazzling star. Joseph is leading a donkey carrying Mary and what looks to be a sleeping bundle of newborn King in her arms.

I bought scores of the stamps so as to use them even after Christmas, and then was delighted to find them offered the next year and each year since. The stamp speaks to me in a different, more immediate way than the lovely Madonna/Child stamps, and I've wondered why. I think it may have to do with how much more

"contemporary" the image feels. Even as it shows a traditional image, the stamp speaks to a relevance to our times and our headlines.

Christ is born, and the family is making a hazardous trek through the desert and into Egypt, because it is not safe for them in Bethlehem, or Nazareth, or anywhere Herod reigns, and so they

are migrating — they are refugees from terror.



The Holy Spirit often uses the most confounding means and methods to get our attention and open us to God's instructive promptings, so perhaps we shouldn't marvel that a few years before immigrants and refugees became the stuff of our daily headlines (and a source of considerable consternation for people inside and outside of the Church) the U.S. Postal Service was pulling our thoughts in that direction.

Yes, it speaks to our times. We see a family uprooted from everything they know, everything "normal," comfortable and familiar. Not only are they unable to simply "go back" to the way things were, they are being led into something wholly different, with nothing to go on but trust: a man, a woman and a baby, moving against a whole world of uncertainty, injustice and danger.

There is much consolation in this lovely picture. In the crucifix we encounter "The God Who Knows" — the one who understands our feelings of fear, abandonment, betrayal, shame, thirst. Here we see "The God Who Knows" familial anxiety, too, and social separation, material deprivation and — perhaps again — thirst. His stepfather, obedient to something as ephemeral as a dream, places everything into the hands of Divine Providence and leads them through new terrain, seeking wells and watering holes as they travel for Mary to drink that the infant might be nourished. This is the God who has been part of a family unit that worked like a closed circuit of surety and continuance, and the God who also knew all of its stresses.

There is nothing going on in the world, or in our personal spheres, for which Scripture and the life of the Christ do not offer an instructive correlation, if only we bother to seek it out. This image is an invitation to the whole world to trust God, even amid blaring headlines, because He is always faithful. It says "Ephphatha, be open!" It says, "I know the plans I have for you." It says, "Fear not, for I am with you." It says, "Do not worry about tomorrow." At the absolute baseline of the life of faith, God asks us a question: Do you trust me? We are creatures who, since Eden, have willfully embraced the illusion that we are in control of everything, when, in fact, the only thing within our control is our decision to trust or to doubt, to be open or to be closed, to believe or not to believe.

The Flight into Egypt stamp is a powerful reminder of that truth, and it bears the word "Forever." We are forever meant to surrender our illusion of control, forever meant to be opened, forever meant to trust in Divine Providence. Call it a coincidence if you like. I see the Holy Spirit giving necessary instruction to our time.



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~ELAINE~
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