



Dear Friends,

~~5 Shopping Days Left 'til Christmas~~

5 Caring Days Left 'til Christmas

*Every time a hand reaches out to
Another...that is Christmas*

Our Christmas Masses are always made up of a diversity of people. Our regular parishioners, students from college, extended families, relatives and friends, those estranged from the Church or rarely attend....all together for the holidays. As Jesus came for all, I, too, extend my welcome to all who will be joining us this Christmas. Nativity's doors are always open to all. This is the message of the Incarnation - of Jesus - of Christmas.

A few thoughts to ponder this Christmas Season

He who has not Christmas in his heart will never find it under a tree.

Roy L. Smith

The best of all gifts around any Christmas tree: the presence of a happy family all wrapped up in each other.

Burton Hillis

I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.

Charles Dickens

Wouldn't life be worth living
Wouldn't dreams be coming true
If we kept the Christmas spirit
All the whole year through?

Author Unknown

Christmas is forever, not just one day,
For loving, sharing, giving, are not to put away
Like bells and lights and tinsel, in some box upon a shelf.
The good you do for others is good you do yourself.

Norman W. Brooks



A MEANINGFUL CHRISTMAS TO ALL

J. Martin

ADVENT....Tell us Your Story!

For the first 300-400 years of the Church, the weeks before the celebration of Christmas were held special in many ways. In some areas daily prayers were an obligation from December 17th through January 6th. In other areas special fasting was required. While there was a lack of uniformity in pre-Christmas preparations during those years, most probably the various devotions were introduced by Church leaders to counterbalance the pagan Saturnalia festivals which took place during that time. The person given the credit for organizing “Advent” is Pope Gregory the Great, (ca. 540-604). He fixed the season to be four weeks long and composed the prayers, antiphons and readings to be used during the Mass. These exemplified the joyful preparation for the Nativity. During the ninth century the Church brought in the theme of the Second Coming of Christ and also the element of penance. By the twelfth century, there existed a solid basis for Advent as we know it today. And it is around that time that we get the first indication of the use of set colors for the seasons and feast days of the Church. Surprisingly, black was used for Christmas, but this was unofficial and varied from region to region. It was in 1507, under Pope Pius V, that an official color scheme was written into the liturgical books. White became the official color for Christmas and royal purple became the color for Advent with rose being used on the third Sunday as a signal of the approaching joy of the Christmas celebration. The Second Vatican Council also brought back the ancient meaning of Advent which was one of reverent and hopeful expectation.



Monday, December 21

TONY TALARICO.....7:30am - Fr. Martin

Tuesday, December 22

PAUL GOULD.....7:30am - Fr. Martin

Wednesday, December 23

PETER AQUAVIVA, SR.....7:30am - Fr. Martin

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve

ANNA DIDUCH.....7:30am - Fr. O’Keefe

JIM LYNN.....4:00pm - Fr. Martin

DOROTHY PERAINO.....6:00pm - Fr. O’Keefe

GLADYS WILSON.....8:30pm - Fr. Wilson

GEORGE MILLIGAN.....Midnight - Fr. Martin

Friday, December 25

Christmas Day

HELEN HADDOCK.....8:00am - Fr. Wilson

HENRY E. FURLOW.....9:30am - Fr. O’Keefe

ANTHONY FRANCO.....11:00am - Fr. Wilson

Saturday, December 26

JOHN HANRETTA.....9:00am - Fr. O’Keefe

JOHN D. RIVI.....5:00pm - Fr. Wilson

Sunday December 27

JESUS & PACITA PALABRICA.....7:30am - Fr. O’Keefe

VERONICA BARTKOVSKY.....9:00am - Fr. O’Keefe

BILL MINETTI.....11:00am - Fr. Wilson

PARISHIONERS.....12:45pm.- Fr. Martin

Thought for the Week

**Good works are links that form a chain of love.
Mother Teresa**



Christmas Holiday — all classes cancelled December 20 through December 29. Classes resume January 3, 4, and 5.

The **Inclement Weather Policy** can be viewed at www.edu.nativityburke.org; click on Weather Policy.



Altar Flowers

**In Loving Memory of
Mrs. Georgette Martin
From Father Martin**

and

**In Loving Memory of
Ed and Olcay Naurocki
From the Matthews Family**

Unemployed? Networking Group CAN Help!

Christians are Networking (“CAN”) is a free community job-networking group for the unemployed and under-employed.

Whether you’re a recent college grad or a mid-level executive, join us **every Thursday** evening from 7-9:30pm at the St. Martin DePorres Senior Center, 4650 Taney Ave., Alexandria, VA 22304. No advanced registration is required to attend. For more details, contact Elizabeth Lucas at 703-683-7704 or elizabeth22305@verizon.net or Bill Hummel at 703-830-5467 hummel830@cox.net.

The **Nativity Knights of Columbus Council 7992** would like to invite all Boys and Girls Ages 10 – 14 to their **2010 Annual Free Throw Championship**. This individual competition will be held Sunday, January 3, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the **Holy Spirit Parish School Gymnasium**. Please contact John Ostrowski at 703-323-1411 / email Johnnyo89@verizon.net for more information.

HAND-MADE STARFISH FROM HAITI

Available at Nativity Church Dec. 19 & 20

This year, the patients at Cardinal Leger Leper Hospital in Haiti have sent us **crocheted STARFISH ornaments** as a way of thanking Nativity Parishioners for our prayers and support. These beautiful creations will be available after Masses on December 19 & 20, hanging on a Christmas tree in the Church foyer. **Please take one home.** Donations are not necessary but if you do choose to make a gift of any amount, all donations will be used to assist the families of the patients. Cardinal Leger Hospital is operated by the Missionary Sisters of Christ the King and is one of the sites visited in the past by Nativity Parish pilgrimages to Haiti. For more information contact Natacha Hines.

(niurda@aol.com).

Pro-Life Corner:

How would life be different today if Mary, the mother of Jesus, had decided to destroy the child within her womb instead of submitting herself to the will of God? Pray that the miracle of Christmas, God taking on our humanity, may lead us to an ever greater respect for all human life. And may the joy and hope of this season bring peace to us, our family and friends. A Blessed and Merry Christmas to All!



Please support the **TEPEYAC FAMILY CENTER**, 11135 Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA 22030, 703-273-9440 x 107, with your prayers and financial resources. Info on this crisis pregnancy center can be found at

www.tepeyacfamilycenter.com

Pro-Life Rosary - A prayerful, peaceful and public gathering of friends and neighbors who pray the rosary for one hour takes place on Saturdays at 10:00 AM on Rolling Road across from Kings Park SC Giant Food. Please call Jane Hamilton, 703-646-5051, for more info.

Crisis Pregnancy Centers Phone Numbers

Catholic Charities National: 1-800-CARE-002

Catholic Charities Local: 703-425-0100

A Woman's Choice: 703-538-4305

Gabriel Project: 1-866-444-3553

WATCH EWTN CHRISTMAS PROGRAMMING

Join EWTN Global Catholic Network in celebrating the birth of the Christ Child. EWTN is proud to bring you Live Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses from Rome and the Basilica of the national Shrine in Washington, DC as well as inspiring musical performances, animated features, specials for children, teens and new holiday presentations the whole family will enjoy. Watch EWTN on cable TV channel 161.

A FAITHFUL FRIEND SUPPORT LINE

Sometimes you need **A Faithful Friend** to talk with, to listen, to understand, and to help Christ's Light shine through. Call **A Faithful Friend** for support and comfort during difficult times. Confidential, anonymous, free of charge. 703-532-0011.

"Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." Let Worldwide Marriage Encounter help your marriage/holy orders remain Christ-centered. The next local Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend is February 19-21, 2010. Early registration is highly recommended, as dates fill up quickly. For more information call John and Lorie Scali 703-631-5289 or visit <http://www.menova.org>
En español...<http://www.seccion16mm.com>.

Retreat for all Men...Need a break? Some time for spiritual reflection? Start the new year with a weekend retreat for men on January 22-24, 2010 at the Dominican Retreat House in McLean, VA. **Rev. Bart A. Karwacki, OFM Conv.** Will be the retreat director. For reservations or information contact Paul Allard at 703-569-1040 or the Retreat House at 703-356-4243.

"Nothing can separate us from the love of God"

Romans 8:39

"It is by God's will that we have been sanctified." How is God calling you to grow in holiness? If He may be inviting you to the priesthood, diaconate or consecrated life, call Fr. Brian Bashista 703-841-2514 or write:

b.bashista@arlingtondiocese.org

The Diocesan Science Fair...Individuals with a science background are needed to help judge seventh and eighth grade students' research projects for the 2010 Science Fair. These projects encompass such categories as botany, health, chemistry, zoology, behavioral science, engineering, physics, math and other areas of life and physical science. If your calendar allows you to spend the morning (8:00am to noon) on Saturday, April 24, 2010 at Paul VI High School to judge projects, please call Janet Vetrano at the Office of Catholic Schools (703-841-2560).



There will be **no Vibe on Dec. 27th**. I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and may the joy of Christ fill your hearts!

It's that time again! If you would like to go to Greensboro, NC for Workcamp this summer, applications are now being accepted. You can pick one up on the Vibe board in the back of the church! Please return them to the youth office ASAP if you would like to reserve your spot.

Forthcoming Programs at Dominican Retreat House
Advance Reservations required

For more information call 703-356-4243 or visit www.dominicanretreat.org

December 20...Christmas Open House...Join us for a fun-filled afternoon with great foods, crafts, gift baskets and a visit from Santa. Time...2 to 4 pm.

December 31, 2009-January 1, 2010...New Year's Eve Overnight Retreat for women and men. **"Becoming a new creation in the new year"** Presented by Fr. Joe Breighner, Time...Thursday 5:30 pm to Friday 10:30 am.

January 8-10, 2010...A Retreat/workshop: **"The Big Question: How to Let Go of a Grudge"** Facilitated by Fr. Frank Desiderio, CSP. Time...Friday 7:30 pm to Sunday 1:00 pm.

January 12-14, 2010...Midweek Retreat for Women of AA Time...Tuesday 7:15 pm to Thursday 1:30 pm

January 22-24, 2010...Weekend Retreat for Men. **"Nothing can Separate us from the Love of God"** Presented by Fr. Bart Karwacki, OFM. Conv Time...Friday 7:30 pm to Sunday 3:00 pm.

Employment Opportunities...The Catholic Diocese of Arlington is currently recruiting for available positions in our Central Administrative Office in Arlington. At the Diocese of Arlington, we are enriching the experience of following your faith through the commitment and exceptional performance of our most valuable resource: our employees. We are seeking innovative individuals with the talent, ability and energy to excel with us. Visit www.arlingtondiocese.org for additional details about vacant positions.

Interested in Nativity's Expansion Project? Visit the Nativity Website (nativityburke.org) for information and updates on Nativity's Vision for the Future.

A CHRISTMAS GIFT TO THE PARISH?
2009 TAX LAW - TAX-FREE IRA GIFT

If you are 70½ or older, you can make a gift tax-free from your IRA to our parish or the diocese thru 12/31/09. While this gift will not result in a tax deduction, the amount will be excluded from your taxable income. Other benefits and restrictions apply – for more information, please call 703-841-2516 or visit

www.arlingtondiocese.planyourlegacy.org/ira.php.

TAX SAVINGS THROUGH A GIFT OF STOCK

You may make a gift of stock as a **donation to our parish or our diocese**. In exchange for a gift of long-term, appreciated securities (stock), you can receive an income tax deduction and avoid capital gains taxes on stock appreciation. For more information, please call 703-841-3896 or visit

www.arlingtondiocese.org/giving/gifts_stock.php

Theology Courses at Christendom Graduate School

The Christendom Graduate School is accepting registrations for the spring term (Jan. 18 to May 8). Courses include Eschatology, Theology of Grace, Biblical Spirituality, Liturgy & Sacraments, Catholic Social Teachings, Philosophical Errors, Ecclesiastical latin, Moral Theology, Christology, New Testament and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (Level One Training.) Online offerings this semester are Philosophy of God & Man, Old Testament, and Teaching the Faith (catechist formation) parts I & II. Most courses are taught during weekday evenings at our convenient Alexandria campus on the grounds of Queen of Apostles Parish. We have low tuition, a friendly, welcoming community and discounts for catechists and seniors. For more information , please call 703-658-4304 or visit

www.christendom.edu/grad



This Week in our Parish

Sunday, December 20

NO CCD CLASSES THIS WEEK

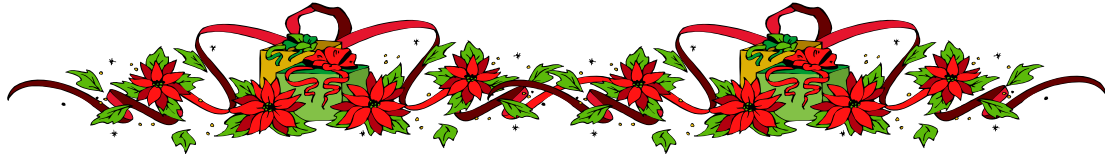
- 2:00 pm.....Baptisms (CH)
- 7:00 pm.....Troop 1100 Committee Mtg. (Room 6)

Monday, December 21

- 9:30 am.....Prayer Shawl Group (APR)
- 8:00 pm.....AA Meeting (APR)

Saturday, December 26

- 7:00 pm.....Hispanic Mass (CH)



CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2009

DEC.24th CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00 PM (Children's Liturgy).Family Choir
6:00 PM Vigil MassFolk Choir
8:30 PM Vigil Mass Traditional Choir
11:00 PM CHRISTMAS CAROLSTraditional Choir

Followed by Midnight Mass

DEC. 25TH CHRISTMAS DAY

8:00, 9:30, 11:00 AM

1:00 PM (Hispanic Mass)

A Blessed Christmas to All!!



DEC. 31st NEW YEAR'S EVE

7:30 PM Vigil Mass

NEW YEAR'S DAY 2010

9:00, 11:00 AM

1:00 PM (Hispanic Mass)



Do you hunger to understand your Catholic faith? Do you have plenty of questions, but not enough answers? Enroll in Education·Parish·Service, which is offering **Speaking God's Word: The Prophets**, a study of the Old Testament prophets, and the prophetic mission of today's Church, Wednesdays, Jan. 6 – 27 at 10:30 AM, at St. Ann Church, 5300 N. 10th St., Arlington; and **This We Believe**, an introduction to the study of theology, drawing on the Creed and Catechism of the Catholic Church, Tuesdays, Jan. 5 – 26, at 7PM, EPS classroom, campus of Trinity (Washington) University, 125 Michigan Ave., NE. To register, contact Gregory Byrne at byrneg@trinitydc.edu or 202.884.9031. EPS offers courses in Scripture, theology, Church history, Catholic social teaching, as well as opportunities for spiritual growth through liturgy, prayer and theological reflection. It operates with the blessing of the bishop in each of the dioceses it serves. For details and information about additional upcoming EPS courses, see <http://eps.trinitydc.edu>