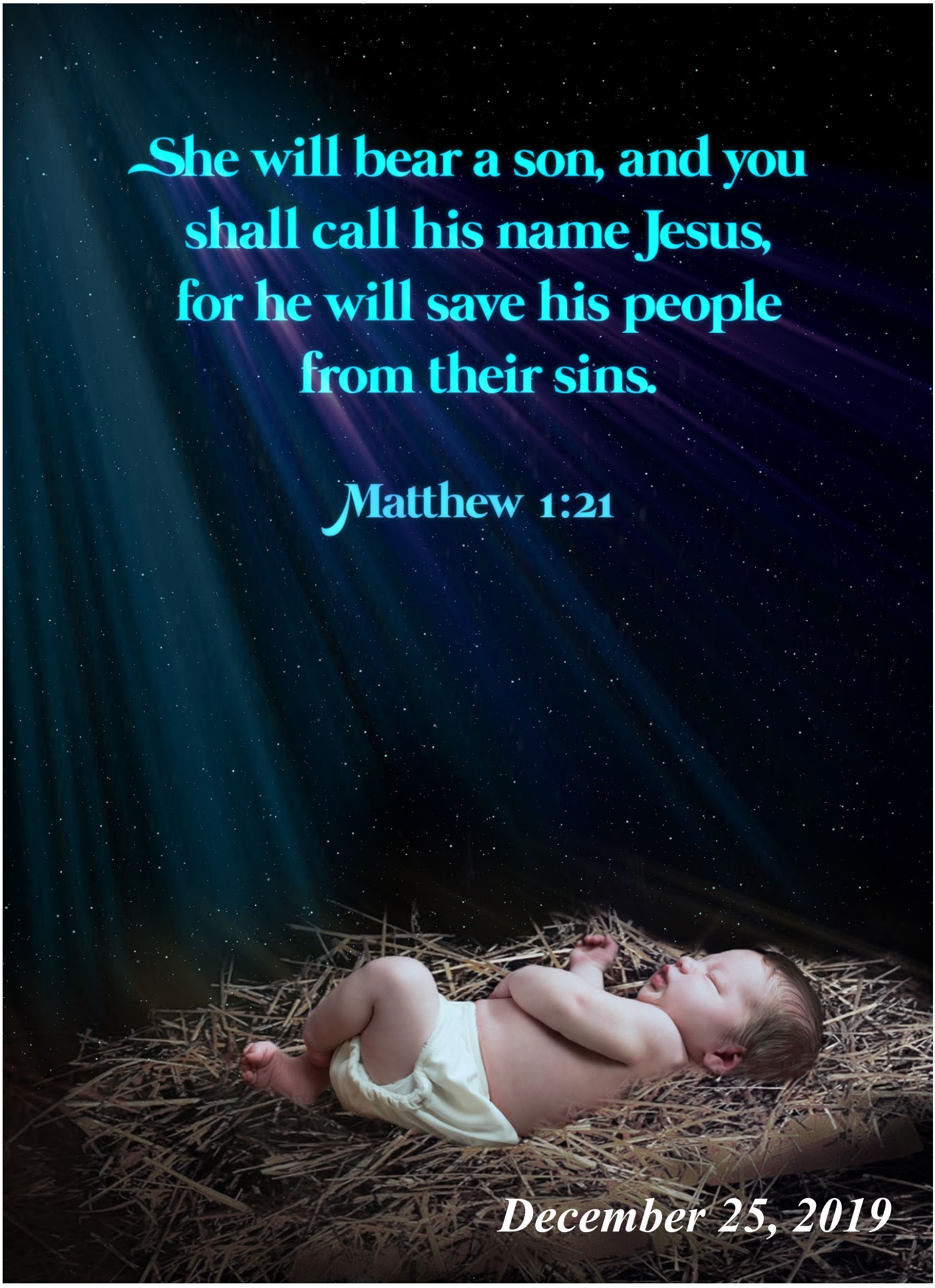

She will bear a son, and you
shall call his name Jesus,
for he will save his people
from their sins.
Matthew 1:21
December 25, 2019

Our Lady of Lourdes
455 Hunter Avenue
West Islip, NY 11795
631.661.3224 | Website: ollchurch.org

Msgr. Brian J. McNamara, Pastor
Rev. Gregory Breen, Associate Pastor
Rev. Sylvester Chukwumalume, Chaplain - Southside Hospital
Rev. Freddy Lozano, in Residence

Welcome...

to Our Lady of Lourdes!

Christmas is a time for family. We are glad you decided to celebrate with our Parish Family during this Holy Season. We hope you will return often. If you would like to become a registered member of our Parish, please fill in the information below and place this form in the collection basket or send it to the Parish Office.

Family Name_____

First Names: Head of Household_____ Spouse_____

Children (please include ages, grades and sacraments received)

_____ _____

_____ _____

Address_____ City_____ Zip_____

Phone_____ E-Mail Address_____

Below please find a set of 3 chances. It is a 50-50 drawing. Chances are $50 each or 3 chances for $100. 1st place winner will win 35% of the money, 2nd place will win 10% of the money and 3rd place will win 5% of the money. You have to be in it to win it! The drawing will take place on **Sunday, January 19 after the 12:30pm Mass**. Hopefully, the Wise Men will bring you a gift of a winning ticket!

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE
Name_____
Phone_____
1 ticket for $50; 3 tickets for $100

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE
Name _____
Phone _____
1 ticket for $50; 3 tickets for $100

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE
Name_____
Phone_____
1 ticket for $50; 3 tickets for $100

Solemnity of Mary

The Parish Family of Our Lady of Lourdes will gather on **Wednesday, January 1** to celebrate the **Solemnity of Mary**.

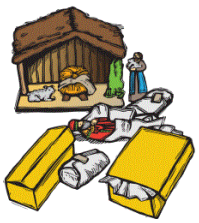
We will celebrate the Solemnity of Mary on…
Tuesday, December 31 at 5:00pm
Wenesday, January 1 at 8:30am, 10:00am and 12:10pm
Please come and pray with us! **NOTE: There will be no 7:30pm Mass**

Share The Light Of Christ

On one gentle night
Under one star so bright
The LIGHT of the World was born!
May the love and peace that was born that night
be with you and your loved ones at Christmas and always.

The Family Ministry Committee

The First Nativity Scene



The origin of the display of the Nativity dates back to the time of St. Francis of Assisi. St. Francis was concerned that people did not appreciate the gift of Christ's birth. St. Francis wanted to celebrate the Incarnation (God becoming a man) in a special way. He wanted to do something that would help people to remember the Christ Child and how Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

On Christmas Eve, in the year 1223A.D., at the proper time, St. Francis and his Franciscan brothers created a new Bethlehem. People, young and old, came to see this new sight. They carried torches to light up the sky as they approached the manger. Once again, shepherds came from the fields to come and adore the King. All were filled with joy over the mystery of the Incarnation. And a beautiful tradition was started.

As you look upon your own family Nativity set, may you remember and celebrate again God's love for His creation. In order to show His abundant love, mercy, and forgiveness for us, God became one like us. That is what the crèche ultimately symbolizes.

VISIT A COLLECTION OF NATIVITY SETS IN THE PARISH CENTER!

DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Christmas 2019

To the People of God of the Diocese of Rockville Centre:

In his December 1, 2019 Apostolic Letter *Admirabile Signum: On the Meaning and Importance of the Nativity Scene*, Our Holy Father Pope Francis writes:

> "The nativity scene is like a living Gospel rising up from the pages of sacred Scripture…I wish to encourage the beautiful family tradition of preparing the nativity scene in the days before Christmas, but also the custom of setting it up in the workplace, in schools, hospitals, prisons and town squares.
>
> Great imagination and creativity is always shown in employing the most diverse materials to create small masterpieces of beauty. As children, we learn from our parents and grandparents to carry on this joyful tradition, which encapsulates a wealth of popular piety. *It is my hope that this custom will never be lost and that, wherever it has fallen into disuse, it can be discovered and revived*."

The Holy Father captures so poignantly how we creatively share our Catholic faith generation to generation through the Nativity sets and creches that bring Christ's light and love into our homes, our parishes and our public squares.

He also captures how the poor, the outcast, the ignored, the forgotten and the vulnerable have a privileged place in every Nativity scene: "The presence of the poor and the lowly in the nativity scene remind us that God became man for the sake of those who feel most in need of his love and who ask him to draw near to them. Jesus, 'gentle and humble in heart' (Mt 11:29), was born in poverty and led a simple life in order to teach us to recognize what is essential and to act accordingly. The nativity scene clearly teaches that we cannot let ourselves be fooled by wealth and fleeting promises of happiness. We see Herod's palace in the background, closed and deaf to the tidings of joy. By being born in a manger, God himself launches the only true revolution that can give hope and dignity to the disinherited and the outcast: the revolution of love, the revolution of tenderness. From the manger, Jesus proclaims, in a meek yet powerful way, the need for sharing with the poor as the path to a more human and fraternal world in which no one is excluded or marginalized."

As we celebrate the joy of Christmas and the power and presence of the Prince of Peace in our families, in the Church and in the World, we realize at the same time that the Christmas Crib can never be separated from the agony of Calvary's Cross.

Post Office Box 9023, Rockville Centre, NY 11571-9023 • phone 516.678.5800 • fax 516.678.3138 • bishopsoffice@drvc.org

Even as we rejoice this Christmas of 2019, we remember and stand with the poor, the hungry, the addicted, the mentally ill, the global refugees and non-documented immigrants, and survivors of sexual abuse.

As we pray before the Christmas manger and see the beauty, the hope, the possibility in the birth of Jesus, we are compelled to remember that far too many children do not receive the welcome and joy they deserve for the miracle of their existence.

We cannot forget this Christmas season the great sadness that New York State, through the passage of the horrific Reproductive Health Act[1], has enshrined into law the killing of innocent human beings through abortion up until the moment of actual birth and beyond, as this radical law permits the killing of those children who survive abortion.

Together, we invoke the power of the Prince of Peace and His compassionate Word found in the Beatitudes and in His call to serve the poor and the most vulnerable among us in Matthew 25. Our Lord gives us the courage and the voice as the Catholic Church in New York State and around the world to speak of the beauty, the sanctity and the dignity of every human life.

We will continue to be "a sign of contradiction" by witnessing relentlessly and courageously to the Gospel of Human Life. As is said in the first words of the *Didache*, the earliest known non-Scriptural Christian writing: "There are two Ways, one of Life and one of Death…" We will always stand with our earliest ancestors in the Christian faith in favor of the Way of Life and opposed to the Way of Death.

We will continue to seek the intercession of St. Thomas More, patron of statesmen, politicians and lawyers for the conversion of the public servants who have supported this tragic legislation.

The Cistercian biblical scholar Father Simeon writes: "The Child, while present only in Bethlehem by his poverty and weakness, is already present in the pattern of the constellations by his splendor and his glory."[2]

May our praise and glory of the Prince of Peace fill our hearts and homes and give us the courage and prayerful determination to bring the Joy of the Gospel and the Splendor of Truth to every public square in New York State and throughout the world.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ John O. Barres

Most Reverend John O. Barres
Bishop of Rockville Centre

[1] https://www.drvc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ReproductiveHealthCareAct.pdf

[2] **Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (Fr. Simeon),** ***Fire of Mercy Heart of the World: Meditations on the Gospel according to St. Matthew Volume 1*** **(San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 76.**

Christmas FLOWER OFFERING

Petrino & Reinbold Families
Marie A. Reinbold
Mark Rosen
John & June Carrick
Tom & Ellen McMahon
Patrick Manley
Virginia A. Petrino,
Stephen A. Petrino, Petrino,
Buonanno & Kaminski Families
Anthony M. Rao
Andrew (Al) Velten,
Andrew (Drew) Velten
Loehr, Koscivch, Wormington &
Marczk Families
Mrs. Modesta Alcobia
Deceased Members of Grillo &
Quevedo Families
Mr. & Mrs. Angelo Ferrara
Mangels & Murphy Families
Mrs. Melissa Rogan
Al, Pat & Kevin Waters
Susan McCarthy &
Lorraine Collins
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Sandora
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Lewis
Carolyn Wissing
Eleanor Carrano
Joseph C. Capo II
Bunting & Hirt Family
Mr. Daniel Henery
Raymond W. Everett, Jr.
Leonard & Gertrude Parine,
Kenneth Meyer,
Eugene & Lois Parine,
Martha Wills, Frances Parine
Leonard & Christine Parine
John R. Hodgkins
Mr. Gorge Tibbe
Philip Berthold, Jr.,
Lucille Yngstrom & Philip Berthold, III
Mrs. Charlphine Lanigan
Mr. Richard M. Devlin, Sr.
The Devlin & Peterson Families
Mr. Russell & Mrs. Carvajal-Russell
Carmine & Josphine Barila
Anthony & Fannie Messina
Mrs. Bruce J. Ferland, Sr
Anthony & William Perre
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Zito
Mary Radosti
Angeloro & Caiati Families
Schmitt & Loscalzo Family Members
Mr.& Mrs. Frank Aparo
Thomas E. Dowling
Ewa Kaminska
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas McLoughlin
Patrick McCarthy, Peter McCarthy
Edward, Kathryn, Peter &
John Herger
Okurowski & Lee Families
Anthony Molinari
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Cusack
Mr. & Mrs. Angelko Telemanic
Mary & Patrick Rodemeyer
Michael Reilly
Walter & Helen Cameron
Michael & Ann Schnappauf
Rosemary & Charles Clancey
Mr. & Mrs. Roderick Dantini
Mr. P:atricia McKeefery
Lanfair & Ruvolo Families
Mrs. Donna Restivo
Herrera & DeLeon Families
Marie & Silvio Allocca
Louise & Amedeo D'Aponte
Thomas J. Fey
Mrs. Terrianne Messina
Mr. William Thomson
Ms. Eileen Martin
Bertha Morris
Steven Christopher Perone
Frances Torina, Michael Torina
Joseph & Anne Malloy
Joseph Horan
Fr. Joe, Fr. Bill Sheen, Fr. Pat
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Benavides
Andrew Sciaruto, Jr.
Deceased Members of Brusca &
Bronkhurst Families
John & Elizabeth Meditz
Paul R. DeSantis
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Castiglione,
Salvatore Castiglione,
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Nangano,
Camille & Ronnie Malaro,
Linda Massaro, Ed Kelley,
Dan Flesch, Anna Palumbo,
and Joseph Piombo, Sr
Thomas & Florence Brady
Deceased Members of the Ferguson Family
Bill Mace, Peter Roache
Ms. Marianne Orross
John P. Caparella
Paul Stegemann, Edward A. Kelly, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Livecchi
Carpenter, Cognato, & Frers Families
Lawrence & Elaine Stehl
Rosemary & Peter Adrat and
Anne & Joseph Reilly
Amabile & Bono Families
Ms. Mechelina Geddrie
Mr. & Mrs. Antonio DeLeon
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Walas
Carole P. Gallagher
Mr. & Mrs. David\ Antanasio
Jessie & Edward Muller, Sr.
Catherine & Richard Bermingham
Robert Beck
Deceased Member of the Colletti &
Guarino Families
Mr. & Mrs. Richard T. Finn
Jim Bogart & Brian Bogart
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Zitani
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Yagarich
Mr. Thomas Ahearn
Fred & Charlene Hervey
Charles & Georgette Van Manen
Mr. & Mrs. Vincent Lamattina
Mr. & Mrs. Domenick Paladino
Felisa Baltazar, Gaspar Baltazar,
Raffy Baltazar, Julia Razon, Ladiscao Razon
Guider & Heartt Families
Dan, Mike, Mickey Salegna,
Ann Harnos, Lil Daly, Chrissy Salegna
Gary & Josephine Vega
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Montesanto
Mr. & Mrs. Natale Pensabere
Dr. & Mr. William Thies
Edward F. White, Sr.
Anthony Ricciotti
Elvera Vieni
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Lucie
Mr. & Mrs. John Sehn
Maryellen Ranzie
Jennifer Gordon
Mr. & Mrs. Francisco Castiller
Mrs. Anna Munkwitz
Mr. & Mrs. Janusz Wlodkowski
Anna & Dominick Nicolosi
Denzler Family
Petersen & Wilson Family
Mr. & Mrs. John Piropato
Mr. & Mrs. John Bochicchio
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Sterling
Mr. & Mrs. Cyril Marquardt
John & Teresa Nikl, Ray & Joan Udris
Mr. & Mrs. James Koehler
Mr. Michael Dennehy
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kaminski
Consolacion DeLeon, Irneo DeLeon

Raymundo Herrera, Edward Feeney, Giusppe Mezzacappa
Parrinello & Termotto Families
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Mascolo
Joseph Lehmann
Keane & Foley Families
Al Eppers
Deceased Members of the Giuffré & Pezzuti Families
Mom & Dad Furia, Mom & Dad Punzi
Peter DeBlasi
Mr. & Mrs. John Mihalo
Frank Harnos Jr., Callegari & Baker Family
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Kilkelly
Mr. Frank Isopo
Sheila Macquade
Benjamin Coppola
Ed, Emma & Eddie Cameron
Mr Vincent Ammirati & Ms Susan LaSala
Patrick, Mary Ellen & Dennis
Mr. & Mrs. E J Terribile
Mr. William Brennan
Kuhlwilm & Estelle Families
Lee & Finnegan Family
Rose & Sal Guastella
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Anderson
Mr. & Mrs. Terence Woodside
Joseph Marrone
Mr. & Mrs. William Mazzoli, Jr.
Cruz & Academia Family
Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Simo
Mr. & Mrs. Edmund Kinney
John Kelly & Liz Finn
Margaret Esposito & James Palmitesto
Mr. Kevin Cruze
Roy & Cecelia George
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Cesario
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Sabella
Deceased Members Carola & Franzone Families
Peter Rooney
Stephen & Mary Morvay
Mr. & Mrs. William Pellegrino
Mrs. Constance Lynch
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bovasso
Mannarino Family
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Scavo
Dominick Stabile
Mr. Joao Mendes & Ms. Susan Lima
Robert Aziz
Mylo Manno
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce O'Shaughnessy
Lazarich & Ruth Families
Jack & Laura Dawson, Steven Dawson, Joe & Laura Campisi, Laurie Kraus, Lee Sferlazza
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Avella
Lilly & Hermance Families
Paradiso & DeCotis Family
Mr. & Mrs. John Muldoon
Jim Paladino
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Haggerty
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Lamb
Mr. & Mrs. Vincent Fiust
Peter M. Magliocco, Mary Magliocco
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Willis
Joseph A. Kelly, Jr.
Mr. Nancy DePetro
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Troiano
Bill Kuhlwilm
Mr. Henry Schreiber
Rutkowski Family
Mr. & Mrs. Lenny Gersbeck
Mr. & Mrs. David Leonard
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph T. Mirro
Mr. & Mrs. Michal Sutkowski
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Conti
Rose Fodera Genna
John & Rose Rickey
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas A. Perri
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Hannon
Ms. June Ryan
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Misiano &
Mr. & Mrs. Felix Florio
Danny Miranda, Edward Duncan & Antoinette Duncan
Mr. & Mrs. Dante Tirazona
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Staniszewski
Mr. & Mrs. William Sheehan
Ms. Patricia A. Koch
Mr. & Mrs. Jay Tirazona
Ms. Nancy Peragine
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Howley
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Papocchia
Ann & John Greenhalgh
Ann Ferraido
Mr. & Mrs. James Lebarr
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Farrell

Christmas Flower Offerings received after December 1st will be published in subsequent bulletins.

Candy Cane Priest

A Catholic priest from the Diocese of Little Rock, Arkansas, invented the machine that shapes candy canes. Candy maker Bob McCormack (founder of Bob's Candies in Albany, Georgia) had begun making candy canes for his children in the 1920's. The process was tedious. Twisting could only be done by hand and the breakage often ran up to 22 percent of production. Perplexed as to what to do, Bob turned to his wife Anna Louise's brother, Fr. Gregory Harding Keller, for suggestions.

Fr. Keller had been dubbed the "family genius" because of his fascination for how things worked. As a student, he fixed the organ at the North American College in Rome. During summer vacations, he would travel to Albany and work at the candy factory. Fr. Keller listened to his brother-in-law's predicament. Within six months, he had perfected the Keller Machine which twisted soft candy into spiral striping and cut the sticks in precise lengths.

Born May 24, 1895, in Little Rock, Fr. Keller studied for the priesthood in Rome, where he was ordained. He returned to Little Rock and served in parishes there for 36 years. Fr. Keller gained national attention as a contestant on the popular TV show, "What's My Line" in the 1960's. He was the inventor priest.

O Holy Night

Originally, " O Holy Night" was written as a poem by French wine merchant and poet Placide Cappeau (1808-1877). Inspired by the Gospel of Luke, he wrote these famous lines in honor of the renovation of a church organ in Roquemaure, France. Later, Cappeau's friend and composer, Adolphe Adams, put the words to song. "O Holy Night" was performed for the first time on Christmas Eve by opera singer Emily Laurie at the church in Roquemaure. The lyrics were translated into English in 1855 by American minister and publisher John Sullivan Dwight.

Legend of St Joseph's Staff

When Mary was 14, so the legend goes, the high priest gathered the young women of marriageable age and told them that they should prepare for marriage. Mary said that she could not because she had dedicated herself to the Lord. The high priest did not want to dissolve her vow, but neither did he want to start a new custom that Jewish women should not marry. With other elders, he prayed for a solution. Since, according to the legend, Mary was a descendant of David, they decreed that all men of the line of David of marriageable age should gather and bring their favorite walking stick to the altar. If a flower should spring from one of these, this man would be the one to whom Mary was given. Joseph was an older man and did not want to participate, so he did not bring a walking stick. One by one, staffs were brought to the altar but nothing happened. So the priest demanded that the "missing walking staff" be brought forward. Joseph went and got his, and when it was brought to the altar, a dove perched on top of it. It was clear that he was to be Mary's husband.

The Legend of the Poinsettia

The brilliant red leaves of the Poinsettia are a common decoration at this time of year. Its association with Christmas began many years ago when the story developed of Pepita, a poor Mexican girl who had no gift for the Christ Child at Christmas. Her cousin Pedro told her that even the most humble gift given in love is a welcomed present. So, Pepita gathered a handful of weeds into a small bouquet. As she laid it at the foot of the crèche, it burst into blooms of red. From that day on, the Poinsettia has also been known as the *Flor de Nochebuena,* or Flower of the Holy Night (Christmas Eve).

Christmas Tree Origins

The German and English immigrants brought the Paradise Tree, or Christmas Tree, to Canada, the United States and South and Central America. Fruits, nuts, flowers and lighted candles adorned the early Christmas trees but, with all of the decorations, many of the trees sagged and drooped due to the weight of the decorations. Ingenuity prevailed as German glassblowers began to produce lightweight glass balls and decorations to replace the heavier natural decorations. The lights and decorations were symbols of the joy and the light of Christmas and at the top of the tree was placed a star that was symbolic of the "Star of the East" that led the Wise Men to the manger.

Another legend surrounds the use of the Pine Tree as the Christmas tree. When the Holy Family was pursued by the soldiers of Herod, many plants offered them shelter. When Mary was too weary to travel any longer, the Family stopped at the edge of the forest to rest. A gnarled and withered old pine tree that had grown hollow from its many years invited the family to rest within its trunk. When the Holy Family did so, the branches closed around them and hid them from the soldiers who sought their presence. When the soldiers had passed, the Holy Family left. When they did, the Christ Child blessed the pine tree and the imprint of the Infant Jesus' hand was left forever in the fruit of the tree, the pine cone. If a pine cone is cut lengthwise, the little hand of Jesus can still be seen.

When you and your family place and decorate your tree this year, you might want to thank God for the true meaning of the Christmas tree: *eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven*.

St. Teresa of Calcutta

Christmas held special meaning for Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who once said that her work with the poor began on Christmas Day in 1948.

A priest had come to India to spend the holiday with Mother Teresa, While he was visiting, there was a knock at the door. When the sisters opened the door, they found a small basket on the doorstep. Perhaps it is a benefactor donating food for Christmas, one sister exclaimed.

But when Mother Teresa opened the basket, she began to smile. "Jesus has arrived." In the basket was a sleeping baby boy, left to be cared for by the sisters. Mother Teresa picked the infant up. "Look, now we can say that our Christmas is complete. Baby Jesus has come to us. We must thank God for this wonderful gift."

Did You Know...

In biblical times, cakes were made with wheat flour and water, then sweetened with honey. Honey doughnuts were made into animal shapes and fried in olive oil. Locusts (grasshoppers) were dried in the sun, then mixed with honey and wheat flour before being baked into biscuits.

An early version of a Christmas ball ornament was made by wrapping a walnut in tin foil and hanging it with a piece of thread.

The popular Christmas Carol, *The Little Drummer Boy*, has been commercially recorded more than 200 times in at least seven languages and has been performed in a variety of genres, including rock, rap and easy-listening.

The word "wreath" comes from the old English word, "writhen", meaning "to twist." In ancient times, wreaths were often placed on the heads of heroes, royalty or winning athletes.

Two of the gifts from the Wise Men were made from plants; both frankincense and myrrh are herbs that come from small trees. The bible says that the Magi came from the East. If they came from Persia, as some scholars think, the trip would have taken almost a year by camels and the Wise Men would have travelled more than 1,000 miles.

A thirsty camel can drink 30 gallons of water in 13 minutes! When a camel does not eat, he uses the fat stored in his hump, so the hump slowly droops.

Christmas Around the World

* "Hyvää Joulua!" In **Finland,** at about 5 or 6 o'clock, families go to the cemeteries to leave candles on the graves of loved ones who won't be there to celebrate Christmas any longer. Thousands of flickering lights, reflecting against the snow and trees, create a memorable scene.

* "Froehliche Weitnachten!" In **Germany**, families also celebrate St. Nicholas Day (December 6). On the eve of the feast, children leave shoes outside their bedroom doors hoping that St. Nicholas will fill them with treats.

* "Ye Dan Kua!" In **China,** it literally means "Jesus birth happy". Because China is still run by atheistic communists, Christmas Day is not a public holiday. In their homes, there are "trees of light" decorated with paper chains, paper flowers, and paper lanterns.

* "Boze Narodzenie!" In **Poland,** a traditional Christmas food is Oplatek-a piece of bread pressed with a holy picture on it. They share it with family and friends to wish them good things in the coming year and to forgive any hurts from the past year.

* "Joyeaux Noel!" In **France**, the crèche or Nativity scene is central in each home. The crèche includes little clay figures called santons which often times bear a strong resemblance to local dignitaries and characters. The main Christmas meal is called Le Revillion—the awakening– and is eaten after midnight Mass.

* "Nollaig Shona Dhiut!" In **Ireland**, lighted red candles decorated with holly are placed in windows on Christmas Eve to guide Joseph and Mary in case they are seeking shelter. Children put out Christmas sacks instead of stockings and to refresh a travel-weary Santa, they leave mince pies and a bottle of Guinness.

* "Buon Natale!" In **Italy**, children receive their gifts on January 6, the Epiphany. They are brought by a kind ugly witch called Befana. She rides a broom and is looking for the three Wise Men. It is said that they asked her to come along with them on their journey to visit the Christ child and she refused saying she was too busy. She regretted her decision and has been searching for the Baby ever since, leaving gifts at every house in case He is there.

* "Vesely Vanoce!" In the **Czech Republic**, during Advent Catholics fast from eating milk, eggs and meat. These foods return on Christmas and there is a tradition of putting fish scales under the dinner plates to bring luck in the coming year. During the time of the Communist repression, the atheistic Communists tried to outlaw Christmas and replace the Baby Jesus with "Grandfather Frost." It didn't work—and neither did atheistic communism for that matter!

* "Feliz Navidad!" In **Argentina**, it is very warm at Christmas. So, people place cotton balls on their Christmas trees to look like snow. On Christmas Eve, people light up and float "*globos",* colorful tissue-paper balloons lit from inside and fireworks are heard everywhere.

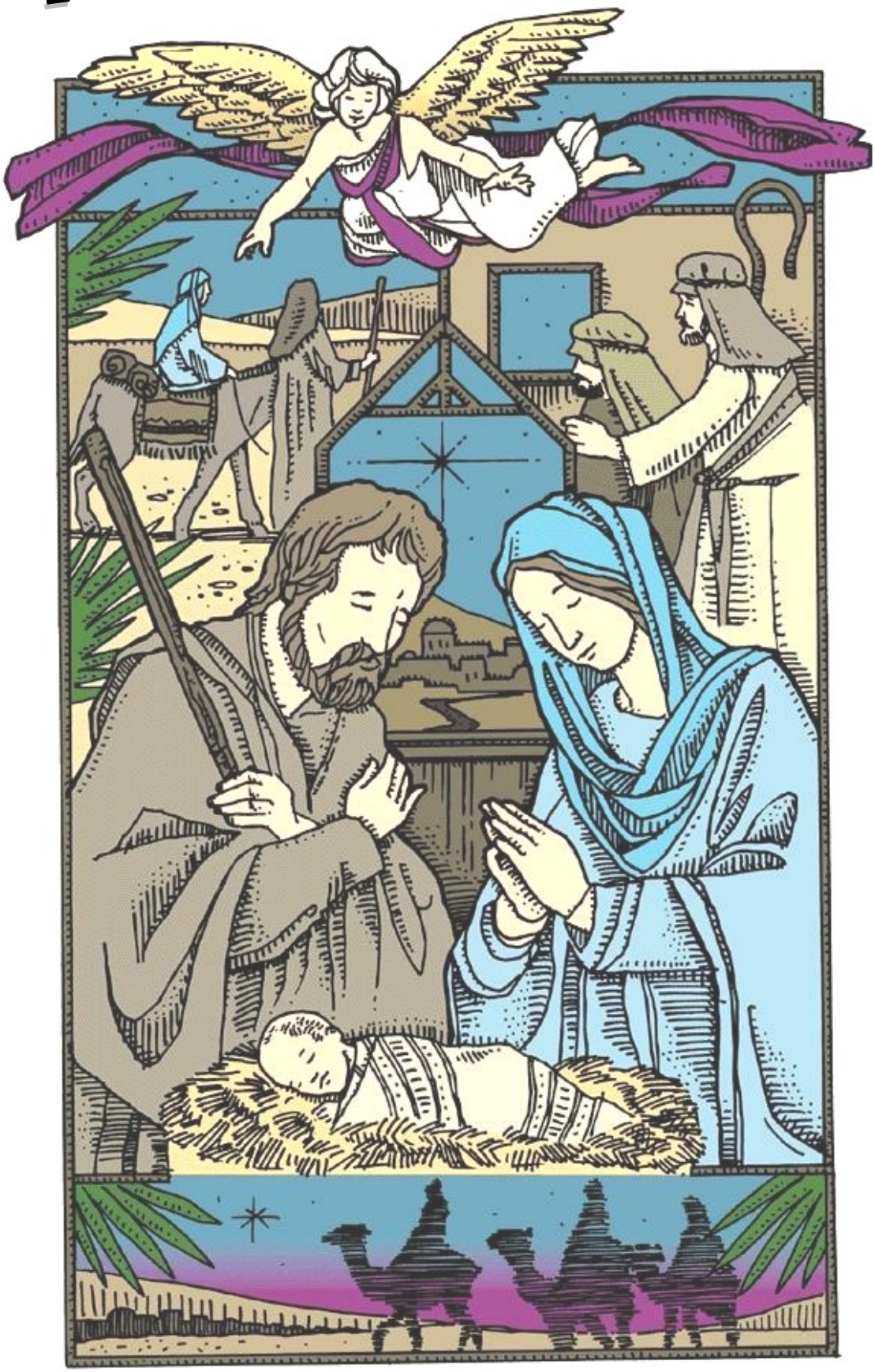
* "Srozhdestvom Kristovym!" In the **Ukraine,** the family places a loaf of bread with a candle in it in the middle of the table. The light reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world. Stalks of wheat are also scattered around the table to remind us of the manger where Jesus was born.

THE NATIVITY SCENE

The Nativity Scene reminds us that CHRIST is the reason for the celebration of Christmas. In an increasingly secular world, let us boldly proclaim that God, the Father, sent us the first and greatest Christmas gift: JESUS CHRIST, Prince of Peace.

This tableau is to be placed in the FRONT WINDOW, or OTHER PROMINENT PLACE in your home, witnessing to WHOM and WHAT we believe in as Christians:

> "For God so loved the world that He sent His only Son that all who believe in Him may have eternal life."
>
> ~ John 3:16

We ask that you display this NATIVITY scene until SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 2019, THE FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD. This marks the official end of the Christmas season. Let us do our part to keep Christ in Christmas!

Keep CHRIST in CHRISTMAS