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Associates: Deacon Martin J. Olivieri, Deacon Nicholas Ramoni

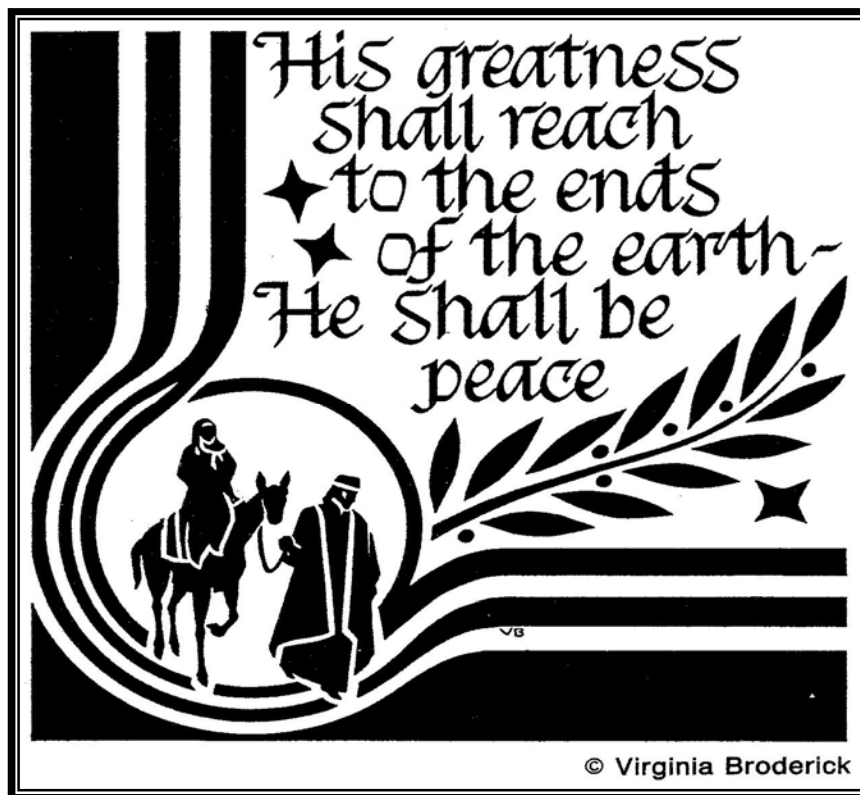
Retired Priest: Rev. Kenneth Ross; Msgr. Walter A. Birkle

Pastoral Associate: Sr. Mary Beth Read, O.S.U.

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Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 20, 2015

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Director
Sr. Mary Beth Read, O.S.U.

Director of Music & Organist
John Stufano

Masses
Saturday Vigil:
5:00 p.m.

Sunday:
8:00, 9:30,
11:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m.

Monday thru Friday:
8:00 a.m. & 12:00 Noon

Saturday:
8:00 a.m.

**Sacrament of
Penance**
Saturday:
4:00 - 4:45 p.m.

**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, 2015

Vigil: Fourth Sunday of Advent

5:00 p.m. For the Deceased Members of the
Moshier, Delaney and Meehan Families

Sunday, December 20, 2015

Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m. Edward Reilly

9:30 a.m. Rocco Cipriano

11:00 a.m. Mass for the Parishioners of
St. John the Baptist

12:30 p.m. Luise Lyddy

Monday, December 21, 2015

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

8:00 a.m. Rory O'Flaherty

12:00 noon Patrick Cunningham

Tuesday, December 22, 2015

8:00 a.m. Laura Buckley

12:00 noon Patricia Sullivan

Wednesday, December 23, 2015

Feast of St. John of Kanty, Priest

8:00 a.m. Eileen O'Sullivan

12:00 noon Elvira Lonardo and Family

Thursday, December 24, 2015

Christmas Eve

8:00 a.m. Anthony Sbordone

5:00 p.m. For the Deceased Members of the
Reamer, Lennon and Razza Families

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

Friday, December 25, 2015

Feast of The Nativity of the Lord

8:00 a.m. For the Deceased Members of the
Vanadia and Ludlow Families

9:30 a.m. George and Rose Milder and
John DiNome

11:00 a.m. For the Deceased Members of the
Naryniecki and Kozlowski Families

12:30 p.m. Rory O'Flaherty

Saturday, December 26, 2015

Vigil: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

5:00 p.m. Joseph Ferrari

Sunday, December 27, 2015

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

8:00 a.m. Marie and Harry Bova

9:30 a.m. For the Deceased Members of the
Barberi and Fortuna Families

11:00 a.m. For the Deceased Members of the
Naryniecki and Kozlowski Families

12:30 p.m. Mass for the Parishioners of
St. John the Baptist



Christmas Mass Schedule

*Thursday, December 24th –
Christmas Eve*

Vigil Mass – 5:00 p.m.

Midnight Mass – 12:00 a.m.

(Choral Prelude at 11:30 p.m.)

*Friday, December 25th –
Christmas Day*

8:00; 9:30; 11:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

There is no evening Mass on Christmas Day

WEEKLY PARISH CALENDAR

Sunday, December 20th

Children's Mass – 9:30 a.m. -- Church
Coffee and Craft Hour – following Mass – School
Cafeteria

Wednesday, December 23rd

No Senior Club

No R.E.

Friday, December 25th

Merry Christmas!

Rectory Office Closed

ALTAR SERVERS

Saturday, December 19th

5:00 p.m. – B. Collins and R. Murphy

Sunday, December 20th

8:00 a.m. – D. Browne and T. Browne
9:30 a.m. – A. Burke, K. Burke and N. Leo
11:00 a.m. – F. Albano and K. Gilligan
12:30 p.m. – N. Conlon and R. Tuffy

Saturday, December 26th

5:00 p.m. – C. Castaldi and N. DeMatteo

Sunday, December 27th

8:00 a.m. – C. Elias and R. Peter
9:30 a.m. – J. Corcoran and R. Corcoran
11:00 a.m. – E. Loughran and M. Loughran
12:30 p.m. – M. DiRosa and P. DiRosa



S.J.B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 20, 2015

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT: As we begin the final hours of preparation for in the season, we have one more opportunity to be made ready for the great solemnity of the birth of the Savior.

Like pieces of a puzzle finding their interlocking home, the elements of the story of the coming of the Messiah fit together perfectly now. As the prophet Micah predicts in today's first reading (5:1-4) Bethlehem shall be the place, the shepherds are the messengers of the story, and peace throughout the land in the hearts of people is the sign of His coming. In the second reading (Heb. 10:5-10), we are reminded that the coming of the Messiah brings with it a new way of being. In today's gospel (Lk. 1:39-45) Mary, the Mother of the coming Savior, is recognized and acknowledged by Elizabeth.

Peace and peace-making should be the focus of our prayer today, especially as the outside pressures of preparation for Christmas can rob us of our few peaceful moments.



SAINTS' DAYS – 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 Counter-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*

Sunday Report: Last weekend 1,415 parishioners attended Mass; our collection totaled \$9311.00; average contribution: \$6.58. Thank you for your continued financial support of St. John's and its many needs. Your generosity is essential and greatly appreciated.



Rest in Peace: Let us pray for Vincent L. Ricci and Marie Bolembach who were buried from our church this past week. Our prayers go out to their families and friends.

Latin Chant: During Advent at our sung Sunday Masses, we will use traditional Gregorian Chant whenever the Sanctus and Agnus Dei are sung. The chant melodies are very easy to sing and the words of these responses are so familiar in English that the Latin shouldn't pose a problem, even for someone who has never studied Latin. Moreover, it gives us an opportunity (however small) to recapture the long tradition of singing Gregorian Chant. The text of and music for these acclamations can be found in the Music Issue: Sanctus (#850); Agnus Dei (#854).



Special Mass

Special Children's Mass: This Sunday at our 9:30 a.m. Mass, we once again welcome younger boys and girls to a special Mass where they will be excused after the Opening Prayer and go to the Church Hall for a special Liturgy of the Word. After this Mass please join us for a Family Coffee and Craft Hour in the school cafeteria at which we will have refreshments and make crafts for the family.

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.



Daily Mass Alert: There will be no noon Mass on Thursday, December 24th (Christmas Eve) and no 8:00 a.m. 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 2016 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.

Second Collection: Next weekend we will take up our monthly special collection to support our school and maintain our school facilities. The school is not only used for our grammar school children, our CCD classes and our RCIA program, but for a variety of community and parish activities. It is vital that we keep our school facilities in excellent condition. We ask for a contribution of \$7.00 in this monthly collection and once again express our appreciation for your generosity.



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.

The Christmas mystery serves as a touchstone for deeply held values of the Catholic community. Angels sing to shepherds, and we hear a message of peace delivered to the poor of every time and place. Herod slaughters the innocents, and believers grieve over the senseless death of children. The Magi follow a star to seek a king, and the Church rejoices in the journey of faith and the progress of all human knowledge and science in the service of truth.



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”.



New Year's Day: 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. In recent times January 1st has been designated as a day of prayer for peace. This recommendation calls us as the New Year begins, to pray and work for peace in our homes, in our nation and in our world. This 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.

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