

**REJOICE! A SAVIOR IS BORN!**

(Is. 62:1-5; Ps. 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25)  
 {Matt. 1:1-25; Is. 9:1-6; Ps. 96:1-3, 11-13; Titus 2:11-14; Luke  
 2:1-14} [Is. 52:7-10; Ps. 98: 1-6; Heb. 1:1-6; John 1:1-18]

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearings good news...” A Savior is born to us! Surely, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.” Indeed, a light has come to shine upon us who have been hit hard by the tough economic times. His light has come to shine upon those who mourn and are in pain because of the loss of their loved one. “For the Lord comforts His people, He redeems Jerusalem! He redeems you and me from our slavery to sin. He redeems you and me from the grips of fear. He lets His light shine upon us and lightens our burden.

At Christmas, God becomes man so that as man He may understand our pains and feel with us. Therefore, come let us adore Him! Let us on this Christmas day celebrate with joy the Word of God, which has taken human flesh and lives among us. Let us celebrate Christ Who is born so that we might have life, and have it in its fullness. The Lord knows how much we need Him in this desperate and tough time. He is aware of our yearnings. He comes to identify with us. “In times past, He spoke to our ancestors through prophets, but in our days, He speaks to us through His only Son,” Jesus Christ, Who has come to live amongst us. In other words, God, in His Son, Jesus, has taken human flesh and lived amongst us so that He might recreate us. God, at Christmas comes to live within and around us. Come let us adore Him!

Come let us adore Him, Jesus Christ, Who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God, but rather emptied Himself and took on human form (Phil. 2:6-7). Jesus humbled himself so that we may have light. Thus, at Christmas, the Mother Church proclaims the words of Isaiah: “The people who walked in darkness, have seen a great light.” The Incarnation of God has turned the night of our darkness, our incomprehensible night, into Christmas. The terrible night of our anxiety and helplessness is now “a holy night.” Christmas has brought abundant joy and great rejoicing to us all. Christmas has smashed the yoke that weigh us down. In our gloom and doom, a light has shone. God has returned! Let us rejoice!

At Christmas, the Word made flesh teaches us humility. He teaches you and me, “With God nothing is impossible.” He teaches us that, like Mary, we should have faith and depend solely on God’s love. He will never disappoint those who put their trust in Him. Like Mary, His demands to you may seem outrageous. The long wait for its fulfillment might be frustrating. But, like her, you have to trust and say “Yes” always to God’s will. He will never let you down!

Surely, times are tough, things are hard, but the Lord comes to say to you: “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy...” Rejoice, because you have Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior. Rejoice, for He has come to set you free. Rejoice, because He, the Lord has pitched His tent in you. Rejoice! Jesus, our Christmas is here! Emmanuel, God is indeed with us!

*Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP*

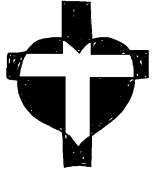

**PARISH NEWS**

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

The Pastor and the Staff heartily wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a blessed, happy, peaceful and healthy New Year in 2012.

**WE APPRECIATE THE GENEROSITY OF OUR PARISHIONERS:**

The Social Ministry Committee has worked tirelessly to collect, organize, and facilitate the distribution of the gifts and food donated by our Parish in the spirit of Christmas - each of the charities we support, Immaculate Conception’s Needy Families (referred to us by our own Sr. Esther), Rosalie Hall in the Bronx (a supportive residence for young expectant mothers), and Richmond Community Services (for people with severe developmental disabilities), were very appreciative as they left with vans filled to overflowing. The Committee stands in awe of the outpouring of generosity they have witnessed. Multiple gifts from individuals or families are commonplace. The food baskets we distribute, through your kindness, to needy families in the area were plentifully. The Pastor and the Social Ministry Committee want to thank you for your generous response to all our requests to help support the less fortunate among us. God bless your generous hearts!



The **Bread & Wine, Altar Candles, and Sanctuary Lamp** for this week have been donated by the Brusco and Nanoia families.

If you or someone you know needs information on the Catholic Faith or have not been confirmed, please call the Religious Education Office for information on the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (R.C.I.A.) in our parish.



**Religious Education Classes will not be held this Tuesday, December 27<sup>th</sup>, and Wednesday, December 28<sup>th</sup>.** Classes resume the following week on Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**All Catholic children attending public schools should enroll in a religious education program.** Please call (476-6676) for more information.

The women of the **ROSARY ALTAR SOCIETY** will attend the 8:30 a.m. Mass next Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup>. Their first meeting of the New Year will be held on Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 7:30 p.m. in the McManus Parish Center. All women of the Parish are invited.



## NATIVITY OF THE LORD



### NEW YEAR'S DAY Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup>

Blessed Virgin Mary  
Mother of God

We like to begin all things with prayer, especially this New Year's Day next Sunday. As a parish family we will honor our Blessed Mother, Mary, and also pray for peace in our world. The times for New Year's Day Masses are as follows:

- Saturday, Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> 5 p.m. Anticipated Mass
- Sunday, Jan. 1 8:30 a.m., 10 a.m. & 11:30 a.m.
- There will be no 5 p.m. Mass on New Year's Day.

Our First FAMILY MASS in the New Year will be celebrated on Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, (the Feast of Epiphany), at the 10 a.m. Mass. Every member of the family is encouraged to attend Mass and to sit and worship together as a family. Mass will be followed by "Family Breakfast" at the McManus Parish Center. It is also a "Bring-a-Friend" Sunday in our parish, thus you are expected to invite your friends and family members to attend any of the Masses that Sunday. All are welcome!



## MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

"All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God." Celebrate the joy of HIS birth by giving each other the gift of a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. The next Weekend is February 11 – 12. For more information, call (877) 697-9963, ext. 3 or visit [www.wmearchny.org](http://www.wmearchny.org).

Worldwide Marriage Encounter's mission of renewal in the Church and change in the world is to assist couples and priests to live fully intimate and responsible relationships by providing them with a Catholic "experience" and ongoing community support for such a lifestyle.

The first Sunday evening of each month immediately following the 5 p.m. Mass, our Youth Group meets in the McManus Parish Center. All youths age 13 and up are invited.



Because the first Sunday of the month falls on New Year's Day, the Youth Group will meet on Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6 p.m.

**MIRACULOUS MEDAL NOVENA:** Held after the 9 a.m. Mass on Mondays.

**EUCCHARISTIC DEVOTION:** Held the First Friday of every month at 1 p.m. Please join us when you are able.

**RECITATION OF THE ROSARY:** Join your fellow parishioners in praying the Rosary after the 9 a.m. Mass on weekdays and Saturday.



### LAST WEEK'S COLLECTION

- The **budgeted** Collection for last Sunday was \$6400.00.
- The **actual** Collection for last Sunday was \$4812.05.

May God bless and reward all your sacrifices for the Parish!

**PARISH SUPPORT:** Next Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup>, we will take up a second collection in support of our parish buildings and grounds. Please endeavor to donate generously.

### REMEMBER YOUR BELOVED PARISH

Remember, "We make a living by what we earn. We make a life by what we share." Please remember our Parish in your Will as a lasting and loving gift to your parish family. Thank you!



Please pray for all the sick & the homebound members of our Parish, especially Ethel Thomas, Aldina Pereira, Rebecca Conroy, Alejandra Santander, Grace Raguso, Andy DeFabritis, Maryann Tolli, Maria Marte, Ed Carpenter, Barbara Rup, Jule Yaskovic, Rosalie Heit, Dolores Santamarena, Florence B. Swetz, Clare Yaskovic, Neil Caruso, Raymond Fitzpatrick, Sr., Deacon James Byrnes, Andrea Objay, Carmen Torres, John Esposito, Francis Farrell, Mark Baum, Frank Marra, Christine Bellino, Deacon Patrick Troy, Josephine Apuzzo, Edith Dugan, Gary Roth, Joyann Allan, Anna Rita Morgante, Lois Burton, Mary DeStefano, Dan Seratto, Mark Cianfaglione, Shawn Colon, Margaret Maccia, Nicole Ryan Betancourt, Anthony Spinner, Audrey & Alfred Falcone, Kathleen Hayes, Marge Muraik, Stan Buoninfante, Donna Vasconez, Mary Ann Berengur, Gene DelBene, Angelina Brusco, Mary Romanchik, Nicole Pisani-Frame, Louis Petruolo, Cynthia Swiatkowicz, Rose Botcheller, Silvia Georgi, Angelo Capobianco, and Jimmy Maimone.

### REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONES, LIVING AND DEAD

Consider giving a loved one or someone who has a special place in your life the graces associated with having a Mass offered on their behalf. You may have a thanksgiving Mass offered for your loved ones or for yourself on such occasions as birthdays, wedding anniversaries, etc.

Also, you may consider offering the Altar flowers, Altar bread and wine, Altar candles, or lighting the Sanctuary lamp for a week for your intention. Come to the Rectory Office, **Mon. – Fri., 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.** to make arrangements or to inquire about the availability of a particular date.



Please pray for the repose of the souls of all the faithful departed, especially Deborah Kucera.

The beautiful **Christmas Trees** and **Wreath** decorating outside our church and the new **Serving Chalice** used by the Eucharistic Ministers for the first time this Christmas were donated by the Falcone family in loving memory of Raffaele Falcone and John DiRodio.



**DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION:** Held the First Saturday of every month at 3 p.m. All are encouraged to participate.

DECEMBER 25, 2011

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*Mass Intentions for the Week*

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**Nativity of the Lord - Christmas**

**Sat., December 24 (Christmas Vigil Mass)**

5:00 PM Elizabeth & Carl Laredo +

**Sunday, Christmas Day**

12 Midnight For All the People of Our Parish  
8:30 AM Carmine Nicholas Maccia +  
10:00 AM Brusco & Nanoia Families  
11:30 AM Deceased Members of Zucconi Family +

**Monday, December 26**

**Saint Stephen, first martyr**

7:00 AM Monsignor Charles J. McManus +  
9:00 AM Rafael & Edwin Rivera +

**Tuesday, December 27**

**Saint John, apostle & evangelist**

7:00 AM No Intention  
9:00 AM John F. Brusco +

**Wednesday, December 28**

**The Holy Innocents, martyrs**

7:00 AM Alma Burrus +  
9:00 AM Salvatore Guadagno +

**Thursday, December 29**

**Fifth Day in Octave of Christmas**

7:00 AM No Intention  
9:00 AM Lena Castaldo +

**Friday, December 30**

**Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph**

7:00 AM Anna L. & Edward Cashin +  
9:00 AM John Burns +

**Saturday, December 31**

**Seventh Day in Octave of Christmas**

9:00 AM Gerace & Lynch Families

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**Sat., December 31 (Vigil Mass)**

5:00 PM Anna & Anthony Faracco +

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**Sunday, January 1**

**Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God**

8:30 AM Caroline Klee +  
10:00 AM For All the People of Our Parish  
11:30 AM Julieann Campisi Moroch +

## WHAT IS THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS?



**LOVE** - that's the true meaning of Christmas. John 3:16-17 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent His Son into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

Philippians chapter 2, verses 6-11, as paraphrased in The Message, records, "Jesus had equal status with God but didn't think so much of Himself that He had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all! When the time came, He set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became human! Having become human, He stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, He lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death - and the worst kind of death at that: a crucifixion. Because of that obedience, God lifted Him high and honored Him far beyond anyone or anything, ever, so that all created beings in heaven and on earth - even those long ago dead and buried - will bow in worship before this Jesus Christ, and call out in praise that He is the Master of all, to the glorious honor of God the Father.

The true meaning of Christmas is God's becoming a human being in the Person of Jesus Christ. Why did God do such a thing? Because He loves us! Why was Christmas necessary? Because we needed a Savior! Why does God love us so much? Because He is love (1 John 4:8)! Why do we celebrate Christmas each year? Out of gratitude for what God did for us, we remember His birth by giving each other gifts, worshipping Him, and being especially conscious of the poor and less fortunate.

The true meaning of Christmas is LOVE. God loved us so much that He wanted to provide a way for us to spend eternity with Him. He gave His only Son to take our punishment for our sins. He paid the price in full! We are free from condemnation when we accept that free gift of LOVE. "But God demonstrated His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).