

St. Mary's Church & Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima

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Mary of Nazareth School: 301.869.0940

*We welcome you to our historic parish family.
Since 1741 believers such as yourself have built a spirit-
filled, Catholic faith community here in Barnesville.
We are privileged to have you join us in our mission to
share God's blessings.*



December 25, 2022

Christmas

Rev. Kevin P. O'Reilly, *Pastor*
David Cahoon, *Deacon*
Rev. Msgr. John Macfarlane, *Weekend Asst.*
Elizabeth Smith, *Dir. of Faith Formation*
Diane Yendrey, *Dir. of Music*
Bill Lynch, *Pavilion Manager*
Brenda Evans, *Secretary*
Denise Crawford, *Secretary*
Chris Carey, *Bookkeeper*
Terry Crawford, *Sodality*
David Bivens, *Knights of Columbus*

Daily Mass: Monday - Friday: 9:00 am
Sunday Mass: Saturday @ 4 pm, Sunday @ 8:30 & 10:30 am
First Friday: Adoration 9:30 am - Noon
First Saturday: 9:00 am with Devotions
Confession: Saturday @ 3:15 pm
Baptism: by appointment
Wedding: by appointment at least 6 months after initial contact
Rel. Ed.: September - May
School: Mary of Nazareth in Darnestown, grades PreK-8

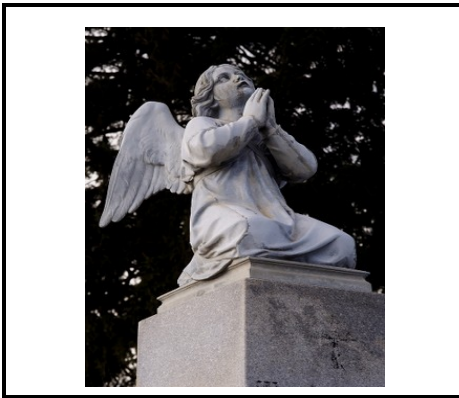


Dear Parishioners & Friends,

Christmas day has finally dawned. There's been so much anticipation, so much hype, that it's hard for one day to bear the weight of all the expectations. That's pretty obvious as we look at gifts scattered around the living room and wrapping paper on its way out. Great expectations have a lot to do with this feast, but they are great expectations that go through significant revisions along the way.

We know that the expectation of a Messiah had a long, long history. The downtrodden people of God yearned for the savior God would send them. Their hopes were chronicled in their history and the writings of the prophets. Like ourselves, they turned to God's word for hope and, like us, they brought their own images to their reading of the Scriptures. They read God's word in the light of their own mindset and created their own images of the savior God would send. They who had been bowed down would be raised up and all the world would see that they were God's own people.

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Please Pray For..... Frank Anderson, Louise Austin, Michael Austin, Christopher Barlow, Lori Bauer, Jim Bowie, Donna Brashears, Suzanne Brodt, Linda Burke, Pete Brunner, Maddie Cabatic, Norma Camp, Ada Candor, Gretchen Carrillo, Patrick Carpentier, Eric Carpentier, Pat Chmelik, Alex Chmelik, Sonya Cortez, Bridget Curan, Grant Kraft, Dot Crawford, John Curry, Dana DeLauter, Michael Dillon, Julian Douchard, Dennis Edward, Tom Ehart, Jo Evans, Robert Evans, Timothy Flanders, Sandy Flynn, Dolores Flynn, Fr. Rich Gancayco, Kimberly Harris, Andrew Howard, Cecilia Hughan & family, Mary Lillian Hewitt, Sophie Hoover, Marie Horton, Laura Hutchinson, Eleanor Kelly, Michael Kelley, Brittany, Joe & Ava Marie Koelie, Jeffrey Krohn, Jr., John Kutzi, Ryma Lacks, Cade Lutz, David Liska Sr., Colleen Loss, Sylvia Marshall, Anna Lozada Martinez, Joy McIntyre, Anthony Murdock, Bea Nastacio, Christine O'Connell, Dennis O'Fallan, Patrick Ambrose O'Grady, Jane Parsley, Bob & Donna Pavlick, Frank Pena, Gene Post, Lauren Prete, Dennis Regii, Susan Reid, Elizabeth Renninger, Everly Reed Rice, Andrea Rivas, Misty Runyon, Tom Schwanbeck, Lin Selby, Teresa Silverman, Nancy Slattery, Jerry Stafford, Colleen Thomas, Richard Thompson, Jack Thorp, Corinne Torney, Vicki Tosques, Michael Zahn.

Please Pray for Our Military Family & Friends... Richard Alford, Michael Breslin, Alex & Maxwell Chmelik, Lucas Conway, Adam Fitterer, David Gilliam, Erich Lloyd, Brian Nazarian, Elvin Rivera, Mark Russell, Oliver Weigand.

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Today's readings tell us the story of God's greatest response to human hopes. God sent a savior who was neither king nor warrior. One of the clearest signs that a message or happening is from God is that something extraordinarily good is happening and it's not at all how we anticipated it would be. No matter how much we learn from the Scriptures, God surprises us by working from another script.

Because the shepherds loom so large in Luke's story, it's worth looking to them for a perspective on the Nativity. Shepherds were among the least esteemed people of their day. Their profession demanded little more than someone who could stay awake most of the time, stop strays, and effectively aim a slingshot at dangerous creatures. Tied to a career that offered no Sabbath breaks, they couldn't observe the letter of the law and would hardly have been among those who could have read it. By reputation they were not overly committed to honesty and would have always appeared on the scene with a liberal dose of the fragrance of their flocks. All in all, they were about as different from the religious elites as anyone could be.

We can assume that the shepherds had no sophisticated presuppositions clouding their perspective. When it came to waiting for a savior they lacked a theological checklist by which to judge any contender. We are told that angels appeared to them, but the angels only whetted the shepherds' curiosity. Not that a sky full of angels would have been their daily fare, but that's not what convinced them. Following the angel's instructions, they went to Bethlehem to see for themselves.

They went looking for "a savior," the "Messiah and Lord." In Bethlehem they stooped down to gaze upon a newborn wrapped up like every other infant, with the singular distinction that this one was lying in a manger – just like the angel said he would be.

Our shepherds were the absolute opposite of cynics. Having heard that God was coming to them as a child born in the poorest circumstances imaginable, they thought that it was worth seeing for themselves. We don't know exactly what they believed. They never could have answered the questions necessary to receive confirmation, but they shamelessly told others what they had seen and heard. Uneducated and inarticulate as they must have been, they were the first evangelists.

The Gospel of Christmas invites us to reexamine our expectations. Where do we seek God? For thousands of years God has been in the habit of appearing among us in the most unobtrusive ways. Supernovas and skies full of music only to point us toward something much simpler, something we must be meek enough to learn about from the humble. We will have to stoop very low to perceive it.

*Peace,
Fr. Kevin*



WORSHIP



"And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."

- John 1:14

Mass Intentions

- Sat., 24** 4 pm - Susan Rizk
10 pm - Celebrant's Intention
- Sun., 25** 8:30 am - Parishioners
10:30am - Anne & Kaleel Rizk
- Mon., 26** 9 am - Kate Gowans
- Tue., 27** 9 am - Gertrude White
- Wed., 28** 9 am - Patrick Patton
- Thu., 29** 9 am - Eucharistic Service
- Fri., 30** 9 am - Eucharistic Service

Mother Teresa Vocation Society The 19th Annual Day of Recollection will take place on January 21, 2023, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Church of the Annunciation, 3810 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. You do not have to be a member to attend. Bring your family and friends. Fr. Mark Ivany, Director of Priest Vocations, will present a reflection, "Spending Time with God, How to Pray before the Eucharist." The morning will begin with the celebration of Mass at 9:00 AM. Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament and Fr. Ivany's reflection will follow Mass. Jim Towey will be our keynote speaker. His presentation is on "Mother Teresa of Calcutta's Secrets for a Happy Life and Peaceful Death." Mr. Towey is the author of the biography, "To Love and Be Loved: A Personal Portrait of Mother Teresa." Mr. Towey was an advisor and personal friend of Mother Teresa for twelve years. His book is an inspiration and it will be a delight to hear his stories in person. Lunch will be served. There is no charge for the day. Fr. Ivany will end the day with an update on vocations in our Archdiocese and a final blessing. May you continue to have a Blessed Christmas season filled with joy and peace.



Thank you to all who donated gifts for our local families, the children of St. Martin's Church in Washington and the patients at Springfield Hospital.

2023 Calendars are in the church vestibule, courtesy of The Hilton Funeral Home. Please help yourselves.



Mary of Nazareth Catholic School An open house will be held on Sunday, January 29 between 1 - 3 pm. Children and parents are welcome to join our classrooms, meet our talented faculty, and tour our beautiful campus. RSVP at maryof-nazareth.org/admissions/visit-us/ to attend open house or to schedule a tour. For additional information, please call 301-869-0940.

Parish Office will be closed for Christmas Holiday from December 23, 2022 - December 28, 2022. For New Years the office will be closed December 31, 2022 - January 3, 2023. A Blessed Season to all.

Weather Policy If Montgomery County schools close or delay then there is no morning Mass and our offices may close. If they are closed, then all activities for that day are cancelled. Our lots are not always plowed right away. We must wait on the kindness of our parishioners.

Christmas

Welcome to all, especially our visitors. Christmas is a time that brings many people to church to celebrate the birth of Christ, and we're glad you're here! We hope you will come back to visit again.

St Mary's is an active, warm parish, dedicated to following the path of Christ and reaching out to those in need and to one another.

Check us out on Facebook and our website: stmaryonline.com.

The entire staff extends our happiest and holiest holiday wishes to you and your family for the Christmas Season and throughout the coming year.

New Years

Sat., December 31 at 4:00 pm

Sun., January 1, 2023

at 8:30 & 10:30 am



The Knights of Columbus are proud to announce the winners of the "Keep Christ in Christmas" poster contest for 2022.

6-8th Grades: Inuli Tilakarante, Liam Gosselin & Stella Volpe

3-5th Grades: Avin Tilakarante, Kyle Bejo & Mackenzie Laffey

K-2nd Grades: Elizabeth VanCise

High-scoring posters were submitted to the Maryland State poster competition.