

December 25, 2011 The Nativity of the Lord



SATURDAY, December 24 *Christmas Eve*

4:00 PM All parishioners and their families
6:00 PM All parishioners & their families (Children's Choir)
12:00 AM (Midnight) All parishioners and their families

SUNDAY, December 25 *Christmas Day*

PLEASE NOTE: NO 9:30a.m. OR 11:00 a.m. Mass

8:00 AM All parishioners & their families
10:00 AM All parishioners & their families

MONDAY, December 26

9:00 AM William & Irene Mello by daughter Ruthann Rebello

TUESDAY, December 27

9:00 AM Vivian Brown by Wanda Peloquin

WEDNESDAY, December 28

9:00 AM Esmelinda Revoredo Alexander by Tina Lynch

THURSDAY, December 29

9:00 AM Theresa Lily by her mother Mabel Medeiros

SATURDAY, December 31

4:00 PM Debora Patterson & Brenda Rogers by Mom & Dad

SUNDAY, Jan. 1st Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God

8:00 AM All parishioners and their families
9:30 AM All parishioners and their families
10:00 AM All parishioners and their families

December Memorial Candles

Sanctuary Lamp in memory of the Seery & Mascarelli families.

Tabernacle Candles in memory of Robert Peloquin by his wife and family.

Altar Candles in memory of Henry & Adele Dion by their daughter, Jeannine Moss.

Crucifix Candles in memory of Philippe Parent by his wife, Lorraine.

December 18, 2011 Collections:

Budget.....	\$ 4,004.95
Christmas Flowers & Decorations.....	\$ 1,515.00

**“Thank You” to all who continue
to support our parish.**

In observance of Christmas
and New Years,
The PARISH OFFICE
will be closed
Monday, December 26.
and
Monday, January 2.

New Years Eve & Day Schedule

Saturday, December 31

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
Vigil Mass at 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 1

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
Mass at 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m.

Faith Formation



In the meantime, see you at Mass and enjoy the break!!

NO CLASSES THIS WEEK

Classes for grades 1 thru 7 will resume, after school vacation, the week of January 2, 2012.

Confirmation I and II classes will resume on January 8, 2012.



Gift Bearers - If you are a family member or friend

who would like to bring the gifts to the altar at a loved one's Mass, we would be happy to have you do so. Just stop by the Sacristy before

Mass and tell Fr. Michael you will be gift bearer that day. Thank you.

ADULT CONFIRMATION CLASSES - The Office of Faith Formation will be offering Adult Confirmation Classes again this year. Candidates must be 18 years of age. Call the parish office at 508-673-2808 for registration forms and schedule of locations, dates & times. There is no charge for the class, however the cost of the book and materials is \$25.00. There is a class that will start in January, so don't wait too long to call.

Knights of Columbus News

The Grand Knight's Facts You Didn't Know



Fact: On behalf of all the outstanding men and families of your KofC, I your Grand Knight thank all the parishioners of our parish

for your support, contributions, and participation in making our first year as a group such a success. In our first year, with your help, we have brighten the lives of many people with the huge success of the Martin Court Project. Also our beautiful church is starting to get some needed love through our ongoing painting projects. The Rome Raffle will generate a nice profit that will be given to Father Michael for church projects. Last but not least we have started to aid our Youth Group with some of the events that they attend. A special thanks to the members of the Family Life Committee and Saint Vincent de Paul Society for their help and support. A HIGH SABER RATTLE to Nancy Storey who helps our church and me in ways that cannot be expressed. Of course a heartfelt thanks to my Padre for his support, friendship, mentoring and just letting me be me.

GOD BLESS everyone and I wish you all a MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!

50 WEEK CLUB DRAWING – Congratulations to the December 25th winner.....Maryanne Tuttle.

St. Francis of Assisi Youth Group

The next Youth Group meeting will be held in the church hall , **today, Sunday, December 18th, from 6 to 8 p.m.** All Grades 8-12 students are welcome. Bring a friend! If you have any questions, contact Fr. Michael at 508-673-2808.



Giving Tree Thank you to all who helped others through our "Giving Tree". Your generosity has made this Christmas brighter for many people

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Theology on Tap - Tuesday, January 10th at 6:30 p.m. at Olive Garden Restaurant, 1013 County St., Rt. 140, Taunton. Young adult Catholics, college age through mid-30s, single or married, are invited to Theology on Tap, an opportunity to learn, share faith, enjoy camaraderie -all in a comfortable setting. Generally meets monthly; program topics vary. No charge to participate. Attendees cover their own costs for food/beverages ordered from the menu. Sponsored by the Fall River Diocesan Faith Formation Office. Contact the Faith Formation/Youth & Young Adult Ministry 508-678-2828 for more information.

St. Vincent de Paul



In Need of Assistance? Are you facing utility shutoffs and or high food bills? If you are a family in need of assistance, please contact the St. Francis Vincent de Paul Society at 508-673-2808.

9TH Annual Socks, Hats, Mittens, Scarves & Coats Drive

HANK YOU to everyone who donated hats, scarves, mittens, gloves, socks or coats. As always, your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter - 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 Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekends in New England are January 13-15 and February 10 - 12. For more information call Ralph & Jane Becker at 1-800-710-WWME or visit our webpage at www.wwme.org

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI AND THE TRADITION OF THE NATIVITY SCENE

The Origin of the Presepio dates back to the Middle Ages. In fact some of the first references to primitive forms of the Presepio can be found in popular songs of the 10th century.

It is Saint Francis of Assisi however, who is credited with the first construction of a manger scene in 1223. The story goes that the idea first came to him on a cold December day as he crossed the woods near the little town of Greccio on his way back to the monastery.

As he was in very poor health, he frequently stopped to rest, pray and to spend time communicating with the birds and other creatures in the woods around him. As he lost sight of the fact that a storm was brewing, he had to take refuge in a cave. There he continued his prayers and reflected on what he could do to re-awaken the religious sentiment among his contemporaries, especially since the feast of Christmas was drawing near.

It was there in that cold damp cave that the idea came to him to reproduce the scene of Bethlehem. His friend Giovanni Velita, owner of the cave and the property around it, agreed to help Francis recreate the manger scene. Several other friends contributed their services and the materials needed to transform the cave: straw, wood for the manger, and evergreen branches to adorn the inside and outside of the cave. An ox and a donkey from the area nearby, drawn by Francis' voice, became part of the scene.

There are different versions as to how a live infant became part of the Presepio at Greccio. One account relates that a young mother and her husband came and placed their new born baby in the manger. Another states that Francis had placed a wooden statue of the infant in the manger and when he took it in his arms, the statue seemed to come to life and smile.

On Christmas Eve, all the bells in the valley's churches rang out, people came from everywhere carrying torches, and the brothers of the order came in procession singing litanies. Francis preached and all joined together singing lullabies and other songs that involved the birth at Bethlehem.

(Courtesy of Joe Ripanti)

*For unto you
is born this day
in the city of David
a Saviour, which is
Christ the Lord.*

Luke 2:11

DIOCESE OF FALL RIVER
47 Underwood Street
Fall River, Massachusetts 02722-2577

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

**Bishop Coleman's Christmas 2011 Message:
"The Meaning of Christ's Birth Today"**

Dear friends in Christ,

This holy Season provides me the opportunity once again to share with each and every one of you the Good News that God has become man and is born among us. Of course, our Lord's Nativity is an event that happened long ago. The basic story is surely familiar to all of you: the Virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus, the Son of God, in Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago. Christ entered the world not as a conquering king at the head of an army in a mighty show of power, but as a defenseless child, born in poverty.

The first Christmas can seem like an occurrence from a long time ago that once took place in a faraway land. Yet, it is an event which happens even today and which can speak to all of us again. The birth of a child is always a momentous occasion which fills all people with hope. But, this child was no ordinary infant; for, he was the Son of God. And, when he takes on our human flesh with all its weaknesses, he reveals in himself and in the power of the Holy Spirit, the true nature of humanity, the true worth of all human life, and the dignity of every person.

We cannot, however, overlook the challenges that face us today: a slow economy, unemployment and underemployment, addictions and drugs, crime and violence, wars, and a morbid fascination with darkness. We bring all these troubles to Christ. We offer them to him. We ask him to transform them for us and to turn them into something life-giving. As our Holy Father Benedict XVI assures us, the birth of Christ has the power to change the world, "for it has the power to change hearts, to enlighten minds, and to strengthen wills" (*Homily at Mass in Manger's Square in Bethlehem, May 13, 2009*).

At Christmas, Jesus calls us to be witnesses of his victory over sin, death, and sadness. Therefore, let all men and women, believers and non-believers, but especially all Christians, rejoice at the birth of Christ, which brings a divine light into the world now and forever.

May the Infant Jesus bless you and your families with the peace and joy of this holy Season.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ George W. Coleman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bishop of Fall River

*St. Francis of Assisi Parish ~ Swansea, MA
December 25, 2011*



Christmas, 2011

Dear Family,

*“Every gift of the season comes wrapped in the love of Jesus.
Wishing you the miracle of Christmas in each smile, each word, each memory,
each kindness that touches your life this wondrous season.”*

May the Lord give you His Christmas peace!

Christmas is, and will always be, a time of wonder. It calls us to ponder the awesomeness of the Father’s love for us – you and me! We celebrate the Savior’s birth, praising God for becoming one of us. In Jesus’ birth at the manger in Bethlehem, heaven was wed to earth. God became one of us and entered into all that is human. His presence makes all things, times, and places, a potential encounter with the holy! Salvation has come to us!

This Christmas I pray that you and your loved ones may know God’s blessings as He meets you right where you are! May you, in turn, love one another and build each other up.

May the Christ Child bless you and your loved ones with peace and joy!

Fr. Michael