

The Catholic Community of Saint John the Evangelist & Newman Center

Mary, the Holy Mother of God

January 1, 2012



WEEKEND EUCHARIST

At Saint John's Church
Saturday, 5:30 pm
Sunday, 7:30, 9:00, 11:00 am, 7:30 pm



Father, you have sent your Spirit to build up the Church you established through your Son, Jesus Christ. Formed by your love, we form our children. Send Your Spirit upon *Saint John's Center for School and Religious Formation*.. By your grace may our work bear fruit in the hearts and lives of our children and all of your people. Form us in our faith and in our work, all for the greater glory of your name. Amen.

St. John's
115 2nd Street North
Wahpeton, ND 58075-4505
(701)642-6982
www.stjohns-wahpeton.org
Fax - 701-642-2601

Newman Center
701 7th Street North
Wahpeton, ND

Mass Times
672-0898

Pastor
Rev. Dale Lagodinski
642-6982

Parochial Vicar
Rev. Terry Dodge

Deacons
Douglas Campbell
George Ethier, Retired
Gene Hoefs, Retired

Parish Offices
Betsy Sitz
Pat Keaveny
642-6982

Office Hours
8:00 am - Noon
1:00 - 5:00 pm (M - Th)
1:00 - 3:00 (F)

Saint John's School
Renee Langenwalter, Prin.
Renee Walter, Secretary
642-6116

Parish Life Coordinator
Michelle Fehr
Office: 642-6982
Home: 642-3461

Youth Ministry Team
Tammy Goerger
Matt Miller
Kathy Davis
Office - 642-6982

St. John's Day Care
Chanda Hogness, director
642-4922

Parish Lay Officers
Jim Lutz 642-6896
Laurie Straus 642-5095

Pastoral Council
Connie Brandt 642-4312
Darin Klein 642-6298
Kristi Mahrer 643-1910
Cody Miller 642-8014
Mike Jacklitch 642-1666
Marty Madsen 642-1808
Darryl Jilek 640-6609
Becky Stasko 651-0107
Rod Koch 274-8282

St. John's Parish Mission Statement

St. John the Evangelist of Wahpeton, a Catholic community of faithful stewards, uniquely gifted, is committed to living fully a spiritual life. We accomplish this mission by:

- † Celebrating a sacramental life;
- † Being a hospitable, generous, faithful, and forgiving people;
- † Serving as a renewing community of life and love;
- † Supporting all people in their journey toward the Kingdom of God.

Parish Goal One

To have functioning, inspiring and welcoming religious grounds that will meet the present and future needs of the parish and community by developing and implementing a plan for addressing the education facility needs.

Parish Goal Two

To promote continual spiritual growth and fuller participation throughout the parish. We will obtain this goal by researching, developing and implementing a renewal process; developing effective methods for evangelization; developing effective methods for increasing participation by all; promoting enrollment in the parish school and by creating effective communication tools.

Baptism:

Baptism Renewal/Preparation is required with each new baby. Experienced parents encourage new parents. Next preparation will be in January. Contact the Parish Office at 642-6982.

Confirmation / First Eucharist:

April 28, 2012

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults:

For the un-baptized and those seeking full communion with the Catholic Church. For information, contact the Parish Office at 642-6982.

Reconciliation:

Saturday, 4:00 p.m. at St. John's, or by appointment. Call 642-6982.

Marriage:

Arrangements must be made at least 6 months in advance. Please call the Parish Office at 642-6982.

Sacrament of the Sick:

Hospitalization or serious illness, please contact one of the priests for Sacrament of the Sick at 642-6982.

Pastoral Care:

If you are homebound or hospitalized, Eucharist will be brought to you. Contact the Parish Office at 642-6982.

Registration:

If you are new to the Wahpeton Community, please register by contacting the Parish Office at 642-6982.

FUNERALS: To support our parish family in its grief, regular daily Mass, whenever possible will be transferred to the hour of the funeral. + + +

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S PARISH

Saturday, December 31st - The Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas / Saint Sylvester I, pope

Scripture: 1 Jn 2:18-21 / Jn 1:1-18

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

4:00 pm RECONCILIATION

5:30 pm EUCHARIST Int: Frank and Mary Theede

Sunday, January 1st - The Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord / Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

7:30 am EUCHARIST + Lucille Holtz (Rosary at 7:00 am)

9:00 am EUCHARIST + James Lies

11:00 am EUCHARIST People of the Parish

NO 7:30 pm EUCHARIST

Monday, January 2nd - Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church

Parish Office Closed

Scripture: 1 Jn 2:22-28 / Jn 1:19-28

NO EUCHARIST at St. John's (Mass at Carmelite Monastery at 7 am)

NO BIBLE STUDY

7:00 pm CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS KC Room

Tuesday, January 3rd - Christmas Weekday / The Most Holy Name of Jesus

Scripture: 1 Jn 2:29-3:6 / Jn 1:29-34

5:30 pm EUCHARIST + Deacon Jim Anderson

7:00 pm RCIA

Wednesday, January 4th - Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious

Scripture: 1 Jn 3:7-10 / Jn 1:35-42

7:00 am MORNING PRAYER

7:30 am EUCHARIST ++ Frank and Mary Karel

8:00 am - 12:00 noon CENACLE OF LIFE PRAYER

10:00 am EUCHARIST (Leach) Int: Mary Ruddy

Thursday, January 5th - Saint John Neumann, bishop

Scripture: 1 Jn 3:11-21 / Jn 1:43-51

1:00 pm EUCHARIST Int: Putnam/Lyngaas families

7:00 pm MARDI GRAS COMMITTEE East Room

7:00 pm 2nd Grade Parent Meeting for Reconciliation Mehok Center

Friday, January 6th - Christmas Weekday / Saint Andre Bessette, religious

Scripture: 1 Jn 5:5-13 / Mk 1:7-11

7:00 am MORNING PRAYER

7:30 am EUCHARIST + Ed Vettel

8:00 am - 4:00 pm - ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

9:45 am EUCHARIST (SCLC) Int: Shirley Briks

Saturday, January 7th - Christmas Weekday / Saint Raymond of Penyafort, priest

Scripture: 1 Jn 5:14-21 / Jn 2:1-11

8:00 am EUCHARIST + Don Briks

Sunday Scripture: Is 60:1-6 / Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6 / Mt 2:1-12

4:00 pm RECONCILIATION

5:30 pm EUCHARIST Spec Int: Braun family and friends

Sunday, January 8th - The Epiphany of the Lord

KC's serving breakfast after morning masses.

7:30 am EUCHARIST Int: Christian Mothers (Rosary at 7:00 am)

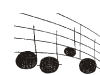
9:00 am EUCHARIST Int: Rita Ethier

11:00 am EUCHARIST People of the Parish

7:30 pm EUCHARIST + Eleanora Erhardt

Fr. Dale will be out of the parish from January 2nd to the 18th. Please keep him in your prayers.

Music Notes: The 9:00 am Choir will practice at 6:00 pm on Wednesday. The 11:00 am Choir will practice one-half hour before Mass. New voices always welcome!



New St. John's School t-shirts and hooded sweatshirts are available with our NEW logo. Youth: \$10 - white or red, \$12 - tie dye red or tie dye multi t-shirts, \$18 - red hooded sweatshirts. Adult: \$10 white or red t-shirts. If you are interested in buying a shirt or sweatshirt please stop by the office. For more information call 642-6116.



SATURDAY, January 7th

5:30 pm Proclaimers: Marian Braun

Servers: Erica Kubela-Miller, Kailee Klein, Jenae Wieser

Euch Min: Harlan and Cathy Muehler, Ann and Richie Smith, Tim Weisz, Mary Aldrich

Greeters: Monica Ehlert, Missy Zarak, Val Erickson, Jeanette Munson

Ushers: H Muehler, T Resler, N Braun, M Zarak, C Zarak, J Bodensteiner

SUNDAY, January 8th

7:30 am Proclaimers: Vickie Kielb

Servers: David Skilbred and Joseph Skilbred

Euch Min: Joe Pellman, Paul Dimmer, Rick and Vickie Kielb, Richard Kurowski, Daryl Knutson

Greeters: Alex Roll, Paul Dimmer

Ushers: A Roll, P Dimmer, R Kielb, D Langenwalter

9:00 am Proclaimers: Matt Miller and Kristi Mahrer

Servers: Austin and Taylor Birnbaum, Joseph Langenwalter

Euch Min: Nancy and Brent Muehlberg, Rod Koch, Aaron and Brenda Morman, Scott Muehler

Greeters: Kathy & Dave Langenwalter, Aaron & Brenda Morman

Ushers: D Resler, M Jacklitch, K King, B Straus, D Keller, M Matejcek

11:00 am Proclaimers: Ed Cronin and Marcie Corbitt

Servers: Thomas Barina, Andrew and Philip Meyer

Euch Min: Jane Priebe, Maria Kaduc, Mary Campbell, Renee Walter, Mary Helland, Michelle Fehr

Greeters: Grace Wallis, Marissa Calderon, Delfena Ballweber, Mark Priebe

Ushers: D Calderon, P Birnbaum, J Walter, M Priebe, D Ehrens, L Bernard

For 3 years now the Cenacle of Life Prayer Group has been meeting each Wednesday from 8:00 am - 12:00 noon praying for an end to abortion and all crimes against life. Women, men and school children spend some time each Wednesday morning in the church in prayer. As we begin a New Year we ask you to find it in your heart to come and spend some time on Wednesday morning to pray. Thank you and may God reward you. Cenacle of Life Prayer Group

I AM the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. - Rev 21:6 Reflection: God gives us the gift of life, in units or years and months and days, and we likewise give it back to Him, in days and months and years of faithful service. In the New Year, let us put the defense of the unborn at the top of our priority list. *Prayer: Lord, enable me to devote more time, energy, and resources to the greatest human rights movement of our day, the pro-life movement.*

A New Year's Resolution - What to do on Sundays

To celebrate the Lord's Day more fully, consider the following:

- * Don't use Sunday as your catch-all day for errands and household chores.
- * Share a family dinner after Mass. Have the whole family join in the preparation and cleanup.
- * Go for a walk and give thanks to God for the beauty of nature.
- * Spend time reading the Bible or a spiritual book.
- * Pray the rosary or the Liturgy of the Hours, alone or with others.
- * Volunteer at a local food pantry.
- * Visit parishioners and others who are homebound.
- * Read Bible stories to your children.
- * Turn off your gadgets and enjoy the silence.

As we take time each week to celebrate the Paschal Mystery in the Eucharist and to rest from the burdens of our daily lives, we remind ourselves that we are made in the image and likeness of God who "rested on the seventh day from all the work he had undertaken". (Genesis 2:2)

PARISH SUPPORT - A TIME TO SHARE

Our Tithes to the Lord (Fiscal Year July 1-June 30)

"No one, in fact, is so poor that they have nothing to give." John Paul II

Amount Needed Weekly	\$ 11,120.00
Envelope "Our Return to the Lord"	\$ 13,110.00
228 Contributors	
Children / Youth	\$ 23.55
Building Fund	\$ 3,798.00
Plate	\$ 3,627.70
Year-to-Date Collection thru 12-25	\$ 295,671.23
Budgeted Amount Needed thru 12-25	\$ 289,120.00

Thanks be to God for our regular contributors. What honors God is not who gives the most, what honors God is all of us doing what we can.

Youth News

January 4th - Regular Class

2nd Grade Parents - Reminder of our Parent meeting about preparing for First Confession this Thursday, January 5th at 7 pm in the Mehok Center. The books for your child will be handed out that evening.

Gentlemen - age 21 & older - We are needing a man to help chaperone our group going to the Catholic Heart Workcamp in Detroit Lakes this summer, July 23 - 28. Please call Michelle for more details. We must reserve your weekend soon. Thank you for considering this opportunity.

Grades 9 - 12 - Three of us have reserved spots at Catholic Heart Workcamp July 23-28. Serving others, having fun, great music, meeting new people. Call Matt or Michelle ASAP so you don't miss out on this great opportunity!

Seniors - Looking for scholarships? "The Ultimate Scholarship Book" is in Michelle's office if you'd like to check it out.

Grades 9-12 will be hosting a youth breakfast Sunday on January 15th. Please call Kathy, Michelle or Matt with which shift you can work. Proceeds will go towards our summer service trip. Thanks!

Please pray for the ill and for those who have asked for prayers. Please pray for: Lydia Zwilling, Wanda Hought, Sr. Therese Merrick, Mary Gette, Norma Poppe, Tammy Meyer, Barb Hagstrom, Jackson Doll, Wyatt Doll, Mary Ruddy, Amelia Zimmerman, Donna Olson, Gregory Waite, Traci Fink-VanOeteghem, Ed Straus, Gerald Braun, Richard Myers, Jane Nold, David Goroski, Pat Goerger, Diane Shorma, Miles Bosch, Sue Braun, Debbie Flanders, Marietta Webster, Stan Barton, Lowell Barton, Lola Freitag, Donald Freitag, Robert Schmitt, Ellie Rezabek-Turner, Mark Schmitt, Cindy Packard, Sophia Geray, John Miesen, Ila Leinen, Ardel Kressin, Kathy Mauch, Tim Lietz, Richard Kurowski, Theresa Thompson, Agnes Railing, Bob Hanson, Francis Schuster, Doug Wanzek, Delores Westphal, Patricia Geditz, Lucylle Schmitt, Mary Ratzlaff, Marilyn Basore, Elarine Pelzl, Connor Terfehr, Mary Busta, James Parow, Audrey Peplinski, Harley Trinkka, Deborah Landphere, Hayden Asche, Mary Ann Siemieniewski, Dawson Wienbar, Virgil Woytassek, Maria Borikova, Shawn Wieser and Matthew Wieser. Praying for our sick is a Corporal Work of Mercy for us all. Please notify our office if a name needs to be listed in our bulletin and please also let us know when a name can be removed.

Advertisers of the Week: St Johns thanks **DownTown Travel/Kitti Kutzer** for their support of our weekly bulletin.

Christian Mother dues of \$4 are due January 1st. Please mail to Valeria King at 515 1st St. N, Wahpeton, ND.

Join us for lunch with Patrick Coffin on Thursday, February, 2nd at St. Anne and Joachim Church in Fargo. Coffin is the host of the top-rated national radio show, Catholic Answers LIVE. He will speak on the Gospel of Suffering and share his personal story of the death of his daughter, Naomi, in the fall of 2006. Cost for the event is \$15/person. Registration deadline is January 23rd. Registration forms can be found at www.fargodiocese.org/news/Events.htm or by calling 701-356-7900, or e-mail: tickets@fargodiocese.org. Sponsored by the Diocese of Fargo Communications and Respect Life Offices together with Real Presence Radio.

New Course: For Handing on the Faith: The Fargo Diocese is offering a 2-year course for adults. Come learn your faith plus learn how to better hand on the faith. The course requires a commitment to read the assignments, submit homework and attend all 4 Saturday seminar days each year (2 in Grand Forks & 2 in Fargo). Upon successful completion, you will be awarded a Pontifical Certificate via the Maryvale Institute. Begins Saturday, January 14th. Deadline to register is January 3, 2012. Cost is \$800 a year (that's \$67.00 a month or 2.20 a day.... It's worth it!) For more information: Katie.dubas@fargodiocese.org or 701.356.7908

The Five First Saturdays Devotion: Our Lady of Fatima promises all the graces necessary for heaven if a Catholic finishes the Five First Saturdays Devotion. During her July apparition at Fatima, Our Lady said "I shall come to ask...that on the First Saturday of every month, Communions of reparation be made in atonement for the sins of the world." "I promise to assist at the hour of death with the graces necessary for salvation all those who, in order to make reparation to me, on the First Saturday of five successive months, go to confession, receive Holy Communion, say five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for a quarter of an hour, meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary." The elements of this devotion, therefore, consist in the following four points, all of which must be offered in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. One should make this intention before carrying out Our Lady's requests. 1. Confession- can be made before the 1st Saturday or afterward. 2. Holy Communion. 3. Rosary 4. 15-minute meditation. Mass will now be scheduled the First Saturday at 8 am.

Catholicism: A Journey to the Heart of the Faith St. John's has purchased the ten episode DVD series recently featured on EWTN and PBS. Journey with acclaimed author, speaker and theologian Fr. Robert Baroon to more than 50 locations throughout 15 countries. From the sacred lands of Israel to the beating heart of Uganda, from the glorious shrines of Italy, France, and Spain, to the streets of Mexico, Kolkarta and New York City, the mystery of CATHOLICISM is revealed. Discover the full meaning of the Faith. Beginning on Tuesday, January 3rd for the next 10 weeks this exciting series will be shown in the East Room at 7 pm. Each viewing last 50 minutes. For more info call Jim Lutz at 642-6896.

Dear generous friends of Carmel,
We are so very grateful for all the food and provisions you brought us these past weeks. We beg the Holy Child and Our Blessed Mother to pour out graces and blessings upon you. All of you are daily in our grateful prayers. May you have a grace-filled New Year as our Heavenly Father watches over you with loving solitude.
Your very grateful Sisters in Carmel

Thanks be to God for you and God bless you!
We priests are very, very grateful for your greeting, cards and gifts which we are honored to receive during this Holy Season of Christmas. Being remembered by you, our parishioners, means so much and is very humbling. We pray that we may be able to serve well your spiritual needs not only during this sacred season but throughout this year. Please pray for us that we may remain faithful and good priests. May you and those you love find in your lives the joy of the peace which only Christ can give.
Fr. Terry Dodge, Fr. Dale Lagodinski

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Thank you to all who made donations for our beautiful Christmas decorations in honor and memory of loved ones.



IN HONOR OF

Monica Ehlert by Barb and Donavon Buck

Elsie Griffith by Larry and Jeanette Miller

Living members of the Niehaus and Masching families by Herb and Lillian Masching

Herb and Lillian Masching by Larry and Cindy Masching

Audrey Hermes by Mark and Judy Underberg

Monica Ehlert by Kent and Sue Quamme

George and Edna Tauber by Doug and Liz Toussaint

Geneva Miranowski by Daryl & Phyllis Knutson and family

Jason and Ashley Ehlert by Matt Miller

IN MEMORY OF

Mr and Mrs Melvin Olson and Norman King by Valeria King

David West by Jane West family

Frank and Mary Jundt and Barney and Mary Held by Duane Held family

Ben and Margaret Ehlert and Arnold and May Lambrecht by Dale and Mary Lambrecht

Louise Lauman and all deceased family members by the Lauman family

Floriene and Gorden Miller, Corey Gette, Mal and Marie Gette by Bob and Mary Gette

Henry Krump by the family of Henry Krump

James M Hruza by Irene M Hruza

Diane Boll by Frank and Mary Theede

Farrel Crissler by Carol Crissler

Sylvester M Althoff by MaryAnna Althoff

Kelsey Ann Vetter and Meagan N Berg by Mary, Kevin and Katie Vetter and Karley and Brady Sykora

Luccile Buck and Lorin Ehlert by Barb and Donavon Buck

Kent Odermann, Ivola Bartelson and Shirley Appell by Timothy and Angela Appell

Deceased family members by Jim and Tammy Miller

John Griffith, Court and Laura Miller by Larry and Jeanette Miller

Deceased members of the Niehaus and Masching family and all those who have given their life in service to our country, and those reported as MIA, by Herb and Lillian Masching.

Norbert and Loren Ehlert by Monica Ehlert

Frank Gregor Jr. by the Gregor families

Luke Allmendinger by Dean and Jo Allmendinger

Dick Haskell by Joyce Haskell

Deceased members of the Ron and Doris Bruesch family by Joyce Haskell

John and Eva Frank and Laurence and Lucille Braun by Niel and Marian F. Braun

Joe Breuer and Mallie Breuer by Mary Joyce and Bob Breuer

Dan, Wayne and Connie Winter by Tim and Kelly Miller, Kelsey, Tyler and Ty

Clarence and Adeline Miller and Harry and Leora Miller by Tim and Kelly Miller

Leo Nordick by Betty Nordick and family

Patrick Goggin and Jens Bertelsen by Catherine V. Goggin

Don and Ramona Schend by Larry and Cindy Masching

Chuck Dufault by Dori Dufault

Donald Hermes, Jim and Bradley Halstenson, Leo and Frances Underberg, Kurt Underberg, Alice (Sam) Underberg by Mark and Judy Underberg

Rod Nordick, Scott Quamme, Norbert and Bud Ehlert by Kent and Sue Quamme

Steve Tauber and Lucy Herrick by Doug and Liz Toussaint

John Ciesynski by Geraldine Ciesynski

James Martin family by Jeanette Munson

Richard Gilles by Mike and Angeline Gilles

William Koenig, John and Margaret Koenig, Hugo and Martha Stern by Lester and Pat Stern

Sylvester Heitkamp by Martha Heitkamp and Joyce Haugen

Mark Miranowski and Marty and Alton Knutson by Daryl and Phyllis Knutson and family

Robert Goroski by Betty Goroski

Jeanne Morken and Margaret Leinen by Richard & Penny Leinen and family

Clarence E Ward by Mark and Joanie Ward

Deborah Weitzel by William and Delores Weitzel

Gust Sestak by Joanne Sestak

Lyle Osmundson by Carol Osmundson

Jean Muir, Caroline Muir, and Lucylle Sturdevant by Jim and Ellen Sturdevant

Deceased members of the Milne family by Jim Milne



The Word of God This Week

Set time aside each day this week with other members of your household, with other members of your parish or alone to listen to and reflect on the living Word of God. Use these passages from the Lectionary that are assigned for Liturgy this week. Reflect on how the Lord is inviting you to a deeper union with him.

TODAY*

Numbers 6:22–27
Galatians 4:4–7
Luke 2:16–21

MONDAY

John 1:19–28
"Among you stands one whom you do not know..."

TUESDAY

John 1:29–34
"... I myself have... testified that this is the Son of God."

WEDNESDAY

John 1:35–42
"Look, here is the Lamb of God!"

THURSDAY

John 1:43–51
"You are the King of Israel!"

FRIDAY

Luke 3:23–38
"Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work."

SATURDAY

John 2:1–11
"My hour has not yet come."

**Solemnity of the Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord and the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God*

Mary, Mother of God and Our Mother



Today is the first day of the calendar year, a day when people often make new resolutions or prophecies that attempt to predict the future; we could even say it's a day of cosmic proportions.

In the meantime, the Catholic Church celebrates the motherhood of Mary to replace the celebration of the circumcision of the child Jesus in the liturgical calendar. While the circumcision emphasized the humanity of Jesus and his incorporation in the Jewish covenant, the celebration of Mary as Mother of God reminds us that the child was not only a human baby visited by shepherds, but also God's eternal Word made flesh in a total union with humanity.

The visit of the shepherds also points to the importance of Mary. She is mentioned as the first one the shepherds notice and as the one holding everything in her heart in a special way. Moreover, Jesus gave Mary to us at the foot of the cross, thus the celebration of his birth has to include his mother.

Mary is called Mother of God because she is the mother of the God-man. Earlier controversy claimed she was mother only of the human Jesus. The controversy came to an end in 431 when the ecumenical Council of Ephesus decreed that since the baby was also God, Mary could rightly be called Mother of God.

God invited Mary to a unique and amazing cooperation in the work of Creation: to give her body to the miraculous and awesome birth of God in the flesh. Ave Maria!



The Faith of the Church

On January 1st, the Church used to celebrate Jesus' circumcision, the sign of his incorporation into the people of the covenant. Instead, today we celebrate the motherhood of Mary, as Mother of God. Mary conceived Christ by the Holy Spirit who, through the angel, proclaimed him the Christ at his birth. Also, through Mary, the Holy Spirit brings people, the objects of God's merciful love, into communion with Christ (Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 695, 725, 2599).



Questions of the Week

Catholics believe that Mary is the Mother of the man Jesus, the Mother of God, and our mother. She is also the Mother of the Church and the humble woman who said a big YES to God's request to be the earthen vessel for Jesus.

Adults

What does the mystery of this human baby, who is also the Word made flesh, the Lord of all creation say to me about the love of God for us all?

Children

What can I do this year to be more like God in loving everyone, even those I don't like very much?

Visit us at www.FaithFirst.com (click on "Gospel Reflections") and share today's Gospel reading as a family.

Responding to God's Word . . .

In most cultures, the evening of the first day of each new year is celebrated somewhat lavishly. These festivities often are filled with symbols, traditions, special music, and food.

We tend to review our decisions and behaviors of the past year and take this time to define new goals and resolutions for the coming year. It feels as if we have been given another chance, a new opportunity to start from scratch. However, the spiritual meaning is actually more powerful and goes much deeper.

It is against this backdrop of starting over that the Church places the liturgical celebration of Mary as

the Mother of God. The feast of this solemnity acknowledges that Mary is the Mother of God, because she is the mother of the God-man; this we call the mystery of the Incarnation.

As Catholics, all we are asked to do is embrace this mystery of the Word made flesh and to cooperate with God's plans for us. Mary showed us how to do this by lending her body to the miraculous conception and birth of God in the flesh.

As we begin a new year, our most important resolution ought to be to cooperate more deeply with our God of love.

SUGGESTIONS

Use one of these suggestions or one of your own to respond to God's Word this week.

In the home. Take some time during Advent or Christmas to gather together as a family. Let every member explain briefly what the celebration of Mary, Mother of God means to them.

In the workplace or in school. Take holy cards with a brief explanation of the feast and give one to anyone who is open to receive it.

In the community. Try to organize a seminar in your Parish to dialogue on the importance of this solemnity.



Meditation Moment

The novel *The Unoriginal Sinner and the Ice Cream God* contains a letter from young Conroy to God. It reads: "Dear God, Today . . . a guest lecturer proved through the use of logic that you don't exist." God responded to the letter as follows: "Conroy, Ask your professor . . . to list the reasons why pizza and beer taste good together. . . . Logic and reality don't have much to do with one another." The point of God's response is this: Some things are beyond reason. All we can do is what Mary did in today's reading [Luke 2:19]: ponder them deeply.

For reflection . . .

What do I find "wonderful" about the fact that God took human form and lived among us?

WE DIE ON THE DAY WHEN OUR LIVES
CEASE TO BE ILLUMINED BY THE STEADY
RADIANCE, RENEWED DAILY, OF A WONDER,
THE SOURCE OF WHICH IS BEYOND REASON.

DAG HAMMARSKJOLD

FROM *MISSION* BY MARK LINK, SJ

Let Nothing Trouble You

Let nothing
trouble you.

Let nothing scare you.

All is fleeting.

God alone is unchanging.
Patience everything obtains.

Who possesses God
nothing wants.

God alone suffices.

From *The Collected Works of
St. Teresa of Avila* Volume Three,
translated by Kieran Kavanaugh
and Otilio Rodriguez © 1985

Carry this thought in your heart
as a guide for your faith journey
this week.

But when the fullness of
time had come, God sent his
Son, born of a woman . . . in
order to redeem those who
were under the law, so that
we might receive adoption
as children. Galatians 4:4-5

Profile in Faith

Saint Angela Merici
(1470?-1540)

As a young woman Angela became a member of the Secular Franciscan Order. The ignorance of the poor children in her neighborhood saddened her, and she organized a group of girls to help her in catechetical work. Later, she formed the Company of St. Ursula to offer Christian education to future wives and mothers.

Feast Day: January 27

NIHIL OBSTAT
Rev. Msgr. Robert M. Coerver, Censor Librorum
IMPRIMATUR
† Most Reverend Kevin J. Farrell, DD, Bishop of Dallas
September 29, 2011

The Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur are official declarations that the material reviewed is free of doctrinal or moral error. No implication is contained therein that those granting the Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur agree with the contents, opinions, or statements expressed.

Author: Adele J. Gonzalez

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Front: iStockphoto

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