

Saint John the Baptist Parish

Pastor: Msgr. J. Christopher Maloney

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

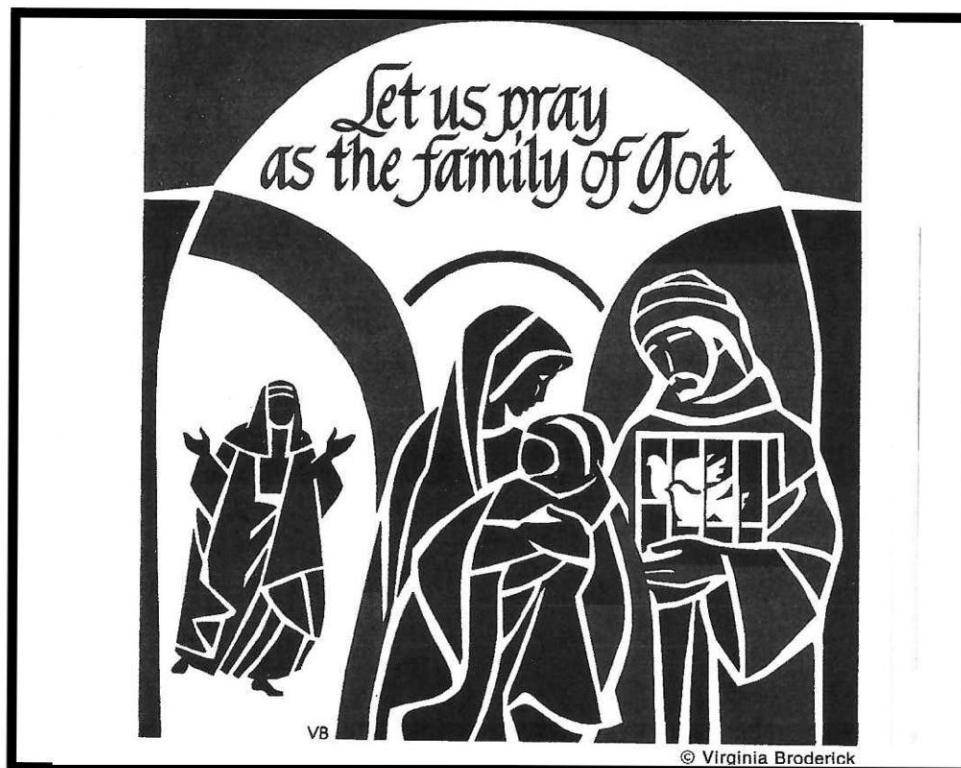
Associates: Deacon Martin J. Olivieri, Deacon Nicholas Ramoni

Retired Priest: Msgr. Walter A. Birkle

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December 27, 2020
Feast of the Holy Family

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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 26, 2020

Vigil: Feast of the Holy Family

5:00 p.m. Esterina and Giacomo Magretti

Sunday, December 27, 2020

Feast of the Holy Family

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

Monday, December 28, 2020

Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs

8:00 a.m. Frank Zito

12:00 noon Deceased Members of the
Iannace Family

Tuesday, December 29, 2020

Feast of St. Thomas Becket, Bishop and Martyr

8:00 a.m. Loretta Menchen

12:00 noon Sylvester M. Grillo

Wednesday, December 30, 2020

8:00 a.m. Cornelius Gleeson

12:00 noon Alice Ackerly

Thursday, December 31, 2020

Feast of St. Sylvester I, Pope

8:00 a.m. John A. White, Sr.

Thursday, December 31, 2020

Vigil: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

5:00 p.m. Tina Rinaldi

Friday, January 1, 2021

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

9:00 a.m. Andre A. Ljuljovic

Saturday, January 2, 2021

Feast of Sts. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen

8:30 a.m. John O'Connor

Saturday, January 2, 2021

Vigil: Epiphany of the Lord

5:00 p.m. Joan and Eddie Winters

Sunday, January 3, 2021

Epiphany of the Lord

8:30 a.m. Mass for the Parishioners of
St. John the Baptist

10:30 a.m. Julia and John Soracco

12:30 p.m. Salvatore Spataro

WEEKLY PARISH CALENDAR

Wednesday, December 30th

No Religious Education Program

Thursday, December 31st

Rectory Closes at 12:00 noon

Friday, January 1st

Rectory Closed

Masses for New Year's Day: The Feast of Mary, Mother of God, is a holy day of obligation. We will have one Vigil Mass on New Year's Eve, December 31st at 5:00 p.m.; we will have one Mass on Friday, January 1st at 9:00 a.m. There will be no evening Mass at St. John's on New Year's Day. **NB:** The rectory office will be closed at 12:00 noon on Thursday, December 31st; will remain closed on New Year's Day and will reopen on Monday, January 4th.

New Year's Resolution: One resolution we can all make is to try to participate more fully and more prayerfully in the Mass. Coming to Mass on Sunday is truly THE most important thing we do in the whole week. We should try to arrive early, spend some time in prayer before Mass then actively respond to the prayers (and in sung Mass, the hymns) of the Mass. Whenever possible there should be some time after Mass for a brief Thanksgiving. At the very least let us resolve never to arrive late for Mass or leave Mass early during 2021.

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.

S.J.B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 27, 2020

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY: Today's feast echoes the reality of the Incarnation: by becoming flesh, Jesus became part of a particular family in Nazareth as well as the universal family of humanity. The "holy family" is not insulated from suffering and sorrow. They are a real family who knows what it means to be persecuted and driven from their homeland but who trust in God nonetheless.

In today's gospel (Lk. 2:22-40) St. Luke's description of Jesus' presentation and Mary's ritual purification underscores the fidelity with which Joseph and Mary followed the demands of the Torah (see Ex. 13:2, 12; Lev.12:6-8) Simeon and Anna give the young couple a hint of the future when they recognize the long-awaited child of the promise. Despite this, however, Mary and Joseph simply return to Nazareth, where Jesus, under their care and tutelage, continued to grow "in size and strength, filled with wisdom."

CHRISTMAS WEEK -- SAINTS' DAYS

Monday, December 28th – Holy Innocents

Matthew's Gospel reports how King Herod, out of fear and jealousy of this newborn king, ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years old and under – (Mt. 2:16). Having been warned in a dream, Joseph took Mary and the Infant Jesus and fled to Egypt. Jesus escaped, but these innocent little ones became the victims of Herod's insane fear.

Tuesday, December 29th – St. Thomas Becket, Martyr

Born in London in 1118, Thomas became Lord Chancellor of England under King Henry II; Henry then persuaded the Pope to appoint Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury. The king hoped his friend would help him exercise control over the church, but Thomas defended the church and was murdered by agents of the king in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170.

Thursday, December 31st – St. Sylvester I, Pope

Sylvester was Pope in the early part of the 4th century – at a time when Constantine became the first Roman emperor to end the persecution of Christians. There was still a great deal of hostility and many heretical sects to be defended against. Sylvester was one of the first non-martyrs to be venerated as a saint.

Friday, January 1, 2021 – Feast of Mary, Mother of God

Following the ancient tradition of celebrating the octave (eighth day) of an event, we celebrate again the mystery of Jesus' birth, but this time with our eyes on Mary. This is actually the oldest feast of Mary in our Calendar. When we celebrate her as the Mother of God we are, at the same time, celebrating the divinity of Jesus, who was truly Man and truly God.

Today is the first day of the new calendar year – and it is appropriate that we begin the year by honoring Mary who was instrumental in bringing God's son into the world. Indeed, the celebration of Christ at Christmas is still very much the context of this special feast. The Preface of the Blessed Virgin Mary which is used at all Masses today speaks of the motherhood of Mary and refers to her son as the "light of the world" – a significant Christmas theme. When the Church's Council of Ephesus in 431 formally conferred the title of "Mother of God" on Mary, it was also clarifying the true nature of Jesus as truly God and truly man. In celebrating today's solemnity, we honor Mary and we acknowledge the true identity of her child. Our first reading today (Num. 6:22-27) is an ancient Jewish blessing traced back to Moses and Aaron – a threefold divine affirmation of highest regard. In our second reading, (Gal.4:4-7) St. Paul celebrates the relationship we enjoy with God by adoption. Thanks to the incarnation of God's Son "born of a woman", we are no longer slaves – we are God's heirs and we are able to call God "Abba" – Father! Finally in the gospel (Luke 2:16-21) the shepherds came to see the Christ Child and go away rejoicing and witnessing to others. In the center of this reading is the figure of Mary, thoughtful and prayerful. Throughout Luke's gospel Mary is a figure of hope – the one who brings about in her Son fulfillment of all the ancient prophecies, the true disciple who lives the good news that her son proclaims.

Saturday, January 2nd – St. Basil and St. Gregory Nazianzen

These two men – leaders of the so-called "Eastern" Church (an area whose center in the early church was Constantinople, instead of Rome) lived in the fourth century. They were bishops, theologians and outstanding leaders. Later they were named "doctors of the church" because of their contributions to Christology and the understanding of the Mystery of the Trinity.

Rest in Peace: Let us pray for Joseph Lionetti and Antonio Perruzza who were buried from our church this past week. Our prayers go out to their families 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.

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.

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.

Christmas Traditions: *The Crèche* - The most meaningful of all Christmas traditions is the nativity scene, for it brings to our mind Jesus – the center of Christmas and of our lives. Although there were representations of the Christmas crib in both the Holy Land and in Rome beginning in the fourth century, St. Francis of Assisi in the thirteenth century is usually credited with erecting the first complete manger scene. Francis saw in the Child Jesus a perfect model for us to imitate – and he wanted to make Jesus the center of Christmas celebration. So, near a church near Assisi, Francis set up the first manger with live animals and real people playing the roles of Mary, Joseph and the shepherds. The popularity of nativity scenes in churches and homes quickly spread – and reached artistic heights in the figures made by 18th century artisans in Naples, Italy.

A NEW YEAR’S PRAYER

*May God make your year a happy one!
Not by shielding you from all sorrows and pain,
But by strengthening you to bear it, as it comes;
Not by making your path easy,
But by making you sturdy to travel any path;
Not by taking hardships from you,
But by taking fear from your heart;
Not by granting you unbroken sunshine,
But by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows;
Not by making your life always pleasant;
But by showing you when people and their causes need you most,
and by making you anxious to be there to help.
God’s love, peace and joy to you
for the year ahead.
Amen.*