



*O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,*

*O come ye
O come ye to Bethlehem,*

Come and behold Him,

Born the King of angels;

O come, let us adore Him

O come, let us adore Him,

O come, Let us adore Him,

Christ, the Lord.



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Mass Intentions
 for the Week
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**THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH
 DECEMBER 30, 2018**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29

The Mass of Anticipation for the Holy Family
 4:00PM John Murphy—10th Anniversary

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
 7:30 AM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Church
 9:00 AM Vincenza Masiello—Birthday Remembrance
 10:30AM Gene & Mary Verri—6th Anniversary
 5:00PM Special Intention

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31

The Seventh Day within the Octave of Christmas
 7:30AM Eileen Maguire—1st Anniversary

The Mass of Anticipation for Mary, the Holy Mother of God
 4:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Church

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1

The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
 8:30AM Carlos & Rose Montini & Paul Amato—Mem.
 12:00PM Frits Weekers—Memorial

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2

St. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors of the Church
 7:30AM Deceased of 248th Co. B & Joseph Zaino—Mem.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3

Christmas Weekday; The Most Holy Name of Jesus
 7:30AM R.G. & Mariakutty Peter—Memorial

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious
 7:30AM Gregory D’Emilio—Memorial
 9:00AM Audrey M. Gesualdi —Memorial

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5

St. John Neumann, Bishop
 8:30AM Fr Kevin Brassil—Memorial

The Mass of Anticipation for the Epiphany of the Lord
 4:00PM Paul Cienki—Memorial

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6

The Epiphany of the Lord
 7:30 AM Dorothy Van Fechtmann—Memorial
 9:00 AM Thomas Cavanagh—8th Anniversary
 10:30AM Louis Pelletier & Nelson Silva, Sr. —Memorial
 5:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Church





Dear Parishioners:

I hope you had a blessed and happy Christmas Day. It was a beautiful day of faith, joy and hope as we celebrate the Incarnation. St. Leo the Great in his sermon for Christmas from the Fourth Century, writes:

“Our Savior, dearly Beloved, was born this day. Let us rejoice. Sadness is not becoming upon the Birth Day of Life Itself, which, now that the fear of death is ended, fills us with gladness, because of our own promised immortality. No one is excluded from sharing in this cheerfulness, for the reason of our joy is common to all men. Our Lord, the Conqueror of sin and death, since there was no one free from servitude, came that He might bring deliverance to all.”

Christmas is always a cheerful season as we rejoice not only that family and friends gather for festivities, but that our God gave us His only Son. The Savior was born to save us all from sin and death. So we are not only cheerful because of the merriment of holiday gatherings and gifts, but because the Savior of the World was born for us. Yes, we truly rejoice in the mystery of the Incarnation.

Every Christmas we celebrate the truth that God became a human being. This belief is so essential that to deny it or to try to explain it away is to cast off a fundamental belief of Catholic Faith. The Solemnity of Christmas invites each of us to pause and reflect on what these words really mean.

It is one thing to simply repeat the words of the Nicene Creed: “...and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary

and became man.” It is quite another to allow these profound words to effect a change in our lives and deepen our knowledge and love of God.

It is only faith which allows us, like the shepherds and wise men of that First Christmas, to make our way through the darkness to the manger. We do so even amidst the many trials and tribulations of life in this fallen world. We, as people of faith, celebrate at Christmas the reality that God is here, present among us, working within us, now.

Ultimately, Christmas contains a promise that what began in that simple stable in Bethlehem is still at work in our own hearts and in the world today. Yes, God’s redeeming love is at work for us and so we rejoice and give thanks! We rejoice in the Incarnation but we also give thanks to the many dedicated folks who make the celebration of Christmas at OLM so joyful and faith-filled.

We thank Paul Anderson and our OLM maintenance for the great job of preparing OLM for the Savior’s birth. They deserve our gratitude for all the cleaning, moving of boxes, waxing of floors, setting up trees and stables, and a whole host of other duties done with dedication.

We thank Cecilia Franzone and her group of decorators for their usual superb job of decorating all of OLM for the season! The beauty of Christmas at OLM reflects their devotion and dedication. We are also grateful to all our dedicated sacristans who prepare the linens, sacred vessels, and vestments for Masses. They are

a great band of behind the scenes volunteers who deserve praise.

We thank too the outstanding corps of OLM Altar Servers for the terrific job in serving Christmas Masses. Their dutiful and reverent service is commendable and we are grateful. We thank all our Lectors for proclaiming the Word of God with zeal and devotion. The Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who assist at Mass, and do so with great care and reverence. And we thank our wonderful ushers for a great job and for making our visitors feel welcome at OLM.

We also thank Henri St. Louis, our Director of Music, and the OLM Choir for the magnificent job at Christmas. As always the beauty of the music lifted our worship to where it rightly belongs, to the praise and glory of God.

In the name of Fr. Barrow, Fr. Connors, and Deacon Dowd, we offer our thanks for your generous personal gifts, sincere well wishes and assorted tasty treats at Christmas. Your support of our ministry is truly uplifting for each one of us and we are grateful. We thank God for all the blessings that Christmas brought this year.

My prayer is that you know the joy and peace of Christmas 2018 both now and throughout the New Year of 2019! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! God Bless.

Father Healey



Who invented the Calendar?

Many at the beginning of the New Year form lists of resolutions and promises, but why exactly do we celebrate the New Year when we do? Many of us take for granted the dates and times of the months and years, but where did we get our current calendar? Part of the answer reveals an important truth about Catholicism: that it is concerned with all aspects of human good, including the dating of time.

The Church has her own calendar marked by the seasons of Advent, Lent, Ordinary Time, and Easter, as well as various memorials, feasts, and solemnities. Little do people realize that the Church also gave us our secular calendar with months, weeks, and days. In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII issued the new calendar in the papal bull *Inter gravissimas*. He did this to correct astronomical errors of the spring equinox in the Julian Calendar (all related to the dating of Easter). The Julian Calendar originated with Julius Caesar and was the main calendar in use throughout Europe since the 1st century BC. Prior to the 1500s European scholars were aware of the error, but it was not until the 16th century that the growing discrepancy between the days and the seasons, required action. While the Gregorian Calendar is not perfect, it is much more accurate than the Julian Calendar. In approximately several thousand years it may require another rework (based on the slowing down of the Earth's rotation and other factors).

Of course the pope's declaration, while based on astronomical and scientific observation, had no authority outside of Catholic realms and the Papal States. Other countries gradually adopted the calendar over the next hundred years. Initially, Protestant countries objected to adopting the calendar in opposition to the pope. For instance, Sweden adopted the Calendar two hundred years later in the 1700s. Interestingly, while the Gregorian Calendar is the most widely used civil calendar there are still countries which either do not use it, or use it in conjunction with their own calendars.

So in addition to its role in salvation, the Church stands behind the dating of months and days.

Weekly Collection 

December 16, 2018

Weekly.....	\$13,087.00
EFT.....	\$3,054.00
	Total=\$16,141.00
Outreach.....	\$933.50
Christmas Flowers (to date).....	\$2,116.00
Annual (to date).....	\$95,434.00

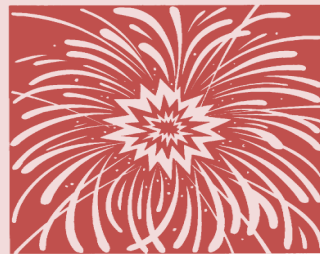
If you have been away on vacation or visiting another parish, we kindly ask you to please make up your missed budget envelopes. We depend solely upon your weekly support to meet our weekly parish expenses.



Please remember Our Lady of Mercy Church in your will or estate.

Second Collections

Next Week: Building & Grounds Collection



**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**

OLM Parish Office Hours

The OLM Parish Office is closed for New Years from 4:00PM on Friday, December 28th and reopens on Wednesday, January 2, 2019 at 8:00AM.



We offer our prayers and condolences to the families of **Russell Ferrara** and **Patricia Sehl** whose Masses of Christian Burial were celebrated here last week.



- **Wednesday, January 2, 2019:** School resumes
- **Friday, January 4, 2019:** First Friday School Mass at 9:00AM

Discover the OLM Difference!
www.olmschool.org



All RE Classes resume next weekend,
January 6, 2019! Happy New Year!



• **OLM Food Pantry** is always in great need of non-perishable food items. Please leave items in the Food Box in the vestibule.

• **OLM Bereavement Group Meeting:** Thursday, January 3rd at 4pm in Mercy House. All those experiencing grief or loneliness are invited to join us for support, prayer and discussion.

• **For more information about OLM Outreach**, please contact OLM Outreach Director, Doug Green at 884-4410 or by email at outreach@olmparish.org

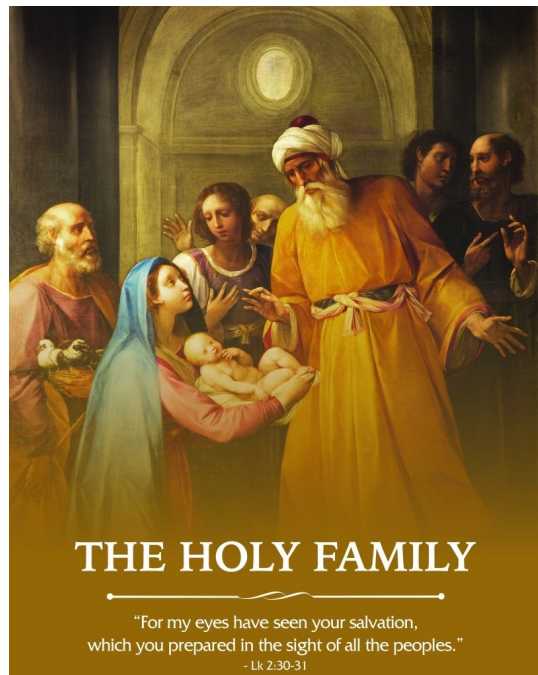
Holy Family



Today's liturgy not only offers us a glimpse into the life of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph but also gives us an opportunity to pray for our own families.

Although private devotions to the Holy Family go back to about the seventeenth century, the feast did not enter the church's calendar until 1921.

One of the readings designated for the day comes from Colossians 3 wherein wives are exhorted to be subordinate to their husbands. A shortened version of this reading which omits that passage and is more in keeping with our modern idea of a woman's place in the family is permitted as an option.



THE HOLY FAMILY

"For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples."
- Lk 2:30-31

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Mary, Mother of God



January 1 is New Years Day in our secular life, but in our liturgical life, it is the solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God.

In the year 431, the Council of Ephesus declared that the Virgin Mary was Mother of God; in Greek, *Theotokos*, “God-bearer.”

Mary was celebrated under this title on the first of January until about the eighth century when the day was changed to mark the circumcision of the Lord.

The reforms of the Vatican II returned the day to Mary, Mother of God but kept the Gospel reading which refers to Jesus’ circumcision.



Mary, the Holy Mother of God

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The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God *A Holy Day of Obligation*

Schedule of Masses

Monday, December 31, 2018

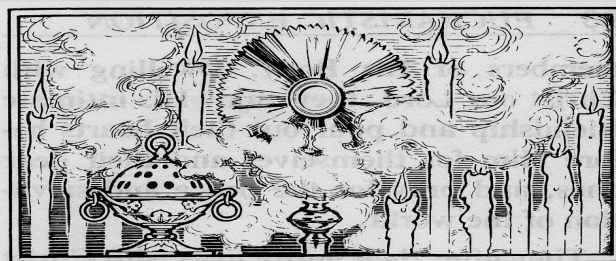
New Year’s Eve

Vigil Mass at 4:00PM

Tuesday, January 1, 2019

New Year’s Day

Masses at 8:30am & 12:00PM Noon



First Friday Adoration

January 4, 2019

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
following 9am School Mass

Adoration All Day

Benediction at 6:00PM