



Dear Friends,

Today's liturgy, the Holy Family, has always been one of my favorites. Perhaps because I look at Jesus, Mary and Joseph not as an ethereal family, but a very real one. A family that had their share of joys and sorrows, as families do today. Mary, a young 14 or 15 year old girl, undoubtedly with many questions saying "yes" to her God, as she would bring Jesus into our world. Joseph, a middle class carpenter, trying to provide for his family. Jesus, a baby who was like any newborn today, waking parents at odd times throughout the night. I recall a picture of Mary sleeping on a mat with Joseph taking care of the baby. It would have fallen to Joseph, the father, to be the one to teach his son about the scriptures and it would be with his father, not his mother, that he would have sat with in the synagogue for worship each Saturday. Women sat in one section and the boys with their fathers in another. I can picture a grieving wife as she mourned the death of her husband, Joseph. Similar grief would be for her son who would die before her.

This feast day always conjures up memories of my own parents and the constant love and support that they always gave to their three children. One of the best definitions of holiness I have ever read: *A holy person is one who is a whole person, open to the needs of all.* My parents were just that – open to our needs. And those "needs" were not necessarily all of our "wants." Their presence, love, concern and occasionally their discipline were the paramount needs. I often have said that being the son of a mailman we didn't get everything that we wanted, but we got everything that we needed. As I read about or observe some children today, it saddens me to see that often they get everything they want and not enough of what they really need. Presence is more important than presents.

Of all the gifts given to me by my parents, of course the most important, was life and love. I am most grateful that my Irish Catholic Dad married my French Protestant Mom. Because of that union, I was part of a very diverse group of people: Aunts, Uncles, Cousins who were Methodist, Episcopalian, Lutheran and Jewish. Quite unusual coming from a family like this in a state that is still 68% Catholic. That "gift" opened my eyes to diversities and accepting *ALL* people, which I try to emulate as Pastor. As long as I am pastor- everyone- will always find the doors open to them.

Today I will be offering Mass at St. Benedict's Church in Warwick- the feast of the Holy Family and the first anniversary of Mom's death. Although the two most influential people in my life will not be there, their memory and everything that they taught me will be part of my Mass. Today, treasure *YOUR* families. Don't take them for granted. Life, truly, is too short.

*"There is no doubt that it is around the family and the home  
That all the greatest virtues, the most dominating virtues of  
Human society, are created, strengthened, and maintained."*

*(Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister 1874-1965)*

Have a happy and blessed New Year!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Martin". The signature is written in black ink and is located in the bottom right corner of the page.

## “THE CRECHE”

One of the most popular Christmas traditions is the setting up of the “crèche” or nativity scene. Most of us know that this tradition had its beginning during the time of St. Francis of Assisi, who believed so very strongly that God never revealed his love more clearly than in the birth of his Son, Jesus. It is said that at midnight Mass on Christmas, 1223, Francis presented a *living* reenactment of the nativity scene in a cave in Greccio, Italy. This first commemoration of the Birth of Jesus began the tradition which we continue to this day. During the time of Francis, visual aids were often used to teach the faithful about the church seasons and feasts, for books were rare and expensive and most of the people were unable to read during those years. So what Francis presented that night caught on quickly and soon was used in churches throughout Christendom. While we know the principal characters: Mary, Joseph, the infant Jesus in a manger, shepherds and angels, It is said that two of the animals often present at the crèche scene are included because of the Isaian prophesy “The ox knows his owner and the ass his master’s crib”, (Is 1:3). Brought to America with the early pilgrims, the tradition has continued with families today who make this an important part of their Christmas celebration.



### Monday, December 28

ANASTASIA PINZON.....7:30am - Fr. Martin

### Tuesday, December 29

NORMA CAYCHO.....7:30am - Fr. Martin

### Wednesday, December 30

SIMPLICIA GALVEZ.....7:30am - Fr. Martin

### Thursday, December 31

#### *New Year’s Eve*

KATHY DAVIS.....7:30am - Fr. O’Keefe

STANLEY CARPENTER.....7:30pm - Fr. Martin

### Friday, January 1

#### *New Year’s Day*

EDWARD RAWLIN.....9:00am - Fr. O’Keefe

RAYMOND BOURGEOIS.....11:00am - Fr. Wilson

### Saturday, January 2

DAVE YASTISHOCK.....9:00am - Fr. O’Keefe

*Special Intentions of*

MR. & Mrs. Gerald Hay.....5:00pm - Fr. O’Keefe

### Sunday January 3

ALBERTO MAELLA.....7:30am - Fr. Wilson

PARISHIONERS.....9:00am - Fr. Martin

NICHOLAS FREEMAN.....11:00am - Fr. Martin

REGINA PHILIPPON.....12:45pm - Fr. Wilson

### 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.

### *Thought for the Week*

We must not only give what we have; we must also give what we are.

Desire-Joseph Mercier (1851-1926)



**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](http://www.edu.nativityburke.org); click on Weather Policy.



### Altar Flowers

**Altar Flowers for the Christmas Season** are donated by our parishioners in memory or honor of their loved ones. Thank you for helping decorate our Christmas Sanctuary.

### 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](mailto:elizabeth22305@verizon.net) or Bill Hummel at 703-830-5467 [hummel830@cox.net](mailto:hummel830@cox.net).

Pastor:	Rev. Richard B. Martin
Parochial Vicar:	Rev. J. Kevin O’Keefe
Visiting Priest:	Rev. Cedric Wilson
Spanish Ministry:	Deacon Jose Pardo
Parish Office:	(703) 455-2400
Nativity School:	(703) 455-2300
CCD Office:	(703) 455-0372



**Nativity's Grief Support Group**, for all who have suffered the death of a loved one, and are in need of the comfort that sharing can bring, meets at **7:30pm** in our school building on the **First & Third Thursday of each month** and is open to all adults at no charge. Prior registration is not required. Contact Carol Mack for more information 703-455-2400, ext. 117

Nativity's Charismatic Love is Given Prayer Group meets every Thursday night from 7:30 to 9:00 pm in the All Purpose Room for an evening of Spirit-filled faith sharing, praise and worship and prayer in a Christ-centered community. For more information call Anne Rother at 703-644-1278.



### Pro-Life Corner:

Our prayer for the New Year is that God will rise up more people to protect the life of every human being, born and unborn.



**Choose Life Today. Choose Life Tomorrow. Pray Always.** We Must Do No Less. A Holy and Happy New Year to All! Start the New Year by reading, rereading and sharing "Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to American Catholics" at [www.usccb.org/prolife/gospel.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/prolife/gospel.shtml) This document was issued in November, 1998 by the U.S. Bishops, but still remains powerful in its direction and words. If you are a serious Catholic and have not yet read it, take time to be renewed.

Are you suffering from an abortion experience?

**PROJECT RACHEL** offers spiritual and psychological healing. Call 703-276-0373

([projectrachel@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:projectrachel@arlingtondiocese.org)) for a referral for private, sensitive and confidential counseling and/or reconciliation. (Project Rachel is a post-abortion healing program open to all and sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Arlington).

**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**

### Food collection for ECHO and the POOR

**CLARE SISTERS.....**The monthly food collection will take place next Sunday, January 3rd.



Please bring non-perishable foods to the foyer of the church. In this time of need, food pantries are being rapidly depleted. The **most needed items** are over the counter cold medicines, paper products (tissues, bathroom tissue and paper towels), peanut butter and jelly and pasta items. Canned fruits and vegetables, canned meats, dry products (cereal, pancake mix, etc.), pancake syrup, vegetable oil, tuna helper, powdered milk, crackers, concentrated juices and quick oats are also needed. ECHO also accepts small appliances such as toasters, blenders, table lamps, pots and pans, microwaves, new and used clothing. For more information pick up a brochure in the bookrack by the sacristy or call 703-569-9160. ECHO Center is located at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road.

God gave us the greatest gift of love when He sent His Son to redeem us. He asks us to love one another as He loves us. Take the time to grow deeper in love with God, your spouse and your family at a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. 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://wwmenova.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

**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).



I hope you all had a very Merry Christmas! Come start the new year off right with our weekly Sunday Vibe meetings. The next meeting will be on **January 3rd from 7 to 8:30pm**. Come ready to have a blast and grow deeper in your faith. See you on Sunday!

**PRIME TIME SINGLE CATHOLICS OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

Thursday, December 31.....7:00pm-New Year's Eve Party KOC (Arlington). Contact Karol at 703-820-0795  
 Friday, January 1.....3:00pm-New Year's Day Potluck (Kingstowne). Contact Tom 703-313-8388  
 Saturday, January 9.....11:00am-Urban Hike, Greater U Street Corridor. Contact Alice at 703-979-2332  
 Sunday, January 10.....5:00pm-Dinner Dance at Elks Lodge (Fairfax). Contact Delores at 703-391-8426  
 Sunday, January 17.....11:45am-Installation Mass and Brunch (Reston). Contact Celeste at 703-560-8547  
 Saturday, January 23.....10:45am-Terra Cotta Warrior Exhibit (Wash. DC). Contact Ann at 703-476-3975  
 Sunday, January 24.....5:00pm-Dinner at Joe Theismann's (Alexandria). Contact Tom at 703-313-8388  
 Saturday, January 30.....11:00am-Bowling (Fairfax Circle). Contact Joan at 703-823-2664  
 Sunday, January 31.....3:00pm-Movie and Dinner (Kingstowne). Contact Johanna at 703-329-9872  
 For more information about PTSC, please contact Membership Chair, John Caldwell at 703-569-5094 or Co-Chair, Joan Donahue at 703-866-5936.

God sent Jesus into the world with a saving love, and Jesus sends us with a similar saving love - for the poor and forgotten, to be sure, but also for all God's creatures. The same forces that hurt widows and orphans, children and the elderly also hurt the songbirds and trout, the ferns and old-growth forests: greed, impatience, selfishness, arrogance, hurry, anger, competition, irreverence. The spirit of Saint Francis and the spirit of Mother Teresa are one and the same: the Spirit of Jesus, to whom the poor and sick and the sparrows and salamanders are all precious, each in a unique way. Taken from "Why I am Green" by Brian McLaren.

How will celebrating the birth of Jesus help us recognize our responsibility to protect all inhabitants of the earth.

A green thought for Christmas from the Nativity Creation Care Ministry.

**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](http://www.arlingtondiocese.org) for additional details about vacant positions.

**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.org/planyourlegacy.org/ira.php](http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/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](http://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](http://www.christendom.edu/grad)

The monthly peer support group for survivors of clergy abuse and others affected by the abuse will meet on December 30 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the conference room of the Tysons-Pimmit Hills Regional Library, 7684 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA. This group is co-sponsored by Voice of the Faithful-Northern Virginia affiliate and meets on the last Wednesday of every month. Free. Confidential. No registration required. For information or directions, contact Ellen Radday at 703-538-6128.

**FOR SINGLE CATHOLICS...12th Annual Epiphany Party**

at St. Catherine Labouré Church, Jan. 9, 6:30pm-Midnight. Includes delicious Italian dinner, salsa dance lessons, speed dancing to DJ music and more. Send \$15 donation to SLS Dance, St. Catherine Labouré, 11801 Claridge Rd., Wheaton, MD 20902. (\$20 at the door.) For info, call 301-946-3636.



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](mailto:Johnnyo89@verizon.net) for more information.

**"APPALACHIA HOME BUILDING -- SPECIAL COLLECTION:** On the weekend of Jan 9-10, the Knights will be speaking at all of the Masses to raise money to build their 11th home in the heart of Appalachia in June 2010. The Nativity Community has provided over 70% of the entire funding in past years and provides over 70% of the crew to build the home. Collections will take place outside of Church and checks may be made payable to "Nativity Parish", but please annotate Appalachia Home Building on the check. Thank you for all your help in the past and help us continue this important outreach effort. Please contact Bob Corsi at 703-239-2890 if you have any questions."

**2nd ANNUAL KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS CHILI DINNER & FOOD DRIVE:** Families of Nativity are invited to the 2nd Annual KOC Chili Dinner & Food Drive on Saturday, January 23, 2010 in the Parish hall. Doors open at 6:00pm. Tickets are \$5/person or \$20/family larger than four. Last year's event raised \$1500 and contributed 700 pounds of food. All proceeds to support Christ House. Please also plan to bring a food donation to support their food pantry. We look forward to seeing you as we support this great organization providing for those in need. For more information, e-mail [GK7992@VAKOFC.ORG](mailto:GK7992@VAKOFC.ORG).



**Sunday, December 27**

**NO CCD CLASSES THIS WEEK**

**Monday, December 28**

8:00 pm.....AA Meeting (APR)

**Thursday, December 31 New Year's Eve**

7:30 am.....Mass (CH)

7:30 pm.....Vigil Mass (CH)

**Friday, January 1 New Year's Day**

9:00 am and 11:00am .....Mass (CH)

1:00 pm.....Hispanic Mass (CH)

**Saturday, January 2**

9:00 am.....Mass (CH)

9:30 am.....First Saturday Devotion (CH)

7:00 pm.....Hispanic Mass

Ellis Island  
By Emily Sun, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade



In my 8<sup>th</sup> grade class here at Nativity, we have been learning about how immigrants came to America through Ellis and Angel Island. We have learned where these people had originated from and why they had left their homes in the first place. Every year the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class reenacts the immigrant's experiences as they come to America with their dreams of a better life. Each student in my class was given an immigrant identity, complete with a name, country of origin, appearance and background to portray. Come the day of our own Nativity "Ellis Island", we relive their port of entry to the United States with everyone arriving at school dressed up in turn of the century period clothing, along with accessories and props such as luggage, hats, shawls, and baby dolls to act as "children" or "stuffed animals" for livestock. As we entered the parish hall-transformed-Ellis Island inspection area, I clutched my immigrant test sheet, unsure of what to expect. One by one, each of us went to the testing areas; continuing on if we had passed, or being sent to the appeals station to plead our cases. It was pretty exciting to be asked about our immigrant's background. I was definitely feeling as if it could actually be real! I was very lucky to be able to breeze right through the tests for my immigrant identity didn't have any health problems, a criminal record, or have a suspicious background. It was however not the case for some of my classmates, some had to fight for their rights to stay in America much like how the immigrants did then. They had to answer probing questions concerning their past and in a couple cases, I watched them being shuffled over to the deportation area. Going through this mock Ellis Island was a fun experience, and a way to interact with my classmates in an educational and new way; it will be an 8<sup>th</sup> grade memory I won't soon forget.

