Masses For The Week

Monday - December 23

6:30 **Edward Naughton**

9:00 Patrick Curtin

Tuesday - December 24

6:30 NO 6:30

9:00 George & Doris Held



CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR'S **SCHEDULE** page 14

Thursday - December 26

6:30 NO 6:30

9:00 The Murphy & Doolan Families

Friday - December 27

6:30 Mary Laraia

Gerolomo DiMaggio, Anniversary 9:00

Saturday - December 28

9:00 **Multiple Intentions Announced at Mass**

Louis Ruggiero, John & Gertrude O'Rourke 5:00

Dorothy & Cornelius Gore 7:00

Sunday - December 29

The People of the Parish 7:00

Joanmarie McCormick, 5th Anniversary 8:30

10:00 Angelina Cilmi, Anniversary

11:30 Cornelius Lewis

1:00 Mary Agrella, Anniversary

5:30 Gonzalo O. Cantos

Readings For The Week

Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Luke 1:57-66 Mon.

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Luke 1:67-79 Tues. Wed. Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18

Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Matthew 10:17-22 Thurs.

Fri. 1 John 1:1-4; John 20:1a, 2-8 1 John 1:5-2:2; Matthew 2:13-18 Sat.

Sirach 3:2-7, 12-14 People who revere their Sun. father will live a long life; they who obey their father bring comfort to their mother. Kindness to a parent will take lasting root.

Colossians 3:12-21 The church at Colossae heard, "Put on...heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Bear with one another. Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you. The author wrote, be thankful, and "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly."

Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23 Joseph was told in a dream to take the child and his mother to Egypt. In that way the prophecy would be fulfilled: "Out of Egypt I have called my son." When they returned, they settled in Nazareth to fulfill another prophecy: "He shall be called a Nazorean."

Our Weekly Sacrificial Gift

Weekend Collection for Dec. 13/14

Amount Budgeted: \$17,500.00 Amount Received: \$16,224.39

Flowers: \$1.427

Thank you for your generosity & support!

Capital Campaign Updates Amount Pledged: \$1,699,549.19 Amount Received: \$467,403.69

Reflection & Living Stewardship



When he discovered that Mary was Stewardship with child, Joseph resolved to end A Way of Life their engagement with as little disgrace as possible. But obedient to

the voice of God, he changed those plans and became instead protector of the child Jesus and His mother Mary.

We are grateful this week for all stewards in our parish who have the courage, like Joseph, to listen to God's voice in their own hearts and conscientiously pursue the tasks to which they have been called.

Charismatic Prayer Group

Is there an Innkeeper inside of you? Are you telling Jesus there's no room in your life? He doesn't ask for much -just a place in your heart. There's only three days left but there's still time to let Him in

Our next meeting is Monday, Dec. 23rd 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

3rd Anthony Arena and Courtney LaSpina3rd Christopher Rossol & Kristen Lamb

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

This week, the Pantry is low on: sweet cereals, Rice-A-Roni®, mixed vegetables, tomato sauce, canned pineapple, peaches, pears, Chef Boyardee®, ketchup, mayonnaise, mustard, coffee, evaporated milk, Parmalot® milk, juice & juice boxes, icing, dish soap, laundry soap, diapers (size 5) and baby wipes. As always, we are so grateful for your tremendous generosity.

All of us at the Food Pantry wish you and your loved ones a merry, blessed and joyous Christmas and much health in the coming New Year. God bless you all!

Food Pantry:

208 Broadway, Bethpage Monday: 9:30AM - 2:30PM Thursday: 2:00PM - 7:00PM Phone: (516) 931-7332

HOLY HOUR

We will have a holy hour before the Blessed Sacrament on Monday, December 23rd at 3:00PM. You are invited in the midst of all the rush and preparations to have some quiet time before the Blessed Sacrament. You are welcome to attend any or all of the holy hour.

Father Pat

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 Shiepko, 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 Battiata, Brendan Rodriguez, Charles Drew Rebecca Passaro Joanne Maguire, Dot Widyn Annette Giuliano, Madeline Ciaravino, Nicole Cagna Linda Cicolello, Grace DeDomenico, Sal Mascolo Patrick Crowe, Rita Kaleda, Gary Vlahov Bridget Mullarkey, Chris & Raymond Mirendia Irene Janampa, Father Henry Sattler, CSSR Deacon Jim Biggin

Thought for the Week

It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a Child Himself.

Charles Dickens



Week of December 22 - 28, 2013 Altar Bread & Wine

> In Loving Memory of Monica Szmytkowski

Rest in Peace

Acts 7:49: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

John G. Cunningham, Robert J. Schenk Jorge Hernandez

Letter from the Pastor

My first assignment as a Redemptorist was to be a teacher in a high school that we conducted. It was a boarding school so as Christmas approached, the students were naturally eager for Christmas and vacation to come since some of them might not have seen their parents and families for several months. I remember at a Mass during Advent we had a prayer of the faithful where the students could spontaneously voice their prayers. This one young man, a freshman, prayed that Christmas may come sooner. It was a most earnest prayer but one that amused me and even though it was more than thirty five years ago, I still recall. I knew what that young man meant but I allowed my imagination to play with his idea. I had this image of God moving the sun around the earth more quickly and rushing the days astrologically so that Christmas would come sooner. Those of you with small children and grandchildren know of what I speak: the young ones want to know how long till Christmas and the arrival of presents and Santa, and how long they have to try to avoid doing anything wrong to avoid the dreaded coal in their stocking. There is a beautiful innocence in hearing and watching those who can't wait for Christmas to come. If you have not yet written a Christmas card, baked a cookie, or wrapped a present, you may not want the day to come any quicker than it already is.

Even our Church recognized this desire for the coming of Christmas. On our Advent wreath, there are three purple candles and one pink one. This third Sunday of Advent, along with the fourth Sunday of Lent, are the only two days of the liturgical year that the priests and deacons wear the rose colored vestment. This candle and vestments

symbolizes the great day is almost here. We cannot help but feel a sense of joy and wonder in our hearts even though Christmas is still several days away. The color pink is a sign of joy.

I love Christmas but I have no difficulty waiting for the day to come. However, I do confess to having lots of difficulty in waiting in other situations. I, like many people, struggle at times with being patient. The words of St. Paul we heard are easy to read but hard to live: "Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You too must be patient."

Sometimes, when I shop, I feel like Charlie Brown, with the dreaded cloud over his head. After waiting on an internally long line, I finally am next in line. A shopper with more than 40 items is in front of me, and she seems to have coupons for everyone of one of the items, and each coupon must be checked. She is given her bill and she slowly counts out the exact change. She is so excruciatingly slow that I am ready to pay the entire cost of all her purchases just to get her to finish. Ah, I am now ready to be checked out. I have two items. The first one is scanned; and then I hear the clerk say: I can't find a price on this and she picks up the phone for the dreaded price check. I volunteer to run back and get another, but she tells me to be patient. (maybe she should give this sermon). Finally, we get a price. Then I hear the most frightening words of all: my register is out of paper—we need to change the role. Do I explode, run out of the store, or pray for patience. At times I have chosen all of the above.

I think there is someone in Bethpage who knows when I am going to take the Belt Parkway to Brooklyn. As soon as I leave, word is sent and the drawbridge on the Belt is raised one half hour from my departure so as to leave me waiting an extra 45 minutes or so when I approach it.

I had a great doctor in Brooklyn. But I found that almost 20 patients had the same two o'clock appointment that I was given. When I was finally seen at 3:30, she would tell me my blood pressure was a bit high. Any wonder. When I am with my family and we are leaving family and friends, I have learned that 'we are leaving' only means we are going to have at least another hour of saying good-byes, bathroom stops, and forgotten leftovers. Lord give me patience.

It is not easy to be patient. Honestly, I think it is one of the flaws of being human and the examples I give are not really serious concerns. I think when impatience becomes a matter for reflection and change is when it leads to explosions of anger that flow over to other people. We may find ourselves screaming at our two year old son or granddaughter because he/she is acting like a two year old. I know that living with a loved one who has dementia is not easy.

Yet, getting overly impatient with such a loved one is fruitless. We know that our loved one cannot act any differently. Screaming at a clerk in a store or on the phone may give us a moment's satisfaction, but they are human beings too, people simply trying to make a living. I find that most of the times I regret it. Sometimes, when in traffic or on hold on the phone, I start to get upset. What I find, if I allow myself to think about the situation, is that there is really something else bothering me to which I need to pay attention. Oftentimes, impatience is rooted in other areas of frustration of our lives.

Similarly, much of our impatience with others is asking them to be someone they are not. It may well be rooted in our desire for control. I want every light in America to be green when I am driving. We want people to act as we think they should act.

Situations that test our patience can lead to anger or to prayer. I can choose to accept what is and say a prayer rather than raise my blood pressure and constrict my arteries. Either way, the situation I am in is not going to change. A great word of Advent is Behold. Rather than to seek to rush through life on a rigid time schedule, there are times in life, when I can just slow down and ask myself: really, what is the great hurry? I know the things I am saying are not easy to do. I struggle with patience. Let us all take a breath, see the wonder and joys of this season that surround us and appreciate the very human, complex, and wonderful people that God has placed in our lives.

Now, if I speak any longer you may get impatient with me so I will sit down. It is good to remember how infinitely patient God is with each one us, with all our sins and failures. He loves us as we are.

Merry Christmas!

I want to wish all the parishioners of St. Martin of Tours a most Blessed Christmas and great blessings and joy in the coming New Year of 2014. Your faith and love of God and the parish community is so very evident in your lives and faith. Thank you for your inspiration. It is a joy to share faith with all of you.

I am so very grateful for the dedicated ministries of Fathers Henry, Jim, and Ciya. We look forward very much to Father Henry's return at the end of January. God bless our three deacons and their families who give so much of their time and talent to the parish: Deacons Gene Capobianco, Jim Biggin and Tom Hennessy. We certainly pray for the health of Deacons Jim and Gene.

I always say that our parish has a rather small staff but they do an amazing amount of work and ministry here in the parish. We are so blessed by our staff: Genny Mitchell, our parish secretary, Barbara Amoroso, our financial officer, Jean Davenport, Janet McKenna and Ann Sadecki, our evening receptionists, T.J. Hance and Al Cattabiani, our two maintenance men, Elena Scollo, Chris McCarthy, Dawn Smith, and Nick Giglio our musicians, Rosemary Scarangella, who leads our parish outreach center, Pat Ryan and Laura Leigh Agnese, the coordinators of the religious education program, Sue Mafrici and Dominic Mafrici, our sacristans, Erin Horan-Baudille, our youth minister, Linda Sehn and Amy Dane our cooks and Yesmin Vasquez, our housekeeper.

I would not be able to name all the countless men, women and children who serve in the many ministries of our parish. They live out their baptismal commitment to serve God and his people so very well here at St. Martin's.

In Grateful Thanks!

To the parishioners who have been so generous in supporting the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's mission - to help the poor and needy in our parish.

- Thank you for your financial support.
- Thank you for the food you leave in the red wagon.
- Thank you for joining in our Christmas program the Giving Tree.
- Thank you for your prayers.

May your Christmas be enriched by your compassion for people in need.

God Bless You!

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul St. Martin of Tours Parish

I have always found this piece of writing by the author John Shea very moving. It concerns the feelings that often surface for many of us at Christmas time as we think about our beloved deceased. Christmas can be, as he says, a bittersweet time as we think about those who have gone home to God, especially most recently. I often think there is no time we feel loss more than during this season. I hope it brings some comfort to all who mourn. - Fr. Pat

"God does not let go of the human person. Although this rhetoric is meant to surprise and stagger us, it is informed by divine love, also holds onto people. Especially at Christmas we remember the dead and, although we know it will cause us more pain than pleasure, we cultivate their presence. We refuse to allow death any sovereignty. The birth of Christ proclaims that love rules. Perhaps that is why ghosts and Christmas go together. Not those who haunt Scrooge, clanging about with chains and threats and pushing for repentance, but the gently, unobtrusive spirits of people who have celebrated with us and who now are gone, the spirits of people sustained by love and, therefore, never far from where love is."

"At Christmas the missing return. I am not sure why. If memories and unseen presence followed the liturgical calendar, their scheduled visits would be at Easter. After all, this is when death is revealed as empty, unable to entomb the elusive human spirit. But at Easter those who have passed through death seem to be in the far reaches of God, consigned to glory. However, at Christmas they seem to roam about the close reaches of God, bumping into the earthbound. Maybe it is the migration pattern of the spirit world. They winter on earth. "

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.smtbethpage.org or contact Erin at EKHoran@yahoo.com.

The Edge program is for all middle school aged students (6th-8th 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!

EUCHARISTIC 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.

Everyone is welcome!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Dec. 23: Holy Hour 3PM
- Jan 14: Youth Ministry Adoration 7PM
- Jan. 21: Padre Pio 7PM
- Legion of Mary: Every Tuesday at 10AM

St. Martin of Tours HOP Club

Dec. 16 #266 Tom & Betty Pope \$25.00 Dec. 17 #403 Joseph Cagna \$25.00

One Week Before Christmas Winner Congratulations to:

Dec. 18 #165 Mary Thomas \$500.00

Dec. 19 #525 Joan Ferraro \$25.00 Dec. 20 #379 Marion DeZervos \$250.00

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.

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.

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 be-

cause 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.

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 or 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



A Message of Thanks

December 11, 2013

Dear Father Pat, Staff and Parishioners of St. Martin of Tours,

We would like to thank you for supporting our community service project.

Thanks to your generosity, we were able to well surpass our goal of collecting 200 glasses for EYEsee.org. Since 2009, EYEsee has recycled over 35,000 glasses which have been sent to the poor in Haiti, Honduras, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Cambodia, Congo, Uganda, Philippines and more. That number will now be over 35,500 thanks to your support.

Your generosity inspires us to continue to become involved in more community service projects in high school and throughout our lives.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and all the best in 2014.

Sincerely,

Isabella Bradley and Shannon Dowd

Ehristmas 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth!

The Prologue of John's Gospel proclaims with awesome beauty the great truth of the One who is born of the Virgin Mary. The Father's Only Son has become flesh and dwelt among us. God's glory becomes manifest in a little child! His glory is made known through a human birth. All of humankind is changed and changed forever. God reveals to us a wholly new aspect of God's love. For he so loved the world that he sent his only son, born of a woman! Divine life becomes one with human life and human life will never be the same.

Small wonder angels sing, shepherds adore and wise men come seeking truth, real truth, the truth of God's love given to us in the all so very human dimension of a baby but a baby born of a Virgin. He is born of a woman so that he could redeem not only his Virgin Mother but all of us who are rescued by him from a destiny of death to a destiny of love and life eternal.

St. Bernard writes beautifully about the two comings of Jesus. The first is the birth of Mary's Son in Bethlehem and the second is when He comes in glory and majesty when *all flesh will see the salvation of our God!* But, he adds there is a third coming of Jesus an intermediary one, *like a road leading from the first to the last coming.* On that road are all of us who seek to keep God's word in our hearts and to live according to his commandments. *If you keep the Word of God in this way, without a doubt you will be kept by it.*

This Christmas I pray that all of us will let the new born child into our hearts and into our lives. I pray the Son of God made man to *make all things new*, will fill your lives and give new hope and joy to your lives day after day until he comes in glory. Let Christ take possession of you completely for he created you and he comes now to redeem you. And he will glorify you so that you will see that he makes our lives like his and makes us one with him in the Father's glory, we too, ourselves, thanks to Him, full of grace and of truth.

A joyful, blessed and peaceful Christmas to you, your families and all those you carry in your hearts!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

William Murphy

Bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre



Altar Servers Needed for Christmas Masses INCLUDING OUR NEWEST SERVERS

Please contact Father Jim McCabe, CSSR at jmccabe79@yahoo.com or Genny at 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:

<u>Christmas Eve, Tuesday December 24th</u>
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

Thanks to all who have purchased a Christmas Tree from the Youth Ministry last weekend. Your generosity has afforded us \$2,033 which will be used to help our ministry.

Merry Christmas and a very Blessed New Year to our Life Teen and Edge Church Families, including those who faithfully attend the 5:30 Mass every week! God bless us, every one!

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.

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 Gos-

pel?

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 <u>middle</u> <u>school and high school students</u> who are interested in becoming Lectors for the Family Mass on Sundays at 10:00 AM. Please contact Rachel Maggio at rldoj@live.com or 516 622-3779.

Training is provided and encouragement and appreciation are guaranteed!

Notes from the Music Ministry

Please join the Saint Martin of Tours Musicians and Choir for a Pre-Midnight Mass Concert on Christmas Eve at 11:15 p.m. in the Church.

We will be performing songs - old and new - that we are sure you will enjoy *including* "O Holy Night," "The Christmas Canon" and "Tu Scendi Dalle Stelle," the Italian Christmas song written by the founder of the Redemptorists, St. Alphonsus Liguori.

This will be followed by the beautiful Mass at Midnight for the Nativity of the Lord.

Don't miss this wonderful celebration of the Birth of our Savior.

Wishing you all a Blessed Christmas and Health and Happiness in the New Year! From All of Us in the Saint Martin of Tours Music Ministry

Adult Choirs Christmas Mass Schedule

Tuesday, December 24th
11:15 p.m. Pre Midnight Mass Concert
(PLEASE BE IN THE CHURCH
AT 10:30 PM)

MIDNIGHT MASS

Wednesday December 25th Christmas Day...Mass as usual

REGULAR 8:30 AND 11:30 CHOIRS PRACTICES WILL RESUME ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 9TH.

LIFE TEEN BAND, PLEASE CHECK WITH CHRIS FOR YOUR REHEARSAL SCHEDULE.

Children's Music Ministry Christmas Schedule

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

Wednesday, January 1
NO PRACTICE!

Sunday, December 29 and January 5 Sing at 10:00 AM Mass as usual. (We will just sing Christmas Carols)

RESPECT LIFE COMMITTEE

"GOD BLESS US EVERYONE!"

As soon as I see people begin to ready themselves for the coming of Christmas, I think of all the ways we each begin. Some try to head off the cold weather by putting up lights on their houses as soon as Thanksgiving. Others venture out on Black Friday to catch those bargains before the rush of December shoppers. Some shop on line and avoid the lines and the traffic. Still others climb up into the attic for boxes of ornaments and decorations for the magic of their Christmas tree.

For me, Christmas begins with fine-tuning myself. By that I mean to take a look back on the year that has passed and think of what I have done, and what...perhaps...I **should** have done. I begin my search for my copy of the movie, "A CHRISTMAS CAROL," which I can never find which leads me back to that part of...."What I SHOULD HAVE DONE this past year! So many movies were made about the Dicken's classic...SCROOGE...A CHRISTMAS CAROL and the funny version by Bill Murray, SCROOGED! I always go to the one that sits me up straight in my seat....Alastair Simms depiction of Ebenezer Scrooge. When I was little, I thought they got Christmas mixed up with Halloween. But as I got older, I realized the truth of this wonderful story, and it has become my way of getting ready for the coming of our Lord.

A little about it: A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens is one of the most beloved works of the 19th century literature, and the story's enormous popularity helped make Christmas a major holiday in Victorian Britain. When Dickens wrote **A Christmas Carol** in late 1843 he had ambitious purposes in mind, yet he could never have imagined the profound impact his story would have. Dickens had faced serious financial problems as Christmas 1843 approached. Beyond his own worries, he was keenly attuned to the profound misery of the working poor in England. A visit to the grimy industrial city of Manchester motivated him to tell the story of a greedy businessman, who would be transformed by the Christmas spir-

it. The book helped elevate the popularity of CHRISTMAS in the 19th CENTURY, which was not yet the major holiday we know. The story established the idea of Christmas charity toward those less fortunate.

This miser, Mr. Scrooge, lives alone, lives for money, and cares nothing for those who work for him. He is blind to the misery of the world, the poor, the homeless, the children in need. Then, three spirits visit him during the night, along with his partner in business Jacob Marley - dead 7 years. One spirit takes him back to his childhood and first and only love, the second to the truth of the world he ignores in the present, and the spirit of the future...THE GRIM REAP-ER! That's the one that sits me straight up!

He WAKES UP Christmas morning and realizes that he is not too late to change his life! He changes his ways.....he's generous...he's joyous....he's thankful....he's found the true meaning of Christmas! He realizes that the kindness, the giving, the loving, the laughter is the joy of life itself.

So after watching it, I carefully put it away for next year....somewhere.....!!! And I start my journey checking on myself. I think of those I might have hurt, ignored or treated badly. I think of that BABY in the manger under the STAR OF BETHLEHEM. I think of what I did good, and what I might have done better.



I thank God for my faith, my life and for peace in the hearts of all that I find in myself after reading this grand book or watching the movie. So, come this beautiful Christmas Day, may the peace, love and comfort of Jesus be with each of you. And as Tiny Tim said, "God bless us...everyone!"

THE RESPECT LIFE COMMITTEE WISHES YOU A HEALTHY, WARM AND LOVING CHRISTMAS DAY AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR 2014!



Christmas Mass Schedule 2013

Christmas Eve

4:00 PM Church

4:00 PM Auditorium

4:30 PM Knights of Columbus Hall (Central Avenue)

6:00 PM Children's Mass (Church)

9:00 PM Life Teen Mass (Church)

11:15 PM Pre Midnight Mass Concert (Church)

12:00 Midnight Mass (Church)

Christmas Day

7:00; 8:30; 10:00; 11:30 AM & 1:00 PM No evening Mass on Christmas Day

December 31, 2013

No 6:30 AM Mass

9:00 AM

7:00 PM Vigil of the Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

January 1, 2014

The Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God No 6:30 AM Mass

9:00 AM

12 Noon

7:00 PM





To All our Parishioners and those visiting our beautiful Church of Saint Martin of Tours, Bethpage NV

The Redemptorist Community, The Deacons and their Families
The Entire Staff, All Ministries and Volunteers
extend our warmest wishes for
HBlessed Christmas and a Joyous, Healthy & Prosperous New Year.

May the Father, Son & Holy Spirit
The Blessed Mother, Saint Joseph
and All the Angels and Saints guide, protect and bless you all!