



Because of uncertainty of assignments in the light of the reducing number of priests, the daily Mass schedule is contracting. 2010 Weekday Masses will be offered Monday through Friday at 6:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. The Mass of the day on Saturdays will be offered at 9:00 a.m. Funeral Masses will be scheduled at 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. and Noon. Saturday weddings, not yet scheduled, will be scheduled at 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

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Has death taken someone away from you?

On Monday 4 January at 2:30 p.m. there will be occasion for anyone suffering from a recent death of a family member or friend to get together in the Rectory Conference Room to share the bereavement experience. In this we hope to see that "friendship doubles our joy and divides our grief." Mrs. Lea Laccadito will be the coordinator in these difficult post-holiday months.

This 2:30 p.m. Monday meeting is for starters and may be scheduled differently in the future for the convenience of participants.

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Come to a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend and recharge your marriage. The next Weekend is February 12 – 14. **For more information go to: www.wwmearchny.org or call 718-317-5881, or 1-877-NYS-WWME.**

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Readings for January 3, 2010
Next Sunday: Is 60:1-6/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12

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Scripture/Faith Sharing
Sessions are on Mondays after the 9 A.M. Mass in the Forum.

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Fallen Heroes

Let us pray for the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Air Personnel, National Guard, and all others in the Department of Defense who have sacrificed their lives in the theatres of the War on Terror. They have given themselves for our National Security and the freedom of our way of life.

Merry Christmas

SATURDAY VIGIL, DECEMBER 26, 2009

5:00 PM John P. McGoorty
7:00 PM Agnes Messina

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2009

6:30 AM People of Holy Child
8:00 AM Edkins & Armstrong Families
9:30 AM Herbert Sanbeg
11:00 AM D'Elia, Marcellino & Molinari Families
12:30 PM Joseph L. Otero
5:30 PM Stephanie Hare

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2009

6:30 AM Ellen Tankowitz
9:00 AM Omerza Family
12:10 PM Salvatore, Carmela & Anthony Anastasi

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2009

6:30 AM Salvatore & Connie DeChristino
9:00 AM Jennifer Marie Parisi
12:10 PM Camille Tortorella

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2009

6:30 AM Marya Scotto
9:00 AM Denise Ingrassia
12:10 PM Anthony Setteducate & Family

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2009

6:30 AM For the Intention of Linda Joyce (Living)
9:00 AM For the Intention of
Maureen & Eugene Hourican (Living)
12:10 PM Randy Randazzo

**SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2009**

5:00 PM Vigil Mass

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1, 2010

8:00 AM Ann Deahl
10:00 AM Edward A. MacDonald
12:10 PM Constantine DeMairo

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2, 2010

9:00 AM Philip Cascio

SATURDAY VIGIL, JANUARY 2, 2010

5:00 PM Sandra Capone DeRosa & Domenico DeRosa
7:00 PM Josephine Lippolis

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WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THIS WEEK'S DONATIONS:



Bread & Wine – In Memory of
Jennifer Marie Parisi
Offered by Mom, Dad & Sister, Michele



Sanctuary Lamp – In Memory of
Marion Del Guadio
Offered by the Ahern Family



Adoration Chapel Candles – In Memory of
Tripo & McNeil Families
Offered by Patricia & Carmine Tripo



Deck The Halls!

It is hoped that you will enjoy the natural beauty of the evergreens that have been transported from out of doors to adorn our worship space. The installation is the work of Green Side Up Nursery. In contrast with the rest of nature that lies dormant at this time, we find in them the perduring promise of everlasting life. The cut evergreens brought indoors as trees and fashioned into wreaths express our wish to appropriate the everlasting life that the Lord Jesus came to give to us.



BAPTISM

ARRANGEMENTS FOR BAPTISM

To preserve a more devout and reverent celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism, only six families will be accommodated each week. Please make arrangements with the Church at least a month beforehand



Get Well Soon!

Joseph Castronuovo
Edward Simmonds
Melissa Marino
Phyllis Malozzi
John Ippoliti
Linda Cardinale
Therese Gregory
Jason D'Angelo
Anthony Parise
Roseann Esposito
Bill Magrino, Sr.
James Naimoli

Teresa Morandi
Anthony Dimesa
Helen Del Zoppo
Aloysius Mazzella
George Cesurano
Emma Cate DiMola
Stephanie Traicoff
Alyssa Trivalone
Billy Sherwood, Jr.
Anthony Sutera
Helen Vigilante

Paul Morandi
Gerri Brady
Pat Lavanco
Lauren Verdi
Erika Balk
Mary Anthony
Jim Ursillo
Mary Caleca
Claire Geary
Roger Sledz
Nico Di Bono



NEW YEAR'S SCHEDULE:

MASSES:

NEW YEAR'S EVE
Thursday, December 31st, 2009
5:00 p.m.

NEW YEAR'S DAY,
Friday, January 1, 2010
8:00 a.m. Low Mass, 10 a.m. & 12:10 p.m.

Epiphany Lessons
&
Christmas Carols

Come and hear the readings, listen to the choir and join together in singing the carols.

Sunday 3 January
2:30 p.m.

p.s. Christmastide goes out next Sunday.

*May the blessing
of the Holy Child
increase you
in wisdom and grace
throughout
the Year of Our Lord
2010*

Father Travers



In observance of New Year's the Rectory Office will be closed, Friday, January 1st. The office will re-open on Saturday, January 2nd at 9:00 a.m.

Christian Twist to Christmas Decorations (excerpts)

by Fr. William Saunders reprinted with permission Catholic Herald – Arlington, Va. – 12/11/03

Some of our Christian Christmas decorations originate from pagan customs. However, with the evangelization of the pagan peoples by the missionaries, these decorations were “baptized,” giving them a new Christian meaning. So let’s consider the five common Christmas decorations.

The first four plants are evergreens, mistletoe, holly, ivy and laurel. Whether in a pagan culture or Christian culture, since the most ancient times, evergreens have symbolized eternity and everlasting life. For Christians in particular, the evergreens have the basic symbolism that our Lord is eternal and divine, and that He want us to share His everlasting life in the kingdom of Heaven.

The **mistletoe** was regarded as a magical healing plant by the pagan Druids. It was even called “All heal.” The Christians adapted this plant, and now it is a symbol of Christ, the divine healer of all nations.

While not known for sure, some sources hold that the pagan Romans sent **holly** branches as a sign of good wishes at the time of the new year festivals. The early Christians easily saw a more profound symbolism: the prickly, sharp points of the leaves symbolize the crown of thorns in particular and even the nails of the crucifixion, and the red berries symbolize the blood that flowed from our Lord’s wounds. The holly decoration at Christmas, thereby, reminds us that Christ was born to suffer and die for our sins, which would be washed away with His precious blood. For this reason, in Norway and Sweden, the holly is called “Christ-thorn.”

In the carol, *The Holly and the Ivy*, two other symbols of holly are noted: first, the holly blossom is white: “as the lily flower,” reminding us of the purity of Jesus born of His mother Mary; and second, the holly bark, “as bitter as any gall,” reminds us of the drink offered our Lord as He hung upon the cross. Ivy grows clinging to something, like a wall or a trellis. The vines are rather fragile and can break easily. For Christians, the **ivy** reminds us that we were weakened due to original sin and could not save ourselves. Christ came to save us. We must faithfully cling to our Lord, relying on His strength to be holy and to attain salvation.

Roman emperors used **laurel** leaves to form a wreath to be worn on the head as a sign of victory. Such laurel crowns were also awarded to military leaders who were victorious in battle and to athletes who had won contests.

At Christmas time, laurel reminds us of Christ’s victory over sin and death, and our call to holiness. We hope to attain the crown of victory over sin and reign with our Lord in heaven. St. Paul taught, “You know that while all the runners in the stadium take part in the race, the award goes to one man. In that case, run so as to win! Athletes deny themselves all sorts of things. They do this to win a crown of leaves that withers, but we a crown that is imperishable” (1 Cor 9:24-25).

The poinsettia, a native plant of Central America, is very popular. The bright red leaves symbolize the burning, divine love of our Redeemer. The shape of the cluster of leaves and the contrast of the red with the green also remind one of the star of Bethlehem that shone so brightly the night our Savior was born and then guided the Magi to visit Him.

These decorations, while perhaps originating in pagan times, have a much more beautiful meaning for Christians. As we decorate our homes this year, let us look upon them as reminders of the real meaning of Christmas.

Season's Greetings

Properly speaking, the time to pass the greeting "*Merry Christmas*" begins on Christmas Day, which is the first of the 12 days of Christmas. The last of the 12 is January the 5th, eve of the Epiphany of the Lord on 6 January.

Contained within the 12 days is the octave during which each day is an extension of Christmas Day itself. The eighth day, the 1st of January, is observed as the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and is also appointed as World Day of Prayer for Peace. The greeting, "*Happy New Year*" has to do only with the secular calendar. Needless to say, that greeting gives no social offence except, perhaps, to the incorrigibly pessimistic.

We can and should say "*Merry Christmas*" during those 12 days. But the Christmas Season extends even beyond that to the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord which this year falls on 10 January. So, "*Merry Christmas*" may be said up until almost mid-month January!

Passing the greeting "*Merry Christmas*" during our time of celebration during the weeks after 25 December will cause folks to question us – at which time the meaning and the time frame of our Catholic celebrations may be made clear by our educational explanation in charity.

Cultivating this practice would be more profitable than complaining that merchants, clerks and commentators are not wishing us a Merry Christmas during the many weeks *before* 25 December.

That said, let me say ...

Merry Christmas!
Father Travers