

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Dear Parishioners,

When I have been going about my classroom visits in December I have visited a number of primary and junior classes. We start out talking about the mustard seed and we come around to the little things that make Christmas great. In part we talk about the Christmas story. I have been asking the children whether the shepherds asked to hold the baby Jesus and further, did they indeed hold the baby Jesus when they came to the manger. There was always divided opinion as there would be if adults had the discussion.

I hope the shepherds held baby Jesus. That is kind of the whole point of Christian life. Christian life is never a spectator sport. The whole point of the call of Jesus for us to follow is that we find ourselves fully in the midst of life and ready to live fully and well. It is fine and well to marvel at a new born baby but the fuller encounter is with the baby wrapped in your arms.

Come to think of it that is probably how Christ thinks of each of us. Not as distant and self-sufficient. Rather each of us worthy to be wrapped in his arms and cherished by him. It does not matter the adversity or the failings that have come our way, we are the beloved children of God.

This Christmas season offers us a particular opportunity to renew our faith in Christ. Not the thunderous judge but the loving presence in each of our lives that we can pick up in our arms and cherish and who in turn cherishes us.

This is the Christ who washes us in baptism, and feeds us with word and sacrament. It is the Christ who closes the door on our failings in confession and promises great things in the sacrament of anointing. It is this same Christ who bids us to pray in time of sorrow and times of joy. We only need to reach and embrace and cherish him and he will show us the way.

May this season of grace bless each of the households of our parish. May you find much to embrace in your families and the seasons' festivities. May you find great things to cherish in the messages of this sacred time of year.

Merry Christmas and may you find some time to hold close the Christ child.

Fr. Frank

MASS INTENTIONS

December 26th - 31st, 2016

Mon Dec 26 th	7pm +Deceased members of the parish
Tues. Dec 27 th	8am +Helen & Bert Shea
Wed. Dec 28 th	8am+Constantina & Manuel Silva
Thurs. Dec 29 th	8am+Vito Brundia
Fri. Dec 30 th	8am +Giuseppe Giannotti
Sat. Dec 31 st	9am +Mary White

FIRST COMMUNION

If you have a child for communion, please pick up the form before or after mass from one of the priests or Sandra and return in a timely fashion to another Sunday mass.

CONFIRMATION

We are forming the classes for confirmation masses in late May and early June. The forms are available before or after mass on Saturday or Sunday.

2017 ENVELOPES

Envelopes for the coming year 2017 are available today! As in previous years you take any box, the number does not matter. When you use the first couple of envelopes please put your name and address on them. That will be your number for 2017.

Pre-Authorized Givers, please do not take a box. Your special collection envelopes are in the mail.

THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE

The Catholic Women's League raffle was held at their annual pot luck dinner on Tues., Dec. 6th.

The sale of raffle tickets, along with the annual Christmas Fair and Silent Auction raised a total of \$6,553.90 which will be donated to local charities in our parish community. We would like to thank everyone who supported our fundraising efforts. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

MINISTRY FAIR FOLLOW UP

Did you sign up to participate in the parish in some particular way at our ministry fair and have not yet heard from the group? Please let us know in the office and we will pass your name on to the particular group. And thank you to all who offered their talents and time.

MASS BOXING DAY – 7PM

OFFICE HOURS BETWEEN CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR

The Office will be closed on the 26th and 27th. It will re-open on December 28th. It is also closed on January 2nd.

DEADLINE FOR PARISH DONATIONS 2016

Each year we need to set a date on which we cut off donations for the previous year. We will ask that all people making a donation for 2016 with the anticipation of receiving a tax receipt for that year do so by Sunday January 8th, clearly marking that this is a 2016 donation.

DO YOU KNOW OF CATHOLICS THAT ARE SHUT IN?

If a parishioner of Our Lady of Grace is unable to get out to church because of infirmity, we can arrange to bring them communion at home. There are a good number of parishioners who do this work in private homes and the care facilities of the town. Call the office if you wish to discuss this further.

PASTORAL CARE FOR THOSE IN THE HOSPITAL

Family members sometimes waste a lot of time when someone is sick in trying to locate a priest. This is especially true if the situation is grave. Southlake and MacKenzie Health can get you a priest quite efficiently if you tell the staff. There is always a priest carrying a pager for each hospital and they will respond when paged by the hospital.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

Are you yearning for a closer relationship with God? Do you wish to deepen your prayer life? Is your heart weighed down with anger, resentment and hurts? The Life in the Spirit Seminars call people to a deeper relationship with God. The seminars will be offered here at Our Lady of Grace beginning January 12th. For those who wish to know more contact Deacon Pat Colangelo at 905-727-8737 or Edwin or Anita Andrade at 905-727-2367. They will be happy to discuss with you in advance any questions you have or just give you a more complete description of this eight-week process of prayer and reflection.

MARK THE DATE – SKATING PARTY

Monday January 2nd (a national holiday) from 2PM-4PM Aurora Family Leisure Complex on Industrial Parkway. Hot dogs & hot chocolate at the church 4PM on.



WHAT IS AT THE BACK OF THE CHURCH?

There are always **parish registration** forms for those who may wish to identify as members of Our Lady of Grace Parish. Just fill out the form and return it or put in on the collection plate on a later Sunday.

Pre-Authorized Giving Forms are always available at the back for those who may wish to support the parish by having a monthly donation drawn from their account. This procedure can be altered or terminated at any time at the written request of the parishioner.

New boxes of Envelopes are left at the back for those who wish to use this more traditional way of giving regular support to the church. Just take any box and fill out the first couple of envelopes used so that number can be assigned to you and used to track your donations for this year.

The financial report for 2015 is also at the back of the church, it will be replaced by the 2016 financial report about mid-February. Information of the financial standing of the parish is always available to all parishioners.

OUR PARISH EUCHRE

You are always welcome at the parish euchre on Mondays from 1pm to 3pm, downstairs in the large meeting room. All are welcome to come every Monday or just from time to time. There is a nominal cost per person. The euchre goes every Monday except on national holidays like December 26th. You are promised a warm welcome.

**Merry
Christmas**