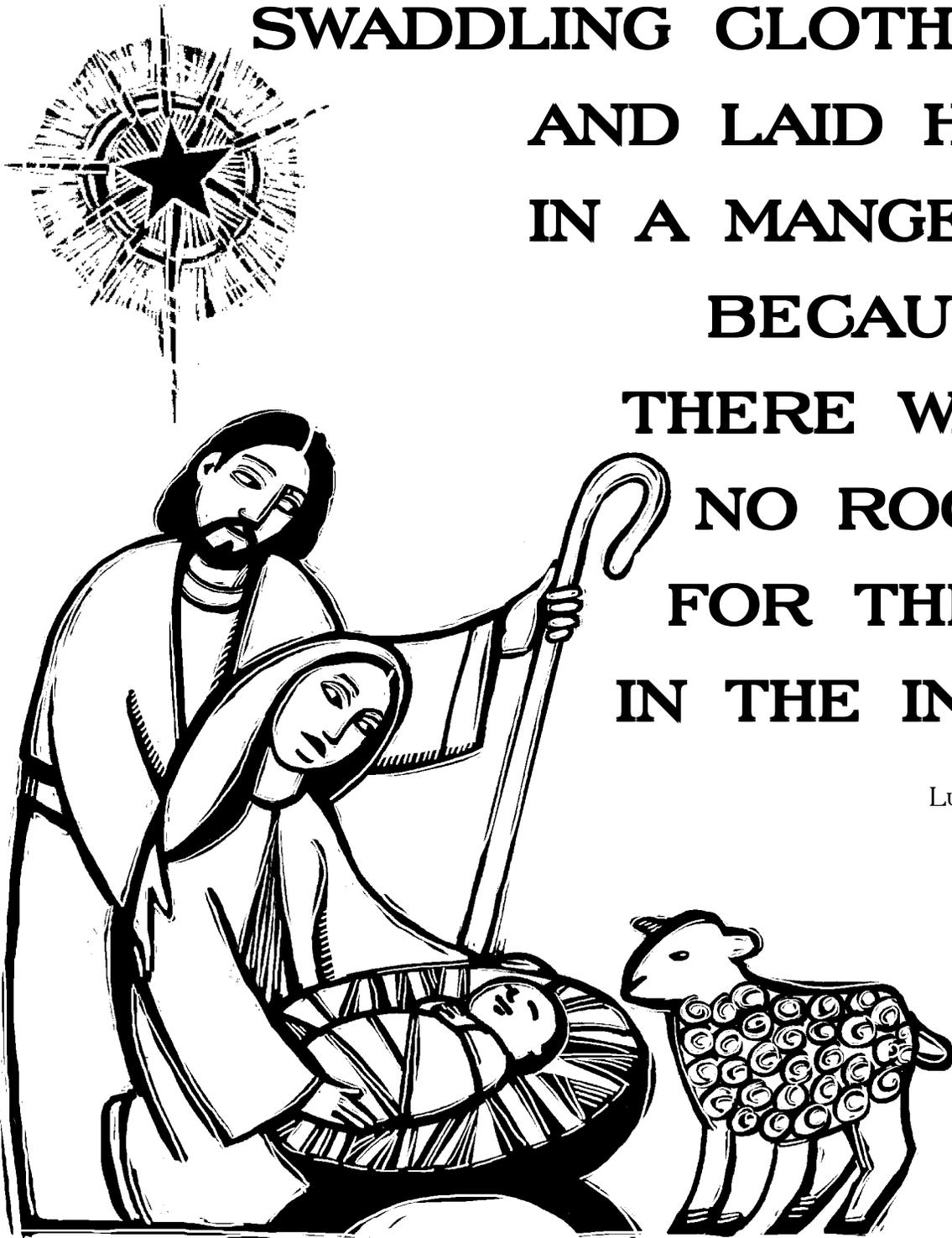


**SHE WRAPPED HIM IN
SWADDLING CLOTHES
AND LAID HIM
IN A MANGER,
BECAUSE
THERE WAS
NO ROOM
FOR THEM
IN THE INN.**

LUKE 2:6



CHRISTMAS 2010
OUR LADY OF LOURDES



Welcome to our Parish Family!

New Parishioners are cordially invited to register as members of our parish family.

Please call or visit our Parish Office.

Our Lady of Lourdes

*455 Hunter Avenue
West Islip, New York 11795*

Daily Mass
8 AM

Weekend Masses
Saturday: 5 PM
Sunday: 8 AM, 9:30 AM,
11 AM, 12:30 PM and 6 PM

Reconciliation
Saturday: 4 PM - 4:45 PM

Mission Statement

As stewards of all that God has given us, the Parish Family of Our Lady of Lourdes serves and ministers to all who come to this place. Regardless of a person's history, ethnicity, gender, orientation, age or race, we commit ourselves to open wide the doors of our Parish to provide a place of welcome and hospitality.

Vision...

so that all may know that they are a vital part of the Body of Christ, we further recommit and challenge ourselves to...

Live out our Baptismal call passionately by caring for all of God's people with justice.

Grow in an understanding of God's role in each of our lives.

Respond to the Gospel in a radical way, inviting and inspiring all to form the Kingdom of God in every moment of life.

Acknowledge we are not complete without the willingness to grow, discern and discover the Spirit who moves and guides us.

Pastoral Team

Rev. Michael A. Vetrano
Pastor

Rev. Patsy Amabile
Associate Pastor

Rev. Robert Scheckenback
Associate Pastor

Rev. Ambrose Cabildo
In Residence

Deacon John DeGuardi

Deacon Tom Lucie

Deacon Jack Meehan
Coordinator of Stewardship

Deacon John Teufel

Sr. Margaret Bickar

Senior Ministry-SAGE

Sr. Nancy Campkin

Director of Religious Education

Allegra D'Alo

Youth Minister/Social Action

Louise Jane Krol

School Principal

Sr. Diane Liona

Director of Religious Education

Mary McMahan

Director of Parish Social Ministry

Robin Reynolds-Brennan

Director of Music and Worship

Vita Scorgia

Ministry Spiritual Director

Sr. Betty Toohig

Senior Ministry-SAGE

Anthony Trombino

Business Manager

Pastoral Council

Diane Ackerly

Stacie Baltrusitis

Mary Borgs

Lisa Cantalino

Sonia DaSilva

Nilo DeLeon

Jerry Esposito

Trish Frodell

Rosalie Mangels

Maryellen McKee

Deacon Jack Meehan

John Muldoon

Bob Natale

Eileen Rega

Vita Scorgia

Fr. Mike Vetrano

Parish Staff

Jennifer Gallagher

Women's Chorale Director

Mary Anne Lettieri

Parish Office

Debbie Meyer

Bulletin Editor/Parish Office

Rosemary Multer

School Office

Rita Spera

Religious Education Office

Lori Walsh

Parish Office



Parish Office

661.3224 (*option 1*)

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - 7:30 PM

Saturday: 9 AM - 3 PM

Sunday: 9 AM - 2 PM

email: ParishOffice@ollchurch.org

fax: 661.7143

website: www.ollchurch.org

Our Lady of Lourdes School

587.7200 (*option 2*)

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - 3 PM

email: lkrol@ollschool.org

Religious Education Office

661.5440 (*option 3*)

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - Noon

1 PM - 5 PM

7 PM - 9 PM

email: ReligiousEd@ollchurch.org

Parish Outreach Office

661.9262 (*option 4*)

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

9:30 AM - 3 PM

S.A.G.E.

661.3224

(Senior Advocates for Growth
and Enrichment)

email: Sage@ollchurch.org

Welcome...

to Our Lady of Lourdes!

We are so happy to welcome everyone who has come to worship with us today! Whether you have come a long distance or you live locally, we are glad that you have decided to spend some time with us as we worship our Lord together. Please know that your presence today is a blessing to our parish family.

Would you like to know more about our parish family?

All are welcome at Our Lady of Lourdes and we do our best to reach out to everyone.

If you would like more information about our parish or if you would like one of our team to be in touch with you, please fill this form out and place it in any collection or offering basket, mail it to us, or send an email to parishoffice@ollchurch.org

Welcome...

to Our Lady of Lourdes!



I would like information about:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joining the Parish | <input type="checkbox"/> Baptizing my Children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Education of my Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Becoming a Catholic or Adult Confirmation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage or Annulment / Remarriage | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual Direction or Counseling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Our Parish Catholic School | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

I would prefer to be contacted by:

Phone at: _____ Email at: _____

Mail at: _____

Your Name: _____

One Solitary Life

I have to admit it! Even though it is against the economy and ecology, I have been known to throw out a whole string of Christmas lights because one dead bulb killed the whole string. It astonishes me that in this era of fail safe systems, we cannot figure out a way to build a string of lights that can withstand the failure of one of its members.

An uncooperative string of lights may be annoying while you are putting up the tree but, that string of lights is a good parable for the message of Christmas. After all, every page of the gospels speaks about how heaven and earth come to a stop so God can pay attention to one lost soul.

Jesus said it this way, “What man among you having 100 sheep and losing one would not leave the 99 alone to look for his one lost sheep?” God, in other words, would never throw out a whole string of lights. God would patiently locate and fix the one dim bulb!

The parable about the importance of each single life is both challenging and affirming. It is challenging because it reminds us of our mission to welcome all and leave no one out. We need to treat our sisters and brothers as God would—no matter what. That means reaching out to those who are different from us---whose lifestyles, immigration statuses, ethnic backgrounds, or religions might not be like ours. It means reaching out to that elderly neighbor; it means protecting that student in school who is bullied. It means going out of our comfort zones, making sure that we don't leave anyone out. Our challenge is to love as God does! Doing this is an amazing task – it requires the support and energy of each member of our parish community.

This is also an affirming parable because it tells us that no one is insignificant – that none of us is unimportant to God's own presence in the world. When I listen to people talk about their relationship to God, it often seems that their imagination is that God is perfectly fine without them, that God won't miss them much if they forget God's presence. But again, no page of the gospel is written in this way. Every page talks about our call, our discipleship, our service to others, and our importance to God!

Often at Christmas, I think of a poem by James Francis Allen called, “One Solitary Life.” In it, he talks about how obscure and unassuming the life of Jesus was. Maybe we can each relate to that feeling in some way. But Allen's conclusion is powerful:

*All the armies that ever marched,
All the navies that ever sailed,
All the parliament that ever sat,
All the kings that ever reigned,
Put together have not affected
The life of people on Earth
As much as that One Solitary Life*

In truth, we are each the one solitary life. We are sometimes the lost sheep and sometimes the searching shepherd. We are sometimes the lonely person in need and sometimes the compassionate friend with the caring touch. We have the power to touch others as the Incarnate Word did, in becoming one of us!

I am so glad that you are here today. You are not just one face in the crowd – you are important. It is in you that Christ is born today and I wish you a blessed and joyful Christmas.

Fr. Mike

PEP 1 Our newest students came to the Church with their families before classes began for a special event: BEE a BEE-Liever! They discovered that many of the qualities of bees were similar to the qualities needed to be good Christians. Buzz the Bee-liever is a frequent visitor in the classrooms! In the brief time these children have been in class, they have learned about their special call as Baptized members of God's Family, the beauty of creation – and most especially, they can answer any possible question about the season of Advent. Right now, they are preparing their hearts for Jesus' birthday!

PEP 2 These little “disciples” just celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation and experienced the healing love of Jesus as they modeled the example of Zaccheus who let himself see and be seen by Jesus! They have learned about the other sacraments as well, and are now preparing to study more about the Eucharist. They are watering their vine plants conscientiously ~ as the growth of these plants help them see not only the growth of their friendship with Jesus, but the connection to others in our Church family!

PEP 3 Although the classroom part of Pep 3 doesn't start until January, the children and their parents gathered in Church this fall for a special treat. Father Bob took the kids on a fishing trip! They actually only went to the parish center, where he shared with them the qualities of a good fisherman which are exactly the same qualities needed for good disciples. They received a fishnet filled with fish which they had to name, using the qualities they would be working on as disciples. After their fishing trip, they joined their parents in church for a ritual: they renewed their Baptismal promises and lit a candle with their parents. It was a very moving and inspiring afternoon!

PEP 4 What a wonderful group of youngsters! They began the year choosing to be pilgrims rather than nomads. The difference between the two is the commitment to follow the directions given to us by God: the Law of Love, the Ten Commandments, then the New Testament challenges of the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy and the Beatitudes. They have prayed the Prayer of Jabez: “Lord, enlarge my heart” . . . and they are growing so beautifully into the people God intended them to be. Their classroom discussions indicate depth, growth, compassion and sensitivity.

The **7th Graders** in our parish family know how to love and serve and feel that sense of belonging. As part of their Service Projects they help and learn more about our Ministries at OLL by hosting refreshments for the Mass of Remembrance with Ministry of Consolation, packaged and gave bread out on Thanksgiving Day with our Liturgy Committee, organized our missalettes/music issues for our Parish Family, helped our 2nd graders with their Sacrament of Reconciliation nights, helped put Advent Tags on our Parish Giving Tree and helped organize the presents for Parish Outreach, and so much more!

All **Grade 8 Confirmation Candidates** will meet with their Sponsors for RESCUE – “Religious Education Sponsor Candidate United Effort” – with a kick-off every Sunday afternoon in January. This night of prayer and reflection will provide them with an opportunity to learn about their new roles as sponsors and candidates, hear personal reflections about what it means to be a sponsor and commit to take a more active role in this process. Each evening will conclude with Sunday 6 PM Mass. Look for them Sunday, January 2, 9, 23, and 30. Let's continue to pray for our parish's Confirmation Candidates.

GRADES 6/7/8 Hang Out Nites Fridays in 2011! January 21, February 18, May 20, and June 10. Guitar Hero III is here at OLL, basketball, and volleyball are here too. Plus, some new additions! Prizes and Raffles! They continue to serve those in need – every month Grade 6/7/8 bring food/ paper goods/ and or \$1 for our Parish Food Pantry. They have contributed over \$200 since October. Wreaths, decorated by our Hang Out Kids, were given to our families who received “Giving Tree Gifts.” Over 100 kids come each month, come and be one of them!

Meetings: Merry Christmas to all from our active youth group! Youth Ministry has taken on a new life at OLL. Youth Group is meeting once a week with both High School and Middle School students. Each meeting is a chance for students to discuss the things that are on their minds—we begin with a prayer and something we call “the high/low check in.” Our group of about twenty explains the best and worst parts of their week. We then move on to a spiritual reflection. Sometimes we talk about faith, what God “looks” like or even sit in complete silence for ten minutes (no easy accomplishment for a teenager)! We finish off each meeting with a “Big Question.” What is a “Big Question?” It is a question that starts an ethical discussion; a debate about what is right and what is wrong and maybe some things that are in between. Some times it is about Catholic Social teaching which the students act out in our monthly service projects. *The next youth group meeting will take place on January 6, 2011 at 7 PM in Room 16 of the School. Please check the bulletin for important El Salvador meetings and fundraisers.*

Activities: Since the beginning of the school year, we have been to the “Hospitality Too” Soup Kitchen at St. Anne’s Church in Brentwood and Madonna Heights, a residential treatment facility for abused women in Dix Hills, to volunteer at a fair. Then, last but not least, is our annual trip to El Salvador. Many of our teens have participated and it is certainly a big commitment. Each student must be a part of fundraising for the trip itself, our sponsorship program “Families with Heart,” fundraising for the CASA Project which, through the generosity of the parish, built a home for a family in El Salvador this year. It is such a pleasure as a young adult to be a part of the lives of the truly brilliant teens at OLL. They are living examples of Christ and I am very proud to host them in our Youth Ministry programs. *If you or someone you know is interested in participating in any of our youth projects please do not hesitate to contact Allegra@ollchurch.org or phone 661.3224 ex. 135.*

Media Safety for Parents...not to be missed!

Presenter: Allegra D’Alo, OLL Youth Director

Tuesday, January 4 in the Parish Center at 7:30 PM

Allegra D’Alo, parish Youth Director, takes us into cyberspace and beyond into “Cautionspace.” If you have a child in middle school or high school, please join us for this informative and interactive class on internet security. Learn how to use the security settings on Facebook and discuss the various concerns that parents face in supervising their children on the internet.

El Salvador Sponsorship and Drive at OLL

This year we are celebrating our Familias Con Corazones–”Families With Hearts”– all of the OLL families who sponsor children through CFCA. We are building a display in the narthex to celebrate all of our generous families, and the connections they have with their sponsored children. If you sponsor a child through CFCA, please return the form below to the Rectorry or to the special box in the Narthex. If you can, please include a picture of your sponsored child.



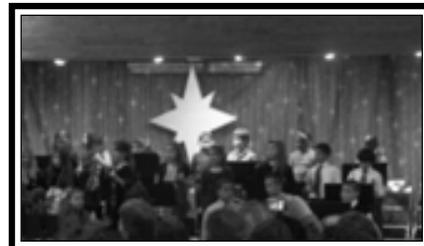
We sponsor a child through CFCA!

Family/Sponsor Name: _____

Name of Sponsored Child or Adult: _____

Our Lady of Lourdes School

Our Doors are Always Open



**Visit our classes in session-
Have your child team up with a buddy for a day!**

What Makes Us Different?

NEW Fully Stocked Science Lab & Media Center, SmartBoard, Piano/Guitar/Violin/Dance Lessons Included in Curriculum, Italian and Spanish Language, Enrichment Clubs, Student Government, Classroom Laptops, Sports Program, Student run TV Studio, Before and After Care, 8th Grade Academy of Inquiry in partnership with Stony Brook Medical School, Distance Learning with NASA, and Virtual Field Trips from Nursery through 8th Grade

Early Childhood Programs beginning at 2 years old!

**2010 -2011 Rolling Registration
Stop in or Call to Make an Appointment**

Testimonial: *"My daughter is in the fifth grade and is in her first year at OLL. I am so very pleased with the challenges that fifth grade has given her so far. This has been such a positive change for my daughter. All her teachers have challenged her to do her very best and to not settle for less. I know she has only been here for a few months, but if this is any indication of what she is to expect in the coming years, we are in for a wonderful ride!"*

- B. Molina

Phone: 631.587.7200 ext.100

Fax: 631.587.4531

Please visit our Website: www.ollschool.org

Merry Christmas from Outreach!

"And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet
ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling,
how could it be so?

It came without ribbons. It came without tags.

It came without packages, boxes or bags.

And he puzzled and puzzled til his puzzler was sore.

Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before.
What if Christmas, he thought doesn't come from a store?
What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more?"



Stingy and mean-spirited, the Grinch is confounded by Christmas. How strange that there is joy in giving to others? How absolutely absurd, how outrageous this celebration of Christmas! How difficult to understand the joy of helping others, of easing a burden, of offering hope, of responding to the needs of another. Our Lady of Lourdes Ministry of Outreach would absolutely confuse the Grinch.

Here, in Outreach, we embody the Christmas message of being a light in the darkness, offering hope to those in need, welcoming the homeless and serving others. The Outreach program is staffed by volunteers who give of their time and talent because that is what Christians do—we help others! The tremendous success of our Outreach Program is due to the generosity of the parishioners at OLL—who weekly donate food, financial assistance and time to witness to the reality of “Emmanuel” —God with Us! This year Outreach assisted over 100 families with gifts of clothing, toys and food for Christmas. As the Grinch learned—Christmas is not about the gifts—it is about the Presence. Outreach is Christmas year round to those in need.

With heartfelt gratitude for all that you, the family of Our Lady of Lourdes offer throughout the year—Outreach wishes all a Christmas gift with Peace, Joy and Hope. And, as happened for the Grinch, may your hearts grow three times larger in the realization of all the good that you do!

-Mary McMahon

December Donations to Outreach

Parish Outreach has received many donations in memory of loved ones...

- Marie Celiberti has made a donation to Outreach in loving memory of *Josephine Carrano*.
- Edgar and Colleen Marin have made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Margaret Palm*.
- Doug and Doris Cameron have made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Vito Mastrorocco*.
- Marty and Anne Kerrigan have donated gifts to Outreach in memory of *John and Helen Cody, Edward O'Rourke, Ben Rio, Howard Campkin, Paul McKee, Anthony Marotta, Vincent Servidio, Brian Nimmo, Ada Fragoletti, Diane McHugh, Harold Cannon, John Szczecina, Ruth Gilroy, Chris Blackwell (9/11/01), Harold Cornacchia, Gertrude Teufel, Salena Costella, Bernadette Tuma, Rev. Bob Guintini, Elizabeth Guintini, Rev. James Kissane, Debbie Barriere*.
- Doug and Doris Cameron have made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Richard Petrucci*.
- Adele and Bob O'Shea have made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Vito Mastrorocco*.
- Dorothy Perdue made a donation to Outreach in the name of the *Thursday Morning Breakfast Group*.
- Thomas and Cecelia Kopelakis have made a donation in memory of *Richard Petrucci*.
- Barbara Kittner has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Alan Kittner and Roy George*.
- Evelyn Christensen and Grello Pediatrics have made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Josephine Carrano*.

Support Groups

Alcoholics Anonymous:

Monday and Tuesday at 8 PM and Saturday at 2 PM and 7 PM in Lourdes Hall-convent lower level.

ALANON:

Each Wednesday at 10 AM in Lourdes Hall-convent lower level.

(Free babysitting available)



Rest In Peace

We pray for our family, friends and loved ones who have died and are deeply missed during this blessed and holy season.

Sunday, December 26

Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, & Joseph

8:00 AM Gertrude Teufel
Fr. Pat Amabile

9:30 AM Dec'd mbrs of Monroe & Shaddock Families
Fr. Pat Amabile

11:00 AM Steven Perone
Fr. Mike Vetrano

12:30 PM Ann P. Keogh
Fr. Bob Scheckenback

6:00 PM People of the Parish, Joseph Zotto, Helen Ianno, Salvatore Dellaria, Robert Dee, Edward McLoughlin, Nicholas Viscoso, Dec'd mbrs of Kozlowski, Tyminski, Caruso, and Sawicki Families
Fr. Ambrose Cabildo

Rosary/Novena

Rosary

Daily after 8 AM Mass

Miraculous Medal Novena

Monday after 8 AM Mass

Anointing of the Sick

Throughout the liturgical year.

If needed sooner, please call the Parish Office.

Baptism

Please contact the Parish Office to schedule an appointment.

Marriage

Arranged at least six months in advance, please call the Parish Office.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults(RCIA)

A process to be embraced by the Catholic Church. For non-Catholics and for Catholics who have never received formal religious education. If interested, please call the Parish Office.

Remembering...

Monday, December 27

Saint John, apostle and evangelist

8:00 AM Marietta Greco

Tuesday, December 28

The Holy Innocents, martyrs

8:00 AM Charles Homann

Wednesday, December 29

St. Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr

8:00 AM Rick Munkwitz

Thursday, December 30

8:00 AM Judith Tasso

Friday, December 31

St. Sylvester I, pope

8:00 AM Louis Montanino

5:00 PM People of the Parish

Fr. Mike Vetrano

Saturday, January 1

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God

8:00 AM John Lovari, Josephine Carrano,
Meldina Albenio, Margaret Kennedy,
Vito Mastrococco

Fr. Ambrose Cabildo

11:00 AM Lawrence Graci

Fr. Bob Scheckenback

5:00 PM Gunther Steck

Fr. Pat Amabile

Sunday, January 2

8:00 AM Gene Langan

Fr. Mike Vetrano

9:30 AM Joseph & Patricia Santangelo

Fr. Bob Scheckenback

11:00 AM Olga Bauman

Fr. Mike Vetrano

12:30 PM Donald & Patrick Manning

Fr. Pat Amabile

6:00 PM People of the Parish, Agnes Reilly, Carol Cosentino,
Michael Squillace, Rosemary Scarpetta, Thomas Albert Owens

Fr. Ambrose Cabildo



Solemnity of Mary

The Church gathers on Friday, December 31 and Saturday, January 1 to celebrate the Solemnity of Mary

(not a holy day of obligation this year).

We'll celebrate the Solemnity of Mary on...

Friday, December 31 at 5 PM (vigil)

Saturday, January 1 at 8 AM and 11 AM

Please come and pray with us!

Upcoming Marriages

Jacqueline Walsh, OLL and

Joseph Start, St. Jude, Mastic

Senior Circle

The Senior Circle meets on the last Monday of each month. The next meeting will be held on **Monday, December 27**, at **12:30 PM in the Parish Center**.

Rosary Christian Mothers

The Rosary Christian Mothers meet on the first Monday evening of each month. The next meeting will be **Monday, January 3**. We will begin with **Rosary at 7:45 PM in the Church** followed by **meeting at 8 PM in the Parish Center**.

Daytime Eucharistic Devotion

The afternoon adoration for the month of January will be on **Wednesday, January 5 from 1-3 PM**. All are invited and welcome! We will be praying for our children, our country, our men and women in the military and our clergy.



Centering Prayer Group

OLL Centering Prayer Group will be meeting in the **Spiritual Life Center** on **Thursday, January 6 at 7:30 PM**. If you have any questions, please contact Diane at 587.0966.

Holy Name Society

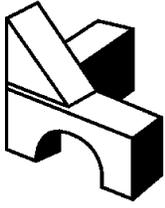
The Holy Name Society meets on the second Sunday of each month. The next meeting will be on **Sunday, January 9**. We will begin with the **Rosary at 7:40 AM in the Church** and the **meeting will follow the 8 AM Mass at 9 AM in Room 16**.

Prayer for Divine Mercy

An invitation to all men and women to be part of God's plan.

We invite you to meet in prayer for the world and our nation to put their trust in God. Our hope is that the nations will have a new spirit of morality. Please come with your love and hope for humanity as well as your prayer requests. We gather together every **Thursday at 1:30 PM before the Blessed Sacrament** for about one half hour. For more information, call Charles Argento at 586.8528.

Adult Faith Formation



**Family Matters:
Building Blocks for a Richer Family Life**
Presenter: Sr. Lauren Hanley, CSJ
Tuesdays, January 11 and 18
Parish Center
7:30 PM – 9:30 PM

- *Have you ever felt* concerned about how family life is changing?
- *Do you wonder about* how your experience growing up in a family has impacted who you are today?
- *Are you interested in* discovering ways to make changes in how you interact with your family members?
- *Would you like to learn* more about what makes families tick?

YES? Then this workshop is for you!

Recognizing the importance of "family matters", this workshop will provide an opportunity to explore how families work. Emphasis will be placed on how to build on strengths and change patterns that are not life giving.

There is a \$5 fee for each session. No fee is required for those who have paid the Religious Education Family Fee or Our Lady of Lourdes School tuition. Registration is necessary and helpful. This will enable us to have enough reading material and refreshments for all those attending. To register, please call the Religious Education Office at 661.5440, option 3 or email to religioused@ollchurch.org.

Bereavement Ministry

Bereavement Support Group

Our next bereavement group will begin on **Wednesday, January 12, 2011**. We are a general group for all losses. We will be meeting, for six weeks, in the **Spiritual Life Center located in the Convent, from 7:30PM ton 9:30 PM**. There is no fee to attend and the group is open to people of all faith denominations and parishes. For information and registration, please call Diane Ackerly at 631.226.9373 or email at dkkkk710@hotmail.com.

Coffee and Conversation

This group is to bring past bereavement support group members together for a night of conversation and hospitality. Our next meeting is on **Wednesday, January 5, 2011, in the Spiritual Life Center, from 7:30PM to 9:30PM**. For information, please call Diane Ackerly at 631.226.9373 or email at dkkkk710@hotmail.com





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The Nativity of the Lord

Today a Savior is born for us, Christ the Lord, Alleluia! The words come from the Gospel acclamation for the day, and it is important to note the tense of the verb. (Yes, it's time to go back to fifth grade English.) A Savior is born for us—"is" is the present tense. Of course, the birth of Jesus took place far in the past. So why not say it that way: "A Savior was born"? The words today are really important, and have to do with what is going on in our celebration of Christmas.

Let's start with the fact that we don't really know on what day Jesus was born. While we each have a birth certificate that lists a specific date, there is no such record for Jesus. So on December 25 we are not celebrating his "birthday" as we might remember our own. So what are we doing today?

Most of us will gather with family or friends. We will open gifts, maybe have a special meal, do some relaxing things together. We'll make a holiday of the day. Through all that we do today, the fact that Jesus is born may at first escape us, but it is no less important. As baptized Christians this day is more than a holiday. And it really has less to do with Jesus and what happened to him than it has to do with what is happening to us. In his birth, Jesus brought together the human and the divine. He gave us a share in the divine life that is his. St. John describes it this way when he writes in the first chapter of his Gospel, "to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God" (v. 12). Today's feast is nothing less than a celebration of the opportunity for humankind to share in God's life. And it happens today, because a Savior is born in us.

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The time came for her to have her child and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. — Lk 2:6b-7

"Renewing Our Spiritual Home"

Summary Data

- 119 Responses to Questionnaire
- 91% Positive Responses



So many of our parishioners who responded to the questionnaire stated their love for our parish and the warmth they experience being a part of our parish family.

List of projects that need to be addressed...

- Church lighting and electrical
- Narthex entrance
- Church pews, kneelers, chairs, and doors
- Parking lot refurbishment
- Parish Center air conditioner unit
- Parish Center repair and remodel

Brief summary of written comments...

- almost all agree lighting in the Church needs to be addressed
- some felt the parking lot is not a top priority
- Parish Center repair/remodel should be a high priority
- flexibility in payment plan for pledges would be appreciated
- many comments stated their understanding that the projects are like maintenance each must do to their own homes

It is time for our current parishioners of our parish to respond with the same love and generosity of our original parishioners and those who were part of our efforts in 1986. We need to care for our home. We need to give priority to our house of faith. Please take a moment and fill out the questionnaire (*found in the Parish Office*) and let us know how you feel-your feedback is important!

Reasons to Celebrate Christmas

by Ron Rolheiser, OMI

For many people the thought of Christmas brings fatigue. It's not the religious aspect that causes the tiredness, but the overdrawn rituals that surround it: the overly decorated shops, the conscriptive shopping, the lights, the Santas, the Christmas trees, and the carols that begin to echo through our malls already in early November.

And so it is asked: What has all of this, or any of it, got to do with the birth of Jesus? Hasn't Advent, which is supposed to be a time of preparation for the feast, become an exhausting ordeal that brings us to Christmas day already saturated with what we were supposed to be building up to? Wouldn't we honor Jesus more if we spend the money we lavish on Christmas on the poor instead? Don't our Christmas celebrations serve to obliterate our awareness of Jesus' birth more than highlight it? Valid questions.

Our Christmas celebrations, admittedly, do start too early, are too-commercially driven, do focus too little on anything religious, and do not take the poor sufficiently into account. Too often too they serve to obliterate religious awareness rather than highlight it. And so it is easy to be cynical about the Christmas. It contains too many excesses.

However, with that being conceded, we need to be careful not to throw out the baby with the bath water – and that is more than a pun in this case. Because something is done badly does not mean it should be cancelled. What is called for, I believe, is not the cancellation of the tinsel, the lights, the socials, the food, and the drink that surround Christmas, but a better use of them. There are good reasons to cancel the rituals with which we surround Christmas, but there are even better reasons for keeping them.

What are those reasons? Why continue so many of these rituals when, almost invariably, they degenerate into excess and fatigue?

Because we have a congenital need to celebrate, pure and simple. As human beings we have a healthy, God-given, genetically-encoded need to sometimes make festival, to have carnival, to celebrate an elaborate Sabbath, to park our prudence for a few hours, and to live life as if there wasn't any reason to pinch our pennies or to be cold to our neighbors. Christmas is Sabbath, the supreme Sabbath.

There are seasons in life, and these should be on

a regular cycle, that are meant precisely for enjoyment, for family, for friends, for color, for tinsel, and for good food and good drink. There is even the occasional time for some prudent excess. Jesus gave voice to this when his disciples were scandalized by a woman's excess in anointing his feet with perfume and kisses.

All cultures, not least those who are economically poor, have times of festival where, explicitly or implicitly, they take seriously the words: The poor you will always have with you, but today it is time to celebrate. Christmas is such a time, meant for festival.

John Shea, in his now-classic book on Christmas, *Starlight*, tells the story of a family who decided one year to celebrate an alternative Christmas. They did not put up a tree, did not string up any lights, played no carols, and did not exchange gifts. They met for a simple, quiet meal on Christmas day. Asked by friends how it all went over, one family member replied that it "was pleasant". Another member, perhaps speaking more honestly, stated that it was "an existential abyss".

There is a God-given pressure inside of us that pushes us to celebrate and instills in us an irrepressible sense that we are not meant for poverty, gloom, and carefully measured-out relationships, but that we are meant ultimately for the feast, the dance, the place of lights and music, and the place where we don't measure out our pennies and our hearts on the basis of having to survive and pay mortgages. The celebration of festival and carnival, even with their excesses, help teach us that.

Christmas is such a festival. In the end, its celebration is a lesson in faith and hope, even when it isn't as strong a lesson in prudence.

To make a festival of Christmas, to surround Jesus' birthday with all the joy, light, music, gift-giving, energy, and warmth we can muster is, strange as this may sound, a prophetic act. It is, or at least it can be, an expression of faith and hope. It's not the person who says: "It's rotten, let's cancel it!" who radiates hope. That can easily be despair masquerading as faith. No. It is the man or woman who, despite the world's misuse and abuse of these, still strings up the Christmas lights, trims the tree and the turkey, turns up the carols, passes gifts to loved ones, sits down at table with family and friends, and flashes a grin to the world, who is radiating faith, who is saying that we are meant for more than gloom, who is celebrating Jesus' birth.

Used with permission of the author, Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser. Father Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author and is currently the President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website-www.ronrolheiser.com.

Altar Society

Altar linens this week will be cared for by *Nancy Trujillo*. If you would like to help care for our altar needs, please call the Parish Office at 661.3224.

Pastoral Care of Our Sick

Please call the Parish Office at 661.3224 to leave the names of parishioners who:



- are homebound and would like to receive the Eucharist.
- are in Good Samaritan Hospital and would like to be visited by a member of our Pastoral Care Ministry.
- would like to receive the Sacrament of the Sick.

Pray for Our Sick

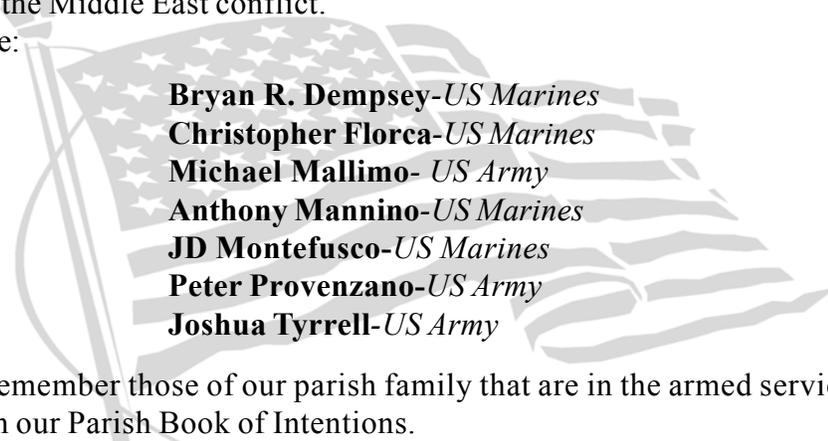
Please remember to keep in your thoughts and prayers ...

Giovanni Andriola, Susan Aviza, Ben Bellotti, Viola Callanan, Grace Ciccarello, Virginia Crescini, Lucilia DaTorre, Beverly DeCanio, Mike DeJong, Jeanne DellaRagione, Tony DeVivo, Tony Drexler, Debbie Eichen, Jake Feldman, Patricia Ferrara, Bill Howe, Kathleen Kerrigan, Robyn Kerrigan, Ann Losee, Louise Malcuit, John McNevin, Vincent Meade, Frances Miranda, Julio Miranda, Michael Montesanto, John Mordente, Ruth Murray, Evelyn Nonnon, Karen Parpounas, Joe Radosti, Dorothy Schiavone, AnnMarie Schiraldi, Baby Isabella Shaw, Roy Sorrese, Derek Stahl, Lindsay Stahl, Linda Starr, Patrick Tardo, Nancy Turano, Al Van Pelt, Bunny Vilim, Irv Weiss, Joe Yezek

Members in the Military

We ask that you pray especially for those in our parish that are on active duty in the Middle East conflict.

They are:



Bryan R. Dempsey-US Marines
Christopher Florca-US Marines
Michael Mallimo- US Army
Anthony Mannino-US Marines
JD Montefusco-US Marines
Peter Provenzano-US Army
Joshua Tyrrell-US Army

...and remember those of our parish family that are in the armed services, listed in our Parish Book of Intentions.

Christmas

Flower Offering

Petrino & Reinbold Families
Virginia A. Petrino
Stephen A. Petrino
Maura N. Dilkes
Eileen Okurowski
Anna & Theodore Reges
Muriel & John Flynn
Nick Cibelli
J. Edmund & Leona McCormick
Joseph & Edith Manley
Yvonne Winthers
Frances & Joseph Cannizzaro
Anthony Cannizzaro
Carolyn Wissing
Pauline Licata
Joseph Shields
Vito Mastrorocco
Edward & Kathryn Herger & Peter
All Veterans
M/M John Meehan
James McGrade
M/M J. Brown
M/M Jo McGrade
All in Heaven and on Earth
Ms. Amy Finch
Mrs. Agnes C. Madden
Geraldine Ferrara
Rosemary & Charles Clancy
Theresa & Frank Feliney
Francis McLoughlin
Dec'd mbrs of DiGiovanna &
Mangels Families
Our Parents
M/M Gary LaCarrubba
Jack & Sheila Timmer
Leonard Parine
Kenneth Meyer
Eugene & Lois Parine
Dec'd mbrs of Badamo &
DeGuardi Family
Marie Elder
Andrew "Al" Velten
M/M Howard Lewis
Patrick Kennedy
Mary & José Jirau
Liantonio/Fernbacher
Theresa Schnappauf
Thomas & Mary Daly

M/M V. Sitone
Larry Krupp
Pasquale DeVivo & daughter,
Joanne Wolffe
Eileen Normile
Vincent & Mary Cannillo
Frances & John Miglino
Vincent & Carmela Vieni
In thanksgiving
Dec'd mbrs of our family
Hilbert, Evoskevicz, Volpone &
Capitena families
Steven Perone
Frances & Michael Toriva
Fr. Bill Shean
Thomas & Florence Brady
Thomas E. Dowling
Carrano & Celiberti Families
Devlin & Peterson Families
Ferrara & Dwyer Family
My Mom, Elizabeth Golden
Josephine & Carmine Barila
Fannie & Anthony Messina
Richard M. Devlin, Sr.
Henry & Josephine Busching
Jessie & Ed Muller, Sr.
Catherine & Richard Bermingham
John & Elizabeth Meditz
Robert Wagner, Sr.
Fr. Joe Lukaszewski
Charlie Tibbetts
Mom & Dad Crosby
Florence O'Regan
Edward Hanly
M/M Charles Cognato
John R. Hodgkins
Dec'd mbrs of Angeloro &
Caiati Families
Alberta Firth
Maryellen Robinson
Donald Ferguson
Suzanne Ferguson
Civile-Keegan Family
Kuhlwilm & Estelle Family
McIlwaine Family
Virginia Muldoon
Sharon Muldoon Suchocki
Dorothy Baltrusitis

William Ball
M/M Thomas Rao
Jerry Esposito
Louis Montanino
Virginia & Joseph Beno
John, Richard &
Robert Fitzgerald
Gene Langan
M/M Gerard Clark
William Basso
Vincent & Grace Capanzano
Joseph Marrone
Margaret & Joseph Colasuonno
Helen & Rocco Marrone
Robert Costanza
Joan Udris
Jean Cilluffo
Elizabeth & Martin Lichten
John P. Caparella
Parrinello & Temutto Families
Allocca & D'Aponte Families
Bill Mace
Peter Roache
Michael Reilly
M/M Vincent Vela
Biagio Mingoia
M/M Joseph Castiglione
Salvatore Castiglione
M/M Andrew Nangano
Edward Kelley
David Hesch
Tori Cohen
M/M John Vaccaro
John Vollmer
M/M Anthony DeVivo
Tamney Family
John R. McKeefery
M/M John E. Seylar
Joseph A. Congero, Jr.
Harrell & Wesley Family
Fr. Joe
Fr. Bill Shean
Frances & Woodrow Slayback
Leah & Luke MacQuade
Short & Troiano Families
Anthony Borsella
Maryann Borsella
Critchley-Zucco Families

Dec'd mbrs Colletti &
Guarino Families
Dec'd mbrs Carola &
Franzone Families
Homann-Sabala Family
M/M Paul Munch, Jr.
Walter & Helen Cameron
Michael & Ann Schnappauf
Colleen McNamara
Christopher Cunn
Aileen & James Hunt
Anna & Paul Crepaldi
Gerard Ambrosino
Nick & Teresa Ambrosino
Sal & Josephine Carrano
John & Margaret Kopitsch
Robert Wilson
M/M Alfred Ferrara
William Martino & Family
Alice Bonacci
Castagna Family
Scaccia Ferro Family
Michael & Edna Ryan
Ann & John Murray
Francesca & Francesco Buquicchio
Victims of 9/11
Frank A. Borsilli
Barbara McCarthy
Grandpa Ralph C. Padula
Grandma Carrie Fileccia
Marlene & Robert Pfeiffer
Richard Martin Maher
Dominick Stabile
Ed & Alice Lee
M/M Thomas Livecchi
Frank Meyer
William A. Small
Anne Bolin
Paul Donat
Angela Russo
Hildegard Kahlke
Bernhard Kahlke
Brigette Webner
Joachim Webner, Tony Roberto
Francis Namacca
James Ranaca
Robert T. Beck
M/M Ronald Maginniss

Ann Keogh
Rutkowski Family
M/M Ted Scorcia
Mary Steck
Mary Jean Wilkinson
Alice Micel
DeLeon & Espina Family
James J. Werner
M/M Joseph Bott
Paul Ermert
Keane & Foley Families
John Conzone
Michael & Jean Kaminski
Mary & Cathy
William Knoblich
Flynn Family
M/M Joseph Zito
Evelyn Albert
Angie & Gaspare Monaco
Dick & Stephanie Garcia
Charles Alton Brady
Veronica Kenny
Anne Hampson
M/M Brian Zitani
Francis Schweitzer
M/M Malchick
Thomas G. Brando
M/M Michael Montesanto
Grace & Walter Okuska
Loved Ones
Lucille Harsch
Joseph James Porter
Flanagan-Reilly Family
Sally Viverito
M/M Robert Petersen
Hennessey/Barresi Families
John Szczecina
Norbert J. Kucala
Rose Gaustella
Irace/Conte Families
Dec'd mbrs of Family
Liberta Brusca
Families of 9/11
Sarah & Mike Furia
Angeline & Jerry Punzi
Dolores Joan DiBlasi
Anna, Josef, Otto & Franz Mahler
Mrs. Eleanor Bruno

M/M Anthony Molinari
Kolkmeier/Kirwan Families
Bill Heartt
Guider & Heartt Families
Harry Hogan, Jr.
Ed Jaworski
Virginia Cruse
Edward White
Jean Stoltenborg
Mario Pannunzio
Laura & Leo Moy
Joseph Aguanno
Ruth Comparato
Patricia Hynes
Gertrude Sullivan
Jean Obremski
Arthur O'Hara
Walter Cox
Aniello Bianco
Giuffr  & Pezzuti Families
Lodespoto Family
Angelone Family
Angelo & Rose Paolino, Sr.
Terence McAdams
Madeline Nadvornik
Martin Klein
M/M Mark Grabow
Peter & Anna Mancuso
Dan & Dominick Mancuso
John & Millie Ritchie
M/M Peter M. Magliocco
Brewster "Digger" Gottsch
M/M John Belyea
M/M John Sureau
Josephine & Antonio Paladino
John & Fred Ardolino
Marie Turfaro
Richard Heithaus
Claire Hopkins
Charles & Antoinette Deleo
Kaz & Stella Malaszczyk
Domenica Ruocco
Joan Meyer
Mechelina Geddr e
M/M Steven Diamond
M/M Joseph Staniszewski
Joan Hill
Raymond Downey

Dan O'Connor
Robert Mariani
Louis Ammirati
John Owens
Pasquale & Clara Strocchia
Carmela Severino
M/M Peter Mockler
William Hahn
M/M Steven Troiano
Ann Rolston
Corazon A. Smith
M/M Anthony LaFemina
Gregory Fredriksen
Marie Winthrop
M/M Terence Woodside
Charles T. Waag
Frank Harnos, Jr.
Mary & Edward Baker
Mary & Frank Harnos
Dec'd mbrs of LaGiglia &
Cinelli Families
M/M Vito Mastrorocco
M/M John Giambrone
Gustina & Ferruggiari Families
Palomba Family
Josie D'Angelo
Ellen Finn
M/M Michael Lamb
Joseph D'Angelo
Concetta Cuttonaro
M/M Michael V. Porzio
Margaret & Wilfred Corrigan
Angela M. Lillis
M/M Salvatore DePetro
William F. Adams
Nancy, Joseph & Joseph Aragona
Minnie & William Watts
Nicolas Aragona
Carmella Triolo
Dec'd family members
Flo & William Carupella
M/M Robert Petite
Joseph "Plasticville Joe" Orbello
Addeo & Deyhle Families
Mary & Edward Baker
Margaret & Angelo Callegari
Jack & Laura Dawson
Alan Kittner

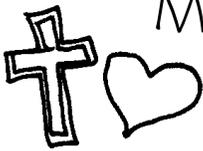
Edith, Jewel, Mildred & Helen Cozella
M/M James Ivers
M/M Daniel Abraham
M/M James Dobson
M/M John Muldoon
Richard Heinz
M/M G. Pjura
Maureen Nyholm
Crescenzo Picone
M/M James Alcus
Lazarich & Ruth Families
M/M Noel MacDermott
M/M William Fortunato
Fred Totans
Perez Family
M/M Thomas Hamilton
Maria Rosenkranz
Musumeci/Cilli Families
M/M Natale
M/M Russell Murphy
Hannah Greenhalgh
M/M Frank Sadowski
M/M James Clifford
Mary Krontiris
Francoise Heim
Robert Govier, Sr.
Edward & Dorothy Solomonik
M/M Michael Poveromo
M/M Christopher Dolan
M/M Carl Nicolosi
Maureen Mehnert
Irene Murray
M/M Alan Storjohann
M/M Anthony D'Auria
M/M Walter Fernandez
M/M Joseph Santomartino
Joe Russo
Pearl Votta
M/M Gerard Vitolo
Irene & Hans Gries
M/M Domenic D'Achille
M/M Louis Esposito
Mary Conroy
M/M Bruce O'Shaughnessy
M/M Nicholas Papocchia
M/m Eddie Shaffer
M/M Richard Van Manen
Barbara Viamonte

Sharing the Gospel

The angels shared the good news about Jesus so people could worship him, too. Maybe it was the way they glowed when they sang about Jesus. Maybe it was the words or the tune of their songs. After the angels left, those shepherds were curious enough to stop what they were doing and look for Jesus themselves. When they found him, they were thrilled. Everything the angels told them was true.



Mission for the Week



Ask your parents to light candles and join you in singing songs about Jesus.

Puzzle

Fit this Gospel message into the empty squares:

They saw the baby lying on a bed of hay.

B					
		T			

Prayer



God,
I am thankful that the angels and the shepherds spread the good news about Jesus.

Something to Draw



Draw a picture of yourself telling a friend about how wonderful Jesus is.