

## ✠ ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ¶ DECEMBER 23, 2007 - ADVENT IV

Today is the Fourth Sunday in Advent. **CHRISTMAS CONFESSIONS** will be heard *before and during* the morning Masses. Our special Adult **Christmas Collection** will take place during all Masses.

The last of our **Advent Vespers** are sung at **1:15 PM** with Benediction.

### RAFFLE

Today is our **ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT RAFFLE**—and your last chance to purchase raffle tickets before the drawings after the 11:30 AM Mass. Please visit Helfta Hall after Mass and find “just the right” Christmas gift for that special someone and, maybe, win a prize at the raffle drawings. Support our parish and our school and have a wonderful time.

### ¶ CHRISTMAS MASS NOVENA

**Today** is the *final* day to remember your loved ones in our Christmas Novena of Masses which begins Christmas Day. Envelopes may be found in the vestibule and the Gift Shop. Envelopes *must* be turned in today to be on the altar for Christmas.

### ¶ CHRISTMAS EVE - FAST AND ABSTINENCE

Christmas Eve is a traditional day of Fast and complete Abstinence from meat, and a last penance before Our Lord's birth. Unless legitimately excused, all Catholics between the ages of 21 and 59, inclusive, are bound by the Church's law of fast, and all who have attained their 7th year must keep the abstinence—no meat on this day.

### ¶ CHRISTMAS WEEK SCHEDULE

#### • Monday, December 24th -

##### *Christmas Eve Schedule - Morning*

- 8:00 AM:** The Office of Prime
- 8:45 AM:** Confessions
- 9:00 AM:** The Vigil of Christmas Mass
- 10:00 AM:** Confessions
- 1:15 PM:** 1st Vespers of Christmas

##### *Christmas Eve Schedule - Evening*

- 8:30 PM:** The Office of Matins
- 10:30 PM:** Carols
- 10:45 PM:** Entrance of the Bishop,  
Blessing of the Crib & Vesting
- 11:15 PM:** Midnight Mass followed by  
The Office of Lauds

A **Potluck Supper** follows Midnight Mass. If you plan to attend, please bring a dish to share.

#### • Tuesday, December 25th -

##### *Christmas Day*

- 9:00 AM:** Low Mass & Benediction,

with String Quartet

- 11:00 AM:** Low Mass with Carols
- 3:30 PM:** Vespers of Christmas Day

#### • Wednesday, December 26th -

- Feast of St. Stephen, Protomartyr**
- 5:00 PM High Mass (N.B. Special time)**
- 6:15 PM Vespers**

#### • Thursday, December 27th -

- Feast of St. John, ApEv**
- 11:30 AM High Mass and the Blessing of Wine and Beverages - "The Love of St. John."**
- 1:30 PM Vespers**
- 5:00 PM Low Mass**

#### • Friday, December 28th -

- Feast of the Holy Innocents, Mm**
- 11:30 AM High Mass followed by the Blessing of Children and a party in Helfta Hall,** hosted by Bishop Dolan. All children of the parish are invited. Bishop Dolan will be reading to the children.

- 5:30 PM Opening of our annual Infant of Prague Novena of Nine Fridays.** Come with confidence to honor our loving little King.
- 5:45 PM Low Mass, SH Novena, Benediction**

#### • Monday, December 31st - St. Sylvester I, PC - New Year's Eve

- 8:45 AM:** Confessions
- 9:00 AM:** High Mass
- 10:00 AM:** Confessions
- 2:00 PM:** First Vespers of the Circumcision

#### • Tuesday, January 1, 2008 -

- Feast of the Circumcision - New Year's Day**
- 9:00 AM:** High Mass
- 11:00 AM:** Low Mass & Benediction

### Hshhrs

DECEMBER 30, 2007

- 7:30 AM** John Wiseman, Kent Maki, Joe Andreotta, Tom Kamphaus
- 9:00 AM** Jim Gebel, Richard Smith, Dale Wilker, Petrus Bruggemann
- 11:30 AM** Bob Uhlenbrock, Kirby Bischel, Dennis Hille, Jim Kokocuch
- 5:45 PM** John Seyfried

JANUARY 1, 2008

- 9:00 AM** John Wiseman, Tom Kamphaus, Kent Maki, Richard Smilt
- 11:00 AM** John Seyfried, Kirby Bischel

### SPUFFS

DECEMBER 24 - DECEMBER 30, 2007

- \*MON & TUE 12/24 & 25 PLEASE SEE SCHEDULE POSTED IN SACRISTY
- \*WED 12/26 5:00 PM HIGH
- \*THU 12/27 5:00 PM LOW: Keaveney, Bayer
- \*FRI 12/28 5:45 PM LOW & BENE: T. Simpson, Sr., Basset, Ritze, Keaveney
- \*SAT 12/29 7:30 AM LOW: C. & T. Simpson, Jr.  
8:00 AM HIGH: C. Ritze, J. Bayer
- \*SUN 12/30 7:30 AM LOW: D. & S. Bruggemann  
9:00 AM HIGH: MC: T. Simpson; AC: B. Lotraski, T. Simpson, Jr; TH: R. Hill; TORCH: S. Adlington, P. Duff, G. Wnek, S. Richeson
- 11:30 AM LOW: J. & M. Brugger
- 1:10 PM VESPERS & BENEDICTION: G. Miller
- 5:45 PM LOW: G. Miller

Collection Report

CHILDREN'S FR. LESLIE COLL. .... \$ 234.00  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2007 ..... \$3666.98

*Thank you for your generosity!  
Remember St. Gertrude's in your will!*

## ✠ POETRY CORNER

### O CHILDREN OF THIS WORLD

By P. L. TRAVERS

Beware the children of light  
That riff-raff crew.  
They will pilfer your peace of mind  
And your money, too.  
Not as thieves in the night—  
Deeper far their offense—  
They make light of the things of this world  
By their innocence.  
Toppling the sturdy house  
To its basic sand,  
Turning silver and gold  
To dust in the hand.

On all your highroad journeys  
Wrapped against wind and snow  
You will find them arrived before you  
Barefoot, by the low.  
Your effect will be cause,  
Your right their wrong,  
Your wisdom a little thing  
To be had for a song.  
And your women, hard to please,  
Cold to you as the sea,  
They will pluck in passing  
Like plums from a tree.

Beware the children of light,  
They will turn you away  
From all that goes by the clock—  
'Now,' they will say  
'Is then; here, there,  
And the frost is warm,  
Sun icy and only danger  
Will keep you safe from harm.  
Taste of the aloe's honey,  
Give your breast to the thorn,  
Let the stone bird pluck at  
The living fern.'



### ¶ PIOUS EXERCISES

*The faithful, who in order to return thanks to God the Father for the benefits conferred upon mankind by the Incarnation of the Word, devoutly assist at midnight Mass on the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, may gain an indulgence of 10 years or a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions.*

*Those who assist at Matins or Lauds and follow the singing of the psalms and lessons, either by devoutly reading them or with pious meditations on the Incarnation of the Word of God, or prayers, may gain an indulgence of 10 years.*

### ¶ LUMEN CHRISTI

For the next fortnight the Sanctuary Lamp will burn before the Blessed Sacrament for:

CONVERSIONS

THE PATTON FAMILY

## ✠ THE CALENDAR

<b>MON</b>	<b>12/24/07</b>	<b>VIGIL OF CHRISTMAS</b> 8:00 AM The Office of Prime 8:45 AM Confessions 9:00 AM <b>High Mass</b> <i>Fr. Markus Ramolla (Patton Family)</i> 10:00 AM Confessions 1:15 PM First Vespers of Christmas 8:30 PM The Office of Matins 10:30 PM Carols 10:45 PM Procession & Blessing of Crib
<b>TUES</b>	<b>12/25/07</b>	<b>NATIVITY OF OUR LORD - CHRISTMAS DAY</b> <b>HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION</b> 12:00 AM <b>Midnight Mass</b> <i>For the People of St. Gertrude</i> followed by a Parish Potluck Supper The Office of Lauds 9:00 AM <b>Low Mass</b> & Benediction <i>Christmas Novena I</i> <b>Plus 2 Side Altar Low Masses</b> 1) <i>For Our Friends, Relatives &amp; Benefactors</i> 2) <i>For All of Our Beloved Dead</i> 11:00 AM <b>Low Mass</b> <i>Eileen Bartels (S. &amp; C. Niehaus)</i> Followed by further Low Masses 3:30 PM Vespers of Christmas Day
<b>WED</b>	<b>12/26/07</b>	<b>ST STEPHEN, PROTOMARTYR</b> 5:00 PM <b>N.B. (Special Time) High Mass</b> <i>Christmas Novena II</i> 6:15 PM Vespers
<b>THUR</b>	<b>12/27/07</b>	<b>ST JOHN, APeV</b> 11:30 AM <b>High Mass</b> Blessing of Wine and Beverages <i>Christmas Novena III</i> 1:30 PM Vespers 5:00 PM <b>Low Mass</b> † <i>Mrs. Marie L. Harris - Mother - Birthday (William Harris)</i>
<b>FRI</b>	<b>12/28/07</b>	<b>THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MM</b> 11:30 AM <b>HIGH MASS</b> , Blessing of Children followed by The Children's Party, hosted by Bishop Dolan <i>Christmas Novena IV</i> 4:30 PM Vespers 5:15 PM Confessions & Rosary 5:30 PM Opening of the Infant of Prague Novena 5:45 PM <b>Low Mass</b> , Sacred Heart Novena, Benediction, Confessions <i>Mr. Laurence Cooley - For Good Health (The Hille Family)</i>
<b>SAT</b>	<b>12/29/07</b>	<b>ST THOMAS Á BECKET, BPM</b> 7:15 AM Confessions 7:30 AM <b>Low Mass</b> <i>Pro-Life (Rosary Confraternity)</i> 8:00 AM <b>High Mass</b> , Confessions <i>Christmas Novena V</i> 9:30 AM Rosary at Abortion Clinic
<b>SUN</b>	<b>12/30/07</b>	<b>SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS</b> 7:30 AM <b>Low Mass</b> <i>Poor Souls In Purgatory (Patsy McConnell Family)</i> 9:00 AM <b>High Mass</b> <i>Christmas Novena VI</i> 11:30 AM <b>Low Mass</b> <i>Kristi Engel - Special Intention (C. Wozny)</i> 4:45 PM Vespers & Benediction 5:45 PM <b>Low Mass</b> <i>For the People of St. Gertrude the Great</i>



## ✠ BISHOP'S CORNER



I had a feeling the worst of last weekend's weather would just miss us. It did. I prayed for this, as I am sure many others did, too. Still, as the Protestants say, you have to "step out in faith." Literally! Nevertheless, we had a good Sunday, our beautiful Rose Rejoice Sunday. Remember to try for a later Mass if you miss your customary early one. (Use your imagination.) Ah, miss the Mass if you miss it! What would be Christmas without the Mass? The very name of the holy day would be lopped off, as would its greatest reality and joy. Do use your imagination to make every day Christmas. How? Why, by hearing holy Mass! I can think of no better New Year's resolution.

Well, our "church elves" have been busily at work here at Bethlehem to make everything beautiful for His Coming. They certainly know how to use their imagination! Our "choir of angels" have been busy, too, practicing for His Birthday. Finally, a priest is waiting for you this morning in the confessional, for a little bit of "last minute shopping." Is everything ready "under your roof" for Christ's Mass?

Come tomorrow evening to watch and pray with us as we await the Midnight hour and the first Holy Mass of Christmas. Fast and abstain tomorrow, simple as that. Pray the family Rosary. Make it a holy vigil, a Christian Christmas Eve. Lay off the sauce. Pass up the second helping. Pour it on in sweetness to others, and don't wait to be asked to help. See and serve the Holy Child everywhere and in everyone this Christmas.

A wonderful ending to your Advent!

—Bishop Dolan

## ✠ A THOUGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

For many, Christmas is no longer the day to celebrate the mystery of the birth of God among us, the God hidden in the wounds of humanity. It is no longer the day of the Child, awaited with prayer and repentance, contemplated with watchful attentiveness, and remembered in liturgical solemnity, joyful song, and peaceful family meals.

Instead, Christmas has become a time when companies send elaborate gifts to their clients to thank them for their business, when post offices work overtime to process an overload of greeting cards, when immense amounts of money are spent on food and drink, and socializing becomes a full-time activity. There are decorated trees, decorated streets, sweet tunes in the supermarkets, and children saying to their parents: "I want this and I want that."

The shallow happiness of busy people often fills the place meant to experience the deep, lasting joy of Emmanuel, God-with-us.

—THE LORD'S NEAR

*The final day approaches, the Lord is now nigh; it is already time to rise from sleep, ready and awake for the Lord's knocking.*

—St. Paulinus of Nola


*What would we say that the ark was if not holy Mary, since the ark carried within it the tables of the covenant, while Mary bore the Master of the same covenant?*


—St. Maximus of Turin

*Since the time of Christ's birth is coming, and virginity is about to bring to light the heavenly miracle of producing a child...let us all hasten to offer adoration, and with holy gifts let us acknowledge that our God and King has come forth from the temple of the Virgin.*


St. Peter Chrysologus

# ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONT'D.)

 **2008 COLLECTION ENVELOPES**  
The 2008 Collection envelopes are available in the vestibule. Please pick up your envelopes today.

**2008 ROMAN CATHOLIC CALENDAR**  
 This year's calendar is available for purchase in the Book Store. The price is \$6.00. Every Catholic home should have a traditional calendar.

**SUNDAY CATECHISM CLASSES**  
Children's Catechism classes are suspended December 30th and January 6th. Catechism classes will resume on Sunday, January 13th.

 **The Rosary Confraternity** will meet at 9:30 AM in front of the **Auburn Avenue Abortion** clinic to *pray the Rosary* on **Saturday, December 29th**. A light breakfast will follow the 8:00 AM Mass before proceeding to the abortion clinic.

**NEXT SUNDAY**  
Next Sunday is the Fifth Sunday of the Month. **Vespers and Benediction** are at 4:45 PM.  
*Set your missal:* December 30th. **Sunday Within the Octave of Christmas.** PREF: Nativity.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### FORTY HOURS: JANUARY 4 - 6TH

The greatest feast of this season, because of its antiquity and theological importance—outranking even Christmas itself—is that of Epiphany, Christ's manifestation to the Gentile world in the person of the Magi. This beautiful feast we will solemnize this year as we keep Forty Hours on the weekend.

On Friday, Saturday and Sunday, January 4, 5, and 6th, Forty Hours Devotions will be held at our church. Please plan to spend some time with Our Lord on these days. There are many hours when adorers are needed.

The Forty Hours' Devotion honors the time Our Lord's Adorable Body passed in the Holy Sepulcher, and obtains for the Church, as well as for each soul, all of the pressing needs of the day by this most efficacious prayer. Please plan to attend one or more of

the special Masses, as well as to take an hour of Adoration where it is most needed: **Saturday afternoon from 3-5:00 PM, and Sunday from 1-5:00 PM.**

The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed after the 5:45 PM Mass on First Friday evening. The moving and very touching Procession and Litany of the Saints conclude opening ceremonies, and are repeated Sunday evening at 7:00 PM following the annual Parish Appreciation Dinner for our workers and volunteers.

*During the course of this exposition, if a visit is made to the Blessed Sacrament, there is granted an indulgence of 15 years. A plenary indulgence on each of the days of the exposition provided the faithful make their Confession and Holy Communion.*

### • January 4th: Opening of 40 Hours - First Friday

- 5:00 PM Confessions
- 5:30 PM The Infant of Prague Novena and Sacred Heart Novena/First Friday Devotions
- 5:45 PM Solemn Opening of 40 Hours
- 7:30 PM (Approx.) Parish Potluck
- 8:30 PM Hour Hour

**ADORATION WILL CONTINUE ALL NIGHT AND THROUGHOUT THE DAY ON SATURDAY.**

### • January 5th: Vigil of Epiphany - First Saturday

- 6:30 AM Low Mass
- 7:10 AM Rosary & First Sat. Devotions
- 8:00 AM Low Mass
- 9:00 AM Solemn High Mass

**ADORATION CONTINUES ALL DAY**

- 1:30 PM First Vespers of the Epiphany
- 5:00 PM Compline and Benediction

### • January 6th: Feast of the Epiphany

- 6:30 AM Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
- ADORATION CONTINUES ALL DAY**
- 7:30 AM Low Mass with the blessing of gold, frankincense & myrrh following the Mass. Home Blessing packs will be available in the vestibule.

- 9:00 AM Solemn High Mass
- 11:30 AM Low Mass
- 4:00 PM Second Vespers of the Feast
- 5:00 PM Parish Appreciation Dinner

- 5:45 PM Low Mass
- 7:00 PM Closing Forty Hours Pro-cession and Litany of the Saints

Parish workers and volunteers please join us for our annual Appreciation Dinner on Sunday, January 6th beginning at 5:00 PM in Helfta Hall. The church will provide the main course, holiday beverages and a cake. Please bring a little something "special" to share - salads, fruit, vegetables, - "your specialty".

This is where we normally beg you to let us know if you're coming. But, each year virtually no one signs up, or calls, so we have to guess—which means either too much or not enough food. The willingness to notify and make a commitment (even for so minor an event as an appreciation dinner—in *your* honor) has gone the way of so many social graces in today's society. It is a direct result of modernism's—"keep your options open" mentality, something better might come along. (Translation: "I just might not *feel* like it when the time comes.")

We really do want all of you to come. Each year we have so much fun at these "family" get togethers, and we miss those of you who can't be with us. Mark your calendars and don't forget! Sunday is a family day, and your "church family" really would like to enjoy a holiday evening with you.



*Hitherto...  
Henceforth...*

Hitherto  
The Lord hath helped us,  
Guiding the way:  
Henceforth  
Let us trust Him fully,  
Trust Him every day.

Hitherto  
The Lord hath loved us,  
Caring for His own:  
Henceforth  
Let us love Him better,  
Live for Him alone.

Hitherto  
The Lord hath blessed us,  
Crowning all our days:  
Henceforth  
Let us live to bless Him,  
Live to show His praise.

### NOVENA PRAYER FOR ADVENT

*Hail and blessed be the hour and moment, in which the Son of God was born of the Most Pure Virgin Mary, at midnight in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. At that hour, vouchsafe O my God, to hear my prayer and grant my desires through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother. Amen.*

(Traditionally said 15 times: a day from St. Andrew's Day until Christmas.)

About eight centuries before Christ was born, the prophet had foretold that He would be born of a Virgin and would be called "Emmanuel," which means "God with us." The sun is so bright that we do not see all of the colors contained in it unless its rays are shot through a prism. God's Divinity is too great for us; it was necessary that it be shot through the prism of human nature, so that we might begin to comprehend God's love for us. This is the meaning of Emmanuel—God with us. He Who is born without a mother in heaven, is born without a father on earth. He Who made His Mother, is born of His Mother. He Who made all flesh is born of the flesh. The Bird that



built the nest of the universe is hatched therein. Maker of the sun, under the sun; Molder of the earth, on the earth; ineffably Wise, little Infant; filling the world, lying in a manger; ruling the stars, suckling a breast; the mirth of heaven weeps, God becomes Man; the Creator, a Creature; the Rich becomes poor; Divinity, incarnate; Majesty, subjugated; Liberty, captive; Eternity, time; master is servant; Truth, accused; Judge is judged; Justice, condemned; Lord, scourged; Power, bound with ropes; King, crowned with thorns; salvation, wounded; Life, dead; Union of unions, three mysterious unions in One—Divinity and humanity, virginity and fecundity, faith and the heart of a man. And though we shall live on through eternity, eternity will not be long enough for us to understand the mystery of the Child Who was a Father, and the Mother who was a child.

—ARCHBISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN

FIRST NOTE IN A NEW SYMPHONY

Imagine the conductor of a symphony giving to each member of the orchestra a well scored composition. Each of the musicians is free to follow the notes to produce orchestral harmony. But suppose one of them deliberately strikes a sour note. In the face of it, the director may do one of two things; he may strike his baton and order them to play it over, or he may ignore the discord. It makes little difference which he does, for that false note is traveling out in space at about a thousand feet a second; and as long as time endures there will always be found a discord in the universe.

Is there any way to restore harmony to the world? It could be done by someone reaching out his hand from eternity and stopping that unhappy note in its mad flight. But would it still not be a false note, even though it could go no further? It would cease being a discord, if he who stopped it wrote a new symphony, and made that false note the first in the new melody. Then it would be harmonious.

Centuries ago God gave to man a symphony of creation and with it the glorious gift of freedom. Man chose to introduce a discord into the universe by the abuse of freedom, by choosing a part to the whole, a fruit for the garden, and his rebellion became a kind of infection which passed on to every human being.

God could have ignored this infected humanity. Rather what He did was to ask a woman to give Him a human nature—one that would not have this stain of rebellion and dissent. Dispensing with the carnal union of man and woman, His human nature broke that bond with awful humanity. It was a kind of a lock in the canal of human generation, by which one passed from foul water to clear water. This human nature, conceived and born of a virgin, became the first note in a new creation or a regenerated humanity.

The human race, therefore, is divided into two classes of people: the "once born," who are begotten of the flesh; and the "twice born," who are begotten also of the Spirit of Christ. Every human being who incorporates himself to Christ becomes like a new note in this symphony of the "New humanity," and the sum of all is what Scripture calls the Mystical "Body of Christ" or the Church.

What is Peace?

The message of the Angels of Christmas was "on earth peace." What is peace? Peace is the tranquility of order. It is not just tranquil in the possession of their spoils. Order or justice is the due subordination of parts to whole, of body to soul, and of man to God. Without order there can be no true tranquility which is peace.

The Christmas gift of peace was the uncoiling of the links of a triple chain which first unites men with God; then man with himself; and then man with his fellowman.



Why we miss Peace

One reason why we do not find peace is because we want to be saved but not from our vices, or because we want to be saved but at not too great a cost, or because we want to be saved in our way, and not God's way. We miss peace because in each and every one of us there is a little secret garden which we keep locked. It contains the one thing we will not give up to have true peace of soul; it may be alcohol, it may be an unholy alliance. The Christmas secret of peace is giving this secret garden and our whole human nature to God, as Our Blessed Mother gave Christ His human nature. Christmas reminds us that the reason we are not as happy as saints is because we do not wish to be saints!

—THE MARYFAITHFUL  
November/December 2003