

MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

Sunday, December 31, 2017
The Holy Family Of
Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

**4:00 PM
8:00 AM**

Gathering: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing BB 92
Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 98)

*All the ends of the earth have seen
the power of God. (2x)*

Preparation O Little Town Of Bethlehem BB 99

Mass Parts Mass of Christ the Savior

Communion: Ubi Caritas BB 480
Christ, Be Our Light BB 596

Recessional: Angels We Have Heard On High
BB 80

10:00 AM

Gathering: Joy To The World BB 7
Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 98)

*All the ends of the earth have seen
the power of God. (2x)*

Preparation O Little Town Of Bethlehem BB 99
Where Love Is Found BB 668

Mass Parts Mass of Joy and Peace

Communion: What Child Is This BB 104
Song Of The Stable (Choir)

Recessional: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing BB 92



St. Luke the Evangelist is now on Facebook! Go to www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/ or **St. Luke the Evangelist Parish – Newton/Plaistow** and give us a Like! Please invite fellow parishioners and friends to do the same.

✠ PARISH TITHING ✠

Our Parish needs to take in \$7,000.00 each week in order to make ends meet. Thank you for your generosity to our parish! Your weekly contribution helps ensure that the parish remains a vibrant community. Please remember to submit your weekly gift even if you will be away. We depend upon your support!

**COLLECTION AMOUNTS FOR
DECEMBER 24 and 25, 2017
WILL APPEAR IN NEXT WEEK'S BULLETIN**

PARISH GIVING

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish has engaged *Parish Giving* to provide parishioners with an opportunity to make your offertory and other contributions through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Parish Giving is a simple, secure, and convenient way to manage your stewardship without weekly envelopes and without worries. It allows you to select contribution amounts and special collections right from your own computer or smart phone. You can be a good steward for the Parish even when you are away from the area on a weekend. Parish Giving allows you to print out a report detailing your contributions for the year. This program is available to parishioners at no cost. Log on to the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish website at <http://stlukenh.org>, click on the Parish Giving logo, and follow the easy registration instructions.

UPCOMING SECOND & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

December 31, 2017	No Second Collection
January 1, 2018	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
January 7, 2018	Property Management
January 14, 2018	Seminarian Fund



Out of respect, please remember to silence or turn off your cell phones during Mass. Thank you!

Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on Income

Annual Income	5% Commitment annually/weekly	3% Commitment annually/weekly
\$100,000	\$5,000/\$100	\$3,000/\$60
\$75,000	\$3,750/\$75	\$2,250/\$45
\$60,000	\$3,000/\$60	\$1,800/\$36
\$50,000	\$2,500/\$50	\$1,500/\$30
\$40,000	\$2,000/\$40	\$1,200/\$24
\$30,000	\$1,500/\$30	\$900/\$18
\$25,000	\$1,250/\$25	\$750/\$15
\$15,000	\$750/\$15	\$450/\$9

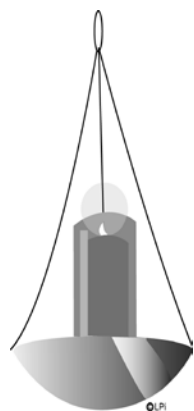
Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on a Percentage Increase

Your Current Offertory Contribution	25% Increase	30% Increase	40% Increase
\$75.00	\$93.75	\$97.50	\$105.00
\$50.00	\$62.50	\$65.00	\$70.00
\$40.00	\$50.00	\$52.00	\$56.00
\$35.00	\$43.75	\$45.50	\$49.00
\$30.00	\$37.50	\$39.00	\$42.00
\$25.00	\$31.25	\$32.50	\$35.00
\$20.00	\$25.00	\$26.00	\$28.00
\$15.00	\$18.75	\$19.50	\$21.00
\$10.00	\$12.50	\$13.00	\$14.00
\$5.00	\$6.25	\$6.50	\$7.00

✠ PARISH NEWS ✠

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

If you would like an "end of year" financial statement of your contributions to the parish for 2017, please call the Parish Office at 382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**



The Sanctuary Candle in Holy Angels Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Carl Vincent Guilbert, Dr. Julie Guilbert Maher and Ronald R. Guilbert** by their family

The Sanctuary Candle in Mary, Mother of the Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Henry Shea** by Susan and Mick Swanwick



THE ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT AND CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH

Our Parish community continues with our Capital Campaign to replace roofs on the Plaistow campus, and to raise funds to complete other projects in Newton and in Plaistow. Our three-year goal is to raise \$250,000.00. Besides the Plaistow roofs, we would like to accomplish the following projects: Plaistow church access ramp, Plaistow office building & convent window replacement, Newton rectory interior flooring, Newton church lighting and painting, Newton rectory painting as funds become available.

How can you help?

Any contribution is welcome.

Make checks payable to

Saint Luke the Evangelist - Capital Campaign.

AMAZON SMILE

AmazonSmile.com is the same market platform as Amazon.com, but with the added benefit of allowing customers to donate 0.5% of the price of items purchased to a charitable organization. Please register today to start shopping and donating at www.amazonsmile.com. For questions, please call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. Be sure to choose:

St Luke the Evangelist Parish, Plaistow.

From the Pastor's Desk

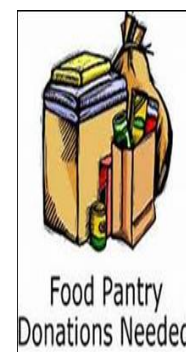


HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSED

Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is now closed until Spring 2018. This decision comes as result of the real dangers of snow and ice in the Cemetery and the costs to Parishioners to inter during the winter months. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions. Fr. Albert

ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST FOOD PANTRY

Food or care items are always needed – donations can be dropped off at Church or are welcome at the Parish Office during regular business hours. Cash donations for food are always welcome – make checks payable to **St. Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry**. All donations to the Food Pantry go toward helping the needy of our communities.



FOOD PANTRY HOURS

Wednesday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

Thursday from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Friday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

For more information, call the St. Luke Food Pantry at **603-819-4949**.

WHILE AWAY THIS WINTER...

We appreciate all of you who remember to send in your Parish Offertory during the Winter even when on vacation or visiting other parishes. Thank you for remembering that our expenses also continue through the Winter months. We invite others to consider doing the same before or even after you return home.

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH

✠ **WEEKLY CALENDAR** ✠

Sunday, December 31

10:00 AM NO Religious Education – Pre-K to 8 *Plaistow*
 11:00 AM NO RCIA *Plaistow*

Monday, January 1
 PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

Tuesday, January 2

7:00 PM Knights of Columbus *Plaistow*

Wednesday, January 3

Holy Angels Church Open All Day For Prayer

7:00 PM Reader Scripture Share *Plaistow*

Thursday, January 4

8:30 AM Adoration Begins *Newton*
 9:00 AM Intercessory Prayer *Plaistow*
 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting *Plaistow*
 8:30 PM Adoration Ends *Newton*

Saturday, January 6

12:00 PM Clothing Drive *Plaistow*
 3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*

Sunday, January 7

10:00 AM Religious Education – Pre-K to 8 *Plaistow*
 11:00 AM RCIA *Plaistow*
 11:00 AM Baptism Catechesis *Plaistow*
 12:00 PM Clothing Drive *Plaistow*

✠ **MASS INTENTIONS** ✠

Saturday, December 30 ~ Vigil / The Holy Family Of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Col 3:12-21; Lk 2:22-40
 4:00 PM People of the Parish
Plaistow

Sunday, December 31 ~ The Holy Family Of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Col 3:12-21; Lk 2:22-40
 8:00 AM Deb Caron by Bob and Alice Litwinovich
Newton
 10:00 AM Robert and Rachael Huberdeau
 by Paula and Stephen Fournier
Plaistow
Nm 6:22-27; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21 (Vigil)
 4:00 PM Helen Elizabeth DeRoche and Lewis Gould, Sr.
 by the DeRoche and Gould families
Plaistow

Monday, January 1 ~ Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Nm 6:22-27; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21
 9:00 AM Lea Roberts by her husband, Paul
Newton

Tuesday, January 2 ~ Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors Of The Church

1 Jn 2:22-28; Jn 1:19-28
 8:00 AM People of the Parish
Plaistow

Wednesday, January 3 ~ The Most Holy Name of Jesus

1 Jn 2:29-3:6; Jn 1:29-34
 6:30 PM People of the Parish
Plaistow

Thursday, January 4 ~ Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious

1 Jn 3:7-10; Jn 1:35-42
 8:00 AM People of the Parish
Newton

Friday, January 5 ~ John Neumann, Bishop

1 Jn 3:11-21; Jn 1:43-51
 No Mass

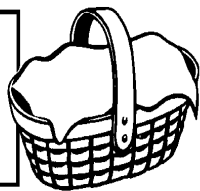
Saturday, January 6 ~ André Bessette, Religious

1 Jn 5:5-13; Mk 1:7-11 (Day)
Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12 (Vigil)
 4:00 PM June and Bud Wizst by Tina Bonnell & family
Plaistow

Sunday, January 7 ~ The Epiphany of the Lord

Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12
 8:00 AM Joseph and Isabelle Krafton by their family
Newton
 10:00 AM Bill Lueders (14th Anniversary)
 by his wife, Carole Lueders
Plaistow

**St. Vincent
 de Paul
 Society**



The generosity of your contributions have allowed us to help out those in need with rent, medical, and heating oil assistance. The St. Vincent de Paul Society is so grateful and blessed.

Our next meeting on **Wednesday, January 17 at 7:00 PM**. We meet downstairs in the Church Hall in Plaistow. **New members are always welcome!**

If you seek assistance or need information about the St. Vincent de Paul Society, call 603-382-8324 x315.

**Hear, OH LORD, and answer me
 for I am poor and needy.**

PRAYER LINE

St. Luke's offers a prayer line as a resource for those seeking prayer assistance. To submit your prayer request please call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 314 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

✠ FAITH FORMATION & PARISH INFORMATION ✠

ADULT CONFIRMATION

Are you an adult who has been Baptized and received Eucharist, but has not celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation? The adult Confirmation process is an opportunity to complete the Sacraments of Initiation. If you would like to prepare for Confirmation, or if you have questions, call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

RCIA

The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. **RCIA** is intended to serve:

- Those not Baptized who would like to learn more about the Catholic religion.
- Those Baptized in another religion who think they might like to become Catholic.
- Those Baptized Catholic but have not been raised in the Faith.

If you or someone you know is interested in inquiring about becoming a member of the Roman Catholic Church, call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

PARENTS BAPTISM PREPARATION SESSION

The monthly preparation session for infant Baptism will be held after the 10:00 AM Liturgy on **Sunday, January 7, 2018** in the Parish Office living room. All parents planning to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism are welcome. Families wishing to celebrate Baptism in the Church must be registered (according to Church Canon Law) and practicing (attending Sunday Mass) for 3 full months before a Baptism can be scheduled. The use of the envelope system is always optional; however, it does guarantee a manner of accountability. For most families, the Pastor or staff can easily verify attendance during these three months. Church Canon Law also regulates baptismal sponsors (godparents). Sponsors must be at least 16, fully initiated (having received Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation), and be practicing Catholics living Christian lives consistent with the Church's teaching. Please see Fr. Albert with questions.

IMPORTANT ADORATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Thank you to the many parishioners who have dedicated an hour or two each week for ten years. Due to the continued difficulty of covering the hours of Eucharistic Adoration of Our Lord in Plaistow, we are unable to move forward in continuing Adoration on Wednesdays. **The last day for Adoration in Plaistow was on Wednesday, December 13.**

The church will continue to be open all day on Wednesdays for people to stop by and pray before the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.

Eucharistic Adoration of Our Lord in Newton on Thursdays will continue from 8:30 AM to 8:30 PM.

CONTEMPLATIVE WEEKENDS **Our Lady of Hope House of Prayer**

Our Lady of Hope House of Prayer invites you to come away for awhile and BE STILL! These weekends are precious times of silence to be alone with God. Cost is \$140 for the weekend. The retreat weekend dates are:

January 19-21, 2018

February 16-18, 2018

For more information, or to register, call Sisters Rita Pay or Suzanne Rivard, p.m. at 603-878-2346.

MARRIED COUPLES DAY OF ENRICHMENT

January 13, 2018

St. Peter Church, Auturn, NH

\$30 per couple includes all day seminar and lunch

Space is limited to first 25 couples – register early and reserve your spot! For more information, contact Scott or Martha at ScottnMartha@comcast.net or register online at www.VitaNova.org.

ST. LUKE'S WEBSITE!
<http://stlukenh.org>

✠ PARISH DIRECTORY ✠

Parish Office	382-8324
Parish Prayer Line	382-8324 x 314
St. Vincent de Paul Society	382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry	819-4949
Preschool	382-9783
Presentation of Mary Convent	382-2744

Fr. Albert Tremblay	fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net
Cathy Smith	csmith@stluketheevangelist.net
Joyce Szczapa	jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
Jackie Tremblay	jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
Thomas Kondel	tkondel@stluketheevangelist.net
Val Barczak	music@stluketheevangelist.net
Youth Ministry	youth@stluketheevangelist.net
Parish Council	parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net

✠ Parish News ~ Youth News ~ Around The Diocese ✠

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

In observance of the New Year's holiday, the Parish Office will be closed on:

Monday, January 1

**ANNUAL VITA NOVA
MEN'S RETREAT**

Come to the well.....and thirst no more

January 5-7, 2018

The Retreat will be led by Fr. Chris Martel beginning on Friday evening and concluding with Sunday lunch

For more information or to register, go to:

www.vitanova.org

IT'S TIME TO REGISTER FOR CAMP!

What's the best thing about camp? For kids, it's all the awesome activities they can do and the friends they make. For parents, it's seeing their kids gain confidence, get unplugged, and blossom under the careful guidance of great counselors.

At Camp Bernadette for girls and Camp Fatima for boys, we offer it all: Incredible outdoor activities such as canoeing, fishing, archery and rock climbing; Arts and crafts to spark imagination and creativity; Camp life designed to create a sense of belonging and foster friendships among campers from all across the country; Positive, energetic, experienced counselors; Gorgeous lakefront New Hampshire locations.

Both Camps are now accepting registrations for the 2018 summer season for 2-week overnight sessions for children ages 6-15.

To register, or for more information, call 603-364-5851.



SURVEY FOR YOUTH

The Vatican recently launched a website and survey for youth and young adults related to the 15th Ordinary Synod of Bishops on *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment*. You can find the survey on the website at <https://survey-synod2018.glauco.it/limesurvey>.

Responses go directly and confidentially to the Vatican Synod Office. Any person between the ages of 16 and 29 is invited to participate. **The deadline for the survey is December 31, 2017.**

Kimberly's 12th Annual Holiday Give Away!!!

It's time again to clean your closets and start fresh!!! We all have clothes taking up space in our homes while there are people on the streets who are cold. Because of this, Kimberly Andrade is holding her 12th Annual Clothing/Coat/Canned Food Drive at **St. Luke the Evangelist Parish** in Plaistow, NH from **12:00 to 4:00 PM on January 6 & 7, 2018**. Items that will be collected include, but are not limited to: winter jackets, new and used clothing from any season and any decade, non-perishable food items, business clothing, blankets, sheets, hats, gloves, and unused socks and underwear (*preferably in their packages*). **All clothing must be cleaned prior to donation.** Clothing received will be donated to organizations such as Ruth's House, Emmaus House, and Catie's Closet. Non-perishable food items will be brought to St. Luke's Food Pantry. If there are any questions, or individuals interested in volunteering, please contact Kimberly at kimberly-andrade@comcast.net. Thank you so much for your generosity.

WINTER WEATHER CLOSINGS

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Office, Holy Angels Cemetery Office, Saint Luke Food Pantry and the Parish Liturgical schedule complies with the longstanding inclement weather policy of Saint Luke Religious Education Program and Holy Angels Pre-School-Kindergarten:

If the Timberlane and/or Sanborn regional school districts close because of inclement weather, ALL Parish Offices and Parish programs will be closed or suspended. All activities by any Parish or non-Parish groups will be cancelled for that day/evening on both campuses.

In the event of a weather related closing, the scheduled weekday Liturgy will not be held and the intention (if any) will be moved to a conveniently available date. **Sunday (or Saturday evening) liturgies can never be cancelled, but all are advised to use prudence when deciding to travel to Church during winter storms.**

GIVING TREES



Thanks to all who took ornaments from the Giving Tree this year. You have helped to make the Christmas season brighter for children of the community and for many people who are struggling to make ends meet. Your generosity is truly appreciated!

WELCOME!!!!

**WOMEN AND MEN
PRAYER BREAKFAST**



“WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?”

(Matthew 16:15)

Please join us for a reflection and talk by Sr. Deborah, osf, on Saturday, January 27, at 9 a.m., with a snow date of February 3, in the Church Hall. We will come together for breakfast, a talk, discussion, and prayer. We will close our sharing and prayer at 12 noon. If you are interested in attending, please e-mail the office at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net by **Monday, January 22**, or call the office at 382-8324.

(There will be a free will offering that will be donated to The Little Sisters of Saint Francis.)

The Gospel at Home

Christmas and Epiphany Gospels: Luke 2:1-14 and Matthew 2:1-12

Christmas celebrates God becoming one of us and one with us. Jesus comes as an infant, placed in the care of a struggling but loving family. The Solemnity of the Epiphany is considered by Eastern Catholic Churches to be far more important than Christmas, the day celebrating Jesus' birth. On Epiphany, a word that means "manifestation," Jesus was revealed as far more than the king of the Jews. Matthew's story of the visit of the Magi from the East makes it clear that Jesus came for all people who seek God.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): Even though your child is very young, he or she is now very aware that Christmas celebrates Jesus' birth. Make sure you visit the Nativity scene in your parish church during the time between Christmas and the Epiphany. Let your young child tell you about all the figures in the scene and what he or she knows about each. It is best to visit the Nativity scene when you can spend some time there with your child.

Promise (Grades K-1): Make a ceremony of setting up the simple Nativity scene made from this week's lesson. Don't forget to add the Magi from last week's lesson. Before you set it up, share the Christmas story that is on the back of the booklet or tell the story in your own words. Ask your child to tell the story that was shared by the cat who lived in the stable on the first Christmas night.

Good News (Grades 2-3): The lesson for the week covers both Christmas and the Solemnity of the Epiphany. Your family will be celebrating all the joys and wonders of the Christmas

season. In addition to family attendance at Christmas Mass and Mass on the Feast of the Holy Family (the Sunday after Christmas), set aside some time to talk about what Jesus' coming means to your family. Sing together some of your favorite Christmas carols. Every carol helps us remember the great mystery of the Incarnation.

Venture (Grades 4-6): Because Christmas can be busy and even a bit stressful, it may be difficult to find time to share as a family. Make an extra effort to talk about the Christmas story as a family. Be sure your child understands that Jesus Christ is the whole reason there is a Christmas feast. Talk about the journey to Bethlehem, the vision of the angels, the shepherds at the manger, the great star, and the visit of the Magi. Ask your child to share the story of "The Three Skaters" with the family. The story expresses the meaning of the Solemnity of the Epiphany.

Visions (Grades 7-8): Your teen learned how to "be Christmas" throughout the Christmas break and into 2018 by being a prophet, an angel, a shepherd, a wise person, and a disciple. Ask your son or daughter to share the commitments he or she made in class. Talk about ways each of the members of your family can "be Christmas" for others.

Pray Together

Pick one of the feast days during the Christmas season to attend Mass together as a family. Use the opportunity to pay a visit to the Nativity scene at your parish church and pray that you will always bring the Good News to others and reveal the love God has for all people.

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH



Teach Your Family

Good and gracious God,
who filled Simeon with the Holy Spirit,
we bless you for revealing to us the Light
of your salvation.

Fill your family with grace
and, like Mary and Joseph,
may our love for you remain strong
so that, filled with the light of faith,
your family may grow in obedience
to your Word.

Bless and protect all families who seek
your embrace.

Open their eyes to see the glory of your Son.
You have promised the Church unity in faith
and love;

as you fulfilled your promises by being part
of the Holy Family.

Be present in our midst
and make us the instruments by which you
heal the world.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, December 31, 2017

Wisdom



Today's Readings: Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14 or Genesis 15:1–6; 21:1–3; Psalm 128:1–2, 3, 4–5 or Psalm 105:1–2, 3–4, 6–7, 8–9; Colossians 3:12–21 or Hebrews 11:8, 11–12, 17–19; Luke 2:22–40. In today's Gospel, Simeon announces that Jesus is God's salvation for the world, and that many will oppose him. He even tells Mary that she, too, would be pierced, foreshadowing the sorrow that overcomes her during the Passion. On this feast of the Holy Family, the Church is asked to ponder the mystery of salvation. Jesus, who is the Light of the World, will suffer so that all can share in salvation. In this Gospel, we hear again of the fulfillment of God's promise that the prophets foretold.

While today's Gospel is certainly joyful, it also reminds families that suffering is part of the journey. Following the Gospel and working to reveal God's love and mercy in our world are often met with persecution and ridicule. The Holy Family teaches us that faith in God is necessary to endure suffering and to share the light of Christ.

As you discern the ways in which your family lives out the Gospel, take time to identify wisdom figures in your community and family. Listen to their stories and learn the ways their faith grew in the midst of joy and suffering. What can these wisdom figures teach you? Pray that your family remain strong in faith and trust in God's mercy.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, January 1

Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Today is the octave of Christmas and the oldest Marian celebration in the Roman Catholic Church. The readings help us reflect on Mary's role in the Incarnation. Mary teaches us what it means to keep and contemplate the mystery of Christ within our heart. Because of her yes, we are no longer slaves but heirs to the Kingdom. Spend time in active, imaginative prayer today and dialogue with Mary to learn how to contemplate Jesus. *Today's Readings: Numbers 6:22–27; Psalm 67:2–3, 5, 6, 8; Galatians 4:4–7, Luke 2:16–21.*

Tuesday, January 2

Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzen

Do you know when you fell in love with Christ? The First Reading tells us to keep within us what we heard from the beginning. What did you hear and when? Like Basil and Gregory, we rely on God's grace to help us witness to the truth of Christ and remain faithful. If the Gospel has taken root in our heart, then when it is proclaimed, we are roused to confess that Jesus is Lord. *Today's Readings: 1 John 2:22–28; Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4; John 1:19–28.*

Wednesday, January 3

Behold

We hear the second line of today's Gospel just before we process to Communion. The words are a beautiful command to gaze upon Jesus and recognize him. John the Baptist knows that Jesus is the Messiah and wants others to encounter Jesus. Do you "behold" Christ in your daily life? Gather some friends and family to go Christmas caroling tonight to a nursing home or soup kitchen to help others behold the joy of the Incarnation. *Today's Readings: 1 John 2:29–3:6; Psalm 98:1, 3cd–4, 5–6; John 1:29–34.*

Thursday, January 4

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

"Come and see" is the message found in today's Gospel. Jesus invited Andrew and the other disciple to follow him. Like the two disciples, we too are invited to follow and learn from the Teacher. St. Elizabeth heard this call and responded by opening schools and orphanages to aid her community. Christ has shown us how to live, but do we have the courage to follow him? Consider researching the Sisters of Charity today and preparing gift baskets for the poor in your community. *Today's Readings: 1 John 3:7–10; Psalm 98:1, 7–8, 9; John 1:35–42.*

Friday, January 5

St. John Neumann

The First Letter of John continues to preach about God's love and the need to love one another. In the Gospel, new disciples continue to respond to the invitation to "come and see." In Baptism, we made our initial response. This response requires the type of love and action the saint we celebrate today personified. The love of Christ leads us to share the Good News. Reach out to the unloved in your community and see the face of Christ. *Today's Readings: 1 John 3:11–21; Psalm 100:1b–2, 3, 4, 5; John 1:43–51.*

Saturday, January 6

Faith

In the First Reading, John turns his attention from the theme of love to the topic of faith. He tells his listeners that Jesus is truly God's Son, to which the Spirit, water (Baptism), and blood (Eucharist) continue to testify. When we look at this in light of the entire Epistle, we learn that those who have faith in God's Son, have eternal life. The Gospel affirms that Jesus is God's Son and so like Jesus, our Baptism calls us to proclaim God's Kingdom. Find a hymn in the parish's hymnal that speaks to the mission of Baptism and faith. Use this for prayer today. *Today's Readings: 1 John 5:5–13; Psalm 147:12–13, 14–15, 19–20; Mark 1:7–11 or Luke 3:23–38.*





Bringing Home the Word

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph | December 31, 2017

Love, Patience, Forgiveness, Gratitude

By Mary Katharine Deeley

When we were married, my husband and I gradually grew in our relationship. Four of the characteristics St. Paul mentions in today’s reading from Colossians were particularly helpful for us: patience, forgiveness, love, and gratitude. They helped us overcome the challenges of building a life together, and each of our children gave us ample opportunity to practice them over and over again.

By God’s grace and with hard work, we’ve been together more than thirty

years. Sometimes I think, “How did we do it?” We did it together, and we did it with God, and I’m so grateful for my husband and for two wonderful daughters who come back home at Christmas and call just to say hello.

So it makes sense that we dedicate one Sunday to the Holy Family. We don’t know a lot about Jesus’ childhood, but today’s Gospel tells us that, as unusual as the circumstances were, Mary and Joseph worked with each other and with God to do the right thing for Jesus. They followed the prescribed law, they listened carefully to the prophecies and rejoicing of Anna and Simeon, and they raised God’s Son to adulthood—when he showed the world who he was.

Even after that, Mary was with him, loving and grieving for him even at the end. What parent would have done less? The Holy Family undoubtedly practiced love, patience, forgiveness, and gratitude with one another, even as the Lord taught us to do. We honor them by doing the same. +

Sunday Readings

**Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14 or
Genesis 15:1–6; 21:1–3**

My son, take care of your father when he is old; grieve him not as long as he lives.

**Colossians 3:12–21,
Colossians 3:12–17, or
Hebrews 11:8, 11–12, 17–19**

In word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Lk 2:22–40 or Lk 2:22, 39–40

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom.

*A day to honor
a special family*

A Word From Pope Francis

It is necessary to reaffirm the conviction that every family is the principal setting for the growth of each individual, since it is through the family that human beings become open to life and the natural need for relationships with others. Over and over again we see that family bonds are essential for the stability of relationships in society, for the work of education, and for integral human development, for they are inspired by love, responsible intergenerational solidarity and mutual trust.

—Address, Food and Agricultural Organization, June 20, 2013



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Does my family know how to encounter trying times gracefully?
- What attitudes or actions allowed the Holy Family to have peace amidst the crosses?



Honoring Our Parents

By Kathy Coffey

“Honor your father and your mother...” (Exodus 20:12).

What nugget of wisdom does the Fourth Commandment teach us? Today some parents and children are estranged; others wish their parents were alive to honor them. But the following story shows how delightfully some children still honor their parents.

Jan celebrated her sixtieth birthday with friends, far from her children living in five different states. “No gifts,” she had told her kids. “All I need are memories of you.” Then the postal service delivered a special box. Within it were sixty slips of paper on which Jan’s children had written sixty special memories. She read and cherished each one, mixing laughter and tears.

Why honor our parents? In the world of the Bible and in good homes today, parents provide images of trust, hope, and serenity that enable the young to face formidable obstacles. To their children they convey the message, spoken or unspoken, “You are loved. You are wonderful.”

All humans are constantly making the passage from the known to the unknown. Parents who have endured disappointment, even tragedy, can help their offspring travel that passage with dignity. “We’ve made mistakes,” they say. “We’ve lost jobs, health, or our dearest loves. But it didn’t kill us. Something in people endures, continues to trust, and moves forward in confidence.”

Related Roles

Furthermore, parents are memory keepers. When their children hit snags, they remind them what glorious people they are. And if humor, perspective, or care packages from home can lighten the load, they contribute those, too.

The wisest parents honor their children in turn. They count on their children’s good sense to pilot them through difficulties, so they restrain the “free advice.” They clarify the boundaries of their role: providing safe harbors, but holding the ropes loosely. They encourage children to explore God’s beautiful world, not burdening them with unnecessary anxiety. They recognize the arenas where the young have more expertise, inviting them to shine there.

Many parents struggle with handing on their faith to a generation that seems unenthusiastic at best. There, too, honor comes in. Realizing that the gift of faith, no matter how important, cannot be coerced or controlled, parents can follow the advice of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Agonizing over her sons’ shenanigans, she once said, “What’s a mother to do but pray and dote, pray and dote?”

If the roles of parent and child seem too idealized, we need only look to Jesus and his mother for role models. (Unfortunately, Scripture records little of Jesus’ relationship with Joseph.)

Learning From Jesus and Mary

The wedding at Cana provides the perfect example of their honoring each other. Mary wisely tells Jesus of the need: “They have no wine.” Then she backs off. She trusts his instincts to resolve the crisis.

Despite his reservations (“My hour has not yet come”), Jesus in turn honors his mother. Whether he was responding to her, or to the couple’s dire need, we may never know. Despite the exhaustion and pain of his passion, Jesus continues to honor Mary, making sure even from the cross that his beloved disciple would continue to care for her (John 19:26-27).

In Jesus’ day, women with no son or husband for protection often became desperate beggars. Knowing that sad reality, Jesus makes sure that John will take her into his own home. St. Ignatius imagined that the first appearance of Jesus after the Resurrection, although not recorded in Scripture, must surely have been to Mary.

As parents and children who follow Jesus, we are called to do likewise. +

PRAYER

Lord, Mary and Joseph helped you to grow in love and wisdom.

Surround me with loving and caring people to help me to be a wise, loving, and caring person.

From Joyful Meditations for Every Day of Advent and the 12 Days of Christmas,

Rev. Warren J. Savage and
Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

January 1–6

Mon. Solemnity of Mary:
Nm 6:22–27 / Gal 4:4–7 / Lk 2:16–21

Tue. Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory
Nazianzen: 1 Jn 2:22–28 / Jn 1:19–28

Wed. Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 2:29–3:6 / Jn 1:29–34

Thu. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton:
1 Jn 3:7–10 / Jn 1:35–42

Fri. St. John Neumann:
1 Jn 3:11–21 / Jn 1:43–51

Sat. Christmas Weekday: 1 Jn 5:5–13 /
Mk 1:7–11 or Lk 3:23–38
or Lk 3:23, 31–34, 36, 38

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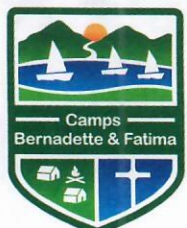
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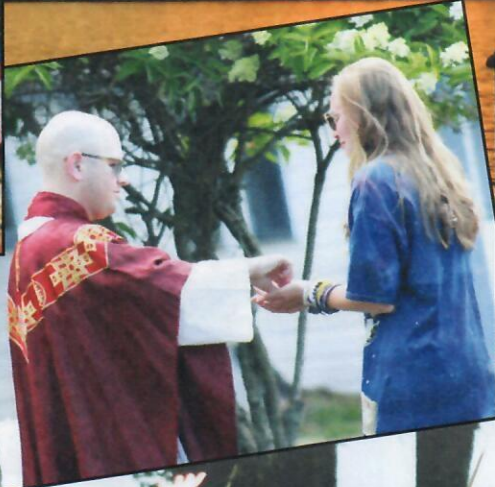
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