



Dear Parishioners,

Having celebrated the holy day of the Immaculate Conception this weekend we have celebrated the patronal feast day for our country. In 1792 Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore, the first American bishop, consecrated the United States to Our Lady under her title of the Immaculate Conception. Then, in 1846, our American bishops officially placed the United States under the patronage and protection of our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. It is therefore important that we pray for our nation through the intercession of our Lady. I encourage us to pray the following prayer, attributed to Bishop Carroll, for our country:

Most Holy Trinity: Our Father in Heaven, who chose Mary as the fairest of Your daughters; Holy Spirit, who chose Mary as Your Spouse; God the Son who chose Mary as Your Mother, in union with Mary we adore Your Majesty and acknowledge Your supreme, eternal dominion and authority.

Most Holy Trinity, we put the United States of America into the hands of Mary Immaculate in order that she may present the country to You. Through her we wish to thank You for the great resources of this land and for the freedom which has been its heritage. Through the intercession of Mary, have mercy on the Catholic Church in America. Grant us peace. Have mercy on our President and on all the officers of our government. Grant us a fruitful economy, born of justice and charity. Have mercy on capital and industry and labor. Protect the family life of the nation. Guard the precious gift of many religious vocations. Through the intercession of Our Mother, have mercy

on the sick, the tempted, sinners - on all who are in need.

Mary, Immaculate Virgin, Our Mother, Patroness of our land, we praise you and honor you and give ourselves to you. Protect us from every harm. Pray for us, that acting always according to your will and the Will of your Divine Son, we may live and die pleasing to God. Amen.

If we pray to our Lady for the United States, we can be sure that her intercession will bring about marvels for us.

On a different note, on Sunday, December 16, from 6:00 to 9:00 P.M., I invite you to stop by the rectory for the annual open house. Hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be served. Both adults and children are welcome. If you stop by, it will be an opportunity to learn about various Advent devotions and customs, which the religious education children will be doing this week as well when their classes visit the rectory on December 12.

Have a grace-filled week.

God bless, Fr. Gutowski



MASS INTENTIONS

DECEMBER 10 THRU DEC. 16

Monday	Priest's Intention
Tuesday	Robert Masters, Jr.
Wednesday	Ann Boro
Thursday	Priest's Intention
Friday	Martha Kralikowski
Saturday	Jim Werner
Sunday	People of St. Joseph

MIDNIGHT MASS SINGERS

If you would like to sing for Midnight Mass, please meet for practice after Sunday morning masses.



We are having "Christmas in Germany" with the first session students on Wednesday, December 19 from 6-7:30. Several of the children have been preparing for a skit that they will perform that night. All are welcome to join us for an evening of fun and German treats.

There is NO RE for 2nd session students on December 19, because of the "Christmas in Germany" celebration for the first session students.

No RE for all grades on December 26 and January 2.

SERVERS, LECTORS & EME'S- NOTE!!

Mass times for the January 1st Holy Day, Mary Mother of God, have been changed. There will be a 6:00 p.m. mass on December 31 instead of 7:00 p.m. and a 9:00 a.m. Mass on January 1 instead of an 8 a.m. Mass. Also there will be NO mass the evening of Jan. 1. Please note these changes if you are schedules to read, serve or be an EMHC.

HOLY FAMILY SHRINE EVENTS

The Holy Family Shrine will welcome Archbishop Lucas as he celebrates the Feast of the Holy Family with a Mass at 2pm on December 30th. Later the same day at 4pm, Jim Nailon will make a return to the Shrine. Jim brings a gift of sacred music with a personal touch that's sure to please everyone. A reception will follow the concert. All free-will donations go to support the Holy Family Shrine.

POPE BENEDICT IS TWEETING

Even as the world was remembering that text messaging became a reality twenty years ago, [the Vatican announced](#) that Pope Benedict would launch a Twitter account on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12. With

over 500 million users, the Vatican sees Twitter as a natural outreach in this era of new evangelization. @pontifex is the Pope's Twitter account, and with the hash tag #askpontifex, users can ask questions about the faith. We won't be seeing encyclicals in 140 characters, but Pope Benedict is making an effort to proclaim the faith in any media that can reach people. The pope's Twitter feed is beginning in eight different languages.

In this weekend's Gospel, Luke casts John the Baptist in the role of a prophet. He is "a voice of one crying out." We still use words to proclaim the message of Christ, but we do it in many more ways than just a voice on a river bank or in a pulpit. It's not hard to imagine that if he lived in this day and age, John the Baptist would be an avid blogger using whatever means were at his disposal to get out the word of salvation.

This time of year, we can see all of the methods that retailers use to draw shoppers to their stores: direct mail, newspaper advertising, television and radio ads, billboards, in-store events, online specials, Facebook likes, and offers to increase sales. They want consumers to know what they have. The merchants need people to come in and buy if the holiday shopping season is going to boost their bottom line.

We Christians are not really "selling" Jesus. Salvation through him is not a commodity to be purchased. But John the Baptist did not hesitate to stand up on that river bank and proclaim what needed to be said. People don't necessarily gather at the river anymore. They are found on social networks like Facebook and Twitter. The prophecy of Isaiah proclaims that "all flesh shall see the salvation of God." If that is to become true, then the proclamation of God's good news will happen in pulpits, in bulletins, in the written word AND through texts, Facebook, and Twitter! Like the retailers who use every method at their disposal, the word of the Lord cannot be limited, but must be given free rein to speak to every time and place.

"Each day is a brand new opportunity to be Jesus to the world." -R.Falcon