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LUKE 2:34



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**THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH
 DECEMBER 27, 2020**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26

Mass of Anticipation for the Feast of the Holy Family
 4:00PM Mary Leddy—20th Anniversary

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph
 7:30 AM Catherine McKenna—1st Anniversary
 9:00AM Gene & Mary Verri—Memorial
 10:30AM John Bucci—Birthday Remembrance

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs
 7:30AM Carolyn Perretta—Memorial

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29

Fifth Day in the Octave within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord
 7:30AM John Gardner—Memorial

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30

Sixth Day in the Octave within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord
 7:30AM Teresa M. Romano—Memorial

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31—NEW YEAR'S EVE

Seventh Day in the Octave within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord
 7:30AM Souls in Purgatory

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
 4:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1—NEW YEAR'S DAY

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
 7:30AM Carlos & Rose Montini & Paul Amato—Memorial
 10:30AM Irene Long—Month's Mind

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2

St. Basil the Great & St. Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors of the Church
 8:30AM Special Intention

Mass of Anticipation for the Epiphany of the Lord
 4:00PM William Hart—Memorial

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3

The Epiphany of the Lord
 7:30 AM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy
 9:00AM Thomas Valenti—Memorial
 10:30AM John "Jack" Donnelly—2nd Anniversary





Dear Parishioners:

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light," the words of Isaiah proclaimed on Christmas Night. We live in the joy of the Christmas season, and it has very little to do with secular festivities. We rejoice because Jesus Christ is Emmanuel – *"God with us."*

Christians celebrate December 25th not as just another secular holiday but much more deeply as the Messiah's day of birth. This birthday, in the words of St. Leo the Great, is the birth of life itself. God loved us so much that He sent us His only Son to save us.

He loved us enough to take on our poverty, doubts, fears, hopes, joys, sufferings, and failures. He became man to show men and women how much God loves them. He was born for that purpose, lived for that purpose, and died and rose again for that purpose.

It's never too late to invite the Christ Child, the Messiah, into our hearts, and our homes. Surely this weary world living in the darkness of pandemic needs "the great light" born on Christmas.

Every household living in isolation needs the presence of the Divine Messiah. May God grant each of us, and those we love, the gift of welcoming Jesus Christ into our hearts and homes this Christmas Season and throughout the coming new year.

As the great English Catholic author, G. K. Chesterton wrote: *"Christmas is built upon a beautiful and intentional paradox; that the birth of the homeless should be celebrated in every home."*

We give thanks to the people who make our celebration of Christmas so very joyous at OLM. The Church is beautiful with its decorations, the Christmas music superb, and our altar servers are outstanding. Although it was a different Christmas than we've experienced before due to the pandemic, it was indeed a joyful and faithful Christmas as always at OLM.

We thank our good Franciscan Apostolic Sisters, Sister Emma and Sister Lourdes, for their hard work in making OLM so beautiful at Christmas with their decorating, cleaning, polishing, and setting up for the Masses. Their hard work is done with humility, gentleness, and great joy!

We thank Paul Anderson and our OLM maintenance crew for ensuring the Church is clean and safe by hanging wreaths, stringing lights on trees and so many other things they do. During this pandemic, especially at Christmas, they work doubly hard, and we are grateful.

We thank our dedicated Altar Servers for their reverent service at Christmas Masses. We are thankful to our Lectors for boldly proclaiming the good news of Christmas. We truly thank our OLM Music Director, Henri St. Louis, for the beautiful music of the Feast of Christmas!

It is a blessing to have such good people dedicate themselves to our parish! In your name, I offer deep gratitude and continued appreciation for all they do for OLM!

On behalf of Fr. Barrow, Fr. Connors, Sister Lourdes, and Sister Emma, I offer our thanks to the parishioners of Our Lady

of Mercy Parish for your faithful witness and joyful spirit in celebrating Christmas. We thank the many kind parishioners who support our priestly and parish ministry here at OLM.

Your many well wishes, greeting cards with warm sentiments and kind words, and generous and thoughtful gifts at Christmas are deeply appreciated, and we are so very grateful. May God bless you and your families, and our parish, with the continued joy and happiness of this season.

The New Year of 2021 is coming soon, so join us on New Year's Day for the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. Attending Holy Mass on New Year's is the absolute best way to start the New Year. As the great Churchman of the 20th Century, Antonio Cardinal Bacci said:

"Since we are at the beginning of a new year, it is especially important for us to ask God more fervently and insistently, to bless the resolutions which are making for ourselves and the good wishes, which we are showering on our friends. These wishes have no meaning and these resolutions have no force, if they are not accompanied by fervent and persevering prayer!"

On this Feast of the Holy Family, may God bless all families with faith, hope, and love. Stay safe. Be Well. Do Good. God Bless. A Happy Christmas Season and Blessings for a Happy New Year!

Ask Father

How Long Does Christmas Last?

When it comes to celebration, festivity, holiday, and the like, the Church always wants us to know that there is more. For instance, Christmas day is not really one day of joy, celebration, and leisure, but eight days. This means that December 25th is Christmas day; December 26th is Christmas day, and so on. In Her liturgy, during the octave, every day is treated the same as on December 25th. This means that all the prayers are repeated. I am sure kids would love to know this, since in their minds that would mean Santa would come eight times!

The “octave” of Christmas ends on the eighth day after Christmas, which is January 1st, the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. The end of the octave is the capstone which ties together all the different aspects of the mystery of the Incarnation. Interestingly in the older tradition Christmas season (or Christmastide) lasted until the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Presentation of the Lord on February 2nd.

The Church has octaves for several historical, liturgical, philosophical, and spiritual reasons. Historically the eight days can be traced to Jewish festival customs (e.g. the circumcision of the Jewish boy was on the eighth day and this was our Gospel for January 1st). God is said to have created the universe in six days, rested on the seventh, and then redeemed the world on the eighth day. I am fairly sure that all of us would agree that part of being human is having celebrations, holidays and leisure. Josef Pieper in his *Leisure: the Basis of Culture* agrees and for him “the most festive festival it is possible to celebrate is divine worship.”

The Church understands human nature. So the reason why the Church has us celebrate Christmas for at least eight days is to give us plenty of time to celebrate and to feast. One day is not enough to celebrate and take in the great mystery of the Incarnation. It would be like walking into St. Peter’s Basilica and walking right out. We need to be like Mary who pondered all these things in her heart.

Of course if we view the liturgy and the Mass more as an obligation than as a festive celebration in which we truly engage in celebration, then the Christmas Octave will seem inconsequential to us. This idea of the liturgy is changed both by trying to understand what the Mass truly is (changing what our mind knows) and also by removing attachment to sin (changing what our will desires so that we desire rightly). I hope that all of us can reorient our minds and desires and live liturgical lives.

Weekly Collection

December 13 , 2020

Weekly.....	\$8,296.00
EFT.....	\$4,776.00
	Total=\$13,072.00
Outreach.....	\$855.00
Annual Collection (to date).....	\$108,328 .00
Retired Religious.....	\$1,610.00
Building & Grounds.....	\$1,843.00

Weekly for December 15, 2019

Weekly.....\$11,863.00

Thank You for Your Generous Support!



Please remember Our Lady of Mercy Church in your will or estate.

Happy New Year!

Parish Office Closed on New Year’s

The OLM Parish Office closes for the New Year’s Holiday on New Year’s Eve, Thursday, December 31, 2020 at NOON and is closed all day on Friday, January 1, 2021, New Year’s Day. The office reopens on Monday, January 4, 2021 at 8:00AM.

Holy Family



Today's liturgy not only offers us a glimpse into the life of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph but also gives us an opportunity to pray for our own families.

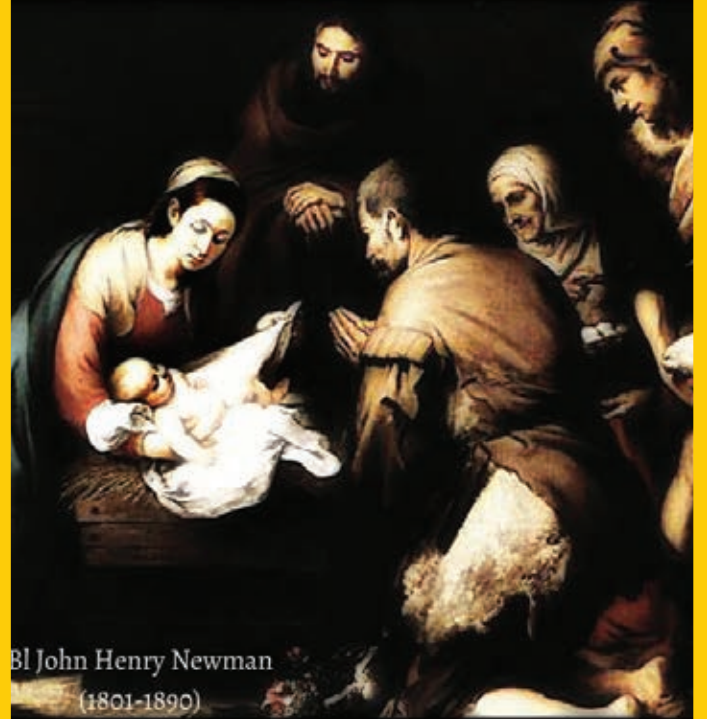
Although private devotions to the Holy Family go back to about the seventeenth century, the feast did not enter the church's calendar until 1921.

One of the readings designated for the day comes from Colossians 3 wherein wives are exhorted to be subordinate to their husbands. A shortened version of this reading which omits that passage and is more in keeping with our modern idea of a woman's place in the family is permitted as an option.



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*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
full of grace and truth;
we have beheld his glory,
glory as of the only Son from the Father.
John 1:14*



Bl John Henry Newman
(1801-1890)

Let us, at this season,
approach Him
with awe and love ...
Let us come to the Sanctifier
to be sanctified.... *Anastpaul!*



Mary, Mother of God



January 1 is New Years Day in our secular life, but in our liturgical life, it is the solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God.

In the year 431, the Council of Ephesus declared that the Virgin Mary was Mother of God; in Greek, *Theotokos*, “God-bearer.”

Mary was celebrated under this title on the first of January until about the eighth century when the day was changed to mark the circumcision of the Lord.

The reforms of the Vatican II returned the day to Mary, Mother of God but kept the Gospel reading which refers to Jesus’ circumcision.



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Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God



Masses at OLM

New Year's Eve

Thursday,

12.31.2020

Mass at 4:00 pm

New Year's Day

Friday, 1.1.2021

Mass at 7:30am

& 10:30am

Family Prayer for a New Year



O God our Father, by the light of the Holy Spirit, lead us to be thankful for the gift of faith. May we grow in our relationship with Jesus, your Son. May we be confident witnesses to Christian hope and joy to all we meet. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

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#WHATSMYNAME

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