

*The Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God*  
*January 1, 2017*



*Our Lady of Mercy Church*

*East Greenwich, RI*

[www.olmparish.org](http://www.olmparish.org)



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## **THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD JANUARY 1, 2017**

### **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31—NEW YEAR'S EVE**

*The Vigil of the Mary, the Holy Mother of God*  
 4:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Church

### **SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 2017—NEW YEAR'S DAY**

*The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God*  
 7:30 AM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Church  
 9:00 AM Robert Anderson—Memorial  
 10:30AM Carlos & Rose Monti & Paul Amato—Memorial  
 5:00PM Lillian Peterson—Birthday Remembrance

### **MONDAY, JANUARY 2**

*St. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors of the Church*  
 7:30AM David W. Gamache—Memorial

### **TUESDAY, JANUARY 3**

*Christmas Weekday/ The Most Holy Name of Jesus*  
 7:30AM John Hwang—Memorial

### **WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4**

*St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious*  
 7:30AM Deceased Members of Company B/Joe Zaino—Memorial

### **THURSDAY, JANUARY 5**

*St. John Neumann, Bishop*  
 7:30AM Harry Mariani—Memorial

### **FRIDAY, JANUARY 6**

*Christmas Weekday/St. Andre Bessette, Religious*  
 7:30AM Thomas Cavanagh—Memorial  
 9:00AM Samuli T. Nygren—Memorial

### **SATURDAY, JANUARY 7**

*Christmas Weekday/St. Raymond of Penyafort, Priest*  
 8:30AM Jean Lee Arruda—Memorial  
*Vigil Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God*  
 4:00PM Rodolphe St. Louis—Memorial

### **SUNDAY, JANUARY 8**

*The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God*  
 7:30 AM Erica Claire Rose—Memorial  
 9:00 AM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Church  
 10:30AM Lillian E. Healey—Birthday Remembrance  
 5:00PM Rosalyn Dobbs—Memorial







Dear Parishioners:

What a grand celebration of Christmas was had at Our Lady of Mercy! Crowds of people coming to worship and praise God for the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Beautiful singing and music in the spirit of the season. Reverent and solemn celebrations befitting the King of Kings! Christmas at Our Lady of Mercy was truly terrific.

Of course, none of this was possible without the hard work of lots of good people. The OLM Parish Staff and our many wonderful volunteers put lots of time and talent into getting ready for the Birth of our Savior! We thank God for all His blessings upon this parish throughout the past year!

We also thank all those who made Christmas so special at OLM. Celia Franzone and her dedicated band of decorators who ensure our Church is always so beautifully decorated with trees, flowers and a truly beautiful nativity.

Paul Anderson and our hard working OLM Maintenance Staff who do all the heavy lifting, the moving of trees, and ensure the cleanliness of our Church. We also thank our great musicians and choirs for giving us the great gift of music this Christmas.

Our OLM Organist and Music Director, Henri St. Louis and the OLM Choir provided beautiful music at Masses. Our OLM Soloist, Deirdre Donovan sang beautifully the great hymns of Christmas! The Children's Choir sounded truly terrific at the 4:00pm Vigil Mass. Their angelic voices add such grace to the Mass!

If you couldn't attend the Midnight Mass then you missed the Choir accompanied by our majestic organ, brass, timpani, and strings! The Concert of Christmas Music prior to Midnight Mass was spectacular. We are so blessed to have such talented and gifted musicians at OLM. If you've never been to Midnight Mass, make the effort next year as it is truly an outstanding celebration of Christmas.

We must thank our hard working OLM Sacristans who ensure all the Mass linens, sacred vessels and vestments are cleaned, polished and ready to go for Christmas! We thank also our great Altar Servers for serving God at Holy Mass with dignity, grace and reverence.

We give thanks for the Lectors who proclaimed God's Word so profoundly and the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who ensure that the Body of Christ is distributed with reverence. We are grateful for our many Ushers who offer a warm welcome to visitors and see to the good order of Mass.

Yes, God is good and we rightly give Him thanks and praise. We thank Him for the blessings of Our Lady of Mercy Parish. We thank Him for the beautiful celebration of Christmas. We thank Him for the gift of His Son born on Christmas Day!

The Christmas Season continues so don't take the tree down just yet or put away the lights now! We have another week to celebrate the light and the joy of the Christ Child as the great feast of the Epiphany comes next Sunday and draws the season to a close.

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. We begin the New Year dedicating our lives and our parish to the protection and guidance of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is a great start to the New Year as we give praise to the Mother of God and seek her maternal intercession.

In this New Year of 2017 the world marks the 100th anniversary of the apparitions of the Blessed Mother to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal. Bishop Thomas J. Tobin has proclaimed that the Diocese of Providence is to commemorate this historic anniversary with a special Year dedicated to Mary our Mother.

In declaring the Year of Mary, Bishop Tobin stated: *"Mary is part of our family and our spiritual family. So we honor her, we love her, we keep mementos of her around us and we turn to her for help whenever we need it. So our devotion to Mary is really a family celebration in our Catholic family."*

On behalf of Fr. Barrow, Deacon Dowd and myself, we offer our deep thanks and gratitude to the many kind parishioners who were so thoughtful in remembering us at Christmas with generous gifts, warm greetings and delicious goodies! Their generous recognition of our ministry at OLM is appreciated.

A Happy New Year to you all! Be well. Do good. God Bless. Go Pats!!! 2017 is here!!

*Father Healey*



**You can't get there from here?**

You can't get there from here. I've never been to Maine, but I hear that this is what they say. We think this refers only to getting from point A to point B on a map. Take that image in your mind of a map and apply it to your ideas and conclusions. "You can't get there from here." In other words, where we start to think, the ideas with which we begun, the assumptions and presumptions we hold, even how we frame the question, impact ultimately where we end up. Sometimes when we want to reach conclusion B; you just can't get there when you start with idea Z.

One idea that starts us off in the wrong direction goes something like this: If only I would give God control over my life, my life would be happier, and my life would be more meaningful. If I do not give up control of my life to God, it will not be as happy as it could be or as meaningful as it could be. You often hear this last response in answer to the question: What if I don't follow God's vocation in my life (e.g. to become a priest or religious). If the vocation shortage is any sign, it seems like there are some people who are fine settling with second best.

This way of framing the spiritual life, besides neutering the concept of the spiritual life (which makes the spiritual life as important and compelling as choosing between brand or off-brand cereals), makes us live in a fantasy world. In this fantasy world God is not in charge of everything. It leads to two incorrect statements: (1) *Because* I have not said "yes" to God, he has no control over my life. (2) *Because* I have said "yes" to God he has control over my life.

This means that our relationship with God is founded solely on our moral choice. It is as if our moral choices change reality/God itself. This is our prevalent mindset today: that our choices dictate reality. For centuries it was the opposite: reality dictates our moral choices. God is always in control; what we choose is whether we want to live in that reality or to create our own.

Is it no wonder that the reason why many people do not believe in God is because they have no need of him? Why say "yes" to God, when I am perfectly satisfied with second best; I've been fine living without him so far. Our connection with God is not dependent on our "yes" or "no." Stop thinking of the spiritual life like this! You can't get there from here. The spiritual life consists in realizing ones utter dependence on God and that he is always in control. This is not a moral choice. This is not something to which we can say "yes" or "no"; this is reality.

*If you have a question about the Catholic Faith , email your questions directly to Father Barrow at [associate@olmparish.org](mailto:associate@olmparish.org)*



*Weekly Collection*

**December 18, 2016**

Weekly.....	\$13,468.00
Electronic Giving.....	\$2,266.50
	<b>Total=\$15,734.50</b>
Outreach.....	\$4,376.00
Annual (To Date).....	\$91,262.00

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.

***Thank you for your generous support!***

*NB: The weekly collection results for the weekend of December 25, 2016 are unavailable due to the holiday print deadline.*

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

**SECOND COLLECTIONS**  
This Weekend: Solemnity of Mary

**Monday,**  
**January 2, 2017**  
OLM Parish Office  
is Closed for the holiday  
observance.

***Congratulations to our newly baptized :***

**Annalyn Rose Scotti,**  
and her parents, James and Claudia

**Wesley John Russell**  
and his parents, Christopher and Rebecca

*"Dearly beloved, these children have been reborn in baptism. They are now called children of God, for so indeed they are."  
– The Rite of Baptism*



# Religious Education NEWS

- No RE Classes this week. Happy New Year!
- All RE Classes resume next weekend at regular times. Welcome back!!



# Outreach Update

The **OLM Food Pantry** is always in need of non-perishable food items. Please deposit all donated food in the box in the Church vestibule.

- The **OLM Bereavement Group** meets on Thursday, January 4th at 4pm in Mercy House. All welcome.



## RCIA

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA).** For those interested in becoming Catholic, receiving Sacraments or simply interested in learning more about the faith, please join us next **Sunday, January 8** after the 10:30am Mass in the Rectory Conference Room. **Next week's topic: The Communion of Saints.** For questions please contact Fr. Barrow at 884-4968 or by email at [associate@olmparish.org](mailto:associate@olmparish.org).



- Monday, January 2, 2017: No School in observance of the New Years Holiday.
- Tuesday, January 3: OLM School resumes! Welcome back!!
- Friday, January 6: First Friday Mass at 9:00am. All are invited to attend!

*Discover the OLM Advantage!*

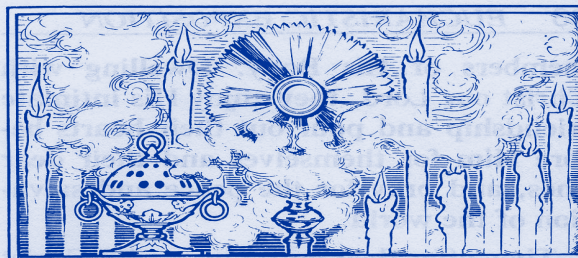
[www.olmschool.org](http://www.olmschool.org)



## THE MEN OF ST. JOSEPH

The Men of St. Joseph meet next Saturday, January 7, 2017 at 7:00am in the OLM Rectory Meeting Room. All adult men of OLM are invited to join us for discussion, prayer and fellowship as we seek to strengthen our spirituality and renew our Catholic Faith. For more information contact Deacon John Dowd at 884-4968 or via email at [Deacon@olmparish.org](mailto:Deacon@olmparish.org)

### FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2017



Exposition of the Eucharist  
following 9:00am School Mass

All-Day Adoration

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 6pm

*Adorers are needed, sign-up in the vestibule.*



## Mary, Mother of God



**J**anuary 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.



*This bulletin insert was written by Marion Eagen, a liturgist and musician in the diocese of Scranton, Pa. © 2002 Resource Publications, Inc., 160 E. Virginia St. #290, San Jose, CA 95112, (408) 286-8505. All rights reserved.*



# HAPPY NEW YEAR

### New Years Prayer for Peace



Lord Jesus Christ, who are called the Prince of Peace, who are Yourself our peace and reconciliation, who so often said, "Peace to you," grant us peace.

Make all men and women witnesses of truth, justice, and brotherly love.

Banish from their hearts whatever might endanger peace.

Enlighten our rulers that they may guarantee and defend the great gift of peace.

May all peoples on the earth become as brothers and sisters.

May longed-for peace blossom forth and reign always over us all. Amen.

— Written by St. John Paul II

