

From My Poor Heart

The Christmas Season: Early Christians seemed more interested in the glorified Christ of Easter than in the Incarnation. However, the attacks of Arianism caused the Church to place more emphasis on the Incarnation. A legend states that Pope Telesphorus (127-136) introduced the Christmas Midnight Mass. Whether that can be proven or not, in the East until the end of the IV century, Christmas was celebrated on January 6. John of Nicea wrote that the date was first observed in Rome under Pope Julius I who ruled from 337 to 352. An early Roman calendar of 354 indicates that Christmas, as we know it, was celebrated December 25. How the date was selected by the Church is unknown. One peculiarity of Christmas is the custom of celebrating three Masses, alluded to by Pope Gregory the Great. In Jerusalem one Mass was celebrated at the grotto in Bethlehem and another in the principal church of Jerusalem on January 6. It seems Rome took up the same custom: One midnight Mass was celebrated at the Basilica of St. Mary Major where the relics of the crib resided. Another was celebrated in the morning at the Basilica of St. Peter. A third Mass was introduced due to the Byzantine group residing in Rome who observed on December 25 the feast of St. Anastasia, whose body lay in Rome. The second Mass of the day was in her honor with a commemoration of Christmas. Later, as her following passed away, the Mass, while celebrated still at the Church of St. Anastasia, only commemorated the holy martyr. At first priests were only permitted to say one of the three Masses of Christmas. Later, by the XII century, permission was given for each priest to celebrate all three Masses. During the middle ages, allegorical reasons were given for celebrating the three Masses. The first was said to symbolize the eternal generation of the Word by the Father. The second symbolized the temporal generation by a Mother without a Father. The third symbolized both the temporal and eternal. Another interesting custom of the Christmas Season is the erection of cribs in the church. This custom was begun by St. Francis of Assisi who received approbation for the practice in 1223 from Pope Honorius III. The practice spread rapidly.



Mass Intentions: 27 DEC, Richard Staumer, by Judy Garton-Zavesky; 28 DEC, Holy Souls, by Jerry Nilsen Family; 29 DEC, Stephen J. Lebowich (RIP), by William Wisdom; 30 DEC, Fr. Stephen Mulkern, by Mickey Cahill; 31 DEC, Msgr Francis Cilia and Family, by Patrick Clark; 3 JAN, Stephen J. Lebowich (RIP), by John Carvalho; 4 JAN, Irene Anderson (RIP), by Haberstock Family; 5 JAN, Catherine Jurkowskiby, by Haberstock Family; 6 JAN, Mario and Lucy del Rosario, by Nilsen Family; 7 JAN, Stephanie and Katerina Zeitz, by Zeitz Family.

Weekly Mass Schedule

8:00 a.m.; 9:30 (High Mass); 11:00 and 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday Mass: 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday Mass: 10:00 a.m.

Thursday Mass: 10:00 a.m.

Friday Mass: 6:30 p.m.

First Saturday: 10:00 a.m.

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Blessed Virgin Mary,
Our Mother, pray for
our country, dedicated
to thy Immaculate Con-
ception.

Love is the essence of Christmas. Yet, realizing our Savior came into the world as a helpless baby, to a world of poverty, unknown and unimportant to the world, leads us to understand that He set Himself aside for the sake of something nobler and greater, our redemption. Love opens our eyes and teaches us to see the beautiful and good things in our fellow man, in God. Love seeks that which is lovable and finds it. Love strengthens our poor will. With the help of love, we can lay down our own lives. Thus, we are told by the saints that perfection is identical with perfect charity. St. Paul tells us, "If I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am nothing." Love is its own reward and covers a multitude of sins. Sins are atoned for through love, but sin is also resisted as one does not wish to hurt one he loves. Lack of love leads to unhappiness whereas love leads one to a joy, both interior and exterior. Love bears fruit for both ourselves and others. We should keep the Commandments, not because of fear, but because we love Jesus who commands us to observe them, because we love our neighbor who is in need. Why pray? Because prayer is living with Our Lord in holiness and because we can more intimately get to know Him. We seek perfection, not out of vainglory, but because to be perfect is to love perfectly which makes us more united with Our Lord. This is what Jesus would have us understand on the day of His birth when he reveals his own love as the model of our own hearts and lives.



Perpetual Help Weekly Bulletin
Month of the Divine Infancy

Octave Day of the Nativity, The Circumcision, 01 JAN 2012, Vol. 5, No. 01



The month begins with a Holy Day, the Octave Day of the Nativity. The feast is dedicated both to the first bloodletting of Our Lord, when He subjected Himself to the ignominy of circumcision, in accordance with the Mosaic Law, and constitutes the oldest Marian feast celebrating the Maternity of Mary. The prayers of the feast are taken from an ancient feast day of the BVM which was long ago celebrated in Rome. The Collect and Postcommunion are from the Votive Mass of the BVM. The Gospel relates the Circumcision. January 2, is the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus. The Gospel of the octave day is repeated, and the emphasis is placed upon the name "Jesus" given to Our Lord, in accordance with Jewish custom, at His circumcision. The feast has been celebrated on the Universal Calendar of the Church since the XVII Century. The two feast days are thus connected closely.

Today: Indulged *Te Deum* after the first 2 Masses of the day.

Tuesday: Silent adoration before the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar at 9:00 a.m., then Mass, Octave Day of the Nativity, at 10:00 a.m., then Novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

Wednesday: Mass of the Octave Day of the Nativity at 10:00 a.m., and then Novena in honor of St. Anthony.

First Thursday: Votive Mass of Our Lord Jesus Christ High and Eternal Priest at 10:00 a.m., the Devotions in honor of the Divine Mercy for Sanctification of Priests.

First Friday: Feast of Epiphany begins at 6:30 p.m., then Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. End of the Christmas Season, beginning of the Season of Epiphany. **Epiphany:** The Feast of the Epiphany is of the I Class, the highest liturgical category. The word "epiphany" means "manifestation," and indicates that Christ showed himself to the Three Kings. This feast has been celebrated in the Church since at least the III Century. The Kings came from the East, perhaps Persia, following a star. Stopping over in Jerusalem to visit King Herod, they inquired whether he had heard of the King of the Jews being born whereupon Herod called in the scribes who told him the Savior would be born in Bethlehem, according to prophecy. Herod asked that the Wise Men return once they had found the Messiah so that he too could "adore" Him. The Three Kings went on following the star, found Christ and presented Him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. An angel subsequently appeared to them in a dream, warning them not to return to Herod, and they went back to their land by another route. **Next Sunday** is the feast of the Holy Family: Jesus, Mary and Joseph and the I Sunday after Epiphany. The seasons of the Church Year are very important for our edification. They provide a framework for our devotion and study. Our Lord is born during the Christmas Season after a period of waiting in anticipation during the Advent Season. The Season of Epiphany emphasizes the childhood and early years of Our Lord.

First Saturday: AT 10:00 a.m., Votive Mass of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (same as 22 AUG), with Devotions of reparation in honor of her Immaculate Heart.

Last Week: Souls in attendance totaled 247. Regular contributions were \$2,949.00. Building Fund I totaled \$1,525.00. Building Fund II was \$250.00. May the Heavenly Infant, his



Mother, the holy and immaculate Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Joseph, foster-father of Jesus, and Patron of the Holy Church, extend many benefits for your generosity.

Many Thanks: To the choir who sang their hearts out on Christmas. To the altar boys who served impeccably for our newly born Savior. To those who worked to make the chapel so beautiful and clean. To those who decorated the chapel with beautiful wreaths and maintain the flower garden. Please pray for all those volunteers who put in so much time, not for themselves, but for Our Divine Savior, Jesus Christ.

A Blessing for the New Year: Lord bless me. Bless my eyes. Never let them behold vanity. Bless my ears. Set around them a hedge of thorns to guard them from hearing unchristian words. Bless my mouth. Surround it with a guard of truth and kindness. Bless my body. Grant that charity may clothe it as with a garment of glory. Bless my mind. Grant that my thoughts may be like unto Thine Own. Bless my Heart. Kindle in it the fire of love which Thou didst bring on earth. Bless my interior. Make it, like Thine Own, the sanctuary of every virtue. Bless me and those who are dear to me. Conform my life to Thy Own. Bestow a special blessing on those in agony this day and apply Thy Precious Blood.

The month is devoted to the Holy Infancy of Our Lord. Thus, we ought to think of ways to please the beautiful Infant who, even as a Child, wished to suffer and give an example of humility for our edification. January 2 is the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus. In honor of the Holy Name do your best to avoid using Our Lord's Name in vain this month in particular and during the new year.

O, Lord Jesus Christ, Who being made subject to Mary and Joseph, didst hallow domestic life by Thine ineffable virtues; grant that we, with the assistance of both, may be taught by the example of Thy Holy Family and may attain to its everlasting fellowship. Who livest and reignest world without end. Amen. (3 years).

Jesu, Mary and Joseph most kind, bless us now and in death's agony. (300 days) (Plenary Indulgence once monthly for daily invoking the sacred names.)

Jesu, sweetest Child, born in Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary, wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, announced by Angels and visited by shepherds, have mercy on us. Have mercy on us, Child Jesus. Have mercy on us. Hail Mary.

All honor, laud and glory be, O Jesu, Virgin-born to Thee. All glory, as is ever meet, to Father and to Paraclete. Amen. Christ is near to us. Come, let us adore him. Our Father.

Jesu, sweetest Child, Who, enclosed for nine months in Thy Mother's womb, wast looked for with eager expectation by the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, and wast offered by God the Father for the salvation of the world, have mercy on us. Have mercy on us, Child Jesus. Have mercy on us. Hail Mary.

Christ hast manifested Himself to us, alleluia. O come let us worship, alleluia.

Instructional Classes: 7 JAN, Adult theological class at 4:00 p.m. 14 and 28 JAN, First Communion Class, 3:30 p.m., and Confirmation Class at 4:00 p.m. Classes are held at St. Clare's Rectory.