

CHRIST, BE OUR LIFE!*Micah 5:1-4; Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; Heb. 10:5-10; Luke 1: 39-45*

Can you imagine that in two days it will be Christmas! Christ, our "Mass," is almost here! Today is the fourth and last Sunday of Advent! The long wait is almost over and this Tuesday Christ our Savior will be born for us.

The tragedy of Friday, December 14th, when a lone gunman gained access into an Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut and killed twenty innocent children and six adults, reminded me of the tragedy that followed the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. After that first "Christmas," King Herod, filled with fury and contempt, sought to kill Jesus, and commanded his soldiers to slaughter innocent children "who were two years old or under" (Matthew 2:16). His intent was to eliminate the Prince of Peace. He wanted to kill the Joy of Jerusalem and that of the whole world! He was determined to destroy our CHRISTMAS. The young gunman who snuffed out the lives of those innocent children in a school building should not be allowed to destroy the joy and peace that Christmas brings to the parents, loved ones and the nation.

Ironically, last Sunday's scripture readings exhorted us to "Shout for joy ... be glad and exult with all your heart." The loved ones of the dead and the entire nation were urged to "have no further misfortune to fear," but rather to "rejoice in the Lord always." Christ is near! He is near to give us comfort! He is near to give us peace and joy! "Have no anxiety at all." We should rejoice and be glad because our salvation is imminent! Our God has humbled Himself and has taken on human form for our sakes. We must lean on Him, and not allow the Evil One to dampen the will of our faith and the spirit of our resolve to welcome Him Who comes so that we might have life.

Prophet Micah is one of the Minor Prophets who were concerned about social justice. As I mentioned last week, Assyria had conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 721 B.C., and was threatening to invade the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Fear and anxiety had gripped the entire nation, thus, they yearned for the promised Messiah who would come and deliver them from their bondage. Prophet Micah's role was to console them and assure them, "You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah...from you shall come forth for Me One Who is to be ruler in Israel." You, whom other nations had oppressed and considered little and unimportant, shall give birth to a King Who shall rule His people with justice. The One Who is to rule Israel "shall stand firm and shepherd His flock..." He shall bring peace and joy to His people!

The tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut has once again portrayed us as a nation that has little or no respect for the sacredness of human life. Millions of lives are lost every year through abortion and other violent means. But, on the contrary, today's gospel shows us how life is treasured right from the moment of conception. When Mary, who had just conceived Jesus, visited and greeted Elizabeth, "the infant in her womb leaped for joy." One life leaps for joy for another life. Our hearts should leap for joy to encounter Christ in the very vulnerable in society, including the unborn – our hearts should leap for joy when we receive Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Our hearts should leap for joy even as we mourn the victims of the Newtown massacre. Jesus, the Messiah is here to give us hope!

Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP



PARISH NEWS



The Pastor and the Staff heartily wish you and your family safe travels as you gather with friends and family to celebrate the birth of Christ and the New Year. Have a Merry Christmas & happy, healthy 2013.

**CHRISTMAS MASSES**

- Mon., Dec. 24 4:30 p.m. Christmas Carols/ Vigil Mass
- Mon., Dec. 24 11:30 p.m. Christmas carols, followed by Midnight Mass
- Tues., Dec. 25 8:30, 10, and 11:30 a.m.
- There will not be a 5 p.m. Mass on Christmas Day.

The **Bread & Wine, Altar Candles, and Sanctuary Lamp** for this week have been donated in loving memory of the deceased members of the Brusco and Nania families by Lou and Angela Brusco.



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.

Just a reminder, that Religious Education classes will resume after the holidays, on Tuesday, January 8, 2013.



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

SAVE THE DATE - SATURDAY, JANUARY 19TH

Holy Name Society's Barn Dance

McManus Parish Center

Immediately following the 5 p.m. Mass



Congratulations to our newest Christian, **Frank Michael Trolio**, who was baptized on Saturday, December 15th. We thank his parents and godparents for presenting him for baptism, and we pray God to bless and keep this child and his parents in their journey of faith.

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



A CHRISTMAS BLESSING FOR THE HOME

Loving God, As we gather at Christmas around the manger, Which reminds us of the birth of Your Son, We ask You to dwell in our hearts and our home. Bless every member of our family, And strengthen the bond of love among us. May we joyfully praise You like the angel choir That announced the birth of Your Son To the shepherds watching over their flocks. May we show Your love to others With the same brightness of the star that guided The Wise Men to offer gifts to the newborn King. Make our family holy, Just like Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, So that we may always live in peace and love. Amen.

HURRICANE SANDY RESPONSE: Short Term Counseling for Those Impacted. Catholic Charities through its Parish Counseling Networks is prepared to offer short-term professional counseling to parishioners who have been impacted by Hurricane Sandy. Professionals can help individuals and families to successfully address the emotional traumas caused by major disasters and tragedies. Parishioners are eligible for a maximum of six sessions. The normal co-pay of \$10 is being waived for those impacted by Sandy. Parishioners need to be referred by their parish.

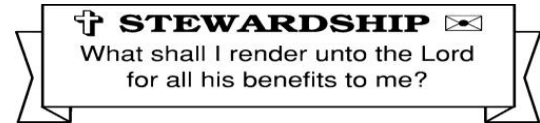
On Sunday, December 30th at 12:45 pm, the Gianna Mass will be offered in Spanish on the Feast Day of the Holy Family at the Church of St. Peter, 115 Broadway, Haverstraw, NY 10927 for the intentions of those struggling with infertility and pregnancy-related difficulties. Time for veneration of the relics of St. Gianna will be made available. A light reception will follow at which Dr. Anne Nolte, MD from the Gianna Center and additional Creighton fertility care practitioners will be on hand to speak with anyone who is interested. The event is open to the public, and all are invited to attend.

Youth Group YOUTH GROUP: 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.

EUCCHARISTIC DEVOTION: Held the First Friday of every month at 1 p.m. Please join us for this most efficacious prayer.

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

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



TITHING - GOD'S PLAN FOR GIVING

December 18, 2011
Adults' Contribution \$4661.85
Children's Contribution \$150.20
Last Year's Total \$4812.05

December 16, 2012
Adults' Contribution \$6135.65
Children's Contribution \$169.15
This Year's Total \$6304.80

\$1022.00 was collected to aid in Snow Removal.

"The true purpose of tithing is to secure not the tithe, but the tither; not the gift, but the giver; not your money, but you... for God."

"WHAT WE HAVE DONE FOR OURSELVES ALONE DIES WITH US; WHAT WE HAVE DONE FOR OTHERS AND THE WORLD REMAINS AND IS IMMORTAL."

~ Albert Pike

YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFT TO THE PARISH: Please as you consider donating to your parish this Christmas, I sincerely request that you try to donate as generously as possible. I plead that you try to increase your gift from what you donated last year; but if that is not possible, please make an effort to donate just as much as last year. Your Christmas donation helps us to take care of the poor and the general needs of the parish. Thank you!

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, Andy DeFabritis, Maria Marte, Barbara Rup, Jule Yaskovic, Rosalie Heit, Florence B. Swetz, Clare Yaskovic, Neil Caruso, Raymond Fitzpatrick, Sr., Deacon James Byrnes, Andrea Objay, Carmen Torres, John Esposito, Frank Marra, Deacon Patrick Troy, Josephine Apuzzo, Edith Dugan, Gary Roth, Joyann Allan, Anna Rita Morgante, Lois Burton, Mary DeStefano, Mark Cianfaglione, Shawn Colon, Margaret Maccia, Nicole Ryan Betancourt, Anthony Spinner, Audrey & Alfred Falcone, Kathleen Hayes, Marge Muraik, Stan Buoninfante, Donna Vasconez, Gene DelBene, Nicole Pisani-Frame, Louis Petrulo, Cynthia Swiatkowitz, Jimmy Maimone, Robert Mirsky, Steve Oddo, Roseann Mercandetti, Louis Brusco, Josephine Daniele, Jennifer Dorsey, Valerie Riccardi, Fatima Panik, Joanne Moscarello, Marian Fletcher, Anna Bonacci, Minerva Hernandez, Paula Parente, Barbara Olivieri, Carol Swetz, Bridget O'Malley, Anna Brucculeri, Peggy Clevenberg, Gerald Mazzerese, Jr., Patricia Keane, Louis Milone, Joey Bastardi, Carol Stola, Amada Ortiz, Karen Aprea, and Stephen Sarich.

DECEMBER 23, 2012

Mass  *for the*
Intentions *Week*

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 22 (Anticipated Mass)

5:00 PM Leonard Revellese +

Sunday, December 23

8:30 AM Caroline Klee +

10:00 AM Carmella & Frank Gerace +

11:30 AM Carl Dietze, Robert & Chester Rodesky +

5:00 PM Debbie DiCaprio +

Monday, December 24

Late Advent Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Dominick Filopei +

Christmas Eve

5:00 PM Elizabeth & Carl Laredo + (Vigil Mass)

Tuesday, December 25

Nativity of the Lord

Midnight Mass For All the People of Our Parish

8:30 AM Carmine Nicholas Maccia +

10:00 AM Brusco & Nanoia Families

11:30 AM Julieann Campisi Moroch +

Wednesday, December 26

Saint Stephen, the First Martyr

7:00 AM Msgr. Charles J. McManus +

9:00 AM Pat & Annie Bryce +

Thursday, December 27

Saint John, Apostle & Evangelist

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM John F. Brusco +

Friday, December 28

Holy Innocents, Martyrs

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Rafael & Edwin Rivera +

Saturday, December 29

Fifth Day within Octave of Christmas

9:00 AM Mary Ann Berenguer +

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Saturday, December 29 (Anticipated Mass)

5:00 PM Frank & Carmela Legio & Family +

Sunday, December 30

8:30 AM Caroline Klee +

10:00 AM Lenore Ciccone +

11:30 AM Robert Sabetelli +

5:00 PM For All the People of Our Parish

YEAR OF FAITH



As we reflected two weeks ago, it is important that we reflect on the reality that sin is created not only by deed but also by neglect. The fourth through the tenth commandments refer to our love for neighbor. The first degree of love of course is justice: to give to our brothers and sisters with whom we share the earth that which they deserve. For

instance: the fourth commandment tells us we are to honor our parents, and by extension, all lawful authority. This word is not time conditioned. Though we might now be far away from our youth we still bear responsibility for those who cared for us, even as they might become difficult. "Thou shalt not murder" calls upon all of us to respect life. Eat carefully. Do not enter into useless prolonged conflicts. Realize we are our brother's keeper. It is most unfortunate that in our society adultery is almost always treated with a wink. The prioritization of marriage vows is of the greatest importance since in them the relationship of Christ with His Church is mirrored. Further, one must realize that the commandment mandates us to respect the dignity of each human being particularly in view of their divine creation. Parents especially have the joy and responsibility of aiding their children in the forming of healthy relationships.

The seventh commandment tells us that part of respecting another is to recognize what they rightfully own. This pertains not only to material things but ideas as well. Students should give proper credit for an idea or statement to its true source. Plagiarism is stealing as is booting up illegally computer programs. Sometimes we justify our wrongdoing in this area because "everyone does it" or "the government will just waste my taxes." Perhaps, but that is not our call. There are other ways of getting redress. Perhaps the most serious element of taking what does not belong to us is covered by the eighth commandment. The stealing of one's reputation causes hurt beyond calculation. Gossip is wrong even if it is true because we never know one another's true circumstances. When we judge we should consider what Christ would write down as He bent to touch the sands of our lives.

The final two commandments utilize the word: "covet." Perhaps because they are last we fail to give them great thought. But in truth, they should receive more attention than the others. The desires we nourish for the lives of others fail to appreciate God's gift to us. They make us reflect on only a part of other's lives. The man we envy for his wealth might have a troubled child or debilitating illness. Sad to say the disobedience of these two commandments might lead us to the breaking of others. Just one example: the fraud committed against our retired people by brokers who never have enough money to sate their appetites. This brief examination of conscience certainly is not exhaustive, but it is a start. Think about your observance of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy

