

The Nativity of the Lord

December 25, 2011

Mary gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room at the inn. Luke 2: 1-14

“Silent Night..”

*Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is right...
A holy night to be sure. But hardly silent and anything but calm.*

That night in Bethlehem we remember this night was anything but silent. In a cold dark cave a young, frightened woman gave birth to her child, while her carpenter husband stood by helplessly. Finally, amid the bleating of the sheep and the braying of the animals surrounding the little family, the sound of the newborn’s first cry of life broke the stillness.

There was no ‘silence’ this night in crowded, chaotic Bethlehem, a little hamlet bursting at the seams with visitors and travelers who had come for the great census. There was, in fact, no ‘calm’ in all of Israel - only tension and conflict between the Jewish people and their Roman occupiers. Ancient Palestine was hardly a place of ‘heavenly peace’ - it was a land torn apart by oppression, persecution, and terror.

‘Silent night?’ Listen again. ‘All is calm?’ Madness reigned. And yet on this noisy, chaotic anxious night, Christ was born. Hidden in a dark cave, the light of Christ dawned. Amid the pain and anguish of a devastated people, Christ came with new hope and transforming joy.

In the middle of our own dark nights of pain and anguish, God comes and transforms them into ‘holy’ nights of His peace. Amid the noise and clamor that consume us, the voice of God speaks to us in the ‘silence’ of our hearts. May we have hearts to embrace the ‘silence’ of God in our midst and spirits to welcome the ‘holiness’ of Christ, who is the very peace and compassion of God. May this night transform all of our nights and days in the ‘brightness’ of ‘heavenly peace.’



CHRISTMAS

Blessed Christmas and Holiest of New Years

My dear friends and visitors, as we come together to Celebrate the Birth of Jesus we realize that in the simple image of the Nativity we see love being poured out. I encourage you to look deeply into the eyes of Jesus and see the gentleness of a God who desires us to be close to Him and Him to us. Through the merits of the cross and resurrection of Jesus we are invited through His eyes to kneel before Him and cradle that gentleness in our lives. Please allow your eyes to be directed to the contemplative eyes of Mary and Joseph, both contemplating a joy beyond any experience they have ever had and reflecting on what all of this means. The Shepherds' eyes and the eyes of the Magi bring to our hearts the wonder of such a precious gift that is being offered to all. Eyes can tell us so much and can bring to our lives the divine. During this Christmas Season, I encourage you to look into the eyes of those who have touched your life - those people who have had the gentle eyes of Jesus, the joyful and concerning eyes of Mary and Joseph, and the mysterious wondering eyes of the Shepherds and Magi. God touches our very world through the eyes of His children.

As I begin my second year as Pastor of Saint Clement Parish, I am extremely grateful for the eyes of so many who have offered their eyes to me. People of all ages have truly reminded me of God's love and compassion for His people. I have learned so much about faith in Jesus and faith in, and care for, one another. This parish is a very generous community, especially with your concern for the poor of our community and our world. Through this we witness to our faith, in so many ways, and at different levels. Being a vibrant parish community calls us to be disciples of Jesus, to each other and to the broader community, and to be the eyes of the Nativity.



Next week we begin a new calendar year. Many people take this time to hope for the new year. Let us not forget the people who truly need our hope. Let us remember those families that are still dealing with the realities of the many natural disasters that have affected our country and the world. These disasters remind all of us how precious life truly is and our call to share life with one another.

Once again, I ask you to look deeply into the eyes of Jesus and see how precious you are to Him. Know that those eyes are always with you and are looking over all of us. May those eyes continue to give us encouragement to the Father's will and be part of the world's gentleness, joy and concern for others, and wonder and awe at God's grace.

Many blessings upon you and your loved ones!!!!

Fr. Workman

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, December 26 - Saint Stephen

5:15 PM Francine Kelley

Tuesday, December 27 - Saint John

8:00 AM Walter & Virginia Frederick

Wednesday, December 28 - The Holy Innocents

5:15 PM Mark C. Zahniser

Thursday, December 29 - Saint Thomas Becket

8:00 AM J.J. & Mary Anne Kelley

Friday, December 30 - The Holy Family of

Jesus, Mary & Joseph

5:15 PM Stanley & Bernice Mack

Saturday, December 31 - Saint Sylvester I

8:00 AM Tina Marchese

4:00 PM Marilyn Czechanski

Sunday, January 1 - Octave Day of Christmas

Blessed Virgin Mary, The Mother of God

9:00 AM John & Anna McGinness

11:00 AM For the People of the Parish

Mass Intentions

The Mass Intention Book for 2012 is open. You might like to remember the birthday or anniversary of your living loved ones, as well as the deceased. Mass stipends are \$10 each. Please stop by the rectory office, or call the office at 226-5116 Monday thru Friday.

Scripture Readings for the Week

Monday: Acts 6: 8-10; 7: 54-59;

Mt 10: 17-22

Tuesday: 1 Jn 1: 1-4; Jn 20: 1, 2-8

Wednesday: 1 Jn 1: 1-5 - 2: 2; Mt 2: 13-18

Thursday: 1 Jn 2: 3-11; Lk 2: 22-35

Friday: Gn 15: 1-6 ; 21: 1-3; Lk 2: 22-40

Saturday: 1 Jn 2: 18-21; Jn 1: 1-18

Sunday: Nm 6: 22-27; Gal 4: 4-7; Lk 2: 16-21

Poor Clares' Prayer Line

Do you need prayer today? Are your loved ones, coworkers or neighbors in need of God's loving guidance? Call the Poor Clares' Prayer Line at 216-361-0783.

Liturgical Ministers

Lector Schedule

Saturday, December 31:

4:00 pm B. Caja

Sunday, January 1:

9:00 am P. Hesland

11:00 am M. Miranda

Eucharistic Minister Schedule

Saturday, December 31:

4:00 pm R. Merritt, B. Trentel,

R.V. Threadgill

Sunday, January 1:

9:00 am Deacon Danny, C. Kelly,
M. Kerg

11:00 am R. Brown, T. Williams,
D. Miller

Server Schedule

Saturday, December 31:

4:00 pm M. Mahoney, S. Mahoney,
L. Kolenz

Sunday, January 1:

9:00 am F. Smith, J. Mangan,
W. Trainor

11:00 am K. Carleton, T. Carleton,
P. Mullen

Jesuit Retreat House Programs

December 31st - January 1st

New Year's Eve Retreat: Hope in the Now

Hope - it is often obscured. We will use the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and St. Ignatius to find hope by grounding ourselves in the 'now.' New Year's Eve presents a terrific opportunity to look back to see the many graces we received in this turbulent year and look ahead to living thankfully in 2012. Dinner is at 6 pm, and Mass is at 11 pm, followed by a celebration. The retreat ends the next day following breakfast. Cost is \$80, includes food and lodging. Come, bring a friend, and enjoy a great start to 2012! To register, please call the Jesuit Retreat House at 440-884-9300, ext. 10.

Finance Corner

Collection for the weekend of December 18th:

\$ 8,736.46

Monthly collection - \$ 2,337.00

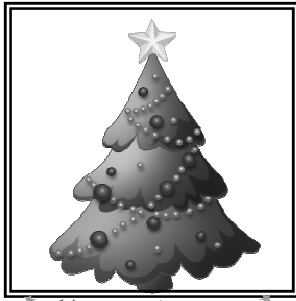
Envelopes used - 222

Share in the Care - \$ 185.00

Children's Collection - \$ 19.42

Envelopes used - 20

Thank you for your continued support
and generosity for the parish.



Lakewood Catholic Academy News

A Merry Christmas from Lakewood Catholic Academy

On behalf of the students, faculty, staff and Board of Directors at Lakewood Catholic Academy, we would like to take this opportunity to wish a Merry and Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year to the entire Lakewood Catholic community. We are grateful beyond words for your continuing support of Catholic education. We hope to see many of you at our Catholic Schools Week Open House, which will take place on Sunday, January 29th, from 2 pm to 4 pm. May God bless you all!!

2012 Calendars:

The 2012 calendars are available by the church doors. Please take only one calendar per household so everyone has a chance to get one. We thank Nickels-Andrade Funeral Home for providing the calendars.

St. Augustine Hunger Center Collection

Please note the collection for St. Augustine Hunger Center will be the weekend of January 7th & 8th. We appreciate your generosity in supporting the center.

Pot of Gold Winners

(\$25) Roland & Mary Miranda,
Will Forsyth, Frank Stasko,
Michael Smith, Jeanne McMaster,
Ron Brown



Donate Your Old Car to St. Vincent de Paul

Donate your used car, van or pickup to the National SVDP Car Donation Program, and avoid the hassles of trading it in or selling it yourself. Your vehicle will be sold and the proceeds used by SVDP in the Diocese of Cleveland in their charitable programs that assist the needy. You may also be eligible for an income tax deduction. To donate your vehicle, call 1-800-322-8284, St. Vincent de Paul Society, USA, or go to svdpusacars.com.

EWTN

Our Catholic Television Network, EWTN, invites all Catholics to see more Christ-centered TV programs. EWTN's vast array of TV programming includes programs for the homebound, teenagers, young adults and children. To learn more, visit www.ewtn.com and click on "Channel Finder" on facebook, twitter and YouTube.

Thank you for your generous donations to the Saint Clement Giving Tree. The kindness of our parishioners will bring joy and happiness to many people on Christmas day!

This year we helped 3 women, 1 man and 11 children from the West Side Catholic Center who are presently in transitional housing.

In addition, your generosity brightened and, in many cases, warmed (clothing, hats and gloves) the lives of 37 children in our Lakewood Community.

A very special thank-you to all the people who made this project possible by making gift tags, sorting presents and loading and delivering gifts!

Year End Charitable Giving & Tax Documentation

All charitable donations received in 2011 will be listed on your 2011 charitable giving statement. A donation that is mailed and postmarked by December 31, 2011 will also be included in your 2011 statement. Please note, all donations received at the 4:00 pm Mass on Saturday, December 31st will be listed on your 2011 statement. Donations received on Sunday, January 1, 2012, will appear on your 2012 tax statement. This ruling comes from both the Diocese of Cleveland and the Internal Revenue Service. Thank you for your continued generosity to the parish!

Moving?

Please notify the Rectory Office of any change of address so that we can update our records. You can call the Rectory Office at 216-226-5116 or email us at stclementlakewood@cox.net.