

St. William the Abbot

Roman Catholic Church



Welcome to St. William the Abbot

Fourth Sunday of Advent December 20, 2020

Rectory Office Hours

The Rectory will remain closed until further notice. If you need to contact the Rectory please email your request.

information@stwilliam.org

Parish Information

Office: 516.785.1266
2000 Jackson Avenue
Seaford, NY 11783
stwilliam.org



And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. - Luke 1:35



The Fourth Sunday of Advent

"Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.'" - (Lk 1:38)

Mary had complete trust in God, saying "yes" to his will. How would you describe your trust in God?

The Mass Intentions are celebrated each day by a member of the Clergy, in either a public Mass or private Mass. Please be advised the current Mass schedule may not allow the family to be present for all Mass Intentions celebrated.

Pray for the Sick

Nicholas Ortiz

Pray for the Deceased

John C. Williamson

Mass Schedule

Daily Mass

Monday - Friday 8:30am

Weekend Mass

Saturday 8:30am & 5pm

Sunday 7:30am, 9am, 10:30am, & 12pm

The Presider Schedule can be found on stwilliam.org.

Mass Intentions

Monday, December 21, 2020

Lois Gallagher
Joseph McConnon
Gerry Black
Patrick Byrne

Tuesday, December 22, 2020

John Scanlon
Jack Kilkelly

Wednesday, December 23, 2020

Teresa Dileo
Joan Tynan

Thursday, December 24, 2020

Maguire Family
Edward Howath
Alan Neubauer
People of St. William

Friday, December 25, 2020

Sick & Deceased Friends of the Ursuline Sisters
William Joseph Geandomenico
Valdez-Le Goff Families (LIV)
Mary Nacci

Saturday, December 26, 2020

Purgatorial Society
Grace Magrino

Sunday, December 27, 2020

People of St. William
Robert & Mary Ann Lennon
Barbara Nigro
Marian Lynch
Espedicta Luna
Joseph Grignano
John Rurney
Diane Kelly

Will we make room at the Inn?

I recently read a powerful reflection about the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem, obviously worn and tired, concerned and worried about the unknown they would face when they got back to the City of David. Joseph and Mary could only do so much, and life was a bit different then. The roads were terrible. They did not have a YETI Thermos, sleek carry-on luggage for the donkey, or a rest stop if they ran low on supplies. Joseph would be worried, "do we have enough provisions for the journey"? Enough water, bread, and cheese? Maybe some figs, hummus, or other traditional Middle Eastern food would help sustain them on the way to the town of the as he went back to register for the mandated census.

I wonder what would be going on in their heart. Perhaps it had been years since Joseph was in that city, maybe it was the first time, and he had only heard stories from his family about what it "used to be like" in Bethlehem. Some of the family stories would be filled with the fantasy and the perfection of the 'old days' – 'the ghosts of Christmas past.' We know it was never as perfect as we remember, but we hold onto those memories. Perhaps the same for Joseph, as he and his very pregnant wife approached not only the birth of their child but also looking for a place to lay their heads to relax and decompress. What a year they had, perhaps in their dreams, they thought life would go one way, and let's face it, their experience became very different after the Annunciation. So many adjustments, so much newness, and now this census, this government or political "responsibility" placed on them. To go and do the things you're supposed to do because the emperor told them – (sound familiar?). In the Eternal Plan, what do they encounter? One closed door after another. They were looking for relief from their physical, mental, and emotional fatigue. And each time the Holy Family came upon an opportunity for rest, and opportunity to make a place for themselves, the door was slammed in their face, "there is no room for you here," "look elsewhere," "you are not welcome."

I think we can all identify with Mary and Joseph in the fatigue and the desire for us to be at rest with the Lord this Christmas 2020. I think that's why we all look so forward to coming home here to the Church of Saint William the Abbot each week, but especially at Christmastime. I ask you to pray about the image of the Holy Family as they journey home to Bethlehem. We know they didn't have a favorite Roadside Inn to stay in - they didn't have one of those fancy restaurants they knew they could count on to eat in. They were coming into the City of David with the hopes of some hospitality, as they came home for the first time in a long time.

You and I know that in this past year, there have been many people who have been away from the physical church, partly because of the pandemic, partly because church and faith have not been the main focus for them. Perhaps for some – they have been hurt by the Church or God-People in the past and have chosen to stay away. But this upcoming week, there will be many Joseph and Mary's who will come back, and they will be met by our incredible volunteers who will be wearing masks and gloves and signs directing them to pews and seats in the church. If we can think of each row an "INN" at Bethlehem – and each of us as an innkeeper - which type of innkeeper will these Holy Families encounter? The one who dismisses them because they have not been here in a while and do not know the protocols, or the flow up for communion, or that we have hand wipes and sanitizer? We might meet someone who is bargaining with God and says, "this is the last chance I am giving you, Lord," and the way you and I meet them could allow them to experience the radical hospitality of welcome – or a sense of being pushed away again – a door slammed in their face.

My dear friends, sometimes it is easier to recognize Jesus as the baby in the manger, but the reality is that He is all around us. In the easy people to love, and the more challenging people in our lives. The Lord invites us all to make a little space, a little room for Him in the INN of our hearts. Are we willing to do that? 2020 has been an extraordinary calendar year. I am so grateful to have journeyed with you all, the St. William the Abbot Pastoral team, who has made an incredible effort to bring Christ into the world. On behalf of Fr. James, Fr. Collins, our Deacons, and Seminarians – we wish you a Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with Christ's Peace, Mercy, and Love.

As always, thank you for your presence and incredible generosity.

Peace,





Safety Protocols

As more of you are returning back to in-person Mass, we want to re-emphasize that all of our safety protocols are still in place. Please allow the ushers to seat you - they have been carefully trained in our seating arrangement that will enable us to get the maximum number of worshippers seated in the Sanctuary while maintaining social distancing.



Arrive Early & Wear Your Mask

Also, we do ask that everyone arrive early so that we can everyone seated before the start of Mass. We ask that all parishioners wear their mask covering their nose and mouth at all times while inside the church.



Please Be Considerate

Please be considerate during the upcoming holidays. Many of the Masses are crowded and parking is difficult. **Please do not block any driveways or the parishes garages.** Try to arrive early and allow time to find parking. Keep in mind that there is a parking lot behind the school. Thank you!



Light a Prayer Candle

Lighting candles has long been a sacred ritual in all traditions, creating precious moments in our own and other people's lives where we pray for loved ones, friends, and ask for or give support.

Low Gluten Hosts Available at Mass

For those who must avoid gluten in their diet, the parish has low-gluten hosts available for Holy Communion. If you wish to receive such a host, please arrive prior to Mass and inform the priest and he will place your host in a oyx.



At this time we are able to offer the sale of individual missals for \$10 per missal. Please bring a check for \$10 payable to St. William the Abbot or \$10 exact cash to the rectory. There will be no change for cash purchases. We have a limited number at this time, so it is a first come first served basis. Please come to the rectory door Monday – Friday from 9am-5pm to purchase your missal.



Banns of Marriage III

Kevin Sostowski

SWA

&

Lauren Murphy

SWA



The St. William the Abbot Ornaments has arrived. If you placed an order you can pick up your ornament at the Rectory, Monday - Friday from 9am - 4pm.

At this time there are still ornaments available for purchase at the Rectory, please bring a check for \$20 payable to St. William the Abbot or \$20 exact cash to the rectory. There will be no change for cash purchases. We have a limited number at this time, so it is a first come first served basis.

Temporary Rectory Hours

Picking up an ornament or missal?

The Rectory will be open Monday, December 21, -
Wednesday, December 23 from 9am - 4pm.

&

Monday, December 28 - Wednesday, December 30
from 9am - 4pm.



Reconciliation

Reconciliation is offered Monday - Saturday
from 7:00 am - 8:30 am.

You may also schedule your time for
confession by emailing
priests@stwilliam.org.

CHRISTMAS THANK YOU

WHAT A WONDERFUL OUTPOURING OF LOVE EVERYONE SHOWED THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON. THE AMOUNT OF GIFTS THAT WERE DONATED FAR EXCEEDED OUR EXPECTATIONS. THANKS TO YOU OUR PARISH & COMMUNITY FAMILIES WHO CAME TO US FOR ASSISTANCE WERE OVERCOME WITH JOY. THEY WERE ABLE TO PROVIDE WONDERFUL GIFTS FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND THEMSELVES. YOU WERE TRULY CHRIST TO OTHERS. THIS IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF FAITH IN ACTION. BLESSINGS TO YOU THROUGHOUT THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON AND DURING THE NEW YEAR.

SINCERELY, PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY
Rosemary Graziano & Allison Marro

CONTACT THE PRIESTS

Please send your email to priests@stwilliam.org to contact Fr. Joe, Fr. James or Fr. Collins directly.

CONTACT THE PASTORAL COUNCIL

Please send your email to pastoralcouncil@stwilliam.org.

QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

Please send your email to igomez@stwilliam.org.

CONTACT FAITH FORMATION

Please send your email to faithformation@stwilliam.org or contact the office directly at (516) 783-2528.

CONTACT SOCIAL MINISTRY

Please send your email to socialministry@stwilliam.org or contact the office directly at (516) 679-8532.

CONTACT MUSIC MINISTRY

Please send your email to mgeorgetti@stwilliam.org.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECTORY

Please send your email to information@stwilliam.org.

CONTACT THE BUSINESS MANAGER

Please send your email to jgoldman@stwilliam.org.

CONTACT THE SCHOOL St. William the Abbot School



Office: 516.785.1266
2001 Jackson Avenue
Seaford, NY 11783
stwilliamtheabbot.net
(516) 785-6784

LIVE-STREAMED MASSES

The Monday - Friday 8:30am Daily Mass and the Sunday 12pm Mass can be viewed on the parish website

stwilliam.org

Food Donations

The food donations bins will no longer be located in the Church. Please bring all donations directly to Parish Social Ministry Office, the church no longer has donation bins. The Social Ministry office is located South of the Church.

Monday - Friday
9:30am - 4:00pm
Sunday
9:00am - 12:00pm

Food Pantry

Pasta Roni
Cooking Oil
Taco Kit
Mayonnaise
Pretzels
Jello-Gelatin
Ketchup

Bereavement Ministry

Although we cannot hold actual Bereavement Ministry sessions at this time due to the restrictions of meetings, we want you to know that we care about the grief you are experiencing. Let us help you take the walk in your grief journey. Trained facilitators are available to support you. Our mission is to help you to find peace in the midst of dealing with your loss. Please call Parish Social Ministry at (516) 679-8532.

Homebound

Do you know someone who is homebound or lonely? Please let us know so we can reach out to them in the spirit of Christ. Perhaps they need someone to food shop for them. Please call (516) 679-8532.

Caring for the Caregiver

Although our program cannot currently meet we are reaching out to those who are caring for a homebound family member. You are filled with compassion for your loved one, it is not an easy situation. The time involved and the emotions you experience can be overwhelming. Particularly at this time you may be without a backup caregiver which compounds the stress. If you would like to call to speak to someone experienced with these situation, please do so (516) 679-8532.

The beautiful trees, wreaths, and flowers used to decorate our Church this Christmas Season have been donated by parishioners in memory of deceased loved ones.

8' - 9' Frasier Fir Trees

Joseph F. Eannel
from Joe and Deb Eannel

Rosemarie Paganelli
from Lynn McCarthy

5' – 6' Frasier Fir Trees

Anthony and Mary Nacci
from Barbara Nacci

32" Christmas Wreaths

Deceased members of the Colletti and Castello families
from Charlie and Rose Castello

Margaret and Henry Christ and Dominic and Ursula Diliberto
from Peter and Margaret Diliberto

Lorraine Landi – Hospitality
from Pat Elliott

Deceased members of the Kaley, Varvaro
and Stuart Families
from Fran and John Kaley

Keenan and Politi Families
from George Keenan

William and Stella Power
from the Mastrianni Family

All My Loved Ones
from Susan Matejov

Kathy and Bob Moulder and Carmen and Bob Ritter
from Robin and Bob Moulder

Albert R. Bongiovi
from Bob and Kathi Olsen

Frank Rugnetta, Jr.
from Helen P. Rugnetta

Thomas J. Ward, Sr.
from Patricia Ward

White Calandiva

Helen Becker, Joseph Eannel, Sr., Charlotte Eannel,
Al Olsen and Felicia Begley
from Joe and Deb Eannel

Mio Bombardiere and Morris Orlando
from Sandy Kandybowicz

Nativity Creche Straw and Greens

Bonnie and Tom Schmotzer
from Karen and Mike Schuh

Red Poinsettias

Donald Heffernan and Theresa Milano
from Kerri Bergen

Katherine Gianesses and William Sullivan
from the Brasile Family

The Corrado and Tempesta Families
from Vincent and Carole Corrado

Terri Dankenbrink and William E. Davison
from William and Christine Davison

Alvira and Stanley Liogys
from the Defendini Family

Eleanor M. Foy, Nana Duffy and Marie Lippert
from Eileen M. Engelman

Nuala Flaherty, Bridgie Fitzpatrick,
Brid Collium and Catherine Harte
from Anthony and Mary Flaherty

Helen and Burt Cavallo
from Mr. and Mrs. George Gorton

Helen and Burt Cavalo
from Keith and Catherine Gorton

The beautiful trees, wreaths, and flowers used to decorate our Church this Christmas Season have been donated by parishioners in memory of deceased loved ones.

12" Wreaths for Outside Doors

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Begley and Mr. and Mrs. Ed O'Malley
from Tara Begley O'Malley

Francis Conlon
from Michael Conlon

Margaret Elliott – 9/30/20
from Pat Elliott

Mauro Filippone
from Linda Filippone

Philip Geraffo
from the Gannon Family

Robert Kandybowicz
from Sandy Kandybowicz

Charles Mantione
from Michael Mantione

The Reinhardt and McKenna Families
from Karen and John McKenna

Basil "Buzz" Santini
from Susie and Tom Quinn

Pasquale Serenita
from Charlene Serenita

48" Wreath

The Godek and Sabatelli Family
from Mr. and Mrs. R. Sabatelli

White Poinsettias

Jeanne M. Laddomada
from John Laddomada

Red Poinsettias

Baby Christopher Murphy
from Dorothy and Peter Griesbach

Mio Bombardiere and Morris Orlando
from Sandy Kandybowicz

Rosalie Kirincic and John Facarile
from Elaine and Steve Kirincic

Jerry Monk and Paul Koster
from Kelly and Tom Koster

Edward and Marie Lorenzo
from David Lorenzo

Helen and James O'Donnell
from Mary A. O'Donnell

Eddie Sanchez
from Monica and Sofia Sanchez

Rita and Fred Bennekemper
from Melissa Winn

White Orchid Cyclamen

Charles D. Giardino, Anna Giardino and Jacob Becker
from Joe and Deb Eannel

Nuala Flaherty, Bridgie Fitzpatrick,
Brid Collium and Catherine Harte
from Anthony and Mary Flaherty

Mary Nacci and Anthony Nacci
from Val and Teri Nacci

Ed Tomczyk
from Gail Tomczyk

STUMP THE PRIEST !



QUESTION:

Why do we make the sign of the Cross and when? Additionally, why do we bow to the Cross?

ANSWER:

One cannot attempt an answer to this three-in-one question without reference to these quotes from St. Paul in the scriptures:

“The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1Cor. 1: 18)

“But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” (Gal 6:14)

Perhaps these two quotes from St. Paul above should suffice for an answer to the question. However, further explanations will be given on the basis of the quotes.

By the atoning death of Christ our Lord on the wood of the cross, the cross has become one of the most significant symbols and signs of our Christian faith.

So we who come to faith in Christ and are therefore called “CHRIST-ians” sign ourselves with the sign of the cross for the following reasons:

- It is first and foremost to remind us that we belong to Christ. Therefore, at baptism, the one to be baptized is sealed with the sign of the cross as a way of claiming the person for Christ.
- It is also to express our faith in the Blessed Trinity who is one God in three divine persons- The Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- Besides, the sign of the cross reminds us of our redemption in Christ Jesus through his death on the cross. So whenever we make the sign of the cross, we wash ourselves clean from the stain of sin by the blood Christ shed on the cross.
- In addition, it is a means of receiving the grace that come from the death of Christ on the cross to overcome the temptations to sin. So when faced with any temptations to sin, making the sign of the cross strengthens us to overcome them.
- From the first quote above we know that the cross is the power of God. Hence, by signing ourselves, we seal ourselves with this power of God to protect us from every evil.
- In the gospel of Luke chapter 9:23, Jesus bids all his followers take up their cross daily and follow him. On this basis, the sign of the cross reminds us of the share we have in the suffering of Christ. Remembering this, therefore, we are able to unite all our sufferings in life to that of Christ and we learn to endure them patiently as Christ did.
- Deducing from all the reasons given above, the sign of the cross becomes one powerful form of prayer through which we express our faith in the Triune God, obtain the grace of our redemption in Christ, strengthen ourselves against temptations, protect ourselves from all evil, remind ourselves of the path chattered for all Christians by Christ our Lord and finally enable us endure our sufferings patiently until we leave this life to share in the glory of Christ in heaven.

It therefore means that, besides the gesture of signing ourselves with the sign of the cross, any other image of the cross or religious item bearing the cross, after being blessed by a priest, should also achieve these same results whenever they are used in faith.

The answers to when we make the sign of the cross and why we bow to the cross should all follow from these reasons given.

Thank you.

The Nativity of the Lord - Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve Mass

2:00 PM - Outside (Weather Permitting)

4:00 PM, 5:30 PM, and 8:30 PM
Church, Abbey, & School Auditorium

The 4:00 PM Mass will be live-streamed on the parish website stwilliam.org

Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve

11:00 PM Church

Christmas Day Mass

8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM, and 12:30 PM
Church, Abbey, & School Auditorium

The 9:30 AM Mass will be live-streamed on the parish website stwilliam.org



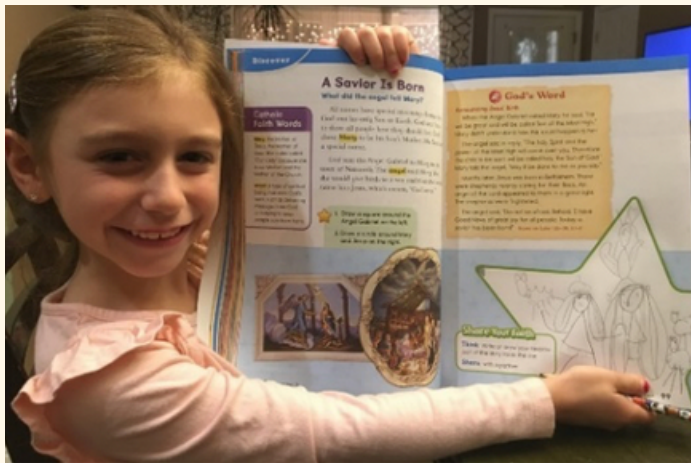
Faith Formation

Blessings! We now light the 4th Violet Candle. It represents Love.

John 3:16-17 – “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him”.

When you look around you see decorations, trees, and presents, reminding us of Christmas and Jesus' coming. You can even feel the excitement in the air, and there seems to be a kinder, caring love inside all of us. It is the Christmas Holy Spirit. It comes from the love that Jesus has given to us all and for the love that we have for Jesus. Jesus has already been born and he lives in all of us, and by helping one another and caring for others that is when we see God's presence. On Christmas Day we will celebrate the Birth Day of Jesus. We need to remember how Jesus came into the world for us, and that the reason for this beautiful season is because the birth of Jesus. Blessed Mother and Joseph were so delighted and grateful of the birth, and they knew that this birth of Jesus is miraculous. This is the son of God and the feeling of love overcame them. Let us continue to keep that Christmas Holy Spirit inside of us and bring to others Joy, Love and Peace the way God has given that to us!

Some of the Faith Formation students did drawings of their idea of Jesus' birth.



Concetta Greco's drawing of the Stable



Bryson Richko painting an ornament for St. William's Christmas Tree.

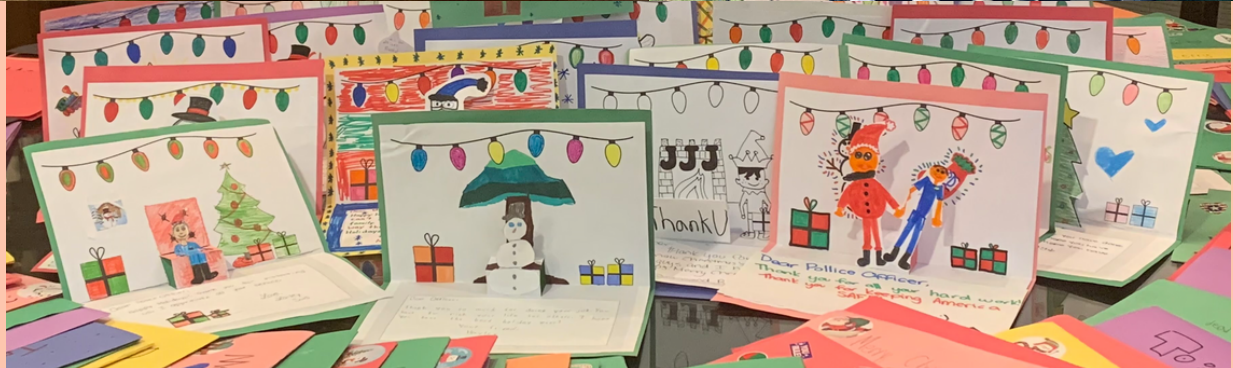


Logan DiFondi's drawing of Jesus' Birth

**Wishing you a Very Blessed Merry Christmas to our Faith Formation Families!
May the miracle of Jesus' birth light your way through the coming year!**



With Christmas right around the corner, it is that time of the year again for holiday games! The last week before break all of the classes participated in the “Grinch’s Lair” game in physical education class. The classes were split into teams and attempted to get their “presents” back from the Grinch and his dog Max. It’s a really fun activity that involves teamwork, communication and leadership skills from each student participating. Classes shown in the pictures were 2-1 and 6-1.



Under the direction of art teacher Mrs. Patricia Calcano, students in grades 3-8 created “pop-up” Christmas cards. This fun Community Service Project sent nearly 300 cards to local police officers through the organization Beyond the Badge. Students designed their cards, carefully created the pop-up, and wrote meaningful messages to thank the officers for their acts of bravery. Michelle Panetta, from Beyond the Badge accepted the cards that were hand delivered by Mrs. Calcano and her daughter Hayley.

Purgatorial Society

Lilla May Ackermann, Robert T. Bonomo, Ruth M. Brower, Rose Camizzi, Judith Ann Canzoneri, George J. Cavaliere, Claudio Facchini, Gary Gruber, Joseph Horodecki, Mary Surico, Vito Tripi, John F. Tynan, Karen J. Urrutia, Patricia K. Vogel, Patricia Morris, John Solice, Marion Dellisanti, Josephine A. Diehl, Limbania Martinez, James Brennan, Dilia DaSilva, Matthew Frank "Dezy" DiStefano, Jean Marie, Laura Godek, William Connors, Edward Anderson, Barbara Hunter, Pat Conroy, John & Mary Marinello, John McFadden, James Sternkopf.

Joseph Carra, Patricia Conroy, Rebecca Dela Cruz, Rose C. Cuva, Josephine Diehl, Santo M. Forlani, Celeste Gouono, John and Mary Marinello, Marcella Miller, Howard Minami, Mary E. Nacci, Lloyd Newell, Lawrence T. Paretta, Donna Richter, Louise Rozzo, John Rurney, Joseph Vallone, Thomas Phillip Smith, Ronald Cabrijan, Christine Glouster, Thomas Larkin, Pat Barbera, Barbara McShane, Angela Zottola, Joseph Ippoliti, Anne M. Bahnken.

Michael Annuziata, Katherine Buccellato, Angela Flori, Wilford Furley, Frances Giraldo, Paula Hagerman, Frank Jacono, Pilar B. Reyes, Lillian Rezoagli, Louie Rozzo, Basil "Buzz" Santini.

Billy Kelly, Thomas Fitzmaurice, Ralph J. Hunt, Dorothy Holland, Nicola Campanella, Brendan McGuire, Vincent McGuire. Mary Barraco, Donald Clark

**ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW CONSIDERING COMING INTO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH,
OR ARE YOU ALREADY BAPTIZED AND WISH TO RECEIVE THE SACRAMENTS OF EUCHARIST AND CONFIRMATION?**



BECOME CATHOLIC

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: JO-ANN METZDORFF AT RCIA@STWILLIAM.ORG

St. William the Abbot - Family Ornaments Project

Join us in our parish Family Ornament project, decorate an ornament with your family. Bring it in to the Church and place it on the manger near the two big Christmas trees.

Take a picture and email them to priests@stwilliam.org

We can't wait to see your designs!



New Year's Eve Ball Drop Raffle

How it works:

When you enter the raffle you'll be assigned a numbered golf ball (entries are \$100 each) and you'll receive an email with your number once your entry has been processed.

On NYE all the numbered golf balls will be dropped from a height at the same time trying to hit one target.

We'll measure to determine 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place and we'll announce the winners on the live stream and on our socials.

Entries must be received by 12/23

**Join us on stwilliam.org at 4pm on
New Year's Eve to watch!**



St. William the Abbot
Roman Catholic Church

NYE Ball Drop Entry Form

Name: _____

Tel Number: _____ Email: _____

Number of Entries: _____ Check Total: _____

Please return cash or check to Rectory drop box or by mail.

Due to the limited number of entries, number requests cannot be honored.



What is RCIA?

RCIA stands for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, and it is the process by which unbaptized adults become Catholic. It is also the way those baptized in other Christian faiths to enter into full communion with the Church by receiving Communion and Confirmation, or for baptized Catholics to complete these sacraments if they haven't already.

How long does it take to become Catholic?

There is not a one size fits all answer to that question. Adult baptisms for Catechumens usually take place at the Easter Vigil, the night before Easter Sunday. Ideally the process would last most of a year or longer depending on the situation. For a baptized Christian of another faith community, the process could proceed rather quickly, only a few months, or longer depending on their own formation and participation in their present faith community. For Catholics who are missing sacraments the process can take a few months or longer.

Why is it important for a baptized Catholic to complete their sacraments?

Baptism is the entryway into life with Christ, but no one is fully initiated until they receive Confirmation and Eucharist. Confirmation is also needed in order to become a Godparent or Confirmation sponsor, or for marriage to another Catholic with a few exceptions. Eucharist is the summit and source of our faith, and if we can't receive it we are missing out on the graces we receive through Holy Communion.

Are their tests or homework?

The simple answer is no! However we encourage Catechumens and Candidates to read and explore things on their own, to keep a journal of their thoughts, insights and questions, and to talk things over with sponsors. Of course we expect them to attend Sunday Mass with the parish community and get involved.

Can you become Catholic if you are divorced?

Yes, but with caveats. It depends on the situation of the previous marriage, and that of the current spouse, if there is one. Some marriage situations are easy to rectify and some take a bit longer. Marriage situations do not preclude candidates from attending sessions to prepare to enter the Church. One of our priests will assist the candidate in this regard.

What are these rituals?

There are a number of rituals that occur at a Sunday Mass. These are steps, so to speak, to enter the Church. They are public rites, and the parish community prays with the Catechumens and candidates at this time. For those who will be baptized at Easter, they will come together.

How much does all this cost?

One of the best things about RCIA is that it is FREE!

BECOMING CATHOLIC - *DID YOU KNOW*

I am already Catholic, why should I know about RCIA?

We all may know family members or friends who are not Catholic but may have shown some interest in our faith, or those who have not completed their sacraments. As Catholics we are called, by Christ, to share the Good News with others. This might mean making suggestions to others that they explore Catholicism. If you know about RCIA you can let them know about it and how to go about getting started.

What does Catechumen mean?

There are a lot of churchy words in RCIA. A Catechumen is a person preparing for Baptism. It is an ancient term meaning one who receives instruction by word of mouth. A candidate is someone from another Christian faith or a Catholic preparing for Confirmation. There are other words that are learned as the person goes along in the process.

What do RCIA sessions look like?

Sessions are usually held once a month on Sunday after Mass. We meet, discuss the Sunday scriptures, and then have a presentation on Catholic teachings. Sessions are informal and are not classes but faith sharing and exploration of our relationship with Christ, always striving to go deeper into that relationship with God and the Parish community. Our textbook is the Bible, videos, and other materials exploring the Catholic faith.

What is a sponsor?

A sponsor is someone who accompanies a person on their RCIA journey. Sponsors are usually from the parish community, but sponsors may be chosen by the person if the sponsor is a practicing Catholic who has received all their sacraments of Initiation and is in good standing with the Church. A Catechumen may also choose Godparents in addition to a sponsor.

Can children be in RCIA?

RCIA sessions are geared for adults. However children do take part in certain rituals that are part of the process. They are usually catechized through the parish school or faith formation. In cases with older children or teens, there may be specific sessions set up for them and their parents.

Can I accompany someone to RCIA sessions?

Of course! Many Catholics who join a relative or friend at sessions find that they learn things about the Catholic faith that they did not know before. It also gives the Catechumen or Candidate someone else to discuss things with after the sessions.

How does someone get started in RCIA?

Go to our website at stwilliam.org/rcia. Fill out the registration form and the Inquiry form and email it back to rcia@stwilliam.org. You will be contacted by our coordinator regarding starting sessions.

PWOFORPAKEVEROWAIWILL

BKOEWLORDPWOEKI

For ever I will
sing the
goodness of
the Lord.

BKWSINGOTKTIEPK

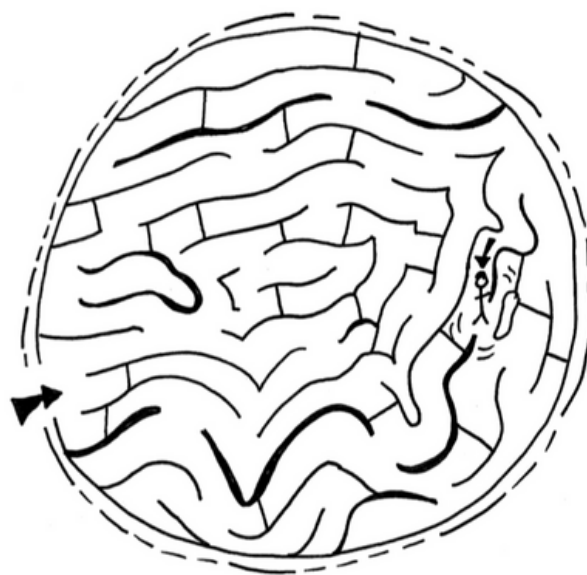
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Which candles are lit today
on the Advent wreath?
Color this wreath to match
the one at your church.



Saint Francis Xavier



Saint Francis Xavier
traveled all over the world
taking care of the poor and
teaching about Jesus.



HAIL MARY,

full of *grace*, the LORD is with thee.

Blessed art thou amongst *women* and blessed is the
FRUIT OF THY WOMB JESUS.

HOLY MARY, *Mother of God*,
pray for us sinners, now and at the
hour of our death. **AMEN**

Countdown
to Jesus'
Birthday...

1

Sunday!



The angel Gabriel visited Mary and told her that she would
give birth to baby Jesus! This is called the Annunciation.



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Christmas 2020

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

When he was elected as a Successor of St. Peter on March 13, 2013, our Holy Father chose the name *Francis*. It was a weighty decision with a prophetic message. Especially now, seven years later and with the publication of his latest encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* from the tomb of St. Francis of Assisi on October 3, 2020, the significance of the choice is clear: Pope Francis connects his papacy to St. Francis.

Through the ministry of our Holy Father, St. Francis of Assisi is close to the Church in these times. Therefore, as we draw near to Bethlehem at the end of this difficult year, I wish to recall two points Pope Francis highlights from the life of St. Francis. One will help us celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord; the other indicates a grace for which to pray during the holy season.

First, in his 2019 Apostolic Letter *Admirabile Signum: On the Meaning and Importance of the Nativity Scene*, Pope Francis emphasizes St. Francis of Assisi's foundational role in our celebration of Christmas. The Holy Father recalls the origins of the crèche and the first nativity scene inspired by the holy friar in 1223, by which the saint sought "to bring to life the memory of that babe born in Bethlehem." Importantly, the remembrance of Christ's birth that St. Francis desired to convey was brought alive in Greccio, a small village in Italy, not by statues but by people from the surrounding towns and countryside. Together with St. Francis, his friars, an ox and a donkey, they gathered at a cave to behold a manger full of hay over which the Eucharist was celebrated. That Christmas night, almost 800 years ago, Pope Francis reminds us, "the nativity scene was enacted and experienced by all who were present." That night, there was "no distance between the original event and those sharing in its mystery." (2) Encountering Christ, there was simply joy and hope.

This Christmas, in our world laden with the Crosses of COVID-19, political and economic turmoil, racism, financial hardship, and so many other societal ills and challenges – challenges that impact us on Long Island – let us remember this lesson from Greccio: Christmas is an event to be lived. It demands our participation. Like the women and men who embodied that first crèche, we must be present to Christ who is born for us. We must behold and receive Him.

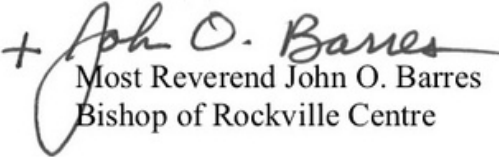
Second, in *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis shows St. Francis as an icon of Christocentric-listening. With great humility and charity, the saint reverently listened to others. He was present to the various voices in his life – the voice of God, the voice of his neighbor, the voice of the poor, the voice of the sick, the voice of nature – and by truly hearing them, he was an instrument of peace, healing, and understanding. How different it can be for us! The Holy Father says well what we know: “Today’s world is largely a deaf world...At times, the frantic pace of the modern world prevents us from listening attentively to what another person is saying.” Aware of this fact, the Pope encourages us, in the midst of our hectic and polarized world, to be like St. Francis and “not lose our ability to listen.” (48)

This Christmas, when we approach the crib, let us ask for the grace to be attentive listeners. Let us ask for the grace to be like St. Francis, so that we may hear the voice of God and the voice of our neighbor and respond with the radical charity he exhibited.¹

Like Pope Francis, may we be moved by the example of St. Francis, and may St. Francis of Assisi’s love for the Mystery of the Nativity, his ecstatic mysticism, his love for the poor, and his spirit of universal fraternity animate our celebration of Christmas this year.

May God bless you and your families this Christmas.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ 
Most Reverend John O. Barres
Bishop of Rockville Centre

¹ Cf. Bishop John O. Barres October 8, 2020 Statement, “The Compelling Figure of St. Francis of Assisi in the Pontificate of Pope Francis and his New Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*.”