

***Masses For The Week*****Monday - December 16**

6:30 In Thanksgiving to God  
 9:00 Rev. Vincent P. Crotty, CSSR

**Tuesday - December 17**

6:30 Charles A. Cisco  
 9:00 Lucille Figueroa

**Wednesday - December 18**

6:30 Billy J. Holt  
 9:00 John Lettis

**Thursday - December 19**

6:30 Vincent Busuttil  
 9:00 Peter M. Moschera

**Friday - December 20**

6:30 Wallace & Sonia Kankas  
 9:00 Stanley W. Lewandowski, 6th Anniversary

**Saturday - December 21**

9:00 **Multiple Intentions Announced at Mass**  
 5:00 Terri Minett & Daniel & Teresa Flynn  
 7:00 William Csajko

**Sunday - December 22**

7:00 The People of the Parish  
 8:30 Mary & Thomas Garone  
 10:00 Mary O'Neil  
 11:30 Michael DeZervos  
 1:00 Robert Hermann  
 5:30 Rosemary Ogno

***Readings For The Week***

Mon. Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a; Matthew 21:23-27

Tues. Genesis 49:2, 8-10; Matthew 1:1-17

Wed. Jeremiah 23:5-8; Matthew 1:18-25

Thurs. Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a; Luke 1:5-25

Fri. Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38

Sat. Song of Songs 2:8-14; Luke 1:39-45

**Sun. *Isaiah 7:10-14*** *The Lord offered Ahaz a sign. Ahaz answered, "I will not ask! I will not tempt the Lord!" Nevertheless, the Lord gave a sign: "The virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel."*

***Romans 1:1-7*** *Paul told the Romans he was called to be an apostle and set apart to proclaim the gospel of God about Christ Jesus. He said to them, "We have received the grace of apostleship" that we may spread the name and bring to faith all those called to belong to Jesus Christ."*

***Matthew 1:18-24*** *Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before the wedding, Mary became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph decided to break the engagement. He changed his mind when an angel in a dream told him to receive Mary as his wife.*

HOP winners are on page 8.

***Our Weekly Sacrificial Gift*****Weekend Collection for Dec. 7/8**

Amount Budgeted: \$17,500.00

Amount Received: \$17,833.11

Flowers: \$2,285.00

Immaculate Conception: \$941.00

***Thank you for your generosity & support!***

**Capital Campaign Updates**

**Amount Pledged: \$1,699,549.19**

**Amount Received: \$467,403.69**

***Reflection & Living Stewardship***

Each of us has his or her own role to play in the coming of the Kingdom of God. John the Baptist



was called to be the herald of the Messiah, preparing the way of the Lord. To what is the Lord calling

me?

We are grateful this week for all stewards in our parish who fulfill God's purpose by accepting their call to freely share their God-given gifts with the wider parish community.

**Charismatic Prayer Group**

We all know the true meaning of Christmas. We teach our kids it's Jesus' birthday but it's so much more. Think about it - without Christmas we couldn't have Easter! So celebrate his birthday but remember it's just the beginning of God's promise of salvation!

***Our next meeting is Monday, Dec. 16th at 7:30PM in St. Alphonsus Hall. All ages 18 and over are welcome. Call (516) 993-9672 for prayer requests or more information.***

**Divine Mercy Novena**

***Every Friday at 2:00 p.m.  
 in the Eucharistic Chapel  
 ALL ARE WELCOME!***

### *Wedding Banns*

2nd Anthony Arena and Courtney LaSpina  
2nd Christopher Rossol & Kristen Lamb

### Wedding at Another Catholic Church

Joseph DeMartinis & Andrezza Jezzi

***“Whatever you do for one of these,  
the least of my sisters and brothers,  
you did it for me.”***

Thank you to the members of St. Vincent de Paul Society for all their help with the Thanksgiving baskets and for securing donations of fresh vegetables and individual dinners from three restaurants - B.K. Sweeney, Crossroads and Runyon's Restaurant. Their help to fill, distribute and deliver baskets was invaluable!

This week the Pantry is low on Rice-a-Roni®, oatmeal, chili, cereals, mixed fruit, pineapple, peaches, pears, applesauce, tuna, pasta sauce, peanut butter, evaporated milk, hot chocolate, juice and juice boxes, cookies, ketchup, mayonnaise, coffee, dish soap, laundry soap and diapers (size 5).

### Food Pantry:

208 Broadway, Bethpage  
Monday: 9:30AM - 2:30PM  
Thursday: 2:00PM – 7:00PM

Phone: (516) 931-7332



### **Please pray for the sick of our parish:**

**Reminder:** please call the rectory at 931-0818 to remove a name off the list. Thank you.

*Helena Carroll, Pat Pedone, Vincent Valenti  
Ledwin Mason, Leevalli Annearosa, Fran Pignataro  
Skylar Vega, Leigh Murphy, Helena Mulligan  
Richard Piernini, John Tortorice, Joseph Simon  
Douglas Torres, Gina Cava, James Robertson  
Amy Hayes, Mom & Dad, Bill Kelly, Matthew Messina  
Sharon Shiepk, Christopher Gratton, John Mitchell  
Salvatore Accardi, Peggy Namiotka, Pat Cannata  
Barbara Thompson, Donald Castor, Dorothy Quinn  
Edith Lagan, Henry Niemczyk, Bud Pehrsson  
Zachery Duff, Sam Zubov, Christine Chiarappa  
Herman Lordahl, Patricia Marrone, Godeliva Pagan  
Michelle Cirillo, Mary Henson, Mary Lynn Brassil  
Catherine Battiat, Brendan Rodriguez, Charles Drew  
Rebecca Passaro Joanne Maguire, Dot Widyn  
Annette Giuliano, Madeline Ciaravino, Nicole Cagna  
Linda Cicoello, Grace DeDomenico, Sal Mascolo  
Patrick Crowe, Rita Kaleda, Gary Vlahov  
Chris & Raymond Mirendia, Irene Janampa*

### *Thought for the Week*

*Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*

*Matthew 1:23*



*Week of December 15 - 21, 2013  
Altar Bread & Wine*

*In Loving Memory of  
Mickey O'Connell*

### **Rest in Peace**

**Acts 7:49: “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”**

**Margaret V. Lincks**

## *Letter from the Pastor*



The Russian writer Leo Tolstoy wrote a beautiful story about seeing Jesus in the face of the poor. Grace Johnson in her book, *The Candle in the Window*, adapts this story for children and is accompanied by beautiful artwork. It is a book for children of any age. I think it has a great message for Christmas or any other time of the year. I am reading this story (with several further adaptations by me) to the children in our religious education program. The book is available on Amazon.



### **The Candle in the Window**

Once upon a time in a little German village named Stille Nacte, there lived a man who owned a store where he repaired people's shoes. His name was Gunther. The village was in the mountains so it was very cold and there was always lots of snow in the winter. The day was December 24, Christmas Eve. Gunther was a very hard working, good man and everyone liked him. But he was also a very sad man. He was sad because many years ago, his wife Hilda and his son Hans died when they were traveling on a train. They were his family and now he felt he had no one in his life. He found the time of Christmas especially difficult because everyone was decorating, singing Christmas carols and going to parties. Gunther's heart was too sad for these celebrations and he hoped that Christmas would pass quickly since he was so lonely. He stopped

putting up any Christmas decorations because they only made him cry when he thought of his family.

Early in the morning, his first customer was a man named Lord Von Schroder. He was a really stuck up man who thought he was the most important person in town. He came into the shoe store and told Gunther, "I want my boots repaired in a few hours since I am going to a party, and I want to dance in them." Gunther complained, "I have too much work already, and it is Christmas Eve." This bossy man just ignored him and left the shop.

A little while later, Gunther had a visit from his cousin Elsie. Elsie always tried to visit Gunther especially at Christmas. She was married and had six children. When she came into the store, she said, "Gunther, why don't you have any decorations up in your shop here? This is also where you live and it should have some Christmas cheer!" Gunther just smiled sadly and said nothing. Elsie had brought Gunther a gift. It was a stuffed toy of a little shepherd boy. She said to Gunther, "The shepherds in the fields were the first to hear the singing of the angels about Jesus our Savior being born. I want you to have this as your Christmas gift." "Thank you, Elsie, and I know you want to make me happy but I am too old and sad for Christmas." Elsie said to him, "Gunther, nobody is too old for Christmas. It is the day that Jesus came to the world to give us life. Where is your Christmas nativity set? You **must** put it up!" Gunther said, "it is somewhere upstairs in this house but I didn't have time to get it." Elsie said, "Gunther, don't you believe in Jesus? That he came into our world because he loved us and wanted us to someday be with him forever?" Gunther said, "I **do** believe it but I still have a very hard time celebrating anything." Elsie gave him a kiss and wished him a Merry Christmas. "I will see you in church tonight. "

Soon after, a young woman came into the shop with two young children. Gunther felt like he knew them but he was not sure who they were. They were very polite and nice but he thought they were a bit different than most other people. They were talking among themselves and looking at the machines in the shop.

Gunther asked, "Do you have shoes to pick up or need something repaired?" They mystified him! "I am Greta," said the young looking woman, "and this is Franz and Carrie. We love to visit people on Christmas Eve." Gunther asked, "Are you looking for money?" He said to them, "I don't have any money to give you; I am very poor."

The three laughed and said, "We do not want money; we are here to place a candle in the window of your shop. We do this all the time on Christmas Eve for sad people. Gunther, where is your Christmas crèche; is it up in the attic?" Greta said, "I will send the children to get it."

Gunther tried to explain politely, "I do not celebrate Christmas anymore," but the children kept decorating the window with holly and putting a candle in it. The shoemaker asked, "why are you putting a candle in my window?" Greta stopped what she was doing and said, "There is a beautiful legend that the Christ Child, who could find no home in Bethlehem other than a stable, walks about the earth on Christmas Eve, and if he sees a candle in the window, he knows that is a home that will welcome Him in for a visit."

Greta then said, "I am going to make you a promise right now - Jesus our Lord and Savior will come and visit you today in this shop. I promise you that with all my heart." Gunther saw that the woman and the young people were very sincere and good. Something about them made him really believe them. He thought what they were saying was true. When they left the store, for the first time in many years, he got very excited and ran to the shop to buy some Christmas cookies and eggnog for Jesus. He came home and started clearing up his shop. He was so excited. The store door opened and it was Lord Van Schroder, who entered demanding, "Where are my boots! I need them to dance!" Gunther said to the Lord, "I have someone far more important to see today than you. For all I care, you can dance in your feet. Now go away!" Lord Van Schroder was shocked at this.

A little while later, a very old woman came into the store. She spoke. "I saw the candle in the window and I was so hungry I almost fainted." Gunther told the woman to sit down. He got the woman some cookies and eggnog and she thanked him. She was holding his Christmas crèche. She was looking at Jesus in the manger. She started to cry. "Oh, I love Jesus!" she said. "When I was young I had such a statue but I had to sell it to eat!" Gunther told her, "I think Jesus would want you to have it." "No," she said. "I could not take your Baby Jesus. What would you do for Christmas?" Gunther insisted the woman take it. He gave her a little money he had saved and she said, "This Christ Child was the best gift I ever got!"

Gunther kept looking out the door for Jesus. "When is he coming? Were those three young people playing a trick on me?" The door opened again and it was a man who had no coat. He was shivering from the cold. Gunther asked, "What can I do for you? Did you come to buy shoes?" The man was embarrassed. "No," he said, "I was so cold and when I saw the candle in your window, I thought this might be a warm place where I could stop by." Gunther felt so sad for the man. "I am glad you stopped in. Where is your coat?" "I do not have one," said the poor man. "Well," Gunther said, "I have two coats and one is now yours!" The man insisted no, that he was ashamed to take the coat. Gunther said, "I can only wear one coat at a time and I insist you take the coat!" The man put it on and felt its great fur warmth. He thanked Gunther. Gunther was glad to have helped the poor man, but he was nervous that Jesus might walk by the store thinking that Gunther was too busy. He did not want to miss Jesus when he came into the store.

A little later, a young girl came in the store. She said, "The candle made me **want** to come in. Gunther said, "Why are you out on the street alone? Where are your mother and father?" "I have had no mother or father for a long time. I live on the streets and try to get food when I can." Gunther's heart broke for the little girl. He gave her cookies and told her to sit by the fire. He called his cousin Elsie to come to the shop. He did not know how to help the girl. The little girl had seen the toy shepherd and was holding it. You could see that she really loved it.

Gunther asked, "What is your name?" She replied, "My name is Maria." She put the shepherd down because she knew it was not hers. "I want you to have that shepherd for Christmas. It is my gift to you." The little girl hugged the shepherd and then Gunther. Now Elsie came to the store and Gunther explained to her about the homeless girl. Elsie said, "I will find out what is going on, but if there is no family, she will become part of my family. It is always good to have one more at the Christmas table." The little girl took Elsie's hand and with the other, she held on to her shepherd.

"What a day! What a strange day!" Gunther thought, "I had those three young people put the candle in the window, then three people who had great needs visited me. I am happy that I could help them but I am so disappointed that Jesus did not come. Maybe he was angry at me for not being happy about Christmas. I am so sad!"

As the day turned to night and he dozed in his chair, the three mystical people came into his shop. It was Carrie, Greta and Franz. Gunther looked at them and said, "Your promise was not true! I waited all day for Jesus to come into my shop, and he never came. You promised me that and now I believe you have made a fool of me!

Greta saw that Gunther had an old Bible on one of his shelves. She spoke, "Gunther, take that Bible on your shelf and turn to the Gospel of Matthew and read from Chapter 25." Although the shoemaker was upset with the three visitors he did what Greta asked. He read, "Jesus said to the people who came before him after they had died these words, 'I was hungry and you fed me; I was cold, and you gave me a coat; I was alone and you took care of me. You are blessed! Come into my kingdom forever!' The people were confused. "Lord, when did we see you hungry, or need a coat or to be taken care of. When did these things happen?" Jesus said, "Whatever you do for people who are in need, you do to me." Gunther started to cry!

Greta said to Gunther, "Jesus came into your shop three times today. Jesus was the woman who was hungry. You gave her food and then you gave her the Christ Child in your nativity set. Jesus was the man who was cold and came into your store and you gave your coat. Jesus was the little girl who had no home and you found her a home and you gave her the shepherd."

"Gunther, Jesus visited you three times today on Christmas Eve and you were very good to him. He loves you very much and he told me to tell you that your dear wife and son are with him in heaven and that you will someday see them again!" Suddenly, Greta and the other two disappeared from the shop. Gunther was alone. He looked at his watch, jumped up from his chair, and started walking to Church for Christmas Eve Mass. He knew that Jesus would come again to him at Mass in Holy Communion. There would never be a sad Christmas again for him because he would always put the candle in the window.



### Update on the Paving the Way for Christ

A continuing word of gratitude for all who have participated in any way in our parish campaign: by prayer, by donation or pledging, by sharing your gifts and talents as a volunteer. I am grateful to all our parishioners.

Here are the financial numbers to date:

**Amount Pledged: \$1,699,549.19**

**Amount Received: \$467,403.69**

The pledge redemption will begin in January of 2014. If you have made a pledge, you will receive a letter that will guide you in making your pledge to the parish (along with an envelope for the pledge). I believe the process will be very user friendly. If you have questions about your pledge, there will be a phone number to call in the letter you receive.

Some folks have already started to make their pledges. There is no need to do so until you receive the letter. However, if you wish to make a pledge before you receive the letter, you can do so by dropping it off at the rectory office. **If you choose to place your pledge in the collection basket (this is before the January letter), please make sure it is in an envelope that is clearly marked as a pledge since we do not want to confuse it with a regular collection offering.**

We have a good group of parishioners who have volunteered to serve on a building committee to help us move our projects forward. At this point, they are evaluating what project to begin first and some firm costs of what the projects will cost. God bless all of you for all you do for the parish.

-- Father Pat

**St. Martin's Life Teen program** is for all high school aged teens (9th-12th grade). Life



Teen gathers every Sunday for the 5:30pm Youth Mass and every Sunday night from 7-8:30pm in the Youth Center (room 107 of the school) for our Life Nights. Each week we gather to grow in faith and friendship with Christ & each other. Check out our parish website for a calendar of events at [www.smtbethepage.org](http://www.smtbethepage.org) or contact Erin at [EKHoran@yahoo.com](mailto:EKHoran@yahoo.com).

**The Edge program** is for all middle school aged students (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade). Edge meets



every other Thursday evening from 7-8:30pm. This program is a wonderful way for young adolescents to grow in their faith as well as build lasting friendships.

**Parent Life** is designed to give parents an opportunity to support their parish ministry programs while strengthening their own relationship with Christ and His Church. Parent



Life meets once a month on Sundays following the 5:30pm Mass in the school building. **All parents and adults are welcome!**

### EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

The next Adoration service is  
Tuesday, January 14th  
7:00PM in the Church



The Life Teen Youth Ministry has Eucharistic Adoration with Benediction every 2nd Tuesday of the month beginning at 7:00 PM in the Church.

We fervently hope that you come and join us in prayer and adoration of the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Everyone is welcome!

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- Dec. 15: Crèche Blessings at 10AM Mass
- Dec. 15: Deadline for Giving Tree Gift Cards
- Dec. 18: Advent Service 7:30PM
- Dec. 18: Blood Drive 2:30 - 8:30PM
- Dec. 19: Pageant Practice 4PM
- Dec. 19: Spiritual Book Club 7PM
- Dec. 21: Anointing of the Sick at 9AM Mass
- Dec. 21: Advent Scripture (after Anointing Mass)
- Dec. 21: "It's A Wonderful Life" 2PM
- Legion of Mary: Every Tuesday at 10AM

**St. Martin of Tours HOP Club**

Dec. 9	#236 John & Noreen Joyce	\$25.00
Dec. 10	#62 M/M Vincent Murphy	\$25.00
Dec. 11	#440 Erin Molloy	\$25.00
Dec. 12	#409 Jane Wojcik	\$25.00
Dec. 13	#121 Karin McTigue	\$50.00

***Need a Stocking Stuffer?***

Come and pick up the *Lessons & Carols DVD* from last year's service. There are still plenty left and at \$10 apiece, they make great stocking stuffers.

Come and see any one of our music leaders after Mass and pick yours up while supplies last. The proceeds will help support our Music Ministry and more importantly, you will be lead into prayer, meditation and the most beautiful music our choirs have to offer.

**SPIRITUAL BOOK CLUB**

This is a **NEW Book Club** called the *Spiritual Book Club* and is not to be confused with the original Book Club. (see notice on the right)

The book for discussion is called *Starlight (Christmas)* by John Shea. The first meeting will be **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19th at 7PM** in Saint Alphonsus Hall.

Whether you've contacted the rectory or not, please come down if you are interested. Looking forward to it! - Father Pat

**GLUTEN, PEANUT & DAIRY FREE HOSTS**

St. Martin's always has a supply of hosts available for anyone who is allergy-sensitive to these types of foods.



Please seek out the sacristan *before mass* so that the priest is prepared to include it for consecration. Please be sure to follow this procedure every time you attend mass.

**Please Note:**

**There is no Padre Pio Prayer Service in December. The next service will be on Tuesday, January 21, 2014.**

**ORIGINAL Book Club**

Dear Book Club Friends,



All the participants at the last meeting were most insightful. It was another event of heartfelt sharing which involved vivid and true connections to our lives and to our world today. However, it became a special time because there was a genuine feeling of community of Catholic believers in Jesus, amid the facts about violence and broken human beings.

Again, all are welcome -new members, old members, recent participants. Whenever you attend, your presence is most valued and appreciated. The next wonderful book is *The Sea* by John Banville. We will contact you about the exact date and location of our next meeting. It will be in January. Thoughts for the book discussion will be sent to all of you.

If there are any questions, please call Ann Mele at (516) 330-3039 or [ann111647@netscape.net](mailto:ann111647@netscape.net).

Till then...happy reading!

Father Patrick Woods and Ann Mele

### PLEASE PRAY CONSTANTLY FOR THOSE SERVING IN OUR MILITARY

Please call the rectory at 931-0818 or email [woodscssr@aol.com](mailto:woodscssr@aol.com) or [gamit1946@hotmail.com](mailto:gamit1946@hotmail.com) to add your loved one to this prayer list. Our whole parish is united in prayer for safe return home of:



MAJ Brian McGrath, US Army  
 CPT Gregory Holownia, US Army  
 PO3 Matthew Sadecki, US Coast Guard  
 CPL Zachary John Sheehy, USMC  
 PVT Travis Ruggiero, US Army, Afghanistan  
 PVT Dennis Diesel, USMC  
 PVT James Kruper, USMC  
 PFC Matthew P. Sirianni, US Army  
 CPT Conor B. Murphy, USMC, Okinawa, Japan  
 2LT Victoria Meyer, US Army Nurse Corp  
 PO1 John Paul Pedalino II, US Navy  
 CPT Thomas P. Shea, USAF, Afghanistan  
 CPL Michael John Kelly, USMC  
 1LT Brian McGrath, US Army  
 PFC Matthew Castellano, US Army



### Celebrate Advent

As a way of entering more deeply into the season of Advent, you are invited to consider doing the following:

- Read the upcoming Gospel before you come to Mass. Reflect on it. What is this Word of God saying to you? If the reflection questions help you, use them to get you thinking about the Gospel and its meaning for you. Perhaps, you could share the Gospel reflection with your spouse, your children, or family and friends. What a beautiful way to enter into Advent.
- Lastly, it would be great if you could come to all or some of our faith sharing discussions on the upcoming Sunday Gospels. These sessions are about 45 minutes and you say or listen at whatever level of participation you choose. You do not have to be an expert on the Bible; you simply have to be open to reading the Gospel and letting it be part of you.

**Last date for these gatherings:  
 Saturday December 21: St. Alphonsus Hall  
 (will begin after the 9AM Anointing Mass)**

### Advent Program at St. Martin of Tours

Last year we had three Wednesday nights during Advent when we paused as a parish community as we sought to enter more deeply into the Advent Season. It is so easy for any one of us to get caught up in the rush of the Christmas Season and wake up on December 26<sup>th</sup> and wonder where the time went. I believe those who attended the Advent program last year were very pleased with it.



**The remaining Wednesday is December 18  
 7:30 PM**

It would be great if we could have some volunteers to read, carry a symbol, hand out materials and so forth. If you can volunteer for one specific night or all three, please let me know. You can email me at [woodscssr@aol.com](mailto:woodscssr@aol.com) or phone 931-0818. The more the merrier!

This simple program is a wonderful way to enter into the Advent Season. You can attend one or all sessions. All are welcome.

### **Middle School and High School Students Lectors Wanted at the Family Mass**



Are you looking to improve your public speaking skills? Are you looking to be an active participant in Mass? Are you looking to gain a deeper understanding of the Gospel?

Are you a middle school or high school student looking for a way to serve your parish community? If you are... then we are looking for **you** to become a **Lector!**

St. Martin of Tours is looking for **middle school and high school students** who are interested in becoming Lectors for the Family Mass on Sundays at 10:00 AM. Please contact Rachel Maggio at [rldoj@live.com](mailto:rldoj@live.com) or 516 622-3779.

*Training is provided and encouragement and appreciation are guaranteed!*

### **CONFESSIONS**

**Tuesday, December 17  
2:00 - 3:00 PM and 7:00 - 8:00 PM**

**Wednesday, December 18  
2:00 - 3:00 PM**

**Saturday, December 21  
2:00 - 3:00 PM and 8:00 - 9:00 PM**

### **The Catholic Counseling Center 12 Ryder Court, Dix Hills NY 11746**

Professional therapy, provided by NYS licensed therapists, is available to our parish and 147 other parishes. This program, under the direction of George A. Giuliani, PhD, Director/Psychologist, is provided by the Catholic Counseling Center which is independent of and not controlled or supervised by the parish or the diocese.

Most insurance policies, including Medicare, are honored. Confidential information and appointments are available by calling Dr. Giuliani at 631-243-2503.

You may visit his website at  
<http://thecatholiccounselingcenter.com>.

### **VIRTUS TRAINING Protecting All God's Children**

If you wish to volunteer in any capacity in a parish, the Diocese of Rockville Centre requires that you first register for Virtus by logging on to [www.virtus.com](http://www.virtus.com).

Look for "registration" at the left column and follow the instructions. If you do not have access to the internet, please pick up a packet at the rectory office. Complete it and bring it with you to the Virtus training session.

### **Next Virtus at St. Martin of Tours**

**Tuesday, December 17 at 7:30PM  
Faculty Lounge at the School**

**Altar Servers Needed for  
Christmas Masses  
INCLUDING OUR NEWEST SERVERS**

Please contact Father Jim McCabe, CSSR at [jmccabe79@yahoo.com](mailto:jmccabe79@yahoo.com) or Genny at [gamit1946@hotmail.com](mailto:gamit1946@hotmail.com) or call the rectory at 931-0818 if you are able to serve during the Christmas Season.

The Mass schedule is as follows:  
Christmas Eve, Tuesday December 24th

4:00 PM Church and Auditorium  
4:30 PM Knights of Columbus Hall  
(Central Avenue)  
6:00 PM Children's Mass (Church)  
9:00 PM Life Teen Mass (Church)  
Midnight Mass (Church)

Christmas Day, Wednesday December 25th  
7AM; 8:30AM; 10AM; 11:30AM and 1PM  
No evening Mass on Christmas Day

December 31st (Vigil)  
7PM

January 1st  
Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God  
(A holy day of obligation)  
9AM and 7PM

**St. Martin of Tours  
Blood Drive**

Wednesday, December 18, 2013  
2:30pm - 8:30pm  
St. Alphonsus Hall  
38 Seaman Avenue, Bethpage

Your donation will help to save up to **THREE** lives. Our community hospitals need your help. Please share this lifesaving gift! Thank you for caring!

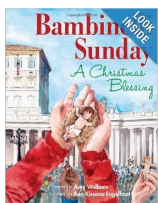
**Eligibility Criteria:**

- Bring ID with signature or photo.
- Minimum weight 110 lbs.
- Age 16 - 75 (16 year olds must have parental permission. Age 76 and over need doctor's note)
- Eat well (low fat) & drink fluids
- No tattoos for past 12 months
- For questions concerning medical eligibility call 1-800-688-0900.

 **New York** Blood Center

**Upcoming Advent - Christmas Event**

In Italy, there is a holiday tradition to bring the baby Jesus from the crèche to be blessed by the Pope on the third Sunday of Advent. **On Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, at the 10:00 Children's Mass, all are invited, especially children to bring their Infant Jesus from their crèche for a blessing.** A Christmas party with a good friend of Jesus attending, Santa Claus, will follow the Mass. Christmas cookies and cakes are Santa's favorites...and you can skip the carrots for the reindeer!



**It's a Wonderful Life**

**On Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, at 2:00 p.m. in St. Alphonsus Hall we will show the movie It's a Wonderful Life.** Anyone wearing a Christmas sweater or hat will win a prize. There will be some light snacks. After the movie, you can go to the 5:00 p.m. Mass.



### The Parish Jesse Tree

In our sanctuary for Advent is a Jesse Tree. The Jesse Tree consists of a stump and a branch coming out of it. This image is found in the prophet Isaiah in the readings for the Second Sunday of Advent and it represents Jesus' family tree. The name is taken from Isaiah 11:1, in which Jesus is referred to as a shoot coming up from the stump of Jesse, the father of David.

The ornaments on the Jesse Tree tell of Jesus' ancestors and of the events leading to Jesus' birth. At the 10:00 children's Mass, for the second, third, and fourth Sundays of Advent, the children will be putting on different religious ornaments that tell the key stories of the Bible that led to the birth of Jesus.



I love the image of the Jesse Tree from the prophet Isaiah. There is nothing deadier than a stump. Tree stumps are a problem; they are hard to remove. The prophet is comparing God's Chosen People, Israel, to a dead tree stump. So often they have abandoned the God who so loves them as do we. Still, from this dead wood will come new and vigorous life: a branch will come forth that will bring a new creation into the world in Jesus, the Son of God. The Jesse Tree is a great sign of hope for anyone who feels hopeless. God is with us always. I thank Pat Astarita for graciously making our Jesse Tree. It is a perfect symbol.

Any child who wants to hang a small picture on the Jesse Tree on December 22<sup>nd</sup> at the 10:00 a.m. children's Mass is welcome to do so at the time of the homily. The picture should be small and have a string to hang it on the branch. It could be a picture of the child, the family, or something that he/she feels is special and wants to use to tell the story of God's love.

### CHRISTMAS EVE CHILDREN'S PAGEANT

ANGELS, SHEPHERDS, KINGS

Sign up for the Christmas Eve Children's Pageant celebrated at the 6:00 PM Mass. Please fill out and return this form to the rectory to the attention of Genny Mitchell. Practice will be on Thursday, December 19th at 4:00 PM in the Church.

Name(s) & Age(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_



## RESPECT LIFE COMMITTEE

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And when the angel had come to her, he said, "*Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women.*" When she had heard him she was troubled at his word, and kept pondering what manner of greeting this might be.

And the angel said to her, "*Do not be afraid, Mary, for thou has found grace with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he shalt be king over the house of Jacob forever: and his kingdom there shall be no end.*"

(Luke: Chapter 1 Gabriel speaks to Mary)

### MARY, DID YOU KNOW?

©Mark Lowry/Buddy Greene

Mary, did you know that your Baby Boy would one day walk on water?  
Mary, did you know that your Baby Boy would save our sons and daughters?  
Did you know that your Baby Boy has come to make you new;  
This Child that you delivered will soon deliver you.

Mary, did you know that your Baby Boy will give sight to a blind man?  
Mary, did you know that your Baby Boy will calm the storm with His Hand?  
Did you know that your Baby Boy has walked where Angels trod?  
When you kiss your Little Baby, you kiss the FACE OF GOD!

The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again.  
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak, The praises of the Lamb!

Mary, did you know that your Baby Boy is Lord of all creation?  
Mary, did you know that your Baby Boy, will one day rule the nations?  
Did you know that your Baby Boy is Heaven's Perfect Lamb?  
This sleeping Child you're holding...IS THE GREAT I AM!  
Oh, Mary did you know?



**FOR HELP IN A CRISIS PREGNANCY**

Call Diana Hart Mirando  
(C)830-5077 (H) 605-1979

**ROSELINE, LIFE CENTER 24 HOURS,  
RACHEL'S VINEYARD RETREAT (631)  
243-2373.**

**Baby Safe Haven, Safe Babies, Safe Place  
at 1 (877) 796-HOPE. Adoption, Foster  
Care, Maternity Services, Catholic Home  
Bureau 1(800) 592-4357.**

***Calling Attention to the  
Giving Tree in the Gathering Area***

Please take a card from the tree  
and return it with the requested  
gift card. Please drop it in the  
mail slot at the Rectory office by  
December 15th.



Thank you and God bless you for your  
assistance in bringing Christmas cheer to  
those in need!

**SCHEDULE FOR CHRISTMAS REHEARSALS AND MASSES FOR THE CHOIRS**

**Children's Choir Practices for Christmas Mass and the Pageant: Monday, December 9, 16 & 23  
from 5:30 to 6:30.**

**Regular Children's Choir Practice: Wednesday, December 11 from 5 to 6PM**

**Children's Choir Practices for Mass and Pageant: Thursday, December 19 from 4 to 6PM**

**Tuesday, December 24 - Christmas Mass and Pageant at 6:00 PM. Please be in the Church by  
5:30PM.**

**Sundays to follow: Sing at 10:00 AM Mass as usual. NO PRACTICE WED, JANUARY 1, 2014!**

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**ADULT CHOIR AND INSTRUMENTS**

**Monday, December 9, 16 and 23 from 7:30 to 9:30PM: Practices for Christmas Masses**

**Thursday, December 12 and 19 from 7:30 to 9:30PM: Regular Choir Practice**

**Tuesday, December 24 at 11PM: Christmas Pre Mass Concert and Midnight Mass to follow  
(Please be in Church by 10:30PM)**

**Wednesday, December 25: Christmas Morning Masses at 8:30 and 11:30AM**

**Sundays to follow 8:30 and 11:30AM Masses as usual. NO PRACTICE THURS, 12/26 OR 1/2/14!**

**LIFE TEEN BAND MEMBERS: Please check with Chris for your mass rehearsal schedule.  
Band members are welcome and encouraged to sing or play for Midnight Mass and Pre Mass  
Concert.**

**Thank you all for your time and talent. Looking forward to a wonderful Christmas Season at  
SMT! NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME ANY TIME!!!**

### **The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick**

**We will celebrate the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick within the 9:00 a.m. Mass on Saturday, December 21st.**

#### ***What Happened to the Last Rites of the Church:***

The Anointing of the Sick is one of the seven sacraments that Jesus gave to the Church. People used to speak about *Last Rites*. Vatican II moved the focus of the sacrament from those who were dying to those who were seriously in need of healing. Now that the Last Rites is promoted as the Sacrament of the Sick, as it encourages anyone who is seriously sick to call upon the priest in order to receive the Sacrament. This is in harmony with the words found in the Bible where it says, ***“Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord.” James 5:1.*** Certainly, if someone in your family is near death, it is important to call the rectory for a priest to come and anoint the person and say the prayers for the dying. This can be done at home or in the hospital.

#### ***The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick***

At the same time, as the Church reflected on the words of the Letter of James (quoted above), and as it pondered the healing ministry of Jesus while on earth, the Sacrament of the Sick became open to more than the dying. People who were about to have surgery could be anointed. Those who were elderly and facing the burdens of aging were invited to receive this sacrament. Anyone with a serious or chronic illness is welcome to this healing sacrament. Anyone with a significant physical, psychological, or spiritual need can benefit from the Sacrament of the Sick. If you are having surgery or if someone is homebound and ill, you are welcome to be anointed in Church, the rectory or at your home. You just need to call the rectory (931-0818).

#### ***How is the Sacrament Celebrated?***

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick consists of the priest laying hands on those to be anointed and then blessing their forehead and palms with Oil of the Sick, one of the special oils of the church. The priest says, as he makes a cross on your forehead with blessed oil, “Through this Holy Anointing, may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the Holy Spirit.” And then he says, as he anoints the palms of your hands, “May the Lord who frees you from your sins, save you and raise you up.” The one receiving the Sacrament responds, “Amen.”

#### ***Effects of the Sacrament***

There are some rare times when people do experience a physical experience of healing. However, that is very unusual. Furthermore, receiving the Sacrament of the Sick is an experience of knowing that Jesus is with us in our fears, anxieties, struggles, pains, and burdens. The sacrament may not remove these realities, but it does invite us to enter into the reality that God is Emmanuel: He is always with us. Sometimes illness and health concerns can move us to isolation. The Sacrament of the Church reminds us that we are not alone - our parish and faith community are with us!