Masses For The Week			
Monday - December 21			
6:30	Sonia & Wallace Kankas	4	
9:00	Caterina Lepore		
Tuesday - December 22			
6:30	Pauline, Rose & Lazzaro Maggi		
9:00	Patrick Curtin		
Wednesday - December 23			
	George & Doris Held		
9:00	Terri Minett, Daniel & Teresa Flynn		
Thursday - December 24			
NO 6:30 I	MASS		
	Mary Agrella, Anniversary		
Friday - December 25 - Mass Schedule on the last page			
	- December 26		
9:00	MULTIPLE INTENTIONS ANNOUNCED AT MASS		
	Louis Ruggiero, Gertrude & John O'Rourke		
	William J. Csajko		
Sunday - December 27			
7:00			
8:30			
10:00			
11:30	,		
1:00	Mary O'Neil		
5:30	Deceased Members of the Mitchell Family		
Readings For The Week			
Mon.	Song of Songs 2:8-14; Luke 1:39-45		
Tues.	Samuel 1:24-28; Luke 1:46-56		
Wed.	Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Luke 1:57-66		
Thurs.	2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Luke 1:67-79		

- Fri. Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18
- Sat. Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Matthew 10:17-22

Sun. 1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28 Hannah conceived and bore a son, Samuel, whom she presented to the Lord in the temple at Shiloh saying, "As long as he lives, he shall be dedicated to the Lord."

1 John 3:1-2, 21-24 God's love has been given to us so we may be called his children. And so we are. We should believe in Jesus Christ and love one another as he commanded.

Luke 2:41-52 At age twelve, Jesus sat in the temple at Jerusalem listening to the teachers and asking them questions. He astounded everyone by his understanding and answers.



Divine Mercy Novena

Every Friday at 2:00 p.m. in the Eucharistic Chapel

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Our Weekly Sacrificial Gift Amount Budgeted: \$17,500.00 Received December 12/13: \$16,578.64

Thank you for your great generosity!

Reflection & Living Stewardship



The Gospel today tells of the Vir-Stewardship gin Mary, pregnant herself, hurrying off to help her cousin Elizabeth. The model of good stew-

ardship, she who had given herself to bear the Savior gave her time and love to others as well.

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

Charismatic Prayer Group

Are you finished shopping? Did you remember everyone?...What about Jesus?

Good news - His gift won't cost you a cent! All He wants is YOU - the best of you! So be like the Little Drummer Boy and play your best for Him!

Our next meeting is Monday, December 21st at 7:30 PM in St. Alphonsus Hall - large room. Please call (516) 993-9672 for prayer requests or more information.

HOP Club Winners

12/14/15 #2	275 Kenneth Sylvester	\$25		
12/15/15 #1	82 J. & A. Achtziger	\$25		
12/16/15 #6	510 Louise Smith	\$25		
12/17/15 #2	201 Dorothy C. DeStefano	\$25		
One week before Christmas. Congratulations!				
12/18/15 #17	72 Christine Del Vicario	\$500		



<u>Wedding Banns</u> 3rd: Christopher Henry ©

Meaghan Rogers

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

This week the Pantry could use: cereal, chili, mayonnaise, oil, laundry soap, diapers size 6, toilet paper, paper towels and tissues. We are so grateful for your tremendous generosity to those in need.

Parish Outreach Food Pantry:

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

* Food Pantry Hours for Christmas and New Year's Weeks:

Monday, December 21st and Monday, December 29th from 9:30AM - 2:30AM Wednesday, December 23rd and Wednesday, December 30th from 2PM - 7PM



Week of December 20-26, 2015

Altar Bread I, Wine In Loving Memory of Stanley & Monica Szmytkowski

Week of December 20-26, 2015 Sanctuary Candle In Loving Memory of Ann Csajko



Rest in Peace Acts 7:49: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Patricia M. Steiger, Joan Mueller

Please pray for the sick of our parish: Reminder: please call the rectory at 931-0818 to remove a name from the list. Thank you.

Ledwin Mason, Leevalli Annearosa, Pattie Meegan Leigh Murphy, Richard Piernini, Joseph Simon Douglas Torres, James Robertson, Amy Hayes Mom & Dad, Bill Kelly, Matthew Messina, Pat Cannata Christopher Gratton, John Mitchell, Barbara Thompson Donald Castor, Dorothy Quinn, Zachery Duff, Sam Zubov Patricia Marrone, Mary Henson, Mary Lynn Brassil Catherine Battiata, Brendan Rodriguez, Rebecca Passaro Dot Widyn, Annette Giuliano, Madeline Ciaravino Nicole Cagna, Gary Vlahov, Tom Schuerlein, Katie Walsh Chris & Raymond Mirendia, Louise Sandberg Florencio Carmenate, Anthony Luisi, Mary McCarthy Christina Macchio, Karen Kilgard, Angela Calendrille Ann Marie Frayler, Nicholas Balducci, Robert Kennan Corey Voboril, Charles Walsh, Baby Scarlett, May Duffey Tommy Johnson, Louise Smith, Joseph Vareed Anna M. Bosco, Baby Daniel, Janet Medina, Kevin Henson Marie Newman, The Mascia Family, Edward Brown Ceil Hollander, Ann Mirto, Vicki Perri, Daniel Costa Nikki Eleanor Behrik, Hector Valentine, Theresa DuRoss Bob Baciuska, Carol Ann Scudder, John Scudder Thomas Napoli, Justine & Nicole Scudder Joan Spira Gerald Campbell, Vincent Esposito, Terry Hall, Joe Bauer Catherine A. McCarthy, Paul Granberg, Charles Boyce Antoinette Diana, Elsa Ryan, Sarah Messin, William Boyce Little Sonny D'Ambrosio, Joann Sescila, Albert La Rocca Michael Arato, Elizabeth Ryan, Ken Mannion, Tom Doty Linda Malone, Laura Cronin, Lynn Calo Christine Chiarappa, Michael Kott, Jr., Connie Burgess

Dolores Miller, Susan Carroll-Goyan, Carol Episcopio Donna Rusch, Samantha McNeil, Patty & Tom Turano Antonia Binetti, Layla Barr, Fran Brideau Kevin Connors Sal Mascolo, Jerome Antonucci, Nicholas Amato

Poppy Singh, Liz Caraccia, Jesusa Aquino Joseph McCroary, Guido Penafiel, Barry Monteleone Dolores Lordahl, Madeline Molnar, Charlie Hoffmann Nadine Lewin Wall, Richard Graziano Jean Mulligan Carol Posnjak, Geraldine Zeterberg, Susan Peters Stephen Hogan, Edward Boyce, Fran & Al Gandalfo Fr. Edmund Faliskie, CSSR, Elinor Gabbola Sheila Neumann, John (Jack) Phelps, Terrence Lynam Joseph Abruzzo, Taylor, Michael Kott, Jr. Angelo Pennestri, Ann Lazzara, Lee Berkowitz

The Pastor's Letter

What is your favorite Christmas hymn? Notice that I used the word *hymn* so that would rule out *Grand-ma Got Run Over By A Reindeer* or *I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus*. I did a little research on the internet and here is one possibility of a top five list: *Silent Night, Joy to the World, O Holy Night, The First Noel,* and *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*. I like that list but I also love *Angels We Have Heard on High* and *O Come All Ye Faithful*. A more recent entry might be *Mary, Did you Know*?

I am sure any list of favorite Christmas hymns is pretty subjective and there would not be universal agreement. I often say that the only hymns that many Catholics sing in Church with fervor are Christmas carols and patriotic songs. I also might add *Holy God We Praise Thy Name*. I often play on our parish sound system a hymn after communion at the daily 9:00 a.m. Mass. I do it because I think a good meditation hymn can move us to a special prayer space in our hearts. Music certainly has a way of touching the soul. I think most of the 9:00 a.m. crowd likes my choices but I am sure a few may groan when I turn on my iPod. I remember a good friend saying, *Pat has a huge collection of music but he can't sing a note!* I would be afraid to ask Elena, our music director, if she would agree with this assessment since I might not like the answer. Recently, a parishioner came to me all excited about a new Christmas hymn that he had heard. He asked me to listen to it and to consider playing it at Mass sometime. The song is called What God wants for Christmas by Darius Rucker.

"What God Wants For Christmas"

Old man playing Santa Claus/Blew into town with old Jack Frost Now he's handing out candy canes and smiles for free/People scurry with their lists Rushing around to buy those gifts that will/End up wrapped up underneath the tree I'm sitting at this red light looking at a manger scene/Watching snowflakes kiss that baby And it makes me think

I wonder what God wants for Christmas/Something that you can't find in a store Maybe peace on Earth, no more empty seats in church/Might be what's on His wish list I wonder what God wants for Christmas

> What do you give someone/Who gave His only Son What if we believe in Him/Like He believes in us

I wonder what God wants for Christmas/What might put a smile on His face Every Bible with no dust, the devil giving up/Might be what's on His wish list

> I wonder what God wants for Christmas What kind of gift from you and me More sister, more brother, more lovin' one another Yeah I wonder, I wonder what God wants By now we oughta know what God wants for Christmas. By Darius Rucker

Merry Christmas!

I liked the song very much and Darius Rucker has a beautiful voice. The singer proposes a very interesting question: What does God want for Christmas? He gives us some possibilities such as: Peace on earth, no empty seats in church, people reading the Bible, and more people loving one another. Those are all wonderful ideas and I have no doubt that God longs for us to act in such ways. Still, I do not think they are the best answers to the questions of what Gift that God would most want his children to give to him in return at Christmas. For me, the best answer to the question would be found in my favorite Christmas hymn, O Holy Night. Here are the words: **O Holy Night** O holy night! The stars are brightly shining It is the night of the dear Savior's birth! Long lay the world in sin and error pining Till he appear'd and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn! Fall on your knees/Oh hear the angel voices Oh night divine/Oh night when Christ was born Oh night divine/Oh night divine Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming Here come the wise men from Orient land The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger In all our trials born to be our friend Truly He taught us to love one another His law is love and His gospel is peace Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother And in His name all oppression shall cease Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we, Let all within us praise His holy name. The two verses I put in bold print give a different slant on what God for wants Christmas. I believe he longs that our soul knows its worth. We are so loved by God that he has come among us as a man. We do not have to earn that love- we already have it. Just as parents love their newborn child before the child has done anything but lie in their arms, so God loves us, not for what we do for him, but because we are his children. O Holy Night reminds us we are friends of God. In the Gospel of John we hear that I no longer call you servants but my friends. I invite you to listen closely to the beautiful hymns of the Christmas season. They can touch our hearts with the love of God and teach about his abiding love for each of us.

> Father Patrick Woods, CSSR woodscssr@aol.com Website: smtbethpage.org

Message from Father Emmanuel from St. Ignatius Loyola Parish

Fr. Emmanuel would like to help AIDS victims in Africa. Reusable mattresses would be shipped to help so many. If you or someone you know are able to help, please contact Father Emmanuel at 516-859-8226.



We will not have meetings during January and February. Our next General Meeting will be Tuesday, March 15, 2016. Please watch the bulletin for more information!

PLEASE PRAY CONSTANTLY FOR THOSE SERVING IN OUR MILITARY



Lord of Hosts, we commend to Your gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our armed forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with Your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils that beset them; and grant them Your abiding presence wherever they may be. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



CPT Gregory Holownia, US Army MAJ Erika Holownia, US Army PO3 Matthew Sadecki, USCG SGT Zachary John Sheehy, USMC PVT Travis Ruggiero, US Army CPL Dennis Diesel, USMC L CPL James Kruper, USMC SPC Matthew P. Sirianni, US Army CPT Conor B. Murphy, USMC 1LT Victoria Meyer, US Army Nurse Corp PO1 John Paul Pedalino II, US Navy CPT Thomas P. Shea, USAF SGT Michael John Kelly, USMC 1LT Brian McGrath, US Army SPC Matthew Castellano, US Army PFC Michael Patrick Murphy, US Army PFC William Corrigan, USMC PFC Salvatore Battiata, USAF LT Daniel Cloonan, USCG PVT Daniel Kuhlmann, US Army LCPL Jonathan M. Gordon, USMC 2LT Sean O'Donnell, USAF SGT Matthew C. Windisch, USMC E3 CORPSMAN Robert Fidnarick, US Navy 1LT Brian Thorpe, US Navy PO3 Joshua Zimmerman, US Navy MAJ Brendan McEvoy, US Army PVT Matthew F. Mayerhofer, US Army BUCN Sean Bourke, US Navy PO3 James Fischer, US Navy LTC John Evans, US Army STS2(SS) James McDevitt, US Navy ABHAA Michael Creagh, US Navy PVT Steven DiPaolo, USMC SSGT Sean V. Oliva, US Army 2LT Samantha Lopez, US Navy SSG George Howard, US Army LT Mario Lopes, USMC PVT Brian Barcavage, US Army CS1 Andrew L. DeMarsico, USN MAJ Thomas E. Mangiamele, US Army

RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY

IMAGINE

Over two thousand years have passed, and still the name of our Lord Jesus remains the symbol of love, of goodness and of peace for Christians all over the world. That child sleeping in a manger under the star of Bethlehem led not only the wise men but much of the world to know that beauty walks among us. No matter that some turned on Him then, and some turn on Him now, that true light will continue to shine. Goodness will always prevail. We are going through turbulent times. Many of us are angry or afraid. But, it is Christmas! The birth of our Lord Jesus is celebrated once more. His birth, his life and his death, should comfort us. He is there when we reach out on any day, hour or minute of our lives. When we are lost, he will lead us He listens. How comforting it is to know that we are never alone. That He hears our silent cries.

So, on this Christmas Day, hold each other just a little closer. Reach out to those who are alone. Pray for the little children, the babies and those standing for their belief in God, even giving their lives. Look for the joy of this season. If each of us take just one moment to reach out to touch another heart, what changes there would be in this world. Imagine!

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another obscure village where he worked in a carpenter shop Until he was thirty when public opinion turned against him. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never went to college. He never visited a big city. He never travelled more than two hundred miles from the place he was born. He did none of the things usually associated with greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

He was only thirty three his friends ran away. One of them denied him. He was turned over to his enemies. And went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for his clothing, the only property he had on earth. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Nineteen centuries have come and gone and today Jesus is the central figure of the human race and the leader of mankind's progress. All the armies that have ever marched; all the navies that have ever sailed, all the parliaments that have ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned put together have not affected the life of mankind on earth as powerfully as that One Solitary Life.

Dr. James Allan Francis 1926

The Respect Life Committee would like to wish you all the most Blessed Christmas Season filled with peace and love.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Dec 19: Exposition of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament from 7PM to 11PM Church
- Dec 20: Decoration of the Jesse Tree 10AM Family Mass Church
- Christmas Schedule last page of the bulletin
- Jan 19: Padre Pio Holy Hour 7PM Church
- Jan 30: Defensive Driving Course 8:30AM 3PM St. Alphonsus Hall





4th Week of Advent FOCUS:

> God's ways are not our ways.





Young Families Ministry - Leading Families Closer to Christ

Parents meet once a month to chat while the kids play. A meal is provided; it's that simple. We'd love to have you and your family join us. You do not have to be a parishioner of SMT to attend. To RSVP or for more info, contact Erin at: SMT_LifeTeen@Yahoo.com

The schedule is as follows:

Thursdays 6:30 - 8PM in the OLPH Youth Center (School Building) January 21, February 4, March 17, April 21, May 19 and June 16





www.uvbh.com

UVBH is a 501 C 3 not for profit organization that provides clean, safe housing & supportive services to homeless & at-risk U.S. Veterans. We provide housing & wrap around services with our goal in mind to help veterans become the independent productive members of society they once were & deserve to be. For more information contact our head-quarters.

HQ:1715 Union Blvd Bay Shore, NY 11706 ~ p:631-665-1571 ~ info@ uvbh.com ~ www.UVBH.com

ast week, I went to see the New York Jets play the New York Giants at the Meadowlands. I was exposed to my first true experience of tailgating as we sat in the parking lot on a fairly warm day, and feasted on french toast for breakfast and juicy hamburgers for lunch. A television played from the back of the SUV we had traveled in. Some adult beverages were also served. I attended the game with very gracious Giant fans who informed me I was the first non-Giant fan ever invited to a game with them in their forty years of going to Giant games.

The food was good, the conversation delightful, and the tension built as kickoff neared. Football is a sixty minute game. With television commercial added, it is more than a three hour game. During the first 55 official minutes of the game I was absolutely miserable since the Jets were playing terribly and the Giant fan next to me frequently reminded me of that. Ah, but those last five minutes when the Jets scored 10 points and went on to win the game, completely wiped out the previous hours of suffering. What has surprised me is that this joy has carried me over all week long. I have had a very happy week in spite of numerous bills on my desk, trouble with the heat in the Church, the need to write my Christmas cards, and a stack of phone messages to get to. I tend to try to be upbeat on a daily basis, but the happiness seemed to be deeper. I could say the Jets shocked me into a period of delight.

As I think about this, I find it kind of strange, as perhaps you do as you listen. Why would such a thing as a football game have such a power to determine my feelings? There have been several times after a particularly difficult Jet loss that my sister would tell her children, "leave Uncle Pat alone; he has gone to the mattress!" which means I went to my room and closed the door. The only defense I can raise for such reactions is that the root of the word fan comes from the word "fanatic."



A few weeks ago, I know that you very much enjoyed our visiting preacher, Father Tom Donaldson. He is a very warm human being and a gifted preacher. His stories are captivating and so very human. His message on that Sunday was very simple, but profound: **we do not have to earn God's love; we have it!** There is no need to be concerned about getting into the issue of worthy and unworthy. Father Tom told us that it doesn't matter. I believe he could not have been more on target and a message we so need to not only hear, but to take into our hearts and souls. I wonder if that powerful message of being loved by God stayed with me and raised me as powerfully as the Jets winning.

Imagine...God, my Creator and my Redeemer, loves and delights in *me*! As the scriptures tell us, "we are the apple of his eye."

Perhaps as a young man, I did not hear that message of God's love as often as I do now. I grew up with an image of trying to earn God's love and believing that one could be cast into hell for eating a hot dog on Friday, being late for Mass, or looking a little too long at an attractive lady. Guilt and sin were very much part of the daily diet of faith. Occasionally some people will ask me why I do not speak more about sin and hell. I do believe in these realities. When Pope Francis was asked in an interview to say who he was, his first response was that he was a sinner. My experience as a priest has taught me that people do a pretty good job on beating themselves up and do not need too much more rebukes from the pulpit.

Radiate

y nephew Rob was my sports buddy. We went to many sporting events of every kind. He would drop all for a Met game or chance to see the Rangers. But then he met Nicole and I saw him change. They fell in love and married and have three children. Even though he is a passionate sports fan, being with his wife and girls is what delights him. Skipping a ballgame to go pumpkin picking is not a chore but a delight. You know well that story. That is what love does to us. We want to make those we love happy; we want to be with them.

When we let the amazing grace of God's love in our hearts, we want to avoid sin and selfishness, not because we are afraid of punishment but because we love God. When we come to Mass, not simply because it is an obligation, but because we want to be here and receive his Body and Blood, we have truly let the message of the Good News of Jesus transform us.

I confess that it is not easy to let God capture our hearts. Perhaps, the old voices of our sinfulness and shame still ring in our souls. It is easy to get lost in needing the approval of others, or success in our work or studies. If we do not meet these desires, we can become low and weary. It is no simple task to love others, even our spouses, our children and friends. All of us, even the greatest of saints, struggle to be patient, forgiving and loving. No easy task. When we fail, it is easy to move into the worthlessness reflections. What a gift it would be if our struggles showed us that they are a means to know and grasp how loved we are by God.

Today is called Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means *rejoice*. We light the pink candle on our Advent wreath as a sign that Christmas is almost here. I often think the liturgy is reminding us that we can be like the innocent child who says, *"Mommy, when will it be Christmas?"* The pink candle is the Church's liturgy telling *us* that it is almost Christmas.

We get lots of bad news from both the media and our own inner thoughts. Let me give you some *good* news of the prophet Isaiah about the coming of the Messiah:

Shout for joy, O daughter Zion! Sing joyfully, O Israel! Be glad and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has removed the judgment against you; he has turned away your enemies.

Here is more good news from St. Paul: Brothers and sisters: Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Have no anxiety at all. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

I went to the doctor the other day for some back issues. She asked me, "on a scale of 1 - 10 how is the pain?" Interesting question. I'll finish with a similar question. On a scale of 1 - 10, in your heart and soul, do you *know* how much God loves you?

Written for the Third Sunday of Advent, December 13, 2015

St. Vincent de Paul Store Locations: 2160 Jericho Turnpike, Garden City Park NY (516) 746-8250 (enter New Hyde Park if you use GPS) OPEN MON-SAT 10-6

1705 Jericho Turnpike, Huntington NY (631) 858-0380 OPEN MON-SAT 10-6

1425A New York Avenue, Huntington Station (631) 385-1226 OPEN MON-SAT 9-5

To arrange furniture, clothing, cars and other donated materials for pick-up, please call (516) 746-8250 (Nassau) or I 800 884-7837 (Suffolk).

You can also visit on line at http:// www.svdprvc.org/thrift-stores.html. Follow the links. St. Vincent de Paul will review your donation request.

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 <u>http://thecatholiccounselingcenter.com</u>



On behalf of Father Jim and Father Ciya along with all the staff of St. Martin of Tours, I wish you a most Blessed Christmas, a joyful time of celebration with family and friends, and good health and blessings in the New Year. May the Lord Jesus Christ who came to us as a helpless infant continue to move our hearts with the great love that God has for every human being. - Father Pat

