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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29

Vigil of the The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
4:00 PM Bernard Kenny—Memorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

The Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
7:30 AM Edna Levesque—Memorial
9:00 AM Thomas Brescia—Memorial
10:30AM John Murphy—Memorial

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31

The Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord
7:30 AM Florence Burns—Memorial
Vigil of the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
4:00 PM For All Parishioners

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1

The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
7:30 AM For All Parishioners
9:00 AM Carlo Montini (37th Anniversary), Rose Montini (10th Anniv.) & Paul Amato (27th Anniversary)
10:30 AM Msgr. John W. Lolio—Memorial

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2

Saints Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors of the Church
7:30 AM Intentions of the OLM Cenacle

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3

Christmas Weekday/The Most Holy Name of Jesus
7:30 AM Intentions of the OLM Cenacle

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious
7:30 AM Deceased Members of 248 Company B—Mem.
9:00 AM Martha Eberhardt—Memorial

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5

St. John Neumann, Bishop
8:30 AM John Nolan—Memorial
Vigil of the Epiphany of the Lord
4:00 PM Barbara Daniels—Memorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

The Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord
7:30 AM For All Parishioners
9:00 AM Thomas Cavanagh—Memorial
10:30 AM William Auld—Memorial



Dear Parishioners:

I hope you had a happy and joyful Christmas. It certainly was celebrated here at Our Lady of Mercy with abundant joy and great solemnity. We had large crowds, joyful music, beautiful decorations and solemn celebrations at all of our Masses. It was truly a worthy celebration for the Nativity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Of course, this wouldn't be possible without the dedicated hard work of so many volunteers. In your name, I thank all of those who helped to ensure Christmas was celebrated so worthily at Our Lady of Mercy Church. We thank Celia Franzone and her band of decorators for making it beautiful. We thank Brother Roger and all of the choir members and choristers for making it joyful. We thank the Altar Servers, Lectors, Ministers, Sacristans and Ushers for making it prayerful.

The Christmas Season is still here and I hope you continue to celebrate it with beauty, joy and prayer. For as Isaiah proclaimed: *"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone."* May we continue to shine that light brightly in our words and deeds especially during this holy season of Christmas!

We celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family this weekend. I always find this feast an important part of the Christmas celebration. At Christmas we gather with family and we remember family members who have gone on to eternal life. The

Feast of the Holy Family serves as a reminder of the importance of family life for us. The bonds of love that unite a family are part of celebrating Christmas.

The Feast of the Holy Family marks a time to honor Jesus, Mary and Joseph who are real flesh and blood figures of faith, hope and love. It is also an occasion to consider the holiness inherent in domestic life. Jesus was born into a family who nurtured, protected, taught, and raised him to adulthood. Although we know little about his life as a youth, it is not hard to picture him doing the same things any well-loved child would do – playing games, learning to read, helping with household chores, interacting with family, neighbors, and townspeople. Through it all, Mary and Joseph are there to model what it means to live by faith and to illustrate what makes a family holy.

So let us pray for all families especially those that face the pain of separation or divorce. May Jesus, Mary and Joseph, intercede for all families and help all to grow in love and deepen the bonds of unity. May we all grow in the holiness that the Holy Family offer us in such a wonderful example

This week we also begin a New Year, 2013! On the Church Calendar New Year's is the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. It is a holy day of obligation for Catholics. But isn't going to Mass actually the best way to welcome the New Year anyway? The Holy Day Mass schedule is in the bulletin and I

hope you join us as we honor the Mother of God and prayerfully welcome in a New Year.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Hill Funeral Home for the beautiful parish calendars they sponsored for Our Lady of Mercy. Their generosity in providing us this great service of a parish calendar with the highlights of the Church Year home is greatly appreciated. Thank them if you get the chance.

Of course, the New Year means a new session for the R.I. General Assembly and I resume my duties as the Director of the R.I. Catholic Conference. New Year's Day the Assembly officially opens its legislative session. This year there is a very serious threat that they will attempt to redefine the bedrock of our culture, marriage between one man and one woman. The very powerful and well financed same-sex marriage lobby is pushing their agenda with a renewed energy this year.

It appears that this issue tops the agenda of the R.I. House of Representatives as they return to Smith Hill. You can help with your prayers and also expressing your opposition to your elected officials. The traditional definition of marriage in our state is under threat so please help preserve it.

New Year's also brings with it new blessings as well as burdens. I pray your blessings are many and your burdens few. Happy New Year! God Bless.

Father Healey

The Catechism Corner

The devotion to the Holy Family was born in Bethlehem, together with the Baby Jesus. The shepherds went to adore the Child and, at the same time, they gave honor to His family. Later, in a similar way, the three wise men came from the East to adore and give honor to the newborn King with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh that would be safeguarded by His family. We can go further to affirm that in a certain sense Christ, Himself, was the first devotee of His family. He showed His devotion to His mother and foster father by submitting Himself, with infinite humility, to the duty of filial obedience towards them. Today's celebration demonstrates Christ's humility and obedience with respect to the fourth commandment, whilst also highlighting the loving care that His parents exercised in His keeping. The servant of God, Pope John Paul II, in 1989, entitled his Apostolic Exhortation, 'Redemptoris Custos' (Guardian of the Redeemer) which was dedicated to the person and the mission of Saint Joseph in the life of Christ and of the Church. After exactly a century, he resumed the teaching of Pope Leo XIII, for who Saint Joseph "shines among all mankind by the most august dignity, since by divine will, he was the guardian of the Son of God and reputed as His father among men." Not many years before, blessed Pope Pius IX had proclaimed Saint Joseph, 'Patron of the Catholic Church' (1870) Almost intuitively, one can recognize that the mysterious, exemplary, guardianship enacted by Joseph was conducted firstly, in a yet more intimate way, by Mary. Consequently, the liturgical feast of the Holy Family speaks to us of the fond and loving care that we must render to the Body of Christ. We can understand this in a mystical sense, as guardians of the Church, and also in the Eucharistic sense. Mary and Joseph took great care of Jesus' physical body. We can learn from Mary and Joseph! What would they ever have overlooked in the care of Jesus' physical body? Is there something, therefore, that we can withhold for the right and adoring care of His Eucharistic Body? No amount of attention, no sane act of love and adoring respect will ever be too much! On the contrary, our adoration and respect will always be inferior to the great gift that comes to us in the Holy Eucharist. Looking at the Holy Family, we see the love, the protection, and the diligent care that they gave to the Redeemer. We can not fail to feel uneasiness, perhaps a shameful thought, for the times in which we have not rendered the appropriate care and attention to the Eucharist. We can only ask the Lord, through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth, for a greater love for their Son Incarnate, who has decided to remain here on earth with us every day until the end of time. Learn more by **checking it out** in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1655-1658



Weekly Collection

DUE TO HOLIDAY PRINTING DEADLINE BUDGET RESULTS ARE UNAVAILABLE THIS WEEK.

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 generosity!

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

Pope Benedict XVI's Prayer Intentions for January 2013

General Intention: That, in this Year of Faith, Christians may deepen their knowledge of the mystery of Christ and witness joyfully to the gift of faith in him.

Missionary Intention: That Christian communities of the Middle East, often discriminated against, may receive the Holy Spirit the strength of fidelity and perseverance.

New Year's Mass Schedule



The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Monday, December 31st

New Year's Eve

Vigil Mass—4:00pm

Tuesday, January 1st—New Year's Day

Masses 7:30am, 9:00am & 10:30am

A Holy Day of Obligation.

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.



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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.



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We wish all our RE students and teachers a Happy Christmas and Blessed New Year!

RE Classes for Grades 1-6 resume on this Wednesday, January 2, 2013. RE Classes Grades 7, 8, & 9 resume on Monday, January 7 & Tuesday, January 8, 2013.



Many thanks to all those who have been so generous in supporting our outreach efforts during this season. We are grateful for the many gift cards and monetary donations as well as the gifts purchased for the residents of the Jeanne Jugan Residence. Wishing you a Merry Christmas for all you do.

The next meeting of the Our Lady of Mercy Knights of Columbus will be held on

Wednesday, January 2 at 7:00 PM in the OLM School Science Room. Any adult male interested in attending and learning more about the Knights are asked to contact our Grand Knight Tom

Mahoney at tom@tommyahoney.com



"In service to one, in service to all"

Prayer to the Holy Family



O most loving Jesus, Who by Your sublime and beautiful virtues of humility, obedience, poverty, modesty, charity, patience and gentleness, and by the example of Your domestic life, did bless with peace and happiness the family You did choose on earth, in Your clemency look down upon this household, humbly prostrate before You and imploring Your mercy. Remember that this family belongs to You for to You we have in a special way dedicated and devoted ourselves. Look upon us in Your loving kindness; preserve us from danger; give us help in time of need, and grant us the grace to persevere to the end in the imitation of Your Holy Family; that having revered You and loved You faithfully on earth, we may bless and praise You eternally in heaven.

O Mary, most sweet Mother, to your intercession we have recourse, knowing that your Divine Son will hear your prayers.

And do you, O glorious Patriarch, St. Joseph, assist us by your powerful mediation, and offer, by the hands of Mary, our prayers to Jesus. Amen.



III-John McLaughlin & Holly LaChance