

The Parish of the Holy Cross

95 Nichols Road + Nesconset, NY 11767 + 631.265.2200 +

www.pothc.org + www.facebook.com/pothcnesconset

LET ALL BE WELCOMED AS CHRIST!

Behold, the
angel of the
Lord appeared to
him in a dream
and said,
“Joseph, son of
David, do not be
afraid to take
Mary your wife
into your home.
For it is through



the Holy Spirit
that this child has
been conceived in
her. She will
bear a son and
you are to name
him Jesus,
because he will
save his people
from their sins.”

Matthew 1:20-21

Come and pray with us!

Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 22, 2019
& The Nativity of the Lord - December 25, 2019

VISION STATEMENT: *Holy Cross is a vibrant Catholic community striving to maintain a spirit of welcome to all, serving as a guiding beacon to nourish and sustain prayer, work and play.*

WE CELEBRATE EUCHARIST

Monday—Thursday: 9:00 A.M. (Chapel)

Saturday: 5:00 P.M.

Sunday: 8:00 A.M. + 9:30 A.M. + 11:30 A.M.

WE CELEBRATE RECONCILIATION

Saturday: 3:45 P.M.—4:30 P.M.

or call Father Michael for an appointment.

WE CELEBRATE BAPTISM

Baptisms are generally celebrated twice each month at 1 P.M. Please contact the Parish Office for more information.

WE CELEBRATE WEDDINGS

Couples should contact the Parish Office at least six months in advance of the proposed wedding date.

We are here for you!

631.265.2200 + Fax 631.265.2229 + pothc@optonline.net
Parish Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM (closed 12:15-1:00 PM)

PASTORAL TEAM

Rev. Michael F. Holzmann
Pastor

Deacon Ralph Rivera
Pastoral Minister

Mrs. Judith Pickel
Pastoral Associate

Mrs. Michele Hahn
Pastoral Associate

Mrs. Tricia Clarke
Coordinator of Religious Education

Mrs. Mary Anne Mc Culloch
Coordinator of Parish Outreach

Mrs. Barbara DeStefano
Business Manager

Mr. Brian Reich
Director of Music Ministry

Ms. Alexandra Roecklein
Youth Minister

PASTORAL STAFF

Mrs. Jane Wirth
Parish Secretary

Dr. Vincent Mazurek
Music Minister

Mrs. Mary Pannone
Religious Education Secretary
(hcreled@optonline.net)

Mrs. Barbara Shipman
P/T Asst. to the Pastor

Mr. Roberto Maza
Mr. Vincent Matula
Custodians

Mrs. Mary Inghilterra
Weekend Sacristan

Celebrants for Upcoming Masses

Christmas Eve, December 24th

4:00 PM Fr. Michael
6:00 PM Fr. Frank Eisele
10:00 PM Fr. Michael

Christmas Day, December 25th

8:00 AM Fr. Michael
10:00 AM Fr. Frank
12:00 Noon Fr. Michael



December 28th/29th

5:00 PM Fr. Michael
8:00 AM Fr. Kenan Peters
9:30 AM Fr. Michael
11:30 AM Fr. Michael

Scripture Readings for December 29, 2019



+ *Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14*
+ *Colossians 3:12-21*
+ *Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23*

Mass Intentions Schedule



Week of December 22nd, 9AM Mass

Mon. John Bryan Sr.
Thu. Wayne Barker

Tuesday, Dec. 24th, Christmas Eve Masses

All Prayer Card Intentions

Wednesday, Dec. 25th, Christmas Day Masses

All Prayer Card Intentions

Saturday, December 28th, 5 PM Mass

Isabelle Sabatino-Molony, Vilma Diaz, Victor Diaz,
Debbie Simonetti, Letizia Antunez, Bernard Cornell

Sunday, December 29th, Holy Family Sunday

8:00 AM People of the Parish
9:30 AM Connie Lopipero, Ercole Ricciardi,
Maria Eannacone, John DaMato,
Mary Reid, Trina Bozzo
11:30 AM Theresa Ann Davis

God is Among Us—Merry Christmas



by Father Michael

This September while I was on my annual retreat, I began reading a book called *The Universal Christ*, by Fr. Richard Rohr. One of the ideas he suggested at the beginning of the book relates to the incarnation. Incarnation is our belief that in some way God has taken on human flesh and has dwelt among us in time. Of course, we most powerfully and appropriately relate that idea to Christmas and the birth of the Child Jesus. However, it is also possible to experience the presence of Christ in people, places and moments that have nothing to do with a nativity setting. Revelation of God's presence began at the very first moment of creation.

Lately, I have been reflecting on the gift (and sometimes the challenges) of priesthood. Priesthood is a rich opportunity to be immersed in ministry and relationship. That ministry needs to take place somewhere. For me, at this moment in time, it is here at Holy Cross. I take great delight in my being part of this community. There are so many moments when I realize how blessed I am and how I am "living the dream." To journey with a family as they face the mystery of death with a loved one is a great privilege. To be invited to share in the life of so many families is a great joy. I think where I am most aware of Christ's presence is on any given Sunday as I celebrate the Eucharist. I take enormous satisfaction in being able to preach. To open God's Word and to help people realize the power of these stories is gratifying. And, then to be able to share food from heaven is a gift beyond measure. For those of you who share in these moments, thank you. For those of you who may not be here often, you are missing something great. Please join us.

Christmas is the common story we share. Jesus is the one who unites us in a way that no one or no thing could. As enormous and eternal as that story is, we truly share in it. The measure of life we receive is no less real than those who first gathered around the Child Jesus. Christmas is one of the few moments when we pause to realize we celebrate something beyond ourselves. Family traditions and festivities bring life unto themselves. But, connecting once again to the story of God being among us keeps us grounded and filled with hope.

Recognize and delight in the ways in which you are aware of God's presence in your life. Relish moments when you use well the gifts God has given you. Appreciate a sunset or a snow-covered tree. Don't let the annoyances of life keep you from loving your family and friends. God blesses us richly, but time can pass quickly. There is joyous news to share today; God is among us! Merry Christmas to all.

LITURGY BYTES



4th Sunday of Advent

Do you believe this is the final week of preparation for Christmas? On this fourth week, we light the last purple candle to mark the final week of prayer as we await the birth of our Savior. This last candle symbolizes peace – “Peace on earth and good will to all.”

For all of us, the story behind these days should invite us to bring into our lives the mystery of how Jesus came into this world and why. Some thoughts that we could reflect upon is how he came into the world. He came in poverty. He was rejected before he was born. He was born in a feeding trough. He even was hunted down as he and his parents had to flee to another land. He did not shun our world and its poverty and conflict. He embraced it.

Important to keep in mind is that Jesus desires to embrace us today, right now, right where we are, even if we are feeling distant or not ready for His coming. All we need to do is let him come into our hearts to be our Savior. I am positive if we can do that, we will find ourselves entering the sacred night and morning of Christmas with great joy and happiness! **“Come, Lord Jesus. Come and visit your people. We await your coming. Come, O Lord.”**

*Merry Christmas ~ ~
Michele Hahn*

HOLY DAY MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas 2019 Schedule

The Birth of the Lord

Christmas Eve: Tue., December 24th
4:00 PM, 6:00 PM & 10:00 PM

Christmas Day: Wed., December 25th
8:00 AM, 10:00 AM & 12:00 Noon

Solemnity of Mary

Tue., December 31st at 5:00 PM
Wed., January 1st at 10 AM

Confession

Mon., Dec. 23rd after the 9AM Mass

PARISH NEWS



Remembering Our Sick

Please pray for the sick of our parish, their families and caregivers:

George V. Daly
Jean Kuhl

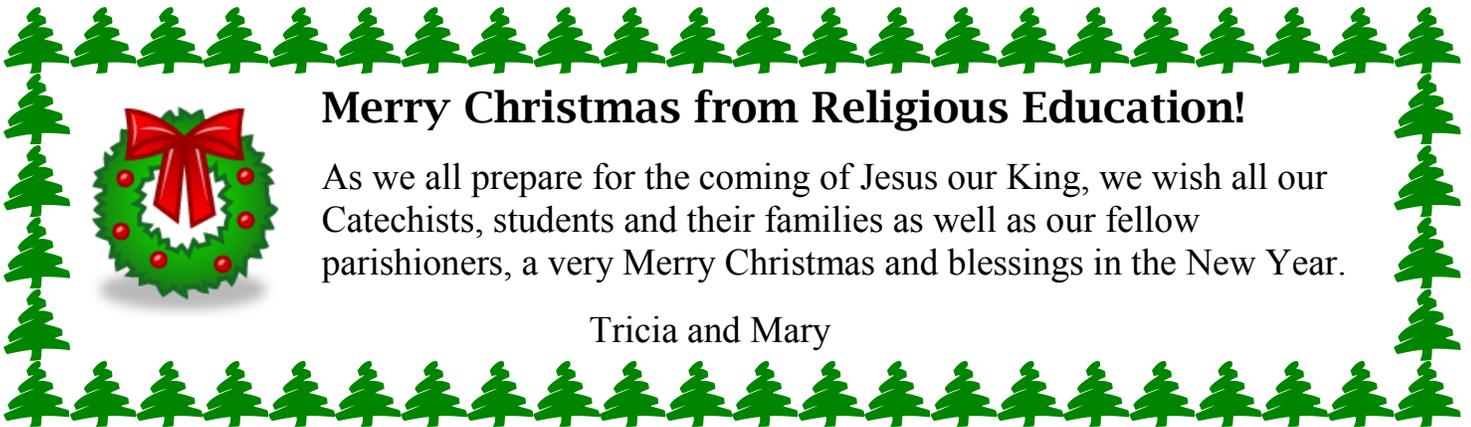
Phil Graziopie
Marlene Starr

The Bread and Wine

*for the week
December 22nd – 28th
have been donated
in loving memory of
Anthony DeVito Jr.
by his family.*



The Parish Office is closed on Wednesday, December 25th, and Thursday, December 26th, for the Christmas holiday. There is a 9:00 Mass Thursday morning.



Merry Christmas from Religious Education!

As we all prepare for the coming of Jesus our King, we wish all our Catechists, students and their families as well as our fellow parishioners, a very Merry Christmas and blessings in the New Year.

Tricia and Mary

Merry Christmas!

Thank you to everyone who sent Christmas greetings and expressions of good wishes. In all the ways you show your generosity, it is greatly appreciated. Your kindness fills us with gratitude, for you are our greatest gift. As this year of 2019 comes to a close, we pray that this coming year will be filled with peace in your hearts, in your homes and in our world. We pray that we will all grow in love of God, and that we will find His joy in each other as we serve His people together.

Fr. Michael, Dcn. Ralph, Jude, Michele, Tricia, MaryAnne, Barbara, Brian, Allie, Jane, Mary, Barbara, Vince, Roberto, Vincent & Mary

PARISH NEWS

Thank You!



We would like to thank **Michele Dry Cleaners** located at 65 Smithtown Boulevard in Smithtown, NY for their generosity in maintaining the linens and vestments used at Mass. They have donated this service to Holy Cross for many years!

Christmas Mass Intentions

In lieu of individual announced intentions at the Christmas Masses, there are cards in the Atrium for you to write your special intentions on. These cards will be placed on the Altar at all the Christmas Masses.



Christmas Flower Envelopes



Due to a delay by our envelope company in distributing the Christmas envelopes, names of loved ones will appear in the bulletin after Christmas.

Bakers Needed

Bakers are needed to make baked goods for the **Baptism of the Lord** celebration which will take place at the Sunday, **11:30 Mass, on January 12th**. This Mass honors those children who have been baptized in 2019. If interested, please contact Nick and Diane Lombardo at **631-698-5930**.



Youth Ministry

Hello everyone!
Are you in high school? Do you want to make new friends as you play fun games? Do you want to build more of an understanding about yourself and your faith?



If you answered "Yes!" to any one of those questions above, then you **MUST** check out the **Holy Cross Youth Group**. You will be glad you did! The Holy Cross Youth Group is the perfect opportunity for you to continue to grow in your faith and build relationships with others in the parish.

The Youth Group would like to wish everyone a very happy and blessed Christmas! We will not be meeting again until January 5th. Keep checking the bulletin for updates on our fun and exciting activities.

So, if you are thinking about coming to the church to see what we are all about, do it! You will not regret it. Come with a friend or family member, and join us as we continue to grow in the endless love of Christ.

If you have any questions or concerns, or if you are thinking about joining us and you would like more information, then please do not hesitate to contact Allie Roecklein, Coordinator of Youth Ministries, at hcyouthgroup15@gmail.com or call the parish office. Thank you!



*The Parish of the Holy Cross
is hosting a Winter Carnival
for all Level 1 and 2 students and their families.*

Date: Friday, January 17th

Time: 1pm - 9pm

Place: Parish of the Holy Cross Atrium

Come join the fun - games, crafts, refreshments, prizes!

Please RSVP by January 10th

631-265-2200 ext. 111 or 112 or hcreled@optonline.net

We look forward to seeing you there!



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Christmas 2019

To the People of God of the Diocese of Rockville Centre:

In his December 1, 2019 Apostolic Letter *Admirabile Signum: On the Meaning and Importance of the Nativity Scene*, Our Holy Father Pope Francis writes:

“The nativity scene is like a living Gospel rising up from the pages of sacred Scripture...I wish to encourage the beautiful family tradition of preparing the nativity scene in the days before Christmas, but also the custom of setting it up in the workplace, in schools, hospitals, prisons and town squares.

Great imagination and creativity is always shown in employing the most diverse materials to create small masterpieces of beauty. As children, we learn from our parents and grandparents to carry on this joyful tradition, which encapsulates a wealth of popular piety. *It is my hope that this custom will never be lost and that, wherever it has fallen into disuse, it can be discovered and revived.*”

The Holy Father captures so poignantly how we creatively share our Catholic faith generation to generation through the Nativity sets and creches that bring Christ’s light and love into our homes, our parishes and our public squares.

He also captures how the poor, the outcast, the ignored, the forgotten and the vulnerable have a privileged place in every Nativity scene: “The presence of the poor and the lowly in the nativity scene remind us that God became man for the sake of those who feel most in need of his love and who ask him to draw near to them. Jesus, ‘gentle and humble in heart’ (Mt 11:29), was born in poverty and led a simple life in order to teach us to recognize what is essential and to act accordingly. The nativity scene clearly teaches that we cannot let ourselves be fooled by wealth and fleeting promises of happiness. We see Herod’s palace in the background, closed and deaf to the tidings of joy. By being born in a manger, God himself launches the only true revolution that can give hope and dignity to the disinherited and the outcast: the revolution of love, the revolution of tenderness. From the manger, Jesus proclaims, in a meek yet powerful way, the need for sharing with the poor as the path to a more human and fraternal world in which no one is excluded or marginalized.”

As we celebrate the joy of Christmas and the power and presence of the Prince of Peace in our families, in the Church and in the World, we realize at the same time that the Christmas Crib can never be separated from the agony of Calvary’s Cross.

Even as we rejoice this Christmas of 2019, we remember and stand with the poor, the hungry, the addicted, the mentally ill, the global refugees and non-documented immigrants, and survivors of sexual abuse.

As we pray before the Christmas manger and see the beauty, the hope, the possibility in the birth of Jesus, we are compelled to remember that far too many children do not receive the welcome and joy they deserve for the miracle of their existence.

We cannot forget this Christmas season the great sadness that New York State, through the passage of the horrific Reproductive Health Act¹, has enshrined into law the killing of innocent human beings through abortion up until the moment of actual birth and beyond, as this radical law permits the killing of those children who survive abortion.

Together, we invoke the power of the Prince of Peace and His compassionate Word found in the Beatitudes and in His call to serve the poor and the most vulnerable among us in Matthew 25. Our Lord gives us the courage and the voice as the Catholic Church in New York State and around the world to speak of the beauty, the sanctity and the dignity of every human life.

We will continue to be “a sign of contradiction” by witnessing relentlessly and courageously to the Gospel of Human Life. As is said in the first words of the *Didache*, the earliest known non-Scriptural Christian writing: “There are two Ways, one of Life and one of Death...” We will always stand with our earliest ancestors in the Christian faith in favor of the Way of Life and opposed to the Way of Death.

We will continue to seek the intercession of St. Thomas More, patron of statesmen, politicians and lawyers for the conversion of the public servants who have supported this tragic legislation.

The Cistercian biblical scholar Father Simeon writes: “The Child, while present only in Bethlehem by his poverty and weakness, is already present in the pattern of the constellations by his splendor and his glory.”²

May our praise and glory of the Prince of Peace fill our hearts and homes and give us the courage and prayerful determination to bring the Joy of the Gospel and the Splendor of Truth to every public square in New York State and throughout the world.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend John O. Barres
Bishop of Rockville Centre

¹ <https://www.drvc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ReproductiveHealthCareAct.pdf>

² Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (Fr. Simeon), *Fire of Mercy Heart of the World: Meditations on the Gospel according to St. Matthew Volume 1* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 76.

CASH CALENDAR



*Parish of the Holy Cross
December 2019*



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 \$50	2 \$50	3 \$50	4 \$50	5 \$50	6 \$50	7 \$50
8 \$50	9 \$50	10 \$50	11 \$50	12 \$50	13 \$50	14 \$50
15 \$50	16 \$50	17 \$50	18 \$50	19 \$50	20 \$50	21 \$50
22 \$50	23 \$50	24 \$50	25 \$500	26 \$50	27 \$50	28 \$50
29 \$50	30 \$50	31 \$50	\$10 Per Chance ~ 31 Chances to Win \$50 Per Day ~ \$500 on December 25, Christmas Day			

Cash Calendar, DECEMBER, 2019

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 TOWN _____
 PHONE _____

Cash Calendar, DECEMBER, 2019

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 TOWN _____
 PHONE _____

Cash Calendar, DECEMBER, 2019

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Cash Calendar, DECEMBER, 2019

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Cash Calendar, DECEMBER, 2019

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Cash Calendar, DECEMBER, 2019

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 TOWN _____
 PHONE _____

MEETINGS THIS WEEK



Monday, December 23rd	9:30 - 10 AM
• CONFESSION	Chapel
Tuesday, December 24th	4PM, 6PM & 10PM
• CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES (No Morning Mass)	Worship Area
Wednesday, December 25th	8AM, 10AM & 12 Noon
• CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES (The Parish Office is closed for Christmas.)	Worship Area
Thursday, December 26th	9 AM
• MORNING MASS (The Parish Office is closed today.)	Chapel
Sunday, December 29th	10:30 AM
• PRAY THE ROSARY	Chapel

Praying the Rosary

Join us as we pray the Rosary in the Chapel at 10:30AM on the last Sunday of each month. We will pray for our friends and loved ones who have fallen away from the Church. Join us on Sunday, December 29th!



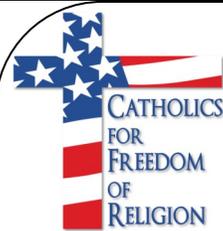
COMMUNITY NEWS

Maria Regina Residence, at 1725 Brentwood Road, Brentwood, is a 188-bed Skilled Nursing Facility under the care of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

They are currently seeking compassionate, dedicated men and women who are willing to volunteer their time on alternate Saturday mornings in assisting to transport residents in their wheelchairs, deliver newspapers or help to serve in the dining room.

For more information, please contact Sister Mary Sheppard, CSJ at **631-299-3288**.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM



**The December Dilemma:
Celebrating Religious Holidays
in Public Schools
& the Public Square**

www.cffor.org

Every December, public schools, towns and businesses, face the difficult task of acknowledging the various religious and secular holiday traditions celebrated during this time of year without crossing the line of promoting a particular belief. The First Amendment guarantees freedom of religion to all Americans - including young school children - by prohibiting the government from endorsing any particular religious point of view while still respecting and protecting all religious beliefs.

Holiday Myths & Facts

Myth: Public schools cannot display religious Christmas and Hanukkah symbols.

Fact: A public school is free to display a Nativity scene, Menorah, and other forms of religious and secular seasonal expression with the purpose of depicting the origins of the holiday.

Myth: Public school students aren't allowed to sing or play Christmas carols.

Fact: Students can sing and perform religious carols along with secular ones. The purpose is to teach about our society's cultural and religious heritage and allow students to perform a full range of music, poetry and drama.

Myth: Students cannot talk about their faith and the religious origins of their holiday in class assignments.

Fact: Schools cannot refuse to allow, punish, or give a lower grade to a student who includes a religious viewpoint in a class assignment. Far from "establishing religion," that would be displaying an anti-religious bias which is unconstitutional and infringing on the free speech of students.

Myth: Christmas trees, Nativity scenes, and Hanukkah Menorahs cannot be displayed on public land.

Fact: The Supreme Court has held that these have become both a secular and religious symbol and their display by a public entity does not violate the Establishment Clause.

(adl.org; adflegal.org, 12/11/15; rutherfordinstitute.org; alliancedefendingfreedom.org)

"To the American People: Christmas is not a time or a season but a state of mind. To cherish peace and good will, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas. If we think on these things, there will be born in us a Savior and over us will shine a star sending its gleam of hope to the world."

President Calvin Coolidge



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