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## *Fr. Corey's Comments*

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➤ *Have you ever wondered where the season of Advent has gone? Hallmark says that Christmas begins in Mid-July with the premier of their Christmas ornament display. The Mall says that Christmas begins a full week or two before Thanksgiving with Santa's arrival and the decorations. The deal is done before December 1<sup>st</sup>, and I really don't mind. Why? Advent is a time to prepare for the coming of Christ...into our hearts, into our communities, into our homes. It is a time of quiet reflection and prayer. It is time for an internal check list to see if our souls are ready and prepared for Jesus Christ when He comes to us in the Holy Eucharist, in the Sacred Scriptures, in one another in our acts of giving and kindness and charity, when He comes to us in the needy and sick, when He comes to us at the end of our lives, when He comes to us at the end of time and when He comes to us at Christmas. The secular aspects of Christmas... the lights, trees, carols, gift-buying and wrapping, the cards, parties and festive mood truly help my soul to get into the Advent mood of preparing and watching and waiting.*

*I dare say that without knowing it, the secular world with its jump on December 25<sup>th</sup> in sort of a roundabout way helps me spiritually to get into Advent. The decorations and good-natured spirit of people seem to lighten whatever worries or cares I have and "prepares room" for the self examination of the Advent season. So, as the saying goes, if the world hands you lemons, make lemonade....if the world hands you Christmas early, make a great Advent.*

*By the way, if you're looking for a great present for Jesus for Christmas, go to confession during Advent. I saw His list, and it's just what He wants.*

➤ *The Christmas/New Year's season is sometimes difficult for people. If you find yourself in need of some help during this time, check out the website: [www.ct-aa.org](http://www.ct-aa.org). AA is a great supportive organization, and it could be just the right thing to help when you need it the most.*

➤ *We received news from the Diocese this week that former Pastor, Raymond Pcolka died this week. Please keep the Pcolka family in your prayers.*

➤ *Tuesday is the feast of the Immaculate Conception. It is a Holy of Obligation. Masses will be celebrated on Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30pm, and on Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30am and 9:00am, 12:05 noon, and 7:00pm. Do you know the date of the Blessed Virgin Mary? All math majors would find this question very easy.*

➤ *I wanted to tell you that the "Thank-You" Party for volunteers that usually occurs after Christmas will happen in the Spring this year. Last year, because of the snow on the evening of the party, we in the rectory just finished the last cocktail hot dog and stuffed mushroom this past week. And, let me tell you that the shrimp would not look so pretty hanging off the Christmas Tree. So, many times in the past we have worried about snow, and I have too many other things to worry about (like what to get Fr. Cyrus for Christmas this year). My plans are to have it in the Spring and perhaps expand it a bit by having it not only inside the gym but also have a tent outside for perhaps a little dancing. Sr. Alberta has been wanting to "cut a rug" all year, and my goal is to make Sister happy.*

➤ *I hope that you received my letter concerning the Sanctuary Project. It is a most wonderful project that will add more beauty to our Church and put us straight with Church regulations. If you would like to read about the entire project again, please go to St. Mary's website and look up "past bulletins", and the entire explanation can be found in the November 1<sup>st</sup> bulletin.*

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## *Fr. Corey's Comments (Cont'd.)*

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### **ABOUT THE ADVENT WREATH**

*The origins of the Advent wreath are found in the folk practices of the pre-Christian Germanic peoples who, during the cold December darkness of Eastern Europe, gathered wreaths of evergreen and lighted fires as signs of hope in a coming spring and renewed light.*

*Christians kept these popular traditions alive, and by the 16<sup>th</sup> century Catholics and Protestants throughout Germany used these symbols to celebrate their Advent hope in Christ, the everlasting Light. From Germany the use of the Advent wreath spread to other parts of the Christian world.*

*Traditionally, the wreath is made of four candles in a circle of evergreens. Three candles are violet and the fourth is rose, but four white candles or four violet candles can also be used. Each day at home, the candles are lighted, perhaps before the evening meal – one candle the first week, and then another each succeeding week until December 25<sup>th</sup>. A short prayer may accompany the lighting.*

### **A RITE FOR THE BEGINNING OF ADVENT AT HOME**

*The first day the wreath is in the home, the leader may say:*

*As our nights grow longer, and our days grow short, we look on these earthly signs -- light and green branches -- and remember God's promise to our world: Christ, our Light and our Hope, will come. Listen to the words of Isaiah the prophet:*

*The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who lived in a land as dark as death a light has dawned. You have increased their joy and given them gladness; They rejoice in your presence as those who rejoice at harvest, as warriors exult when dividing spoil. (Is. 9:1-2)*

*Then all pray:*

*O God, rejoicing, we remember the promise of your Son. As the light from this candle, may the blessing of Christ come upon us, brightening our way and guiding us by his truth. May Christ our Savior bring life into the darkness of our world, and to us, as we wait for his coming. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen*

*Then the first candle is lighted.*

*Each day at home, the candles are lighted, perhaps before the evening meal -- one candle the first week, and then another each succeeding week until December 25<sup>th</sup>. The rose candle is usually lighted on the third Sunday of Advent. As the candles are lighted, a prayer may be said.*

### **DAILY PRAYERS FOR LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH**

**First Week:** *O Emmanuel, Jesus Christ, desire of every nation, Savior of all peoples, come and dwell among us.*

**Second Week:** *O King of all nations, Jesus Christ, only joy of every heart, come and save your people.*

**Third Week:** *O Key of David, Jesus Christ, the gates of heaven open at your command, come and show us the way to salvation.*

**Fourth Week:** *O Wisdom, holy Word of God, Jesus Christ, all things are in your hands, come and show us the way to salvation.*



**CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATION:**

If you wish to make a donation toward flowers for the Church in memory of loved ones, please put your donation in the basket or bring it to the Rectory.

**COFFEE & ...** will be served after the **8:30 & 10:00 Mass** on **SUN., DEC. 13<sup>th</sup>**.



**ST. MARY'S MEN'S MINISTRY**

meets every **Saturday morning** from **6:30-8:00** in the **Parish Hall**. Please stop by for bagels, fellowship, and faith discussions to help men and their families. Any questions, please call **Dave Whitmore** (203 470-0909).

**LECTOR WORKBOOKS** are available in the **Vestry**. Please sign the sheet provided when you pick one up.



**Holiday sign-up sheets** are in the **Vestry**. If you wish to serve a Christmas Mass, please sign up by **WED., DEC. 16<sup>th</sup>**, or call **Sheila** (744-5777). **MASSES: Christmas Eve** – 4:00, 4:15 (school), 6:00pm, & 12 Midnight (12:00 – **HS only**). **Christmas Day** – 7:00, 9:00, & 11:00am.

**PLEASE NOTE:** New Altar Servers should not sign up the weekends of 12/6 & 13. If additional servers are needed, you may sign up on 12/20.

**BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP:**

Our next meeting at the **Parish House** - **SAT., DEC. 12<sup>th</sup>**, from **10:30am** to **12:00noon**.



If you or someone you know is in need of prayer, please call our **Prayer Line**. Our team leaders are **Mary Walsh** (798-1237) and **Colleen Santaniello** (792-0009).



There will be an early dismissal at **11:15am** on **TUES., DEC. 8<sup>th</sup>**, for the **Feast of the Immaculate Conception**.

The school community will attend the **9:00 Mass**.



**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**  
**Next Meeting – DEC. 14<sup>th</sup>, at 8:15.**  
**Rosary at 7:45pm in the Church.**

The **Knights** is a Catholic men's society dedicated to service. If you are 18 or older and are interested in joining, visit <http://pavia48.tripod.com/>.

**CHRISTMAS FOOD COLLECTION**

will continue to **MON., DEC. 14<sup>th</sup>**. Non-perishables are welcome, but breakfast cereal and hams are especially needed. Money gifts may be sent to: **BIA, PO Box 582, Bethel, CT 06801**.



**MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS**  
**SUN., DEC. 13<sup>th</sup>, 3:00pm, Church**

Take a break from the hustle and bustle to reflect on the true meaning of the Christmas season. Come join the **St. Mary's Choirs** for an afternoon of carols and scriptures, followed by refreshments in the **Parish Hall**.

**SANTA'S WORKSHOP for Dorothy Day**

**SAT., DEC. 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009**



St. Mary's past efforts have made Christmas a happy occasion for many of the less fortunate children in the greater Danbury area. Last year 500 children who would receive little else for Christmas received gifts at Santa's Workshop. We will continue to collect for Dorothy Day again this year. If you wish to donate, please leave your unwrapped toy in the vestibule of the Church. We appreciate any donations. **Deacon Mike Oles** (733-5880).

# Coming Soon

**GROWING IN THE FAITH** – We tabulated your inputs from our recent survey, and the results are as follows:

<u>AREA OF INTEREST</u>	<u>RANKING</u>
<i>Bible Study</i>	1
<i>Putting Faith in Action</i>	2
<i>Church History</i>	3
<i>Today's Moral Issues</i>	4
<i>Why Be Catholic</i>	4
<i>Catholic Catechism</i>	5
<i>Understanding the Mass</i>	6
<i>Marriage and Family Relationships</i>	7
<i>Forgiveness</i>	8
<i>Social Activities</i>	9
<i>Sacraments</i>	10
<i>Heaven and Hell</i>	11
<i>Book Club</i>	12
<i>Prayer Groups</i>	13
<i>Sexuality</i>	14
<i>Addiction</i>	15
<i>Understanding RCIA</i>	16

- The first four listed are being planned for presentation in the Winter/Spring 2010. Full details will be published as soon as they are finalized.

- *Understanding the Mass*, ranked #6, will be presented early in the New Year. Details will be available shortly.

- Based on the above rankings, additional presentations will be planned for Autumn 2010.



Give the gift of prayer this Christmas! The **MISSION TRIP** teens will be selling "*Heavenly Stock*", the stock with heavenly returns, after all the Masses the next two weekends, **DEC. 12/13** and **DEC. 19/20**. Each recipient will be included in monthly Masses said throughout the year and the proceeds will help fund next year's Mission Trip/Retreat to Camden, NJ in June.

# Christmas Schedule...

## ST. MARY HOLIDAY MASS SCHEDULE

### CHRISTMAS CONFESSION SCHEDULE

SAT., DEC. 19<sup>th</sup> - 11:00-12noon  
4:00-5:00pm

MON., DEC. 21<sup>st</sup> - 9:30-10:00am

TUE., DEC. 22<sup>nd</sup> - 7:00-8:00pm

WED., DEC. 23<sup>rd</sup> - 4:00-5:00pm



### THURSDAY, DEC. 24<sup>th</sup> – CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00pm (Church),  
4:15pm (School),  
6:00pm (Children's Choir),  
(11:30 Sing-along at Church),  
12:00 Midnight (Adult Choir)



We Wish  
You A  
Merry Christmas

### FRIDAY, DEC. 25<sup>th</sup> – CHRISTMAS DAY

7:00am, 9:00am, 11:00am.

(Please note the change in Mass times.)



### NEW YEAR'S DAY MASS SCHEDULE



THUR., DEC. 31<sup>st</sup>: New Year's Eve –  
6:30am, 9:00am, and 5:30pm.

FRI., JAN. 1<sup>st</sup>: New Year's Day –  
7:00am, 9:00am, and 11:00am.

**MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK**

<b>MON., DEC. 7</b>	6:30	+	Rev. Robert Nugent – School Sisters of Notre Dame
	9:00	+	Peter DeJardins – Kitty & Charlie Grant
	5:30	+	John Bonacci ( <i>13<sup>th</sup> Anniv.</i> ) – Family
<b>TUES, DEC. 8</b> <i>Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	6:30	+	Cathryn Costello
	9:00	+	Ann Blizman – Roger & Veronica Hibbert
	12:05	+	Fred Timm – Wife, Rosa
<b>WED., DEC. 9</b>	7:00	+	Kellianne Gartland – Family
	6:30	+	Ann Hulswit – Jed & Cornie Costello
<b>THU., DEC. 10</b>	9:00	+	John Masucci – Family
	6:30	+	Rev. Paul Spodnick
<b>FRI., DEC. 11</b>	9:00	+	Msgr. Edward B. Karl – Jane & Bill Shannon
	6:30	+	Richard Giardina, Jr. – Patrick Simonelli
<b>SAT., DEC. 12</b>	9:00	+	Sophia & Edward Nepple – Rosemarie & Vern Nepple
	8:00	+	Doling Yee – Helen & Dan Yee
<b>SUN., DEC. 13</b>	5:30	+	Caterina Bochicchio – Family
	7:00	+	James & Dorothy McCabe – Family
	8:30	+	Deceased Members of DeAngelo Family – Edith Jaccarino
	10:00	+	Rose D’Ambrosio Maturo & Andrew D’Ambrosio – Children
	11:30	+	Hugh Lee – Family
	5:30	+	Peter Clarke – Family



**WELCOME TO THOSE WHO WERE NEWLY BAPTIZED**

*Johnathan Michael Comiskey*

**GOAL:    \$15,000**

**COLLECTION:    \$14,176**

**PARISH OFFICE (744-5777)**  
**Sheila Kurjiaka:** *Bulletin Editor*  
**Kate Fitzgerald:** *Secretary*  
**Paul Orsino:** *Property Manager*

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (743-4557)**  
**Mary Ferri:** *Director*  
**Peggy Gavin:** *Secretary*  
**Dennis Nauheimer (RCIA):** **794-9488**  
*(Call if interested in becoming a Catholic or completing your initiation as a Catholic with Confirmation and/or Eucharist.)*

**MUSIC MINISTRY**  
**Mike Macelletti:** *Music Director*  
**Elizabeth Barnes:** *Choir Director*  
**Debbie Caraluzzi:** *Contemp. Group Director*

**ST. MARY SCHOOL (744-2922)**  
**Sister Anne McCarthy:** *Principal*  
**Linda Curry:** *Secretary*

**MASS SCHEDULE**  
**Monday – Friday:** **6:30 & 9:00am**  
**Saturday:** **8:00am & 5:30pm**  
**Sunday:** **7:00, 8:30, 10:00, 11:30am & 5:30pm**

**CONFESSION SCHEDULE**  
**Saturday:** **4:00 - 5:00pm.**

**BAPTISMS:** *Every Sunday at 1:00pm.*  
**(Call the Rectory to Schedule.)**

**PRE-BAPTISM CLASSES:** *Twice a Month.*  
**(Call the Rectory to Schedule.)**

**ARRANGEMENT FOR MARRIAGE:**  
*Couples must meet with a parish clergyman at least six (6) months before the marriage is to be celebrate.*