

December



All Saints National Catholic Church

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December



STAR OF BETHLEHEM



Back in the days before Jesus was born, stars were believed to be very important and often were named by astrologers. Stars were thought to be able to foretell the future, affect the ocean tides and give directions to travelers.

A little over 2,000 years ago, a uniquely shaped star shone brightly in the eastern sky. It was so bright and unique that it caught the attention of four shepherds in the fields. Suddenly an Angel of God appeared before them and told them to follow the star and they would find a baby King.

The shepherds were moved that an angel would call upon them, so they picked up all their belongings and followed the wonderful star. Shepherds were very poor people, so they did not have a lot to carry.

After many days of following the unusual star, the shepherds arrived in a town called Bethlehem. The star shone directly over a small stable on the far side of Bethlehem, ending their journey.

Waiting for the shepherds was another angel who greeted them saying, "Welcome; God has chosen you to be one of the first to see His newborn son, Jesus." One shepherd spoke to the angel and asked, "Why did God choose us? We are just shepherds with nothing to give this newborn king?" "You have already given gifts to God by loving one another," the angel replied, "and God has chosen you to meet His Son, Jesus, to show that everyone is important in God's heart."

The shepherds indeed felt special and knelt down beneath the star that had brought them to Bethlehem. On their faces they felt the warmth of the bright star and in their hearts felt the love for their newborn king. They thanked God for all He had given them, including the star, the star they named the **Star of Bethlehem**.

To this day, the **Star of Bethlehem** shines in the sky above. It serves as a constant reminder of God's love for us. The star that gave directions to the shepherds still gives direction to anyone who longs for it. It directs them to God's greatest gift - **His Son, Jesus**.

Please join us for the **Mass of Shepherds** at **9:00 p.m.**, on **Thursday, December 24** or **Christmas Day Mass on Friday, December 25 at 10:00 a.m.** as we once again **relive** the **experience** of the **birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem**.

† PARISH FAMILY MASS SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER †

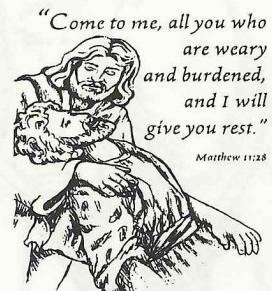
- Sunday, December 6 at 9:00 a.m. +Veronica Podkulski and Kay Lynch, offered by Terri Podkulski Miller
Sunday, December 6 at 9:00 a.m. +Edward Gidzinski, offered by the Cushner Family
Sunday, December 13 at 9:00 a.m. +Irene Ruda, offered by Family
Sunday, December 20 at 9:00 a.m. +Jadwiga Sperski, offered by son Vincent
Thursday, December 24 at 9:00 p.m. Mass of the Shepherds
Friday, December 25 at 10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Mass
Sunday, December 27 at 9:00 a.m. +Rob Mnahoncak, offered by parents Bob and Joanne
Sunday, December 27 at 9:00 a.m. +Edith Nosal, offered by husband Joseph and Family
Sunday, December 27 at 9:00 a.m. +Ruth Campbell, offered by daughter Yvonne and Family
Sunday, December 27 at 9:00 a.m. Feast of St. John with the blessing and distribution of wine

I acknowledge the following who have given of themselves in time, labor and material offerings to our parish:

- ☺ to Diane Turock for being our Sunday Mass greeter and handing out the mass music programs.
- ☺ to Ernie Kolba for his time and labor helping around the parish complex.
- ☺ to Bob Blakeslee ret. for his time, labor and donation of a Wi-Fi router and setting up the Wi-Fi router for the rectory.
- ☺ to Brian Kot/Martin Bread Co. for donating the bread products for our Men's Society Turkey Party.
- ☺ to all who helped and supported our Men's Society Turkey Party making it huge success ☺ ☺ ☺ - Thank You!
- ☺ to those who ordered Christmas Candy from the PTA Christmas Sale. Orders will be available on Sunday, December 13 - Thank you!

Please remember the following in your prayers, with a Christmas card, or a visit:

- Joseph Nosal at Bridgewater Nursing Home
Jennie Kolba at Willow Point Nursing Home
Jacqueline Pokrinchak at Susquehanna Nursing Home
Emil Kotasek at Ideal Living Center
Edward and Vicki Ambrose
Jean Chapin
Florence Ottman
Barb Kotasek
Mike Kozloski
Pam McKiernan
Mae Raychel, Genevieve Lupinsky, Lottie Rogowski



Privacy laws do not allow hospitals or nursing homes to inform priests of admission. Family members must make this notification to the priest.



The Binghamton Downtown Singers, accompanied by The *Binghamton Philharmonic Orchestra*, will be presenting Handel's Messiah on Saturday, December 19 at 8:00 p.m. at the Forum. Our choir members Christina Dyman and Betty Ruda will be singing with this group. For ticket information contact Christina or Betty.



Looking ahead to **Christmas Eve Thursday, December 24**, and **Christmas Day, Friday, December 25**, the following services have been scheduled: **Thursday, December 24 at 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass of the Shepherds with full choir, Friday, December 25 Christmas Day Mass at 10:00 a.m. with organ music.**



**Christmas
Day
Service**



We will do the **flowering of the church, preparation of altars and final decorations** on the interior of the church on **Wednesday, December 23 at 10:00 a.m.**

**Donations for Christmas Poinsettias will be taken until December 20.
Thanking you in advance for your help!**



**Rectory
OPEN HOUSE**

As holiday tradition holds, Betty and I invite you all to the rectory following the 9:00 p.m. Mass of the Shepherds on December 24 and on Christmas Day after the 10:00 a.m. mass for the sharing of the Christmas Wafer, baked goods and refreshments.

We are well aware of your hectic holiday schedule but we would like to spend a few moments with you all during the holiday of the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.



**Rectory
OPEN HOUSE**

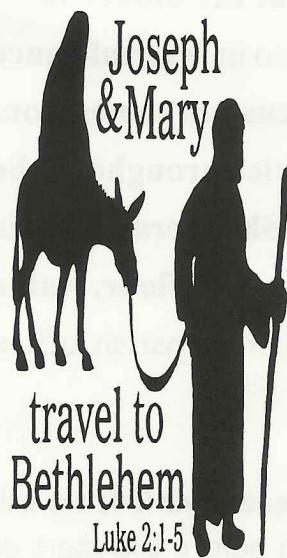
ADVENT REMINDERS

Here are some Advent reminders:

- Those wishing to receive **Holy Communion before Christmas** who are confined to their homes, hospitals, or nursing homes, please call the rectory to make an appointment for a visit from the priest.
- Take care of your parish membership obligations during the first two weeks of December.
- **Christmas wafers** are available every Sunday in the parish office at \$1.25 per pack.
- Donations for **Christmas Poinsettias** will be accepted until **Sunday, December 20.**



ADVENT



travel to
Bethlehem

Luke 2:1-5

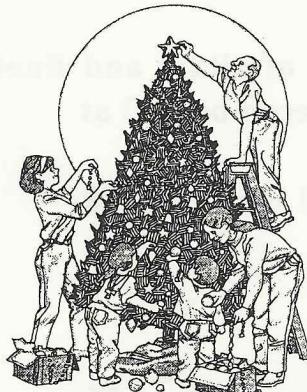
Peace Love JOY Peace Love JOY

MEN'S SOCIETY



The next scheduled meeting of our **Men's Society** will be on **Sunday, January 17, 2016**, following the 9:00 a.m. mass. An invitation is extended to **all men** of our parish family to become a member of our society. Our men's society is a **back bone organization** of our parish sponsoring **many activities** and supporting **our children and teen programs**.

HISTORY OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE



Evergreen trees and wreaths have been used as symbols of eternal life since the ancient times of Egyptians, Chinese, and Hebrews. After the coming of Christianity, evergreens took on a more spiritual significance and were thought to scare away the evil spirits. In the Middle Ages, the Christmas tree, decorated with candles and wafers (symbols of Christ), became popular, as did gaily decorated wooden Christmas pyramids. By the sixteenth century, the two objects merged into what is now known as the Christmas tree. By the nineteenth century, the Christmas tree was popular across Europe and the United States.

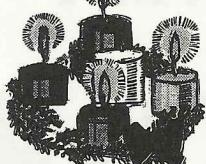
THE CHRISTMAS WAFER

Many families still uphold the Christmas Eve tradition of the sharing of the Christmas Wafer at dusk at the Christmas Eve Holy Supper and throughout the Christmas season. The sharing of the Christmas wafer is a sign of peace, love and unity within the family unit, relatives and friends also acknowledging the birth of Jesus Christ.

In many households there is an empty place set at the dinner table with a piece of straw under the plate for the baby Jesus, also in remembrance of departed loved ones or for an unexpected guest. This custom comes from Poland and has been adopted by many non-polish people throughout the world. Following the Holy Supper, the pilgrimage to the Shepherds Mass is also a part of the tradition. The Christmas wafer is made from flour, water and unleavened yeast. The Christmas Wafer is available in our parish office during the Season of Advent.

Again, during the Advent Season, (**November 29 through December 24**) we will have the lighting of the **Advent Wreath** every Sunday morning before the start of mass. **Children and teens** have their **Advent Calendars** at home which were supplied by our **Sunday School PTA** to open one slot with an **Advent Scripture message** during each day of **Advent**, concluding on **December 24**.

Lighting of
Advent Wreath





POINSETTIA DONATIONS

Offerings for Poinsettias will be accepted until **Sunday, December 20**. If you would like to donate a plant or plants as a donation or in memory of your departed loved ones, please sign the sheet in the vestibule. Donations are \$16.00 for a double bloom plant, \$11.00 for single bloom plant. A mass will be celebrated at a later date for plants donated in memory of your departed loved ones. Plants will also be available to take home to after their use in church, if you wish.

THE SAINTS - St. Nicholas



St. Nicholas was born in Asia Minor. He was named **Bishop of Myra**, a poor and run down Diocese. When his wealthy parents died, he gave His wealth to the poor and devoted himself to the conversion of sinners.

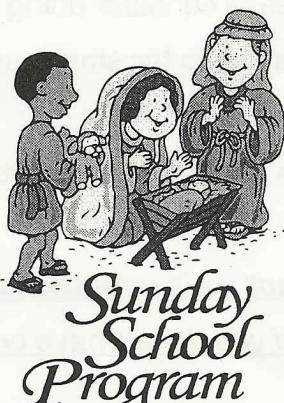
Once he heard that a man who had become very poor intended to abandon his three daughters because he could not afford a dowry for them. **Nicholas**, on three occasions, threw a bag of gold into the window of the sleeping father, and his daughters were soon married. Later the father fell at his feet and said, "*Nicholas, you are my helper. You have delivered my soul and my daughters' souls from destruction.*" This and many other works of his charity led to the tradition of giving presents on his Feast Day and at Christmas in his name. **St. Nicholas** is regarded as the special patron of children. The name of Santa Claus evolved from the word *Sint Klaes*, by the Dutch.

Nicholas died at Myra in 350. His popularity, already great, increased, when, in 1087, his relics were brought to Bari, Italy. Both the Eastern and Western Churches honor him. **St. Nicholas** is the patron Saint of Russia, Greece, Apulia, Sicily and Lorraine. His Feast Day is December 6.



Christmas Cookie Raffle

The choir will be sponsoring its annual **Christmas cookie raffle** drawing on December 20, following the 9:00 a.m. mass. Tickets are attached to your newsletter and a volunteer sign-up sheet to help bake is posted in the vestibule. We will again have ten large trays of a variety of homemade cookies to win. Ticket donation is \$1 each or three for \$2, and are included in this newsletter. Tickets and money may be given to any choir member or to the financial team in the church office following Sunday mass.



On Sunday, December 13, immediately following the end of mass, our **Sunday School students** will present their **Christmas Program** to the parish family in the church.

Following the presentation. There will be a breakfast served in the parish family center. *It will be our sumptuous buffet menu for \$6.00 per adult. Sunday School students will be free of charge.* There will be a special visit from Santa for children and teens participating. Please mark this date on your calendar and be a witness to the Christmas program and join us for breakfast and fellowship.





One of the holy days following the birth of Jesus is the **Feast of Saint John the Apostle**.

On this day scripture tells us that the **Roman Empire** wished to eliminate St. John because of his **Christian teachings and philosophy**.

Members of the **Roman Empire** gave him a **chalice of wine** to drink with enough **poison** to kill ten horses. As John was **drinking** the chalice of wine God purified it causing John no harm.

The feast day this year is **Sunday, December 27**. As a **commemoration** of this **holy day** wine is **blessed** before mass and given to those in attendance for mass after receiving **Holy communion**.

ST. JOHN, APOSTLE

As we rapidly approach the end of the year **2015**, I as pastor would like to publicly acknowledge the fine work of our **Parish Council and Directors**, especially those of the **Executive Branch**, who take care of the financial books, recording of the offering envelopes, and meeting minutes, setting and tracking the church budget.

These good people take their work home and spend countless hours during the year on book work and record keeping.

A tip of the hat goes out to: our Treasurer Terri Miller, our Financial Secretary Pam Fuller, our Offering Envelope Secretary Betty Ruda our recording secretary Debbie Cushner, Parish Center/Cemetery Treasurer Judy Dyman, Council Vice President Mark Broczkowski, Council President Ernie Kolba. and all of the parish council directors. **God Bless - FDR**



FINANCIAL NEWS FOR DECEMBER



With the beginning of **December**, the **Parish Council** would like to remind those who have not fulfilled their **membership obligations** for **2015** to please consider doing so soon. **Membership for a married unit is \$155.00** and **membership for single unit is \$85.00**.

These obligations may be paid in the **parish office** on Sundays either before or after mass.

Finally, the financial officers request that you please do not wait until the last weeks of December if possible. Also request a receipt book if you do not have one.

**Financial
NOTES**



December 2015

EVENTS AT ALL SAINTS



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																								
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<p>8:20 AM Priv. Confessions 9:00 AM Holy Mass 10:00 AM Parish Council Mtg. 10:15 AM Sunday School & music Advent 2</p>		<p>Fr. Ruda away</p>	<p>Fr. Ruda away</p>		<p>6:45 PM NOTE DAY CHANGE CHOIR Practice</p>																																																									
<p>6</p> <p>9:00 AM Holy Mass Advent 3 Sunday School Advent Breakfast following students Christmas presentation after mass.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>DECEMBER 7, 1941 PEARL HARBOR Remembrance Day</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Feast of Divine Love</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>6:45 PM</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:30 AM Set up for Sunday School Breakfast</p>																																																								
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<p>20</p> <p>9:00 AM Holy Mass 10:00 AM Men's Society Mtg. 10:15 AM Christmas Cookie Raffle Drawings. 10:15 AM Coffee Fellowship 10:15 AM Sunday School Advent 4</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>FIRST DAY OF Winter</p>	<p>23</p> <p>10:00 AM Church Decorations</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9:00 PM Mass of Shepherds followed by Rectory Open House.</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10:00 AM Christmas Day Mass followed by Rectory Open House.</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Feast of St. Stephen, First Martyr for Christianity.</p>																																																								
<p>27</p> <p>9:00 AM Holy Mass with the blessing and distribution of wine. Feast of St. John, Evangelist and Apostle. Sunday School Christmas Break</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>New Year's Eve</p>	<table border="1"> <tr><td colspan="7">Jan 2016</td></tr> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>.</td><td>.</td><td>.</td><td>.</td><td>.</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	Jan 2016							S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31							
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