

**LITURGIES FOR THE WEEK OF THE
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT AND
THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY
& JOSEPH**

December 26 - 31, 2023

Tuesday, 12/26 † Saint Stephan, The First Martyr

8am: Aiden

9am: S.S. Harry Owen by Michael & Cindy Owen

**Wednesday, 12/27 † Saint John, Apostle and
Evangelist**

9am: A.S.- Annabeth Duttlinger (Birthday) by Jan
Duttlinger

6pm: Ella

Thursday, 12/28 † The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

8am: Addie

9am: A.S. Roland Nielsen by Marita Cervenka

**Friday, 12/29 † Fifth Day within the Octave of the
Nativity of the Lord**

8am: Patty Haugh (Birthday) by Joan Haugh Beatty &
Ed

9am: A.S. Roland Nielsen by Marita Cervenka

**Saturday, 12/30 † Sixth Day within the Octave of
the Nativity of the Lord**

8:30am: Thelma (Birthday)

**Saturday, 12/30 † Vigil: The Holy Family of Jesus,
Mary & Joseph**

4:30am: Dorothea & John Boilini by Daughter
Donna Rowe

**Sunday, 12/31 † The Holy Family of Jesus,
Mary & Joseph**

7:30am: Tom

9am: A. S. Parishioners

11am: Parishioners

A Special thank You to the Parish Life & Liturgy & Worship Committees for all of the time spent on setting-up, taking down and re-setting up the church and altar for all the December activities. You are appreciated!!

A Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated by The Most Rev. Bishop Robert J. McClory, Bishop of Gary honoring the Presence of the Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus, East Chicago, IN will be held on Sunday, January 7th, 2024 at 2 pm at the Carmelite Monastery at 1628 Ridge Road, Munster, IN
The Carmelite Sisters will be leaving East Chicago after serving thousands of children and youth for over 110 years! Please join us for this Spiritual Farewell to the Carmelite Sisters!

†† R. I. P. ††
Regina Howard

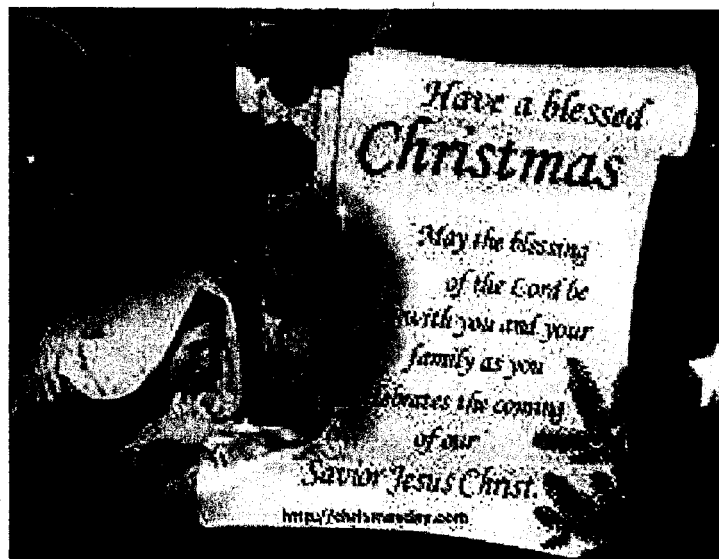
This week at SS. C & M & All Saints

Thurs., Dec. 28 – 2:15pm - Legion of Mary

Thurs., Dec. 28– 4pm - Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Sun., Dec.31 – 9:30am –NO Religious Education

Saint Vincent DePaul would sincerely like to thank all the wonderful families who purchased gifts for the folks on our gift tree. You made their Christmas!!



Imagine how Mary felt at the birth of Jesus: excited, awed, frightened. Deep faith was her light in the darkness, for Jesus was born during the night of the year when darkness is the longest. **Your gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul brought light into the darkness surrounding the heart of those living in poverty bringing them the real, lasting, and deep joy of Christmas.**

Dear Padre

December 24, 2023

The Bible talks about Jesus' brothers and sisters. Is there scriptural proof that Jesus was Mary's only child?

The Catholic Church's position is that Mary had only one child; her son called Jesus. Yet there are at least ten scriptural references to "the brothers of Jesus" or to his "sisters" (see Matthew 13:55-56, Mark 6:3, and Luke 8:19-21).

The difficulty is that the meaning of the term "brothers" (translated from the Greek *adelphos*) isn't restricted to the sharing of a parent. On the contrary, it may not only refer to other relatives, including cousins, but also to close relationships, such as disciples. This is not unlike how we might refer to "brothers in arms" as those who fought in a war together, or a religious order of brothers or sisters.

Recall, too, that Jesus and his disciples spoke Aramaic, and there is no equivalent for the meaning of "cousins" as we know it in that language. Instead, the word for brother or sister was used when referring to cousins. Thus, when St. Jerome (circa 340-420) translated the Bible from Hebrew into Church Latin, he considered "the brothers of Jesus" as cousins, not siblings. After all, it would have been the rightful responsibility of these male relatives of Jesus to take care of Mary when Jesus died. Yet Jesus entrusts his mother to the care of his beloved disciple John (John 19:26). ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org

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"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" – Luke 1:28

After Jesus, we look to Mary as an ideal steward. Her entire life was lived in obedience to God's call. Mary teaches us to live with joy for all we have been given. Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, Mary reflects the light of Christ. Like Mary, we are called to reflect Christ's light to the world through our gratitude and generosity.

Good News!

December 24, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Advent (B)

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 /

Romans 16:25-27 / Luke 1:26-38

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

The old axiom goes: if you want to make God laugh, tell God your plans. All too often the vision God has for us takes us in quite varying directions. The stories of King David and of Mary echo such realities. David, who wanted to build a temple for the Ark of the Covenant so God would not need to live in a tent, had his plans nixed, only to be reminded that it is *God* who does the building in life and not David. And Mary, who found herself confused over how she might conceive, was asked to simply trust and place her life in the hands of God. Both said "yes."

There are always times when the unfolding path of God for us may unsettle us: the complexities of immigrants at our doorstep, the changing demographics of our cities, the need to close or merge parishes, the upheavals of our personal lives. We find ourselves asking why without receiving any answers. Each time there is no answer, consider it an invitation to trust in a power greater than ourselves.

Not all rhythms of life are necessarily caused by the hand of God, but then one can never be sure. Who is to say where and how and through whom God works? Christmas comes as a reminder that God's love and presence still unfolds in varied and new ways, always giving birth again and again to the divine made flesh in our lives. The mystery of the Incarnation points to this truth: God is present in all of life. ●

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**IN LOVING MEMORY
CHRISTMAS FLOWERS 2023
SS. Cyril & Methodius**

INTENTIONS:

BY:

Deceased of the LaBuda Family,	Larry LaBuda
Deceased members of the Doctor & Rippy Families	Mark & Shirley Rippy
Deceased of Jachim & James Family	Sharon James
Deceased members of Zysk, Kida & Eby Families	Donna Kida
Russell, Fran & Mary Vizza	Geri Vizza
Pete & Leona Bau, Norman & Mary Schrombeck, Kate & Leona Bau, Mollie & Silas Richie	Sharon & Larry Richie
Deceased members of Bowman & Kaminski Families	Don & Mary Bowman
Cyril, Alice & Chris Dolezal	Ken & Sue Dolezal
Neftalie Avla, Sr., Selso & Juanita Guetierrez, Tom Rowe	Guadalupe Alva
Deceased of the Skronski & Lippelt Families	Frank & Evelyn Skronski
Deceased of Bobcek & Schacht Family	Kevin & Betty Bobcek
Deceased of Scherer, Haugh, Fary & Beatty Families	Joan & Ed Beatty
Deceased of the Mosher & Materna Families	Shirley Mosher
Venture Pacilio	Wife, Marilyn
Deceased of the Wick & Vogel families	Priscilla Vogel
Deceased of the Origer Family	M/M John Origer
Joseph M. Healy	Mary Healy
Deceased of the Vessely Family	Laura Vessely
James Bachert & Richard & Mary Roy	Sue Bachert
Deceased of the Trzop & Dziura Families	Christopher & Violetta Trzop
Deceased members of the Brunicon & Haklin Families	Jason & Joan Brunicon
Deceased of the Janik family	Marie Kocsak
Deceased of the Housinger Family	Amy Housinger
Deceased members of the Koc Family	Jolanta & Jesse Koc
Deceased members of the Skronski Family	Norbert Skronski
Deceased of the Fula family	Eugen & Maria Fula
Deceased of the Heidel & Liskey Families	Pat Liskey
Juanita Harris	Barb Williams
Deceased of the Sample & Good Families	Kyle & Jessica
Deceased of the Dziura Family	M/M Eugeniusz Dziura

IN LOVING MEMORY
CHRISTMAS FLOWERS 2023
All Saints

INTENTIONS:

BY:

Stacy Deem, Frank & Alice Deem, Christin & Sarah Roper

M/M James Roper

Deceased of the Daly Family

Mary Daly

Deceased of the Stalbaum Family

David Stalbaum

Cushing Family Members

Gerald Cushing

Jim & Arlene Nevroske, Al & Pat Goin, Father Spranger

Kevin & Pat Goin

Harry Owen, Arson Bybee, Jerry Wade

Michael & Cindy Owen

Henry Jelinek

Wife, Judy

Deceased of the Wojdula & Miskowicz Families

Joann & Steve Scamerhorn

James Scutchfield

Wife, Alexia

John Bobek Family, Joseph Pojeta Family

John & Vera Bobek

Linda Potempa, Patty Blazczyk, Lillian Potempa,
Lottie Johnson

Chester & Peggy Potempa

Don Sickler, Dawn & Michael Simpkins & Diane Fox

Joan Sickler

Rita Oliver

Husband, Jim

Torsell, Wooster & McCullez Family

M/M Tom Torsell

Michael Schumacher

Wife, Ruth

Cyril & Dorothy Rozhon, Eugene & Jane Garner

Larry & Penny Rozhon

Deceased of the Potempa Family

Tom Potempa

Deceased of the Lukac Family

John & Claudia Lukac

Lorraine McMahan

Larry McMahan

Mozzi, Brown, & Rocha Families, All Souls

Allen & Soleda Brown

Tom, Pat & Steve Spenner, Joan Danford, Larry Stonebraker,
Jean Russell

Barbara Hawkins

Linda Potempa, Lillian Potempa, Lottie Johnson

Phil Potempa

A Good Christmas Story

On Christmas Eve, in homes everywhere, there is quiet excitement, festive feeling and the warmth this holiday reminds me of a Christmas tale I love to relate each year. It's a true story, even though it might sound unbelievable. And it gives proof that miracles do happen.

A long time ago there was a group of young people who decided to spread some Christmas cheer. They had discovered that there were several children who would be spending Christmas in a community hospital nearby. So they bought nice presents, wrapped them, and armed with guitars, sweet voices and one of the friends dressed as Santa Clause—dropped in at the hospital unexpectedly.

**The children were overjoyed at seeing Santa, and by the time the group was handing out presents and singing Christmas Carols, there were tears everyone's eyes. From then on, it was decided they would play Santa every year.

The next year, the ladies at the hospital were included in their rounds, and by the third year it was expanded to embrace some poor children in the fourth year however, after all the rounds were made, Santa looked into his bag to discover there were still a few extra toys left. So the friends mulled- it over, trying to figure out what to do. Somebody mentioned a few squatters' shacks nearby in which a couple of desperate poor families lived.

So the group decided to go there. Thinking there were perhaps three families at most. But as they drove over the crest of the hill into this lonely area—it was around midnight now— the shocked group saw a large number standing at the side of the street.

There were children, more than thirty of them. Behind them were not three shacks, but rows and rows of them. As the car drew to a stop, the children came running out, shouting with joy. It turned out they had been waiting patiently all night for Santa Clause. Somebody— no one could remember had told them he was coming, although our Santa had decided to go there moments before.

Everyone was stunned, except for Santa. He was in a panic. He knew he didn't have enough toys for all the children. Not wanting to disappoint the children, he decided to give whatever toys he had to the smallest. When the presents ran out, he'd just have to explain to the bigger kids happened.

So moments later he found himself perched on top of the car's hood these thirty or more sparkling clean children, dressed in their best clothes, lined up in order—according to height, with the smallest first. Waiting for their moment with him. As each anxious child approached, Santa dipped into his bag, his heart heavy with dread, hoping to find at least one more toy. And, by some miracle, he found a toy each time he dipped into the bag. And as the last of the children received their present, Santa looked into his deflated bag, it was toyless. It was empty— empty as it should have been 24 children ago.

With relief, he let out a hearty HO-HO-HO and bade the kids farewell. But as he was about to enter the car, (the reindeer apparently had the day off) he heard a child scream, *Santa, Santa, Wait!!* And out of the bushes rushed little children, a boy and a girl. They had been asleep. Santa's heart sank. This time he knew for sure he had no more toys. The bag was empty. But as the out of breath kids approached, he summoned up some courage and dipped in to the bag once more. And, lo and behold, there were two more presents in there.

The group of friends, now all grown adults, still talk about this miracle on Christmas morning. They still have no explanation for it, other than that it happened. How do I know so much about this? Well I was the one playing Santa.

Raynier Maharaj, Toronto, Canada.

Christmas Wreath History

The wreath has an important place in the history of Christmas. According to historians, wreaths have had a special place in pre-Christian era itself. It is said that in Eastern Europe, people used to illuminate wreaths made of evergreen leaves in winters, with the belief that it would bring spring and sunshine. Though the exact origin of a Christmas wreath is not recorded, it is said that they originated before Christianity itself. Since its origin, the Christmas wreath has gone through a multitude of changes, but has retained its significance. It is used to symbolize the festive spirit of Christmas as well as an embellishment for the homes and premises. Go through the following lines to know all about the history and origin of Christmas wreath.

History & Origin Of Christmas Wreath

In the ancient period, wreaths were handmade by people. The wreaths symbolized pride and victory. Evergreen twigs, branches and flowers were used to make handmade wreaths, in the ancient times. They were used during auspicious occasions like weddings. Historical records suggest that it was sometime around 776 BC, when Greeks started using laurel wreaths as crowns, to award athletes who finished first in Olympics. Another record suggests that wreaths were worn by military heroes and kings in ancient Rome. Wreaths were used as embellishments by women, and were sometime complemented with jewels. The wreaths were also used as fashion accessory by women belonging to the elite class.

The tradition of hanging wreath during Christmas is essentially a Catholic ritual. This is done during the Christmas season, traditionally known as Advent. The traditional Advent Christmas wreath has four candles in the circle and one candle in the middle. The candles are either white or colorful. If the candles are colorful, three would be violet in color and one would be a rose colored candle. Traditionally, the Christmas wreaths were made of evergreen leaves, which still symbolize the permanence of life. A traditional wreath is a circle, which means that there is no beginning or end and that God is eternal.

The candles, placed in the Christmas wreath, have their own significance. According to the tradition, one candle is lit in each day of the holiday season and the middle candle is lit on the Christmas Eve. This symbolizes the birth of infant Jesus. Prayers are usually chanted, when the candles are lit. The candles are lit just before people sit to have dinner. The decoration used for the wreath used to be nuts, seedpods, pinecones that were considered to be symbols of resurrection and permanence of life. Although Christmas wreath has now become more of a decorative wreath, the significance and importance of the wreath remains undeterred and shall remain so until eternity.

KNEELING SANTA PRAYER

The sleigh was all packed, the reindeer were fed,
But Santa still knelt by the side of his bed,
“Dear Father, ” he prayed, “Be with me tonight.
There’s much work to do and my schedule is tight.
My sack will hold toys to grant all kids’ wishes.
The supply will be endless like the loaves and the
fishes.

I can do all these things, Lord, only through You.
I just need your blessing, then it’s easy to do.
I do this only to honor the birth of the One,
That was sent to redeem us, Your most Holy Son.
So to all of my friends, lest Your glory I rob,
Please, Lord, remind them who gave me this job.”