

**Peace
On Earth**



12/24 9:00 am For all the mothers in our parish

VIGIL FOR CHRISTMAS

4:00 pm William Ainsworth
(Wife)

6:00pm Chris Groener
(The family)

10:30pm Wally Regan
(The family)

CHRISTMAS DAY – NATIVITY OF THE LORD

12/25 8:00 am Giacomo, Vincenza, & Teresa
Sciarretta (Lucy Albano)

11:00am Michael & Margherite Catalanello
(Wife & mother)

12:30pm Giuseppe Giglio
(Wife)

Please Note: There is NO 6:00PM Mass today

12/26 9:00 am Angelo Palermo
(Wife, Connie)

12/27 9:00 am Dorothy O'Connor Kerin (2nd anniv.)
(The family)

12/28 9:00 am Douglas Card, Sr.
(Furgiuele family)

12/29 9:00 am Thank you to Fr. Joseph Palacino
(John Dillane)

12/30 9:00 am Lee R. Giannattasio
(Capone family)

12/31 9:00 am Rose Miserendino
(M/M Robert LeBrun)

VIGIL FOR SUNDAY

4:00 pm Steve Chocus
(family)

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

01/01 8:00 am Giacomo, Vincenza & Antonio
Sciarretta (Lucy Albano)

9:15 am James Genovese
(Hall family)

11:00 am Juozas (Joseph) Migonis

6:00 pm William McBrinn
(TOTAL)

MISSION STATEMENT

We the people of St. Jerome Parish, a Roman Catholic community, proclaim our belief in the message and mission of Jesus Christ. As disciples of Jesus we are called to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to work for its values in the local community and beyond. We are committed to: worship, religious education, shared faith and service. We welcome all people with respect, acceptance and support

PLEASE NOTE: ADORATION AND SILENT PRAYER IS EVERY DAY FROM 4:00-5:00PM, IN THE CHURCH. COME AND SPEND TIME ALONE WITH THE LORD.

On the first Wednesday of each month, immediately following the 9:00 AM Mass, there will be an anointing of the sick in the sanctuary. Anyone with an ongoing medical condition or who is seriously ill, anticipating a medical procedure or operation, is welcome to come



CHRISTMAS

PLEASE NOTE: THE OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED DECEMBER 23 THROUGH JANUARY 2. WE WILL REOPEN JANUARY 3RD.

FR. DAVID, FR. JOE, FR. MIKE AND THE PARISH STAFF WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL OUR PARISHIONERS A HAPPY AND HEALTHY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR.



REACH

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our REACH families!

Our next REACH class for grades K-6 will be January 8th.

Family Gospel Connection

At Christmas we celebrate the great mystery that God became flesh and dwelt among us. We call this mystery the *Incarnation* (the word means “to take on flesh”), and it changes everything. Today’s Gospel reminds us that we can also look upon the Nativity from God’s perspective to better appreciate the significance of the Incarnation. The mystery we proclaim at Christmas is that God, the very God who created all things from nothing and who is light itself, took on our humanity in order to transform us. Through his birth among us, we have seen the face of God and have become nothing less than God’s own children. At this awesome mystery, we adore.

Gather as a family around your Nativity set. Keep this image before you and talk about how familiar we are with this scene. Invite members of the family to recall the details of Jesus’ birth that we hear in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Observe that the Gospel of John invites us to consider Jesus’ birth from a different perspective. Read together today’s Gospel, John 1:1-14.

John’s Gospel reminds us that the image we see in our Nativity set is a most remarkable sight. God made himself at home with us by taking on flesh and becoming a human person. We call this mystery the

Incarnation. What are some of the things that John's Gospel says happened for us because Jesus came to dwell among us? (Light overcame darkness; we see God's glory in Jesus; we became children of God.) Together thank God for this mystery of the Incarnation and the salvation that we received because Jesus was born among us. Sign together a Christmas hymn, such as "O Come, All Ye Faithful" or "silent Night."



TOTAL

TOTAL will meet again on January 8th. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and safe and Happy New Year.

Emmaus planning has begun. Juniors and Seniors are welcome to attend our retreat the weekend of February 10, 11 and 12. Watch your email for an application.



"Our most heartfelt thanks go out to all the parishioners who helped make our GIVING TREE project a huge success. 115 of Julie's Kids will receive shirts and jeans. 55 CCA Children will receive 3 gifts each because of your generosity. A very special thanks to all who wrote out tags, sorted, counted, bagged and delivered the gifts to CCA. We know there will be many delighted children because you gave your time to make it all work.

WOMEN'S LITERACY PROGRAM SEEKS VOLUNTEER TUTORS

Mercy Learning Center, located at 637 Park Avenue, Bridgeport, continues to look for volunteers to teach English as a Second Language (ESL), Reading and Math to women in its tutoring program. Tutors meet with their students at the Center twice weekly for two hours each session through May. A one-day training session is provided for all new tutors; teaching experience is not necessary. Training sessions will take place on Tues., Jan. 10, or Wed., Feb. 1, from 9:00am to 3:00pm. (Lunch will be provided). For more information or to register for a training session at the Center, please contact Diane Holmes, Tutor Coordinator at 203-334-6699, or email at diane.holmes@snet.net.

RANDOM THOUGHTS

One of my deepest convictions is that the Secret of Life involves looking below the surface of things to see their foundation and ground. The physical eye, sees the surface but it is the eye of the heart that see that which is most real.

To understand Christmas you have to look deeply. Let me give you two examples. Oddly two of these examples involve Santa Claus.

The first example is given by G.K. Chesterton who claims that as he grew older Santa Claus became even more important. Here is his explanation: "As a child I was faced with a phenomenon requiring explanation. I hung up, at the end of my bed, an empty stocking, which in the morning, became a full stocking. I had done nothing to produce the things that filled it. I had not even been good - far from it! And the explanation was that a certain being whom people called Santa Claus was benevolently disposed towards me. And as I say, I believe it still. I have merely extended the idea.

Then I only wondered who put the toys in the stocking. Now I wonder who put the stocking by the bed, and the bed in the room, and the room in the house, and the house on the planet, and the great planet in the void."

"Once I only thanked Santa Claus for the few dolls and crackers. Now I thank him for stars and street faces and wine and the great sea."

G.K. Chesterton had learned to see Christmas not just with the physical eye but with the eye of the heart.

Or take, as my second example, the Pulitzer Prize winning writer, Annie Dillard. She too remembers Santa Claus and what he taught her about looking at Christmas deeply. She says, "one cold Christmas eve I was up unnaturally late because we had all gone out to dinner. I had taken off my fancy winter coat and was standing on the heat register to bake my shoe soles and warm my bare legs. There was a commotion at the door. It opened and cold wind blew around my dress. Everyone was telling me, "look who's here, look who's here." I looked. It was Santa Claus, whom I never ever wanted to meet. Santa Claus was looming at the doorway and looking around for me. My mother's voice was thrilled. Look who's here. I ran upstairs, like everyone in his right mind. I feared Santa Claus, thinking he was God. He knew when you had been bad or good and I had been bad."

Later Annie discovers the identity of this Santa Claus, a loving neighbor lady who later, while trying to teach her about magnifying glasses accidentally burns Annie's hand. Once more, she runs away.

Now, all grown up, she says this: "Even now I wonder if I meet God, will he take and hold my bare hand in His and focus he eye on my palm and kindle that spot and let me burn? But no, it is I who misunderstood everything and let everybody down. I am sorry that I ran from you. I am still running, running from that knowledge, that eye, that love from which there is no refuge. For you meant only love, and I felt only fear. So once, in Israel, love came to us incarnate, stood in the doorway between two worlds, and we were all afraid."