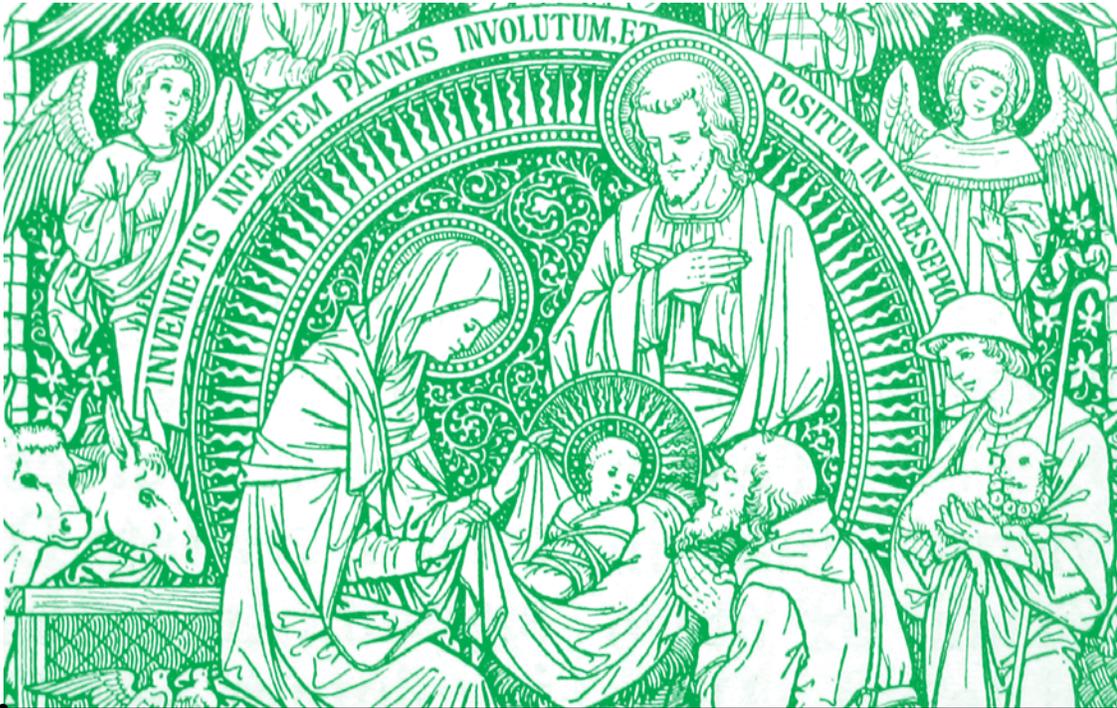


89 OVERLOOK DRIVE  
MASTIC BEACH, NY 11951  
PHONE: 631-281-5743

Roman Catholic  
Shrine Church of  
**St. Jude**

WWW.STJUDEMB.ORG  
RECTORY@STJUDEMB.ORG  
FAX: 631-395-5786

“To the Greater Glory of God and the Salvation of Souls.”



### Celebration of the Eucharist

SATURDAY EVENINGS  
5:00pm Vigil Mass  
7:30pm Spanish Mass

SUNDAY  
8:00am English & Italian  
9:30am Children's Choir  
11:30am Adult Choir  
5:00pm Youth Mass

MONDAY, TUESDAY,  
THURSDAY AND FRIDAY  
9:00am Mass

WEDNESDAY  
9:00am Mass  
Noon Mass

SATURDAY  
8:30am Mass

HOLY DAYS AS  
ANNOUNCED.

## The Nativity of the Lord - December 25th 2011

**Pastor**  
Rev. Gregory Yacyshyn

**In Residence**  
Msgr. John Heinlein

**Senior Priest**  
Rev. James Leone

### Parish Office Hours

MONDAY, TUESDAY,  
THURSDAY, & FRIDAY  
9:00am-5:00pm  
WEDNESDAYS  
9:00am-6:00pm  
SATURDAYS  
CLOSED  
SUNDAYS  
10:00am-2:00pm  
CLOSED HOLIDAYS

**Deacons**  
Thomas Gillen  
Kenneth Geohan  
Mark Herrmann  
Joseph Simeone

### Useful Numbers

RECTORY  
281-5743  
PARISH OUTREACH  
281-5634  
RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATION  
281-2835  
YOUTH MINISTRY  
281-5743  
NURSERY SCHOOL  
395-3959  
QUEEN OF APOSTLES  
SCHOOL  
878-1033  
ST. VINCENT DEPAUL  
219-3542

**Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick**  
Available in danger of death or whenever there is a personal need, call the rectory for an appointment.

**Sacrament of Penance/ Confession**  
SATURDAYS  
Noon during Advent,  
4:00-4:45pm and by appointment  
WEDNESDAYS  
2:00-2:45pm and by appointment

**Parish Outreach**  
MON.-THURS.  
9:00am-1:00pm  
CLOSED  
FRI., SAT., SUN.,  
AND HOLIDAYS

**Sacrament of Marriage**  
Couples wishing to be married should contact the rectory at least one year in advance to meet with one of the priests to make wedding arrangements. Pre-Cana is required for all couples.

**Sacrament of Baptism**  
Celebrated on most Sundays throughout the year. Please contact the rectory to set up an appointment with a member of the staff to arrange for the Baptismal preparation session and to set a date for Baptism.

### Devotions

MIRACULOUS MEDAL  
NOVENA  
Mondays after the  
9:00am Mass

ST. JUDE NOVENA  
Thursdays after the  
9:00am Mass

ADORATION OF THE  
BLESSED SACRAMENT  
Wednesdays  
12:30pm-1:00pm  
Benediction at 1:00pm

FIRST FRIDAY  
8:00pm-9:00pm  
Benediction at 9:00pm

THE HOLY ROSARY  
Monday through Friday  
at 8:30am; Saturdays at  
8:00am

## Masses for the Week

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2011

4:00pm Christmas Novena  
6:00pm Christmas Novena  
8:00pm Novena de Navidad  
11:15pm Christmas Novena-Midnight Mass

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2011

9:00am Parishioners of St. Jude  
11:30am Christmas Novena

MONDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2011

9:00am Christmas Novena

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2011

9:00am Christmas Novena

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2011

9:00am Christmas Novena  
12 Noon Christmas Novena

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2011

9:00am Agnes & Jerry McCarthy †

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2011

9:00am Colantuono & McGuire Families †

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2011

8:30am Christopher Clay †  
5:00pm Harold & Jean Scholl †  
7:30pm Parishioners of St. Jude

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 2012

8:00am Victor Mendolia †  
9:30am Giovanna Scalzo †  
11:30am Michael S. Orsi †  
5:00pm Matthew Yuhas †

† Denotes Mass is for deceased

FOR THE SICK: Benjamin Archer, Faith Barile, Paul Bidegain, Janet Brandimarte, Francis X. Butler, Cecelia Cottone, Anthony Cuccia, Mary Theresa Cunningham, Michael Francis Cunningham, Natalie Danisi, Alexandra Ditman, Isabella Grace Dobbeck, Chuck Drake, Nicholas Ferrara, Anthony Fino, Christian Gallucci, Frank Gaeta, Bob Gamberale, Nora Getchell, Deacon Thomas Gillen, Ann Giordano, Michelle Gonzalez, Joan Guarino, Charlotte Hall, Catherine Hannon, Jon Hanson, Steve Herrbrandt, Jo, Richard & Matthew Kaminsky, Father Walter Kedjerski, Cookie Landau, Frances Lee, Christine Leone, Katherine Lindsey, Carmine Linsalata, Brian Lotus, Julius Manchise, Joseph V. Mosca Jr., Joan Muller, Ruth Muller, Joshua Mussi, Logan Murphy, Ronald Nappe, Frank Nitto, Miguel Oriana, Doris Ortiz, Joan & Jessica Passaro, Jackie Pastore, Gina Pisano, Abdul Rattu, Karen Ratcliff, Salvatore Russo, Lucille Story, Joseph Stozetto, Patricia Swenson, Angelo Tafuro, Al Vanderbilt, Mary Vazzana

FOR THE MILITARY: John Abel, Matt Corica, Joseph Competello, Michael Cuervo, Kenneth Drumm, Jr., Daniel Edwards, Daniel Engo, Michael Hickey, Jeffrey Holmes, Steven Kay, Richard Kruger, Chris Manakides, John Maresca, Joe Occhineri, Anthony Ochoa Jr., Katherine M. Onorato, Matthew Parenti, Rich Pinckney, Tory Pinckney, Gerard Posillico, John Redding, Jr., Eric Reilly, Vinnie Riveria, Randy Sanchez, Steven Schloesser, Carl Seaman, Don Skelton, Bobby Sosa, Derek Trabocchi, Timothy Weisner

## Important Information

All parish offices will be open regular business hours on Friday, December 23rd. All parish offices will be closed on Christmas, Sunday, December 25th.

Sunday, January 8th is the 'Epiphany of the Lord' the Children's Pageant will be performed at the 9:30AM Mass

## Thank You from your Priests

In case we are not able to thank everyone personally for their Christmas cards, gifts, delicious cookies, and other goodies, please know we are grateful for all that we received and thank God for your kindness and generosity to us! Merry Christmas!

## Faith Formation

**WINTER RECESS:** Winter Recess will begin Saturday, December 24th thru January 3rd, 2012. Classes will resume Wednesday, January 4th, 2012. The office will be open December 26th through the 30th from 9–5PM. We will be closed Saturday, December 31st through January 2nd, 2012. We will reopen, January 3rd, 2012 at 9AM. Theresa, Laura & Ana wish to extend our Christmas blessings to all the catechists and parishioners. During this Christmas season, let us give thanks to God for His love and for giving us His only son—Jesus. May your family receive God's grace, good health, and spiritual renewal while you celebrate and create wonderful memories.

## St. Vincent de Paul

The angel told the shepherds that the Savior was born and where to find him. How and when are we told? God reveals divine presence in someone's generous offer, in a plea for help, in the cry of the poor and the oppressed, in the child needing reassurance, in the aged needing a listening ear, in the sick needing a consoling hand. Today we see not a Baby in the manger, but a saving God working through and among us. This Christmas, through your gifts, the 'Society of St. Vincent de Paul' was able to assist many families by helping with utility and rent bills, etc. Thank You!

## Lighthouse Catholic Media

**THE CHRISTMAS AND EASTER STORY: EXCERPTS FROM THE TRUTH AND LIFE DRAMATIZED AUDIO BIBLE:** The *Truth and Life Dramatized Audio Bible* is a brilliantly recorded production of the Revised Standard Version (Catholic Edition) of the New Testament. These excerpts are narrated by a star-studded cast and include beautiful music and sound effects which make the scriptural accounts of Christmas and Easter come alive, helping us to enter more deeply into the birth, death and Resurrection of Christ.

## Bishop McGann-Mercy High School

**DRIVER'S EDUCATION—FEBRUARY 2012:** With the season of giving upon us, give your teenager the gift of life and give yourself the gift of peace of mind! Enroll your child in the 'McGann-Mercy Driver's Education Program'. This NYS approved program provides the required 48 hours of instruction—24 hours of lecture and 24 hours of in-car training. The Winter 2012 session will start this upcoming February. In addition to classes after school during the week, 'McGann-Mercy' will also offer a Sunday session ideal for those students who play sports or participate in other after school activities. Call 631.727.5900, ext. 20 for information on specific class dates, sessions, costs and registration.

## The Woman at the Well

Come together with other women as we look at the stories of the 'Women in the Bible', as well as other women in our church history and see how they relate to our lives today. This Tuesday, December 27th from 7:30–9PM at 'Mary Immaculate' in Bellport located in Room 7 of the Church Auditorium. We will be discussing **QUEEN ESTHER AND JUDGE DEBORAH**.

## A Christmas Carol

The story of Ebenezer Scrooge and his journey to find the true meaning of Christmas. The Charles Dickens classic, "A Christmas Carol" is being performed at 'Theatre Three' 412 Main Street in Port Jefferson until December 27th. Please call 631-928-9100 for more information.



# Christ's Mass

Jesus was born in a humble stable, into a poor family. Simple shepherds were the first witnesses to this event. In this poverty heaven's glory was made manifest. *"The church never tires of singing the glory of this night: The Virgin today brings into the world the Eternal and the earth offers a cave to the inaccessible. The angels and Shepherds praise him and the magi advance with the star. For you are born for us, little child, God eternal!"* (Catechism of the Catholic Church 525)

And so, with great joy we celebrate the birth of our dear Savior: the fulfillment of God's promise made known through the prophets over many centuries; that God would free His people from slavery; especially slavery to their sins. He was born of Mary, born in a stable: a most unsavory place. He was born to die on a cross; a death in agony. He was born and died for love of you and me. Like the angels, shepherds and the Magi, *We believe, too.*

Sometimes people (even Christians) will say, "I am Catholic, but I believe that all religions are basically the same. All paths lead to God." While we do believe in a merciful God who wills the salvation of all His children, to say and believe such, makes Jesus—second Person of the Blessed Trinity—out to be a liar. Either we believe in what He said and taught—that He is the Son of God; the Way, the Truth, and the Life; the Resurrection and the Life; the Light of the World—or we don't. He Himself gives us this priceless gift, and it is our choice whether or not to accept Him and His word. If we really think about it, we cannot take Jesus and our Catholic Christian faith lightly. It is either true that HE IS GOD, or the Gospel is merely a nice story about a "good" man, who did good things, and who called Himself God's Son; one with the Father. The whole concept is either true, or it is not. **We cannot be casual Catholics.** If we really believe in Jesus Christ and His Church, we MUST be committed and live our lives and practice our faith in a very tangible way. When we are true to God, we are true to ourselves.

If we have not practiced our Catholic faith this past year as we know we ought to and truly need to, this Christmas is a marvelous opportunity to return to the sacramental life of the Church. Prepare for a worthy reception of the Most Holy Eucharist through a sincere examination of conscience and a good confession of sins. As priests, Msgr. Heinlein and I are so grateful and humbled to be instruments of the good God's mercy and forgiveness in this beautiful sacrament. It is a tremendous source of joy for us to welcome sinners (which we all are) Home.

The schedule for confession times are found on the front cover of this bulletin, and confession pamphlets may be found in the literature rack at the church entrance. The priest is here to welcome, guide, and be an instrument of God's mercy for you. He is not here to judge you.

Our infant Lord is calling us all to love Him more deeply by bringing Him sorrow for our sins, so that we may be welcomed back to the loving embrace of Jesus Christ. From the manger, His arms reach out to each and every one of us; may we respond to Him in kind, and share the gift of His life and love with others who need Him as well. May we bring His real Christmas joy to all those we meet.

**To all members of St. Jude Parish; and your dear loved ones:  
A very Blessed, holy and Merry Christmas,  
Fr. Greg**

"Tell us shepherds,  
what have you seen?"

Who has appeared  
on earth?

We have seen a new  
born infant and  
a choir of angels  
praising the Lord."

(Psalmody)

## Outreach Thank You

We were truly blessed this year. The response from our very generous parishioners and community members has been humbling. We thank you for going that extra mile to assure many needy children have a special Christmas, full of hope and faith in humanity. We were met with tears of joy from our Outreach guests, at the abundance of love and care from St. Jude parishioners. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts, for all the support and donations.

We would like to thank all our dedicated volunteers who re-adjusted their schedules in order to help us pick up, wrap, bag, and package for 709 children. Linda & Tom Rodecker, Jay, Dan & Laurie Rudek, Mary Beczak, Ana & Walter Haass, Grace & Adeline Minelli, Angela DiMartino, Michael Gallo, Rosemary Pavlicek, & Joe Dankowski. God bless you all for giving of yourself and doing Jesus' work with a smile.

Thank you to the 'Mastic Pizza & Café' for supplying "free pizza" vouchers to needy families from Outreach, as an extra Christmas treat.

The Outreach office will be closed Friday, December 23rd through Sunday, January 1st. We will re-open on Monday, January 2nd, 2012. Have a happy and healthy New Year!!!

## IRA Charitable Rollover: Now is Your Opportunity

You can make a gift from your 'Individual Retirement Account' to St. Jude before **THIS WEEK Saturday, December 31st**. You must be over 70 and use a traditional IRA. You will not have to report your gift as income—it will be income tax-free, and it will count toward your required minimum distribution (RMD). The best way for you to start is with your IRA custodian. Tell them you want to make a **"qualified charitable distribution"**. In most cases you will only have to fill out a simple form. Your gift must go directly from your IRA to St. Jude—tax-free. If you receive the money first, then you'll be taxed on it like any other distribution.

## Rosary Altar Society

Our next meeting will be on Monday, January 2nd in the parish center at 7PM (Earlier time No religious ed. classes). Agenda: New schedule and contact list will be distributed. Holiday review.

## New Years Eve Party

Party starts at 7:30PM, the doors will open at 7:15PM. The delicious food is catered by Mama Lisa, the music provided by DJ—Bob Vecchio. You may bring your own bottle of "cheer", if you wish. Raffle tickets can be purchased at the rectory 3 for \$10 until Friday, December 30th and will be sold the night of the event. 1st Prize \$1,000; 2nd Prize \$500; 3rd Prize Lottery Tree (value \$250); 4th Prize Basket of Cheer (value \$200); 5th Prize Trader Joe's Basket (value \$50). Thank you to the following donors: 'Roma Funeral Home', 'J.V. Kavanaugh Council', 'Empire National Bank', Anonymous, and the Kane family. The generosity of our donors is greatly appreciated.

## Seminary of the Immaculate Conception

Offers the following graduate degrees—**MASTER of ARTS in THEOLOGY MASTER of ARTS in PASTORAL STUDIES**. The spring semester begins January 30th 2012. Registration closes January 25th 2012. For further information, contact the 'Academic Office' 440 West Neck Road, Huntington, NY 11743 (631) 423-0483 x112 or x147. Or visit our website, [www.icseminary.edu](http://www.icseminary.edu)

## Catholic Charities Talbot House

Are you or someone you know having family or interpersonal problems due to drinking **ALCOHOL** and/or using **DRUGS**? 'Catholic Charities/Talbot House', is a voluntary 'Chemical Dependence Crisis Center', located in Bohemia we provide withdrawal and stabilization services for males and females over the age of 18, who are seeking to stop and/or withdraw from alcohol and/or drug use. Our medical and clinical staff at 'Talbot House' will assess the kind of care the person needs, to begin his/her journey to recovery. For more information, please call: 631-589-4144. The 'Talbot House' staff is available 24/7. Each call is confidential. 'Talbot House' is a NO fee for service program.

**HELP WANTED:** 'Catholic Charities/Talbot House' is looking for LPNs (per diem). Please contact Stella 631-589-4144 or fax resumes to her at 631-589-8396 or e-mail to [howard.stella@catholiccharities.cc](mailto:howard.stella@catholiccharities.cc)

## Respect Life Youth Contest

The 'Diocesan Respect Life Office' is excited to announce the '9th Annual Youth Respect Life Contest' for grades 7–8 Level 1, and grades 9–12 Level 2. We welcome all Catholic youngsters in the 'Rockville Centre Diocese' to participate. Download your registration form at [www.drvc.org/respectlife](http://www.drvc.org/respectlife). The awards ceremony will be on March 22nd, 2012. All entries must be attached to the registration form, postmarked by January 27, 2012, and mailed to the 'Respect Life Office'. Please note the registration form must be signed by a parent or guardian. Participation in the contest is through poetry, art (book mark design), essay, photography, music and video. All entries will be judged on originality and expression of thought in relation to our Catholic faith and the contest theme, **"I came so that all might have life and have it to the full"**. Respect life issues cover abortion, adoption, euthanasia, cloning, stem cell research, just war doctrine, death penalty, suicide, responsibility of Catholic politicians, reproductive technologies that include invitro-fertilization and embryo adoption, marriage, chastity, rights of the disabled and conscience protection for Catholic health care workers.

## The Life Center is in desperate need of the following items:

Clothes for girls and boys (Sizes 0-6 and 18-24 months are especially needed) Toiletries (i.e. wipes, baby soaps, shampoos, diaper rash creams, powders, etc.), Crib sheets, Bottles, Hooded towels, Wash cloths, Socks, Diaper bags, Non Drop Side Cribs/Bassinets/Pack n Plays, Car seats (both infant and toddler), Strollers. Thank you for any help that you can provide to help us support these women, especially those who are in crisis. Donations can be dropped off at our Deer Park location: 1767 Deer Park Ave Deer Park, NY 11729 (across the street from 'St. Cyril & Methodius Roman Catholic Church', and next door to 'Boyd-Carratozollo Funeral Home'). Any further questions can be answered at (631) 243-2373.

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God is now on Earth, and man in Heaven.

—St. John Chrysostom

Today a light will shine upon us,  
 for the Lord is born for us;  
 and He will be called Wondrous God,  
 Prince of Peace,  
 Father of future ages:  
 and His reign will be without end.

## Neighborhood Watch

'Neighborhood Watch' is one of the oldest and most effective crime prevention programs in the country. 'Neighborhood Watch' programs bring people together with law enforcement to deter crime and make communities safer. For additional information and to receive a free 'Neighborhood Watch' DVD log onto [www.suffolkpd.org](http://www.suffolkpd.org) or call Bernadette Zimmerman at 631-852-6983.

## Crime Stoppers

Is offering cash rewards of up to \$500 for information leading to the arrest of anyone selling drugs to students. All information is completely anonymous. Text "SCPD" and your message to: CRIMES(274637) call 1-800-220-TIPS.

## Mother of Good Counsel Home (MGCH)

Home for pregnant, parenting teen and young adult mothers, with one or two children under the age of four. MGCH is run by the 'Oblate Sisters of the Most Holy Redeemer'. MGCH provides the following services: shelter, food, counseling, help to get child care services, orientation and help for work and school, homework tutoring, parental skills. For information call Sister Matilde at 516-223-1013.

## Shrine of Our Lady of the Island

**WOMEN'S WISDOM CIRCLE:** Attention all ladies! You are invited to join us the First Thursday of each month from 7:30-9PM at the 'Shrine of Our Lady of the Island'. As you enter a quiet place where you meet wisdom, allow yourself to let go of all that is on your mind. Become aware of your heart beating. Take several deep breaths. Breathe in: quiet, peace, harmony. Breathe out: stress, anxiety, and lack of harmony. Be still as you wait for wisdom to speak to your heart.

**MEETING FOR MEN ONLY:** Every Monday night at 7:30PM at the 'Shrine of Our Lady of the Island', Fr. Roy hosts a meeting geared for men that discusses topics and interests for and about men on their spiritual journey. Why not join us and bring a friend for these timely meetings.

The Shrine is located at 258 Eastport Manor Road in Manorville. For more information call 631-325-0661 or email us at [shrineoffice@optonline.net](mailto:shrineoffice@optonline.net).

## Free Food for those in Need

The C.S.F.P. (Commodity Supplemental Food Program), funded by the USDA, NYSDOH, and administered by 'Catholic Charities' is offering free food for up to 6-12 months postpartum women, infants, children 5-6 years of age, and elderly persons above 60 years of age. For more information please call 631-491-4166 or visit our website [www.catholiccharitiesusa.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org).

## Food Stamp Benefits

Helps families, individuals, and all ages to improve nutrition and increase food buying power. You no longer have to take time from work to apply for benefits. You may be able to apply electronically. Food stamps can be used conveniently with an 'Electronic Benefit Card'. See our website for more information, [www.otda.state.ny.us](http://www.otda.state.ny.us) or call 1800-342-3009. For a free and confidential prescreening contact: 'Nutrition Outreach & Education Program Catholic Charities', 'Diocese of Rockville Centre' 631-789-9546.

## Mass Attendance

	SATURDAY		SUNDAY			Total
	5pm	7:30	8am	9:30	11:30	
Dec. 4	354	175	260	291	305	1588
Dec. 11	330	139	225	349	530	1754

The Mass Census for December 18th and 25th will be reported in the January 1st bulletin.

## Weekly Collections

Due to early bulletin submission requirements the collection figures for December 18th, 25th and the Christmas Collection will be reported in bulletin of January 1st.

## Catholic Ministries Appeal

2011 Goal	\$50,174.00
Total pledges a/o 12/16/11	\$59,414.08
# of Donors	200
Payments a/o 12/16/11	\$56,248.08

Thank you to all who have pledged.

## Scripture Readings

MONDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2011

*Saint Stephen, first martyr*

ACTS 6:8-10; 7:54-59

MT 10:17-22

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2011

*Saint John, apostle and evangelist*

1 JN 1:1-4

JN 20:1A, 2-8

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2011

*Holy Innocents, martyrs*

1 JN 1:5-2:2

MT 2:13-18

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2011

*Octave of Christmas*

1 JN 2:3-11

LK 2:22-35

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2011

*Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph*

SIR 3:2-6, 12-14 or GN 15:1-6; 21:1-3

COL 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or

HEB 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

LK 2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2011

*Octave of Christmas*

1 JN 2:18-21

JN 1:1-18

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 2012

*Mary, the Holy Mother of God*

NM 6:22-27

GAL 4:4-7

LK 2:16-21

## Altar Bread and Wine

The altar bread and wine for the week of December 26th has been donated:

For all the deceased and living members  
 of the 'J.V. Kavanaugh Columbiettes'

# Flower Offering

Flower Offering in Memory of or Dedicated to:

The Nucci Family  
Patti, Zummo & The Riker Families  
The Scotti Family  
John Nicolini, Catherine & Joseph Guarino  
Patricia Kelleher  
Anthony & Joan Jeans  
Rascona Family  
For the intentions of The Downing Family  
Michael Mattera  
Paul Leonardi Sr. & Jr.  
Erika Hughes  
Edward & Frances Engel  
Romeo D'Ambrosio  
Sigmund Chodkowski  
Nicolasa Babilonia  
Mr. & Mrs. Coady & Sons  
Carl M. Conn  
Arturo Tones  
Castrogiovanni & Russo Families

Fusco & Kamerer Families  
Charles Philip Cottiers, Sr.  
Esterly, Harvey, Brown & Ruggieri Families  
Erika Rae Hughes  
Bateman & Troise Families  
Buono, Cassarino & McManus Families  
The Donovan and Doyle Families  
Ann & Dave York  
Lillian & Michael Fitzgerald  
Mr. & Mrs. Patsy Nappi  
The Realmuto and Omelcruk Families  
James & Alexandra Cirabisi  
Anthony Menneci  
Kane Family  
Patterson & Nappa Families  
James & Elizabeth Dermody  
Thomas & Suzanne Kokindo  
Saverio & Giacomia Orlando  
Cateria & Antonia Lewery

For the intentions of  
The Benevento Family  
Peter & Edna Clancy  
Jacqueline Gusmerotti  
The Harris and Gerold Families  
The Diver and Lynett Families  
The Crow and Blume Families  
Catherine Sherry  
Spagnolo & Mahon Families  
Lipari & Luparello Families  
Eileen & Guy Roberts  
Grace M. Kelly  
Eva & Wojiech Gielarowski  
Loretta Masters  
Conrad "Junior" Carube  
Stephen D. & Stephen J. Stribula,  
William Giodano  
Rose & Salvatore Cognata  
Joseph Scanpico  
Scivano & Gaetan Families

All flower offering envelopes received after December 16th will be printed in the bulletin of January 1st.

## The Nativity of our Lord

This may not seem like the most seasonally appropriate comment, but I really dislike camping. I love the outdoors during the day, but give me a hotel bed at night. Others see camping in a much different light, but for me it involves too much dirt, too little sleep, and an unfortunate lack of electricity and running water. I don't need the Ritz, but camping is just too bare bones for me.

This is why I'm so struck by the Greek translation of the verse from John's Gospel we hear at Christmas Mass during the day: "And the Word became flesh and pitched his tent among us" (John 1:14).

*Pitched his tent among us!* Not an RV. Not a camper. Not a hotel room. Simply a tent. Bare bones. **Vulnerable.**

This is how God chose to come—and come *among us*. Not over us. Not above us. *Among us*. It's as completely simple and completely mysterious as that.

The divine tent  
was pitched  
in the dirt  
where animals slept.

In the weeks leading up to this wonderful day, we've certainly been surrounded by and probably participated in much feasting and purchasing and planning—some of it to excess, for sure.

Many presents were bought, festive parties planned, special food prepared. It's good and right to celebrate with friends and family and to share our blessings generously with those in need.

But the deepest truth of what we celebrate today is that God came *among us* in simplicity. There was little fuss, just a poor couple in a poor place. The divine tent was pitched in the dirt where animals slept.

God came as a vulnerable, helpless child—a mystery as old as the ages, but ever new each

Christmas. Celebrate it well today.

Merry Christmas!

JANEL ESKER | [sundaybulletins@liguori.org](mailto:sundaybulletins@liguori.org)