

Saint John the Baptist Parish

Pastor: Msgr. J. Christopher Maloney

Parochial Vicars: Rev. Daniel Ulloa, O.P., Rev. Mathew Biby

Associates: Deacon Martin J. Olivieri, Deacon Nicholas Ramoni

Retired Priest: Msgr. Walter A. Birkle

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Yonkers, NY 10704
www.sjbyonkers.org

December 20, 2020
4th Sunday of Advent

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School
(914) 965-2356

Principal
Sister Maryalice Reamer, R.D.C.

Religious Education
(914) 965-2338

Director
Mrs. Angela Minchilli

Director of Music & Organist
John Stufano

Masses
Saturday Vigil:
5:00 p.m.

Sunday:
8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m.,
12:30 p.m.

Monday thru Friday:
8:00 a.m., 12:00 noon

Saturday:
8:30 a.m.

**Sacrament of
Penance**
By appointment only

**Sacrament of
Marriage**
Make arrangements six months
prior to wedding

**Sacrament of
Baptism**
Every Sunday
after the 12:30 Mass

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 19, 2020

Vigil: Fourth Sunday of Advent

5:00 p.m. Catherine and Jerry O'Sullivan

Sunday, December 20, 2020

Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:30 a.m. Allen, Geraldine and Allen, Jr. Purdy

10:30 a.m. Mass for the Parishioners of
St. John the Baptist

12:30 p.m. Margherita Spataro

Monday, December 21, 2020

Feast of St. Peter Canisus, Priest and Doctor of the Church

8:00 a.m. Anne Chin

12:00 noon Christine O'Connor and Thomas
Coleman

Tuesday, December 22, 2020

8:00 a.m. Rosaria Verbene

12:00 noon Deceased Members of the Lonardo
Family

Wednesday, December 23, 2020

Feast of St. John of Kanty, Priest

8:00 a.m. Eileen O'Sullivan

12:00 noon Denis J. Burbridge, Jr.

Thursday, December 24, 2020

8:00 a.m. Anthony Sbordone

Thursday, December 24, 2020

Vigil: The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

5:00 p.m. Luise Lyddy

12:00 mid. Mass for the Parishioners of
St. John the Baptist

Friday, December 25, 2020

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

8:30 a.m. Deceased members of the Vanadia and
Ludlow Families

10:30 a.m. Deceased members of the Razza and
Signore Families

12:30 P.M. Cesare Recine and Michele Lovecchio

Saturday, December 26, 2020

8:30 a.m. No Mass

Saturday, December 26, 2020

Vigil: Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

5:00 p.m. Esterina and Giacomo Magretti

Sunday, December 27, 2020

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

8:30 a.m. Marie and Harry Bova -- Anniversary

10:30 a.m. Rev. Peter J. McKeown

12:30 p.m. Deceased members of the Naryniecki and
Kozlowski Families

WEEKLY PARISH CALENDAR

Wednesday, December 23rd

No Religious Education Program

Thursday, December 24th

Rectory Closed at 12:00 noon

Friday, December 25th

Rectory Closed

Special Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve – Thursday, December 24th

Vigil Mass – 5:00 p.m.

Midnight Mass – 12:00 a.m.

*(Admission to the Vigil Mass and Midnight Mass by
ticket only)*

Christmas – Friday, December 25th

8:30; 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

*(There is no evening Mass on Christmas Day and
no 8:30 a.m. Mass on December 26th)*

Saturday, December 26th – Feast of Holy Family

Vigil: 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 27th -- Feast of Holy Family

8:30; 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Daily Mass Alert: There will be no noon Mass on Thursday, December 24th (Christmas Eve) and no 8:30 Mass on Saturday, December 26th (the day after Christmas). Also the rectory office will be closed on Christmas Eve at 12:00 noon.

Calendars: The beautiful religious calendars for 2021 are made available to St. John's parishioners' thanks – once again – to the generosity of Tony and Mark Flower and all our friends at Flower Funeral Home who have served the needs of the St. John's community with compassion and sensitivity for many years. We are very grateful for their thoughtfulness. These calendars may be found at the exits of the Church.

S.J.B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 20, 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: Our liturgy today centers on the coming of Jesus in the flesh; Today we meditate on the Savior's entrance into our world as a child, within a family, as part of a people with a rich history. Today we begin a week of wonder at the circumstances through which the Word became flesh.

Our first reading (2 Samuel 7:1-16) focuses on King David's concern that the place of God's dwelling is too humble – especially when compared to his royal palace. The prophet Nathan reveals to David that his concerns are not God's concern. It is God who does the protecting; it is God who builds and cares for David's "house". The second reading (Romans 16:25-27) is the conclusion of Paul's Epistle, wherein Paul gives praise to God for the mystery of Christ; it is that mystery that unlocks all of scripture and allows us to enter into the very life of God.

The gospels read on the Fourth Sunday in Advent in all three liturgical cycles stress the role of Mary – but most clearly in this cycle as we hear the gospel of the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38). Mary's surprise and confusion at the Archangel Gabriel's message are combined with her faith-filled openness to God's will. It is a sacred moment that has inspired Christians (and especially artists) throughout the centuries. Although she was young, poor and powerless, Mary "found favor" with God – a clear indication that once again God works in mysterious ways – almost always reversing human expectations.

SPECIAL SAINTS' DAYS THIS WEEK – ADVENT WEEK FOUR

Monday, December 21st – St. Peter Canisius

Born in Holland in 1521, Peter studied in Germany and was ordained a priest of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1546. He played a pivotal role in the Catholic Center Reformation and wrote many books defending and explaining the faith. His most well-known book was a popular catechism

Wednesday, December 23rd – St. John of Kanty

Born in a small town near Krakow (Poland) in 1390, John studied at the university where he was a brilliant student. He was later ordained a priest and lived for a time a very simple life. He eventually returned to the university as a professor of theology and later dean of the Philosophy department. He is a patron saint of Poland.

Saturday, December 26th – St. Stephen

The Christmas celebration continues with eight days following, known as the *octave*. Prayers are assigned to each of these days, the first of which honors Stephen, the first martyr. In the shadow of the *first-born* Son of God, we celebrate the victory of eternal life for the *first-born* martyr of the Christian faith. Looking at it from a human perspective, the celebration of martyrdom might seem out of place on the day after Christmas. But as the prayers and readings make clear, the Church understands Stephen's death as a celebration of birth. Stephen is radiant with the message of the Risen Lord and will not cease preaching it. The Incarnation is fulfilled in the Resurrection. We celebrate Stephen's martyrdom to remind us that with the birth of Jesus we enter into His life, death and resurrection.

A Christmas Prayer

A marvelous change was wrought in our nature at its restoration. This truth flashed on the world when from the old stock the new humanity was born, from mortality came immortality, from human nature the remedy was drawn for human nature's healing, from a race of sinners sprang a child who was innocent of sin. When your Word took to Himself this frail nature of ours, it was honored with the gift and we ourselves, sharing its wonderful destiny, were made eternal also.

-- Sixth Century
Author Unknown

Rest in Peace: Let us pray for Ann Marie Pandolfo who was buried from our church this past week. Our prayers go out to her family and friends.

Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation: The Archdiocese of New York has determined that this Sacrament should only be celebrated individually. Therefore we will no longer hold our Saturday afternoon Penance Service. For the foreseeable future, since we are unable to use confessionals, the Sacrament of Penance will be available by appointment only. Please call the rectory for further details.

Second Collection: In order to limit the interaction between ushers and parishioners at Mass, we will eliminate second collections until further notice. The ushers will pass the baskets only once – at the usual time. If a second collection has been scheduled, we ask envelope users to place both envelopes for that Sunday in the collection basket – and we ask everyone to be as generous as their means permit.

Practical Matters:

1. The **Weekly Collection** remains absolutely essential to our parish operations. Parishioners may contribute via WeShare (go to sjbyonkers.org –look for “online Donations” on the title page) or by bringing or mailing your contribution to our rectory office or dropping it into one of the baskets in church on Sunday.
2. Our parish office is open Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
3. Please consult our parish website (www.sjbyonkers.org) for updates on parish events and activities.

Important Reminder: We make every effort to sanitize our church before and after every Mass – and we offer sanitizers at our church entrances for those who don’t have their own. We ask all of our parishioners to wear masks while they are in church. This is a requirement by both the archdiocese of New York and New York State. Just as importantly it is an example of practical charity; even if we find wearing a mask difficult, our concern for the health and wellbeing of others should overcome our personal preferences. In addition, we ask everyone to observe “social distancing” both in where we sit in church and especially in coming to communion. What we want to avoid is making people feel anxious about coming to St. John’s for Mass.

Christmas Envelopes: For anyone who did not receive a Christmas envelope in the mail, they are available at the exits of the Church and in the sacristy. Christmas is traditionally a time for giving – because we are especially aware at this holy season of everything that God has given us through His Son. Your special sacrifice at this time of year does so much to insure that St. John’s will be able to meet the many needs of our people and continue to be such a special church in which to pray, to hear God’s word, and to receive the sacraments. God bless you for your goodness.

Christmas Traditions: *Santa Claus* – The origin of this popular Christmas tradition has little to do with the mythical “jolly old elf” of Clement Moore’s poem, “Twas the Night Before Christmas.” No, “Santa Claus” is rooted in a very real person who lived in Asia Minor in the 4th century; he was a bishop noted for his concern for the poor and his love for children. His name was St. Nicholas, and he became a model of generosity and charity; his feast day is December 6th and that day was often celebrated in parts of Europe by giving gifts to the poor. When some of these Europeans came to the new world they brought with them their devotion to “Santa Niklaus” which quickly became “Santa Claus”.

The Meaning of Christmas: For faithful Christians 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 the time when we retell some of our most cherished stories as a faith community. Not only do Christians meditate upon the marvelous infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke, 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 are highlighted at Christmas.