

ISSUE NO. 123

29 DECEMBER 2019

Cathedral WEEKLY

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

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AN UNKIND WORLD NEEDS SAINT JOSEPH, THE PERFECT PATRON FOR 2020 | ELIZABETH SCALIA

Cathedral WEEKLY

THE MOST REVEREND THOMAS JOHN PAPROCKI
NINTH BISHOP
OF SPRINGFIELD IN ILLINOIS

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Mass Times: SAT 4PM, SUN. 7AM, 10AM, 5PM
Weekday Masses: MON. thru FRI. 7AM, 5:15PM and SAT. 8AM
Reconciliation (Confessions): MON-FRI 4:15PM- 5PM, SAT. 9AM-10AM,
2:30PM-3:30PM, and SUN. 4PM-4:45PM
Adoration: Tuesdays & Thursdays 4PM to 5PM

Diocesan Victim Assistance is available. For the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, please contact: Patricia Kornfield at 321-1155.

Please remember that if you or a loved one is in the hospital, a nursing home or home-bound, to contact the Parish offices or Sr. Francella at 522-3342 x 142. Hospitals may know you are Catholic, but not know you are from Cathedral. We would be happy to visit.

Welcome to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception!

On behalf of our bishop, the Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki, our parishioners, deacons, and priests, I welcome you to the mother church of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

The seat of the diocese was moved to Springfield from Alton in 1923. In the same year, "Old St. Mary's" church of Immaculate Conception Parish was named as the pro-cathedral of the new diocese until this cathedral church was built and dedicated in 1928. Currently, our diocese comprises twenty-eight counties in central Illinois, serving over 140,000 members of the Catholic faithful.

I hope that your visit to our Cathedral is one of grace and beauty and that you feel at home in the mother church. I also hope that you will find this edition of the *Cathedral Weekly* to be both informative and spiritually enriching. May God bless you and yours!



Very Reverend Christopher A. House
Rector

Mass Intentions for the Upcoming Week

Monday – December 30

7 AM DORIS DREA (ROB & JAN SGAMBELLURI)
5:15 PM SOPHIA E. BARTOLETTI (BARTOLETTI FAMILY)

Tuesday – December 31

7 AM DORIS DREA (MIKE & KAREN RELLIHAN)
5:15 PM BILL CRUMLY (KATIE HUGHES)

Wednesday – January 1

7 AM NO MASS
9:00 AM Nancy Shea (JIM & BARB STELTE)
5:15 PM NO MASS

Thursday – January 2

7 AM DELBERT FAIRWEATHER
(ANDREW & CHERYL KLEIN FAMILY)

5:15 PM BILLY CRUMLY (Michael & Mary Belford)

Friday – January 3

7 AM DORIS DREA (G. ROBIN VOTA)
5:15PM CARL VENVERTLOH
(MR. & MRS. RICO JOHNSON)

Saturday – January 4

8 AM SPECIAL INTENTION FOR MARIO MERCURELLI
(TRISH & NORA)
4 PM CATHERINE ARMSTRONG (4 O'CLOCK USHERS)

Sunday – January 5

7 AM MARY ANN MIDDEN (WILLIAM MIDDEN)
10 AM LELAND ORR (THE SGAMBELLURI FAMILY)
5 PM FOR THE PEOPLE



Continuing Through Christmastide

We continue our journey through the Octave of Christmas this weekend with the celebration of the Feast of the Holy Family. This feast reminds us that Jesus was raised in a home, that he grew in age, wisdom, and in knowledge of God's will for his life. He also grew in grace and obedience under the care of Mary and Joseph.

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God follows the Feast of the Holy Family on New Year's Day. This solemnity marks the end of the Octave of Christmas by celebrating the motherhood of Mary, remembering that it was from her that Jesus took his human nature, becoming one with us in all things but sin. This solemnity is a holy day of obligation and Mass will be offered on Tuesday evening at 5:15PM and on Wednesday morning, New Year's Day, at 9AM.

As we continue our journey through the Christmas season, I wish to thank all who ministered and assisted in making our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day celebrations so wonderful, especially to those in our music ministry, our liturgical ministers, our ushers, and to our maintenance staff for their work in setting the environment in the church; a special thanks to our retired maintenance director Mike Hickey who journeyed up from Southern Illinois to help with the decorating.



With the ushering in of the new year, we will be making a change in office personnel. For just about three years now, Katie Price has served our parish as Director of Discipleship and Stewardship. She was instrumental in the refashioning of the bulletin into the Weekly and she helped to move us in a new and better direction in the area of stewardship and discipleship. Katie will be going full time in the diocesan curia in this area of ministry beginning January 1. While she will no longer be a member of our parish staff, we will still benefit from Katie's expertise and energy. I thank Katie for all that she has done to help us to be better disciples. Please join me in wishing her the best and asking God to bless all her future endeavors.

How blessed we are to have this joyous season of light in the midst of the darkest days of winter, but also at a time when the light begins to lengthen ever so slightly and the darkness begins to recede. Please continue to enjoy the beauty of the season. It began, not ended, on December 25th and continues through Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord on January 12th. May the joy of Christmas continue to be yours and may you know God's abundant grace and blessings in 2020. Happy New Year!

Father Christopher House is the Rector of the Cathedral and serves in various leadership roles within the diocesan curia, namely Chancellor and Vicar Judicial.

Stewardship Activity

Stewardship of Prayer:

As we enter into the New Year, pray that we may continue to grow as intentional disciples in prayer, service, formation and hospitality.

Stewardship of Service:

Help us, help you accomplish those New Year Resolutions to grow in faith and service. Are you interested in joining the Cathedral or becoming more involved? Reach out to the parish offices to get connected!

Stewardship of Gifts

Due to print deadlines, the gift information from the weekend of Dec. 22nd will be printed in the upcoming *Weekly*.

*Did you know you can make a gift online? If you would like to extend a special gift to the Cathedral during this upcoming season go to <https://spicathedral.org/give-online/>. We appreciate your generosity!



Is this the End of the Christmas Season or the Beginning?

You've probably seen it already. Your neighbors no longer have lights twinkling outside their houses. Large trees are strewn across front lawns in preparation for garbage day. The radio station that had been playing Christmas music twenty-four hours a day since November 1 suddenly stopped playing all their carols at 12:01 AM on December 26.

We have entered the end of the Christmas season ... or so thinks the world. I walked into a hardware store on December 27, and I heard "Joy to the World" playing over the loudspeakers. I was glad to hear that some place was still celebrating Christmas. But then a regular Scrooge who worked there commented to her co-worker, "Christmas is over! Why don't we turn off this silly music?"

Christmas is over for the secular world, but not for the Christian. Even now that Little Christmas (The Epiphany is over), we still have a week of Christmas left! The Christmas Season, according to the Church's liturgical calendar, doesn't end until the Baptism of Our Lord on January 13.

Even after those days are over with, Christmas still continues. If you don't want Christmas to end, you've found good company with the Church. Below are four ways that Catholics can continue to celebrate Christmas after the New Year, just as the Church directs us to.

1. Don't Throw Away Your Christmas Tree Just Yet

As I mentioned above, you've probably seen many of your neighbors already taking out their Christmas trees. It's odd to think that just a generation or two ago, many people in North America didn't even put up their trees and decorate them until Christmas Eve. Christians understood that the days leading up to Christmas were in preparation for the holy day. We were more keenly aware of the season of Advent then. Some would start decorating the tree on Gaudete Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent, which would be quite fitting. But when people start putting up their tree before Thanksgiving, there's no reason to even bother keeping the tree up past December 25th. Not to mention that if you have a real tree, you probably have needles all over the floor since the tree has been up for well over a month.

But there's a reason why we as Christians have the Christmas tree in our house. While the tree has certain German origins, it represents various Christian truths. The star at the top of the tree represents the light of Christ illuminating the entire world, and various ornaments are signs of our Lord's grace upon us. But even Scripture has good things to say about the Christmas tree, in a certain sense:

Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!"

*Yea, the world is established, it shall never be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
let the field exult, and everything in it!
Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy
before the Lord, for he comes,
for he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with his truth.
(Psalm 96:10-13)*

Even the tree itself speaks to the coming of Christ. It always brings great joy when one lights up a Christmas tree. It's almost inexplicable. At a Christmas tree lighting in 2014, Pope Francis made an important observation:

"A Christmas without light is not Christmas. Let there be light in the soul, in the heart; let there be forgiveness to others; let there be no hostilities or darkness.... Let there be the beautiful light of Jesus. This is my wish for all of you, when you turn on the light of the Christmas tree."

We can allow our Christmas tree, seen from the streets in our windows, to bring the light of Jesus to others. But that prompts the question: how long should one keep their Christmas tree up?

2. Keep the Christmas Festivities Going through Candlemas (February 2)

Typically, at least in the Latin Rite, the Christmas Season wraps up not on Epiphany, but on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. This feast takes place, typically a week after the Epiphany. That means that the length of the official Christmas Season can range from sixteen to as many as twenty days.

In 2019, the Baptism of the Lord falls on Sunday, January 13, the latest that this feast can fall on. But more than a few people contend that Christmas actually goes even further than that, and many a debate has sprung from such a notion. For those that can't get enough of Christmas, the season can extend all the way into February. If you needed an excuse to keep the Christmas tree up through January, you now have one. But just what is the significance of Candlemas Day? Many of us know this day as the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, and less commonly as the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Forty days after Jesus' birth, He was presented at the temple, according to the Mosaic Law. Also being obedient to the law, Our Lady underwent the purification rite.

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Continued from p. 4

Both of these events follow what was spelled out in Leviticus 12:1-8. But what some people have pointed out is that the forty days between Christ's birth and his presentation is related in some way to the forty days of the Easter Season. Indeed, many of the older liturgical books prior to the 1969 Missal of Pope St. Paul VI (what we now know as the Ordinary Form) labeled the days of Advent up until Septuagesima as the "Christmas Cycle", and the rest of the days of the year as the "Easter Cycle", as can be seen here. Of course, the Easter season certainly trumps the Christmas season in terms of importance and solemnity, but it's interesting to see how the liturgical calendar has evolved over the centuries.

3. Pray the Liturgy of the Hours Regularly

Now this should be something that happens all throughout the year, but praying the Liturgy of the Hours during this time of year does offer us a bit of extra Christmas "flavor". Compline or "night prayer" has always been a favorite prayer of mine, as it's the perfect way to end the day with a brief examination of conscience. At the very end, however, we sing one of four Marian antiphons depending on the time of year. Beginning on the first Sunday of Advent, we recite The Alma Redemptoris Mater (O Loving Mother of Our Redeemer). When is the last day we recite this antiphon? You probably guessed it. February 2n, for Candlemas Day.

The prayer sings the praises of Mary, the one "who brought forth thy holy Creator", which reminds us of our Lord's birth in a lowly manger. It's yet another way to carry on the Christmas Season well past New Year's Day. But ideally, we can use this opportunity to form a good habit. If we haven't been praying the Liturgy of the Hours regularly, we can start now in our hopes to keep the spirit of Christmas going. Then, once February 2n has passed, we can continue on in this wonderful prayer. The Catechism of the Catholic Church has the following to say on the Liturgy of the Hours:

"The Liturgy of the Hours is intended to become the prayer of the whole People of God. In it Christ himself 'continues his priestly work through his Church.' His members participate according to their own place in the Church and the circumstances of their lives.... The laity, too, are encouraged to recite the divine office, either with the priests, or among themselves, or even individually."
(CCC 1175)

4. Keep Giving to Charity

I'm sure that at the very end of the year, you received many emails and letters from a swath of charitable organizations, asking that you make one last donation before the end of the year for tax purposes. At this time of year, we are already predisposed into being generous with our talents and treasures, and we see many people making monetary gifts to many different charities. This should certainly be commended. But why do we have to stop after December?

We know that almsgiving is something that our Lord directs us to do, and the Church doesn't relegate this action just to penitential seasons. If we had the ability to make the season bright for our less fortunate brothers and sisters immediately before Christmas Day, then we should try to find that same generosity immediately after. This might mean we don't go absolutely crazy with the gifts for family and friends on Christmas Day, but those in need require our assistance just as much now as they did then. It's absolutely something to prayerfully consider as we try to extend the Christmas season.

The Word Became Flesh!

As can be seen, there are several ways to lengthen this holy season of Christmas throughout our daily lives. Our extension of the season can serve as a light to our secular friends and peers. Pope Benedict XVI put it beautifully in a general audience he gave back in 2008:

"Because of the atmosphere that distinguishes it, Christmas is a universal celebration. In fact, even those who do not profess themselves to be believers can perceive in this annual Christian event something extraordinary and transcendent, something intimate that speaks to the heart..."

"At Christmas, therefore, we do not limit ourselves to commemorating the birth of a great figure: we do not simply and abstractly celebrate the birth of the man or in general the mystery of life; even less do we celebrate only the beginning of the new season. At Christmas we commemorate something very tangible and important for mankind, something essential for the Christian faith, a truth that St John sums up in these few words: 'The Word became flesh.'"

In turn, let us not allow ourselves to put a limit on the Christmas celebration. It didn't end on December 26, and it's not over today. We can even continue it beyond February 2 if we allow ourselves to acquire some new, good habits.

This is truly the beauty of our Catholic Faith. We cannot confine the joy of Christmas to one day. When a single moment has the ability to change the course of human history, we can't blame ourselves for wanting to commemorate that event for a long period of time. Feel free to keep on giving those you encounter a hearty "Merry Christmas!"

Nicholas is a cradle Catholic and hopes to give a unique perspective on life in the Church as a millennial. His favorite saints include his patron St. Nicholas, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. John Mary Vianney and St. Athanasius of Alexandria.



An Unkind World Needs Saint Joseph, the Perfect Patron for 2020

Yesterday, I experienced something of a “Saint Joseph Synergy,” finding a copy of Fr.

Donald H. Calloway’s Consecration to St. Joseph in my mailbox, and on the very same day that we read at Mass:

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. (Matt 1:18-19)

Having the book in my hand on the same day in which Joseph is featured in our readings felt a bit like one of those moments when the Holy Spirit is giving me a pronounced slap upside the head, saying “pay attention.” For that reason (and a few others) I am asking St. Joseph to be my patron for 2020, and to teach me what he knows. Bold of me, perhaps, but in general I think “teach me what you know” is precisely what we should ask of the saints and, in my experience, if you ask for the lessons, they’ll supply them to you by the handful. Given all of my failures in 2019, it seems wise for me to go to a master teacher for some one-on-one tutelage on how to live and work and love with steadiness and a truly grounded faith. That would mean going to Joseph. We know the rest of the story begun in yesterday’s reading. Joseph does not put Mary aside. An angel comes to him in a dream. Not a great Archangel as greeted Mary, but a rather workaday heavenly messenger tasked with reassuring a rather ordinary workman of his time. Going on faith, he brings Mary into his home, and prepares to parent and protect Emmanuel, “God-with-us,” and to quietly contribute to what Christ Jesus, the Man-God, would become, and even how he would conduct his earthly ministry:

There is a rabbi on the cross, and he looks like a king, but he was a tekton (i.e., artisan, builder, technician) like his stepfather, the righteous man who likely drilled him in the law even as he taught him how to take the measure of whatever construction material was before him and determine its best usage—to envision, design, attach, refine, and finish.

Perhaps parables of mercy were launched in the imagination of the rabbi when he was still very young, when the master taught him his craft, urging the apprentice to discover metaphors before his eyes: how the difficult process of planing something down—of making straight what is gnarled and knotted—brings out its inner beauty, even as it exposes its tiniest deformities to the scrutiny of the world.

An adolescent with the wisdom and confidence to debate the temple elders might have nodded in agreement, while countering that those minute flaws only served to better emphasize all that

was intrinsically lovely within the wood—what made it worth saving and finishing, rather than tossing into the fires.

People like to say, “We don’t know anything about Joseph.” Well, we know what matters:

- Joseph was righteous; he lived devoutly and in accordance with God’s word.
- Joseph was faithful; he was a man willing to work within the mysteries of God as they came at him.
- Joseph was courageous; it is no small thing to go outside of the customs of a village or a tribe.
- Joseph was generous; the needs of Mary and the Child came before all else, including his established life and industry.
- Joseph was wise; he understood that God’s mind and ways are not our own, but always trustworthy.

We know one other thing about Joseph, and with the world as it is, it might be the most important thing to think about: he was kind. Joseph’s kindness may outweigh all his other good qualities, even his righteousness. Righteousness can sometimes become a boat stuck on the shoals of justice and thereby rendered immovable. Kindness, which contains an element of mercy, can lift the vessel to freedom. Joseph’s kindness is an example of true strength. He could have, in all “righteousness,” cast Mary aside in a way that publicly shamed her and would have ended her life. Within the Law, within the society and the tribe, he had that power and to use it would have meant no dishonor to him.

But even before the reassurances that came from heaven, Joseph was too kind to use his socially approved power in that way. Having seen qualities in Mary that made him see her as unique and lovable, her value was not so lessened in his eyes as to diminish her human status into mere, disposable thing-hood. He would not expose her to that element of humanity that, even today, has a lust for the lives and the blood of the vulnerable—for vengeful, often spiteful, interests that serve something other than heaven.

- Joseph was righteous;
- The righteous life he embraced developed his faithfulness;
- Faithfulness gave him courage;
- Courage permitted his generosity;
- Generosity let him grow in wisdom;
- Wisdom taught Joseph kindness.

Kindness is where, if we must err at all, all our errors should occur. Joseph made no errors because he was a man of faith, and a man in full. Oh that in 2020 the whole world would appreciatively make a model of this righteous, faithful, courageous, generous, and kind Jewish man. Indeed, with such an undertaking, 2021 might look very different.

Elizabeth Scalia is a Benedictine Oblate and author of several books. She served as Editor-in-Chief of the English edition of Aletheia, and as Managing Editor of the Catholic section of Patheos.com. Elizabeth also blogs as “The anchoress” at www.theanchoress.com. She is married, and living on Long Island.

Embracing Change

I remember the first few conversations about changing the traditional Cathedral Bulletin into a Weekly magazine-style format. It was contentious and just about anyone you had spoken too had an opinion on the matter. Of course, people were worried about getting the news and upcoming events or programs, while others were concerned about the cost or the additional time necessary to compile a weekly magazine. To be frank, I was initially concerned myself. At the time, I had worked in Catholic organizations and parishes, coast to coast, and never, ever, seen a Cathedral parish endeavor to change the layout of the traditional bulletin into an evangelization piece. We don't *change* traditions in the Catholic church all too often and that goes for our administrative tasks, especially bulletins! So the question was, what if we could create a faith formative piece to nourish and sustain our parishioners, while encouraging them to share it with others? Wouldn't that help us move toward discipleship and stewardship?

So, why the change and why does it matter?

Change is required in every conversion process and the bulletin is just one example. The standard Parish bulletin is for insiders, aka parishioners. We wanted to create a piece that would be for insiders *and* outsiders. Most parish bulletins do not include faith formation articles. Most parish bulletins do not engage or encourage readers to share the resources and articles with others. While this may seem like a small insignificant change to some, it was a big adjustment for others. It was one of the first actions taken to enact significant change to encourage discipleship and evangelization at the Cathedral Parish.



It is not just change the Cathedral has gone through since my time here, but a deeper conversion process. The way we message and communicate is different, the way we learn through enriched adult faith formation programs is different, the way we pass along the faith through *Family Faith* is different, the way we commit as stewards through the Season of Stewardship is different. This is not just about embracing change, but allowing ourselves to dive into a deeper conversion process toward discipleship. Change is incredibly hard. Conversion is incredibly hard, but is change through the lens of holiness.

A conversion process requires a willingness to rid oneself of old habits. The same goes for Parish life. If Parishes remain stagnant, comfortable or in maintenance mode, they are not only dying, but also not fulfilling the call toward discipleship. Working towards intentional discipleship IS an uncomfortable process of change and conversion! It has been uncomfortable through the mistakes, falls, or road blocks. This process of conversion at Cathedral has had stumbling blocks, sure, and I am sure to have been a part of some of those. However, we have set a course toward becoming a welcoming community of intentional disciples. It is

both exciting and nourishing in so many ways! Don't you love change?!

It has been a pleasure getting to know so many of you and working alongside you! This community is a special place, a spiritual home unlike any other. Be proud of the Cathedral community you have been a part of shaping. Be evangelizers for the Cathedral and our faith. Be disciples through ministry, service, hospitality, and spirit. Get uncomfortable! Never tire of this journey. We need you!

As I endeavor to support the parishes and schools of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois full time, I know my family will have a nurturing and welcoming spiritual home in our Cathedral. I am eternally grateful for all of you and the amazing priests and staff that I have had the pleasure of working with and learning from! God bless you all- you will continually be in my prayers!

Katie Price is the Coordinator of Discipleship and Stewardship at the Cathedral.



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