



THE FEAST OF THE
HOLY
FAMILY

Painting by Claudio Coello
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CLAUDIO
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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26

The Mass Anticipation for the Feast of the Holy Family
 4:00PM Fred Buoro—Memorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27

The Feast of the Holy Family
 7:30 AM Bernard Kenny—8th Anniversary
 9:00AM Albert Edward Hyde—Memorial
 10:30AM Gene & Mary Verri—Memorial
 5:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs
 7:30 AM Frank Almonte—Memorial

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29

Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord
 7:30 AM Robert F. Armstrong—Memorial

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30

Sixth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord
 7:30AM Pat Franzone—13th Anniversary

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

Seventh Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord
 7:30AM John Gardner, Jr. — Memorial

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

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1, 2016

The Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God
 7:30AM Fr. Charles H. Downing—Memorial
 10:30AM Carlos Montini, Paul Amato & Rose Montini

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2

Saints Basil the Great, & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors of the Church
 8:30AM Mary Lou Deus—Memorial

The Mass of Anticipation for the Epiphany of the Lord
 4:00PM Deceased Members of Manocchia & Cardillo Families-Mem.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3

The Epiphany of the Lord
 7:30 AM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy
 9:00 AM George Brigido—Memorial
 10:30AM Franciszek Majewski—Memorial
 5:00PM Hope Votta—Memorial

O, Come let us adore Him





Dear Parishioners:

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light," as the reading from Isaiah announced at Christmas. We live in the joy of the Christmas season, and it has very little to do with holiday sales. Jesus Christ is *Emmanuel* – "God with us."

Exchanging gifts and good times with friends and family is a tradition that springs forth from our Christmas joy. But the noise of these things should never drown out the quiet voice of God's love made flesh in the birth of Jesus. Bethlehem, for each of us individually and the world as a whole, is the beginning of something entirely new and utterly beautiful if we ask God for the purity of heart to possess it.

Christians celebrate the 25th of December not as just another secular holiday, but much more deeply as the day of birth of the messiah that is the birthday, in the words of St. Leo the Great, of life itself.

God loved us so much that He sent us His only Son. He loved us enough to take on our poverty, our indignities and fears, our hopes and joys, our sufferings and failures — and to speak to us *as one of us*. He became man to show men and women how much God loves them. He was born for that purpose. He lived for that purpose. He died and rose again for that purpose.

It's never too late to invite the Christ Child into our hearts. Surely this weary and war-torn world needs "the great light" born on Christmas Day. May God

grant each of us, and those we love, the gift of welcoming Jesus Christ into our hearts this Christmas Season and all throughout the coming year.

We give thanks for so many people who make our celebration of Christmas so very joyous at OLM. The Church is beautifully decorated, the Christmas music was superb, our altar servers are outstanding and the crowds were overflowing! It was truly a joyful and faithful Christmas at OLM.

We thank Celia Franzone and her loyal band of decorators for their tremendous work in making OLM so beautiful at Christmas. We thank Paul Anderson and his maintenance crew for ensuring the Church is clean, for hanging the wreaths and stringing the lights on the trees and so many other things.

We thank our dedicated sacristans and all those who help clean the Church for ensuring the sacred vessels were polished, the linens cleaned and starched, the vestments wrinkle free and for taking care of all the little details for our worship of God.

We also thank our wonderful Altar Servers for their reverent and solemn service at Christmas Masses. We thank our ushers for their warm welcome and hospitality. We are grateful for our Lectors and the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion for their good service to the parish.

We must also truly thank our musicians, Henri St. Louis, Deirdre Donovan, the OLM Adult

Choir and Children's Choir for providing such beautiful music for the Feast of Christmas!

We are truly blessed to have such good people dedicate themselves to our parish! So please take a moment to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for all these dedicated people who work so hard for our parish! In your name, I offer our deep gratitude and continued appreciation for all they do!

Finally, on behalf of Fr. Connors, Deacon Dowd and myself, I offer our thanks to the parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Parish for your faithful witness and joyful spirit in celebrating Christmas. We thank the many parishioners who are so supportive of our priestly and parish ministry here at OLM.

Your well wishes, greeting cards and the many generous and thoughtful gifts at Christmas are truly appreciated and we are so very grateful. May God bless you and your families and our parish with the continued joy and happiness of this season.

I hope you join us for the holyday on New Year's Day, the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. There is a Vigil Mass at 4pm on New Year's Eve and Mass at 7:30am and 10:30am on New Year's Day. Attending Mass on New Year's is a great start to the New Year. So please join us as we honor Mary, the Mother of God!

Happy Christmas and a Holy and Happy New Year.

Father Healey



Fr. Connors

Q & A

Dear Fr. Connors: For how long should we keep up the Christmas tree?

There is no rule exactly. You must decide for yourself. However, the Christmas season does not end on December 25. Instead, it continues until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, celebrated on the Sunday following Epiphany.

The eight days following Christmas are the known as the Christmas octave or the so-called "eight days of Christmas." This privileged period ends on January 1 with the celebration of the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. The Christmas season continues through epiphany, celebrated in the United States on the second Sunday after Christmas and in other parts of the world on January 6.

For the octave of Christmas there are special prayers both at the celebration of Holy Mass and in the Liturgy of the Hours, the official prayer of the Church prayed especially by priests and religious. During Mass the *Gloria* is said each day, for example. The priest and deacon wear white throughout the Christmas season until the Monday after the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

There is one final distinction. The feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the temple is celebrated on February 2. There is some sense in which the season of Christmas, at least in an analogous way, extends through that day. The Christmas tree in the papal apartment in Rome traditionally was kept up until 2 February.

Likewise, the proper chant for the Blessed Virgin Mary, sung during solemn celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours or at Holy Mass, is the same one for Advent, Christmas and until February 2. At Mass at Our Lady of Mercy, for example, often after the distribution of Holy Communion, the proper chant in honor of Mary will be sung. Until February 2, that is the *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, which is Latin for "Loving Mother of the Redeemer." Christmas might come but once a year but it extends beyond just December 25. The truth is the coming of God is too great to be celebrated in just one day

If you have a question about the Catholic Church or Catholic Teaching, please email questions to: associatepastor@olmparish.org



Weekly Collection

December 13, 2015

Weekly.....	\$13,460.50
EFT.....	\$3,174.50
	Total=16,635.00
Retired Religious.....	\$5,292.50
Immaculate Conception.....	\$3,071.50
Outreach.....	\$1,797.50
Annual (to date).....	\$102,634.00

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!

Please note collection results for the week of December 20, 2015 were unavailable due to print deadline

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



SECOND COLLECTIONS

Next Week: Building & Grounds Collection



HAPPY NEW YEAR

New Year's Holiday, January 1, 2016

Please note: The OLM Parish Office closes on New Year's Eve, Thursday, December 31, 2015 at Noon for the New Year's Holiday and reopens on Monday, January 4, 2016 at 8:00AM. *Please plan accordingly.*

We wish the OLM Parish Staff and Parishioners
God's Blessings for the New Year of 2016!

Religious Education
NEWS

No RE Classes this weekend or next weekend
due to the Christmas Vacation!

*We Wish A Happy New Year to
the OLM RE teachers, aides, students and families!*

*Mickey St. Jean & Doug Green
OLM Religious Education Directors*

Outreach
Update

*With thanksgiving for all your generous
support of OLM Outreach Ministries
during the Year of 2015! Happy New Year!
I wish you many Blessings for 2016!*

Doug Green
OLM Outreach Director



*A Happy New Year to all our
OLM School faculty, staff, students, and
families! See you next year!!*

Principal Scott Fuller

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*The Solemnity of Mary,
the Mother of God*



A Holyday of Obligation for All Catholics

Mass Schedule at OLM

New Year's Eve

Thursday, December 31, 2015

Vigil Mass at 4:00PM

New Year's Day

Friday, January 1, 2016

Masses at 7:30AM & 10:30AM

No Mass at 9:00AM or 5:00PM on New Year's Day

*Please note: No First Friday Eucharistic
Adoration this month on Friday, January 1, 2016 .
Eucharistic Adoration resumes on the next
First Friday, February 5, 2016.*

Start *the* new year



with a prayer...

946 Our Lady of Mercy—5

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.



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.

A Prayer of Consecration to the Holy Family



O Jesus, our most loving Redeemer, who having come to enlighten the world, with Your teaching and example, willed to pass the greater part of Your life in humility and subjection to Mary and Joseph in the poor home of Nazareth, thus sanctifying the Family that was to be an example for all Christian families, graciously receive our family as it dedicates and consecrates itself to You this day.

Defend us, guard us and establish among us Your holy fear, true peace and concord in Christian love: in order that by conforming ourselves to the divine pattern of Your Family we may be able, all of us without exception, to attain to eternal happiness.

Mary, dear Mother of Jesus and Mother of us, by your kind intercession make this our humble offering acceptable in the sight of Jesus, and obtain for us His graces and blessings.

Saint Joseph, most holy Guardian of Jesus and Mary, assist us by your prayers in all our spiritual and temporal necessities; that we may be able to praise our divine Savior Jesus, together with Mary and you, for all eternity.

Amen.



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