The Coming of the King

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem wrote in the 4th century: *"Make your left hand a throne for your right, because your right is going to receive the King: make a hollow of your palm and receive the Body of Christ, saying after it: 'Amen!'"*

We immediately consume the Body or Blood of Christ in the presence of the priest, deacon, or extraordinary minister, never closing our hand on the Eucharist or walking away with the Host. Not hurried or harried, we hold the Author of time & life in our hands and consume the Lord while facing the priest, deacon, or extraordinary minister. If there are extenuating circumstances which limit us to receive gluten free Host, or a small or broken piece of the Eucharist, then we should ask the priest or extraordinary minister's assistance in providing for this.

If we accidently drop the Host, we would immediately pick up the Host as if a loved one fell before us. It is God we behold. The priest or minister will be more than willing to help us in such circumstances.

If you would like to have the Eucharist brought to someone who is sick or homebound, please speak with the priest or call the rectory to arrange a visit. Do not take the Eucharist from the church. On several occasions we have found the Sacred Host left in the bench or stuck in the pages of the missal. If ever you find the Holy Eucharist in a situation like this, please help us by bringing the Host (the Lord) to the priest, or notifying the priest as soon as possible. Consuming the Eucharist before the priest, deacon, or extraordinary minister will help prevent concern or likelihood for any abuse. In our pluralistic culture there are those who do not hold sacred our beliefs and more than a few who even openly mock religion. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us the danger of this sacrilege:

Sacrilege consists in profaning or treating unworthily the sacraments and other liturgical actions, as well as persons, things, or places consecrated to God. Sacrilege is a grave sin especially when committed against the Eucharist, for in this sacrament the true Body of Christ is made substantially present for us. CCC # 2120

All of us as faithful Catholic Christians may, with love and care for God and neighbor, assist or remind those who may have gotten disoriented at the reception of communion. Parents should be particularly helpful in assisting their children.

STEWARDSHIP

"You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah, too small to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel." *Micah 5:1*

We may think that the gifts we have to offer may be too small or too inconsequential to give to God. Today we are reminded that God brought forth His greatest gift to mankind, His own Son, through the humble town of Bethlehem. He can also accomplish great things through us if we generously offer our gifts to Him.

Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 19
4:00pm Margaret Clarkowski ..... Memorial Mass

Sunday, December 20
7:00am ..... *Pro Populo*, For the People of the Parish
9:00am Robert J. Hague ..... 21st Anniversary
11:00am Edward Noël..... 12th Anniversary
6:00pm Rita Doherty ..... Memorial Mass

Monday, December 21
7:00am Vincent Latham ..... Memorial Mass

Tuesday, December 22
7:00am Geraldine Goodman Cahill..... 6th Anniversary

Wednesday, December 23
7:00am ..... For Deceased Priests of the Archdiocese of Boston

Saturday, December 26
4:00pm Corrina Antonucci & Rita Kretzman ..... Memorial Mass

Sunday, December 27
7:00am ..... *Pro Populo*, For the People of the Parish
9:00am Richard Gallant ..... 9th Anniversary
11:00am Francis Good Sr., Marybeth Lubrano..... Memorial Mass
6:00pm Anita Angers..... 20th Anniversary

Funerals Patricia Landers (12/15/09)
Regina Wojcik (12/18/09)

OFFERTORY COLLECTION FY2010

	Amount Collected	Amount Budgeted	Variance
Envelopes (rec'd 496)	$12,445		
Loose Cash	$3,234		
Total – week of Dec. 13	**$15,679**	**$15,300**	**$379**
Fiscal YTD Offertory (thru 24 of 51 weeks)	$366,013	$367,200	($1,187)

Please remember that the offertory is our main source of funds for paying our daily operating expenses.
Thank you to all for your continued generosity!

Christmas Collection for the Clergy Benefit Trust

Our only collection at all of our Christmas Masses will be dedicated to providing for the retirement, healthcare, and financial needs of priests of the Archdiocese of Boston. We can all remember fondly the priests who baptized our children, witnessed our marriage, or brought the anointing of the sick to a loved one that was dying. We encourage you to give generously on behalf of the priests that have devoted their lives to God and His Church in the Archdiocese of Boston. On behalf of all of our priests, thank you in advance for your generosity.

The Rectory and Lighthouse will be closed on Friday, December 25 in observance of Christmas. A priest will be available for emergencies.

Christmas Memorial Flower Fund

Envelopes for your donations to the Christmas Memorial Flowers Fund will be in the pews at all Sunday Masses until Christmas. The envelopes may be placed in the offertory basket or brought to the rectory. At the Christmas Masses a basket containing all the names to be remembered will be placed near the nativity in the sanctuary of the Church. As always, anonymous donations are also graciously accepted. *Thank you for your generosity*.

Arts & Environment Christmas Decorating - The Arts & Environment Committee is seeking volunteers to assist with decorating the church for Christmas on December 22 beginning at 3:30pm. Give a little or a lot of your time! If you are able to help and/or would like more information, please contact Brenda Lovering, 978-256-0705.

Saint Vincent de Paul - Due to the tremendous generosity of our benefactors in the parish, St. Vincent de Paul Society has been able to provide assistance to most callers this year. The reasons for the hardship vary from person to person. But many individuals just need a little help paying utility bills or a month's rent until their lives get back to normal. Our greatest satisfaction is to say "yes" -we can help you. As you consider year-end charitable donations, we ask you to consider supporting St. Vincent's work in the parish. Our members are all volunteers and 100% of your donations assist your neighbors in need. You may send donations to the rectory or place an envelope in the collection basket to our attention.

Protecting God's Children

All volunteers at St. Mary Parish are required to complete Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Training. This is a **one-time** workshop that will help to recognize child abuse, offer protective practices, and instruct on reporting incidents of abuse. **CAP training is available at St. Catherine Parish, 107 No. Main St., Westford, MA on Sunday, January 10, 2010, 12:30-3:30pm in the Parish Center Mezzanine.** If you'd like to register, please contact the St. Catherine Parish Office, 978-692-6353.

Revelation: The Kingdom Yet to Come

A second course in Sacred Scripture will be offered for St. Mary's parishioners. The book to be studied is Revelation which explores how the Kingdom established by Christ in His Church is intimately connected with the Kingdom of Heaven, especially throughout the celebration of the Mass. Jeff Cavins, the popular teacher of A QUICK JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE, will explore what the figures and images of Revelation represent in salvation history. Classes will be offered on Sunday afternoons from 12:30-2:00pm, beginning January 10 or Tuesday evenings from 7:00-8:30pm, beginning January 12 (location TBD). The cost is $25. Please return your registration (located at church entrances or on our website, www.saint-mary.org) to the rectory by January 3. For more information, call Fr. William Dunn at 978-256-2374, or wdunn@saint-mary.org. A minimum of 20 participants is necessary to keep the cost affordable. For information, please contact Father Dunn or the Rectory.

Special Opportunity for IRA Gifts Available

Between now and December 31, 2009, you could make a gift to St. Mary Parish far bigger than you ever thought possible.

You can make the gift of a lifetime by giving from your IRA to the parish without federal tax penalty. So your retirement funds can go further than ever before.

This is good news for parishioners who want to make a charitable gift during their lifetime from their retirement assets, but have been discouraged from doing so because of the income tax penalty.

Here's what it takes to qualify for this tax advantage:

- Need to be 70 and a half years or older
- Have an IRA – whether traditional or Roth
- Want to make a charitable gift up to $100,000
- Make the gift by December 31, 2009

For more information, contact Paul Firicano at the rectory, or Richard Ely at The Catholic Foundation, 617-779-3702 or email Richard_Ely@rcab.org. Or visit The Catholic Foundation website www.CatholicLegacySociety.org.

The Catholic Book Club's next selection is *The Power and the Glory* by Graham Greene. The next meeting is Sunday, January 31, 2010, after the 6 PM Mass.

Religious Education

Religious Education Inclement Weather Plan

If Chelmsford Public Schools are cancelled for inclement weather Religious Education classes will be cancelled. The announcement will be publicized through The Religious Education Office outgoing phone message, 978-256-3541. It will also be broadcasted on **Channel 4/WBZ, Channel 5/WCVB, and Channel 7/WHDH.**

Weekday Classes: Decision will be made Mon.-Thurs. by 1:00PM

Sunday Classes: Decision will be made Saturday evening or Sunday by 6:00AM or in case of mid-afternoon storm by 1:00pm.

Should we experience inclement weather, kindly check the Religious Education voice message system, St. Mary's parish website (www.saint-mary.org) and local weather stations for closing information. As the weather in New England can be somewhat unpredictable, please know that we respect and expect parents to use their own prudential judgment in regard to the safety of transporting their family members during periods of inclement weather.

Receive cell phone notification of class cancellations from 7NEWS (WHDH)! Go to www.whdh.com, click on "Snow Day Alert" and provide the information requested. If you have questions contact 7NEWS at webmaster@whdh.com or call the toll-free number, 1-877-316-5990.

Religious Education Building Closed for Christmas Break - The Religious Education and Youth Ministry offices will be closed December 24, 2009 through January 1, 2010. Classes will resume on Sunday, January 3, 2010. If you have any questions, please call the Religious Education Office at 978-256-3541.

Attention Sunday Liturgical Ministers...

If you would like to serve at Mass for Christmas Day, and/or the Mary Mother of God Vigil or Holy Day Masses, please sign up now, at the bulletin board outside the sacristy. *Thank You!*

Chelmsford Community Exchange Christmas Hours

One North Rd. Chelmsford MA - P.O. Box 394 - 978-250-3818

Food/Gift Drop-Off Hours

Thurs. Dec. 17 .....10:30am - 1:00pm & 6:45-7:45pm
Sat. Dec. 19 ..... 10:00am - 12:00Noon
Mon. Dec. 21 & Tues. Dec. 22.....4:00-6:00pm

Food Pick-up Hours

Thurs. Dec. 17 ..... 2:00 - 4:00pm
Fri. Dec. 18 ..... 6:30 - 8:00pm
Sat. Dec. 19 ..... 12:00Noon - 2:00pm
Mon. Dec. 21, Tues. Dec. 22, Wed. Dec. 23 ..... 6:00 - 8:00pm

The Chelmsford Community Exchange is *closed* Thursday, December 24 thru Tuesday, January 5. For more information, call 978-250-3818, or email vze2gt3p@verizon.net.

The Knights of Columbus would like to thank everyone who supported the December Bottle & Can Drive. $277 was raised for the youth ministry programs. The next drive is scheduled for February 13th & 14th.

CatholicTV Christmas Programming

It's that time of year again! CatholicTV will intersperse Advent and Christmas programming with their regular schedule throughout December, especially December 21 until New Year's Eve. Then, all day Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and December 26, CatholicTV will become ChristmasTV for 72 hours of non-stop specials.

You can always watch all of the fine CatholicTV programming and on-demand at our easy to navigate website, www.catholictv.com.

Mass Schedule for weekend of December 27

4pm Altar Servers: R. Boshar, B. Lapierre, D. Lapierre
EMHCs: P. Cella, M. Hood, C. Larock, D. Mancini, D. Martel, G. Ripsom, P. Wetmore
Lectors: C. Desfosse, R. Rock

7am Altar Servers: C. McCarthy, M. McCarthy
EMHCs: K. Cusick, D. Robillard, J. Serra
Lectors: C. Frassica, M. McCusker

9am Altar Servers: D. de la Flor, K. DeSilvio, N. DeSilvio
EMHCs: B. Bovill, G. Defreitas, M. Kijanka, M. Kijanka, M. Makara-Higgins, J. McMillian, C. Moran
Lectors: M. Messier, J. Morency

11am Altar Servers: Maddie Andrews, Moira Andrews, C. Conte
EMHCs: P. Boyd, D. Camacho, C. Coady, S. Conte, M. Hastings, L. McDonald, T. Sousa
Lectors: A. Gagnon, G. Noonan

6pm Altar Servers: B. Martin, B. Whitehouse
EMHCs: C. Hirt, A. Whitehouse, R. Whitehouse
Lectors: B. Donahue, C. Garrahan

CALENDAR

Sunday, December 20 - 4th Sunday of Advent

- Family Mass - 9:00am - Church
- Gr. 2 Religious Education - 10:00am - Hall
- Baptism - 2:00pm - Church
- Gr. 9 Confirmation I Class - 4:30pm - Hall
- Youth Mass - 6:00pm - Church
- The Truth/S.N.A.C. - 7:00pm - Hall

Monday, December 21

- Gr. 7 Pre-Confirmation I- 5:00pm - Hall
- Gr. 8 Pre-Confirmation II– 6:00pm - Hall
- Gr. 9 Accelerated Confirmation - 7:00pm - Hall
- Liturgy Commission Meeting - 7:00pm - Conf. Rm. B

Tuesday, December 22

- Arts & Environment Church Decorating - 3:30pm - Church
- RCIA - 7:00pm - Conf. Rm. B

Wednesday, December 23

- Teen Choir Instrumental Rehearsal - 5:30pm - Church
- Youth Mass Music Group - 6:00pm - Church
- Boy Scouts Troop 77 Meeting - 7:00pm - Hall
- Lector Preparation Workshop - 7:00pm - Conf. Rm. A
- Pizza & Prayer - 7:00pm - RE Rm. 7
- Choral Singers - 7:15pm - Church
- Adult Contemporary Music Group Rehearsal - 8:15pm - Church

Thursday, December 24 - Christmas Eve

- Rosary - 12:00Noon - Church
- Vigil Mass - 4:00pm - Church and Hall
- Live Nativity - 6:00pm - Church
- Saint Mary Choir Concert & Carol Singing followed by Midnight Mass - 11:30pm - Church

Friday, December 25 - Christmas Day

- Christmas Masses - 7:00, 9:00, and 11:00am - Church

Saturday, December 26

- Reconciliation & Eucharistic Adoration 11:00am - Church
- Anointing of the Sick - Following 4:00pm Mass - Church

Sunday, December 27
Feast of the Holy Family

- Family Mass - 9:00am - Church
- Youth Mass - 6:00pm - Church

Adult Confirmation

Saint Mary Parish is offering a six week course for adults who have not completed their third sacrament of initiation, CONFIRMATION. The course begins on Monday evening, February 22 at 7PM and last for six weeks. The Confirmation Mass will be on Easter Wednesday, April 7 at St. Monica's Parish in Methuen at 7:30 PM. Questions and additional information: Fr Dunn at 978-256-2374 or wdunn@saint-mary.org.

SAINT MARY CHURCH **03-0756-04C**
25 NORTH ROAD
CHELMSFORD, MA 01824

CONTACT : **Mary Steiner**
978-256-2374 ext. 10
Week of December 20, 2009 - 4th Sunday of Advent/Christmas

Print 1,600 bulletins this week only!

Thanks!