



*St. Mary's Catholic Church
Windthorst, TX*

**St. Mary's / St.
Boniface
Vision Statement**

To serve Christ and
promote
His teachings
through Worship,
Education,
Training, Service,
and
COMMUNITA



*St. Boniface Catholic Church
Scotland, TX*

**Father Michael Moloney, O. F. S., Parochial Administrator, and
Donald Brown, Deacon**

Mailing Address for Both Churches

PO Box 230, Windthorst, Texas 76389
Phone (940) 423-6687 * Fax (940) 423-6657
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm
www.stmarysstboniface.org

General Information

BAPTISMAL PREPARATION

on the **3rd Sunday** of the month at 8:45 A.M.
contact the office for dates and to register for classes

Marriage Preparation

contact the office at least **six to nine months prior** to
wedding date

RCIA

contact Florence Anderle @ 423-6310 or 423-6271

Funerals

in the case of a death in the family, please contact the
office as soon as possible.

Ministry to the Sick

contact the office immediately if you know of anyone
who is sick, hospitalized or home-bound

Reconciliation

St. Boniface – **First Saturday** from 3:15 – 3:45 p.m.
or by appointment

St. Mary's-Wednesday after evening Mass, or by appointment

Hispanic Ministry

Tuesday & Thursday in Convent
Call Oscar or Alma Contreras at 423-6918 or 940-224-8183

Mass Schedule for the Week

Monday <u>8:15 am</u>	December 28 - St. Boniface Living and Deceased Members of 4 th Degree Knights of Columbus
Tuesday	December 29 NO MASS
Wednesday <u>7:00 pm</u>	December 30 – St. Mary's † Harold Schreiber by John Wolfs <u>NEW YEARS EVE MASSES</u>
Thursday <u>5:00 pm</u> <u>7:00 pm</u>	December 31 – St. Mary's Parishioners † Henry C. & Bertha Munchrath by Marvin Munchrath (SPANISH MASS) <u>NEW YEARS DAY MASSES</u>
Friday <u>8:15 am</u>	January 1 – St. Boniface † Ernest & Apoline Schreiber by Robert W. Krahl
Friday <u>10:00 am</u>	January 1 - St. Mary's † Al Veitenheimer by Ann Veitenheimer and Family
Saturday <u>8:00 am</u> <u>5:00 pm</u> <u>7:00 pm</u>	January 2 – St. Mary's Peace & Unity by C. D. A. #296 † Adolph Veitenheimer & Lois Luig by Joey Veitenheimers Parishioners (SPANISH MASS)
Sunday <u>8:15 am</u> Sunday <u>10:00 am</u>	January 3 - St. Boniface † Hugo Teichman by Donna & Amanda January 3 - St. Mary's † Jerome Berend by Family

ST. MARY'S MINISTERS
December 28, 2015 – January 3, 2015

HOSPITALITY

Thurs. 5:00 pm Doug & Betty Wolf
Fri. 10:00 am Donald & Laurie Veitenheimer
Sat. 5:00 pm Alfred Berend Jr. & Brett Hoff
Sun. 10:00 am Steve & Carla Schlumpf

LECTORS

Wed. 7:00 pm Krista Vieth
Thur. 5:00 pm Gina Wolf & Deana Vieth
Fri. 10:00 am Karen McCann & Weston Schlumpf
Sat. 8:00 am Jean Berend
Sat. 5:00 pm Florence Anderle & Jerry Anderle
Sun. 10:00 am Margie Berend & Chuck King

SERVERS

Wed. 7:00 pm Nathan & Thomas McCann
Thur. 5:00 pm Gage, Gavin & Grayson Steinberger
Fri. 10:00 am Bethany Schlumpf, Luke & Noah Koetter
Sat. 5:00 pm Landry Vieth, Kyle Wolf, Larson Vieth
Sun. 10:00 am Kennedy Veitenheimer, Brayden Armstrong, Trent Price

MINISTERS OF COMMUNION

Thur. 5:00 pm Jay Pope/Hosts, Cheryl Pope/Hosts, Arthur Litteken, Richard Schreiber, Brett Hoff, Ricky Schroeder, Jerry Anderle/Hosts Choir, Diane Schroeder/Choir
Fri. 10:00 am (Holy Day) Trissa Berend/Hosts, Melinda Schneider/Hosts, Joey Veitenheimer, Brian Anderle, Joyce Wolf, Sherry Berend, Tommy Schlumpf III/Choir Hosts, Shelley Schlumpf/Choir

Sat. 5:00 pm Stacey Steinberger/Hosts, Beverly Lindeman/Hosts, Michael Schroeder, June Schroeder, Ricky Schreiber, Whitney Schreiber, Leo Hoff/Choir Hosts, Donna Hoff/Choir

Sun. 10:00 am Leann Hoff/Hosts, Susan Veitenheimer/Hosts, Mark Veitenheimer, Kristi Veitenheimer, Weston Schlumpf, Craig Anderle, Krista Vieth/Choir Hosts, Sandra Gresham/Choir

USHERS

Thur. 5:00 pm Alfred Berend, Eddie Luig, M. J. Geis, James Vieth
Fri. 10:00 am Terry Schroeder, Trey Berend, Jay Meurer, David McCann
Sat. 5:00 pm Alfred Berend, Gary Wolf, Leo Hoff Jr., Doug Wolf
Sun. 10:00 am Donnie & Jesse Fleitman, Dalton Anderle, Brad Hoffman

GIFT BEARERS

Thur. 5:00 pm Leo Hoff Jr. Family
Fri. 10:00 am Tammy Schroeder Family
Sat. 5:00 pm Greg & Patricia Vieth Family
Sun. 10:00 am Lloyd Wolf Jr. Family

COMMUNION MINISTERS TO THE SICK

January 3rd Ann Hertel & Tracy Schreiber

CHILDREN'S LITURGY LEADERS

January 3rd Gwen Teichman & McKenna George
January 10th Alex Veitenheimer, Bailey Schlumpf, Hannah Anderle

MONEY COUNTERS

Mon. Dec. 28th Alfred Berend Jr., Chuck Veitenheimer, Joann Hoff

SUPPORT-Sunday Envelopes \$5396.00, Loose \$336.80, Children \$42.25, Building Fund \$120.00, Immaculate Conception \$90.00, Retired Religious \$335.00.

ST. BONIFACE MINISTERS,
December 28, 2015, January 3 2015

HOSPITALITY

Friday 8:15 am Bertha Mae Schenk & Sis Smith
Sun. 8:15 am Kim Hemmi & Kayla Styles

LECTOR

Friday 8:15 am Rhoda Schenk
Sun. 8:15 am Keith Teichman

SERVERS

Friday 8:15 am Madison Krahl & Callie Idell
Sun. 8:15 am Landon & Abby Brown

MINISTERS OF COMMUNION

Friday 8:15 am Robert & Debbie Krahl, Terry Berend, Patsy Stallcup
Sun. 8:15 am Keith & Cindy Teichman, A. J. Schreiber, Debbie Rodgers

USHERS

Friday 8:15 am Bryan & Brent Hemmi
Sun. 8:15 am Terry Berend & Lyndon Teichman

GIFT BEARERS

Friday 8:15 am Harold Stallcup Family
Sun. 8:15 am Grady Schenk Jr. Family

MONEY COUNTERS

Friday Jan. 1st Arthur Hemmi, Vivian Rice, Debbie Krahl

Sun. Jan. 3rd Chris Hemmi, Donna Tettleton, Joyce Moer

SUPPORT – Sunday Envelopes \$1215.00, Loose \$264.00, Children \$4.00, Immaculate Conception \$130.00.

ST. MARY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

SANCTUARY LIGHT will burn this week in memory of my Dad-in-law, Frank Hoffman on his birthday as requested by Frances Hoffman.

CHALICE FOR VOCATIONS: Lester & Florence Anderle will receive the Chalice on **January 2nd** at the 5:00 p.m. Mass. They, as well as all of us, are asked to pray for vocations.

1-9 Leroy & Caroline Anderle 5:00 pm Mass

1-16 Jerry & Marsha Anderle 5:00 pm Mass

CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED ON TUESDAYS.

SPECIAL NOTICE: All bulletin notices need to be in the office by 10:00 a.m. on Monday, December 28th because of the New Year's Holiday. Thanks for your cooperation.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

December 30 - Adoration at 6:00 p.m. Benediction 6:50 p.m.
Mass at 7:00 p.m.

Dec. 31 New Years Eve Mass St Mary's 5:00 pm

Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Spanish Mass 7:00 pm

Jan. 1 New Years Day Mass St. Boniface 8:15 am

Jan. 1 New Years Day Mass St. Mary's 10:00 am

WINDTHORST SENIOR CITIZENS meet **Tuesday, December 29th** in the K. C. Hall at 11:30 for lunch and 1:00 p.m. for games.

CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON JANUARY 1ST.

ENVELOPES- The stewardship envelopes for 2016 are ready for you to pick up. Envelopes for those families that have children in school are in the paper bags. Please pick them up at your earliest convenience. Thank you. If anyone has been overlooked please notify the office at 423-6687.

CHURCH NURSERY- We are excited to announce that we have opened the church nursery for ages 1 – 3 years of age. Drop off time will start at 9:30 a.m. for Sunday 10:00 a. m. Mass ONLY. The Nursery is located in the classroom of the Parish Hall, but please enter through the Meeting Room Door. The Nursery Registration form is required for each child. If you are interested in volunteering, The Keeping Children Safe Training is required. Please contact the church office for training information. There is no charge for the nursery, but donations for snacks and supplies are accepted. If you have any questions, please contact Kayla Anderle at 940-337-1995.

YEARLY LIGHTS will be due at the end of the year. Please let the office know if you wish to renew any lights from 2015.

ST. BONIFACE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

SANCTUARY LIGHT—will burn this week in Thanksgiving for my family as requested by Cathy Hoff.

ST. BONIFACE 7-DAY LIGHTS; For my mother, Matilda Hulett, that the Lord walk with her in these days of darkness by Donor; Speedy recovery for Harold Stallcup by Robert and Edna; Special Intention by Donor; For Peace, Our Members by St. Boniface Christian Mothers' Society; Living & Deceased Members & Relatives of Catholic Life Insurance Branch #36.

SPECIAL NOTICE: All bulletin notices need to be in the office by 10:00 a.m. on Monday, December 28TH because of the New Year's Holiday. Thanks for your cooperation.

CHALICE FOR VOCATION: Bertha Mae Schenk will receive the Chalice on **January 3rd** at the **8:15 a.m.** Mass. She, as well as all of us, is asked to pray for vocations.

1-10 Grady & Cherry Schenk

1-17 Wayne & Laverne Lindemann

SCOTLAND SENIOR CITIZENS will meet on **Sunday, January 10th 2016.** Come enjoy the fellowship and share a meal. All are welcome.

ENVELOPES- The stewardship envelopes for 2016 are ready for you to pick up. Envelopes for those families that have children in school are in the paper bags. The envelopes are in the vestibule of the church. Please pick them up at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON JANUARY 1.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR BOTH PARISHES

APPOINTMENTS WITH FATHER MICHAEL – If you have a concern and wish to visit with Fr. Michael, please call the office for an appointment. Or you may e-mail Father at mmoloney@comcell.net.

THE PILGRIM VIRGIN STATUE- will be in the home of **Joseph & Lugenia Zotz** the week of **January 3rd**. They are asked to pray for world peace, military, and vocations.

1-10 Harold & Patsy Stallcup

1-17 Bertha Mae Schenk

CONFESSIONS: Father Michael will have Confessions on Wednesdays after evening Mass and on Saturday afternoons from 4:00 to 4:40 at St. Mary's. Confessions at St. Boniface will be on the first Saturday of the month from 3:15 to 3:45 pm. If you are unable to make those times, please call the office at 423-6687 or e-mail Father Michael at mmoloney@comcell.net for a time convenient for both you and Fr. Michael.

ALZHEIMERS CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP For family and friends involved in the care of people with Dementia. The support group is FREE and open to the public. Long distance caregivers are welcome. **Monday, December 28th at 6:30 p.m. in St. Mary's Convent** in Windthorst. Call Sue Gross at 940-767-8800 or 1-800-272-3900, www.alzorg/northcentraltxas for more information.

FOURTH DEGREE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS - All Fourth Degree members and guests along with all widows of members are invited to join us for our annual Christmas Party. This year it will be **Monday, December 28th** and will begin with a social at 6:00 pm followed by dinner around 6:30. Gift exchange items should be limited to the \$15.00 range.

PLENARY INDULGENCE: The remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sin whole guilt has already been forgiven. A properly disposed member of the Christian faithful can obtain an indulgence under prescribed conditions through the help of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints. An indulgence is partial if it removes part of the temporal punishment due to sin, or plenary if it removes all punishment.

THE HOLY FATHER'S INTENTIONS FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER ARE:

Universal: That all may experience the mercy of God, who never tires of forgiving

Evangelization: That families, especially those who suffer, may find in the birth of Jesus a sign of certain hope.

The four conditions to receive a Plenary Indulgence after going through the Door of Mercy in Church are: Praying the Apostles Creed, Praying for the Intentions of the Holy Father, Going to Confession within a couple of weeks, and receiving Holy Communion.

ADDITIONAL FLOWERS FOR CHRISTMAS: These names were received after the bulletin was printed. In Honor of Ann Veitenheimer, Margie Himmels, Mabel Bowlden and Annette Fleitman by the Richard Wachsman Family. We apologize for the delay in getting this on the bulletin.

ATTENTION SENIORS 2015 – 2016: If you are a JCDA member or the son/daughter, niece/nephew, brother/sister or grandson/granddaughter of a CDA member you are eligible to apply for the CDA State Memorial Scholarship. The deadline postmark for this scholarship is January 31, 2016. For more information or an application please notify Dianne Zotz at 423-6460 or the WISD Counselor Darla Tackett, at 423-6608.

NOTICE FROM KIM HEMMI – “The City of Scotland & Friends of the Park are currently selling commemorative engraved bricks to raise money for a new playground in our city park. **DECEMBER 31** is the deadline to purchase a brick for \$125 in honor or in memory of someone, anniversaries, pets or any other reason. Donors giving \$1,000 or more will have their family name or business placed on a bronze plaque. All donations are tax-deductible and gratefully appreciated! This makes a great gift that keeps on giving. If you have family members from Scotland who currently live away but may be interested in purchasing a brick, please share this information with them. A big thank you to everyone who has already contributed! For more information, Call Kim Hemmi at 940-733-6804.”

DIVORCED AND RE-MARRIED? If you are divorced and remarried outside of the Catholic Church without a Decree of Nullity/Invalidity, or if you are a Catholic and are married outside of the Catholic Church, you may not partake of the Sacraments, including the reception of Holy Communion. Until it is shown otherwise through the ministry of the Tribunal, no person is free to enter into another marriage without the appearance or occasion of serious sin. However, a divorce alone does not affect or hinder in any way, your participation in the Sacraments. A divorced Catholic is free to receive the sacraments. However, if you are divorced and have remarried, or if you are divorced and in a new relationship, or if you are living with someone without a Decree of Nullity/Invalidity (and your former spouse is still living) you may not partake of the sacraments, including the reception of Holy Communion. Consider seeking a Decree of Nullity/Invalidity which will enable you to return to a full participation in the sacramental life of the Church. For more information please Contact Father Michael at mmoloney@comcell.net. Thanks.

WELCOME TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY

William Holden Schreiber

Son of

Nicholas and Mary Burns Schreiber

Baptized September 27, 2015

Beatty Lane Sullivan

Son of Shad & Thea Neeb Sullivan

Baptized November 27, 2015

Makayla Marie Tapia

Daughter of Armando & Maria Azua Tapia

Baptized December 5, 2015

MILITARY PRAYER LIST – Taylor Anderson (Air Force), Charles Berend, Jr. (Navy), Jarrod Canada (Army), Fermin Estrada Jr., (Army), Sgt. Bill Foster, Capt. Sean Fuhrmann (Marines), Lt. Colonel Tony Garcia (Navy), Luke Grotelueschen (Army), Tracey Hoff (Navy), Sgt. Damian Hoffman, Ethan Hoffman (Air Force), Sgt. Whitney Jeter (Marine), Sgt. Nicholas Klein (Army), Staff Sgt. Chad Koetter (Air Force), Jess Martinez (Army), Blake Newby (Army), Kenneth (K.J.) Nichols (Army), Major David Ogura (Army), Kyle Page (Marine), Frank Prokop, (Colorado Air National Guard), Sgt. Robert Rhinehart, Hank Schenk (Air National Guard), Isaac Schenk (Army), Rock Schenk (Army), Colonel Tony Schenk (Air Force), 1st Class Craig Slaten (Air Force), Staff Sgt. Ricky Smith (Air Force), Judy Solorio (Navy), Staff Sgt. Matthew Tubbs, Sgt. Ann Schreiber Turner (Air Force), Sgt. Matt Turner (Air Force), Ben Veitenheimer (Navy), Josh Winter (Army), Major Audrey Wolf (Army). (If there are any changes or additions please call the office.) Dear Heavenly Father, please protect our troops as they protect us. Bless them and their families for all that they are doing for us in our time of need. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS!

Caroline Anderle, Ruth Jean Anderson, Zack Andrus, Mous Badad, Andy Berend, Cordella Berend, Nellie Berend, Don Bilbrey, Patience Blake, John Brenneis, Deacon Don Brown, Helen Brown, J.C. Birkenfield, Diane Borgman, Jose Cabrera, Chris Carcaño, Jesús Colchado, Jeff Conrady, Sue Conrady, Freida Day, Brad Dennis, Karen Edge, Marlene Ermis Marshall, Jeanne Fischer, Margie Frazier, Father Nicholas Fuhrmann, Kimberly Fulford, Sister Marie Green, Jerry Gibson, Artie Hallenbeck, **Linda Haynes**; Floyd Hilbers, Margie Himmels, Billie Hoff, Cathy Hoff, Ernie Hoff, Frosty Hoff, Marvin Hoff Sr., Wilfred A. Hoff, Bill Hoffman, Chris Hogue, Beth Holovak, Carol Hudak, Libby Ingram, Casey Jeter, Patricia Schroeder Kainer, Dale Keen, Rodney Kitten, Joe Lindeman, Jim Lowe, Brian Lucore, Kyler Marlar, Gerry Meurer, Jess Meurer, Loretta Meurer, Kathleen Moer, Anna Moloney, Clyde Morbitzer, Mary Morbitzer, Skylar Mueller, Steve Munchrath, Leesa Schroeder Nelson, Kim Nelson, Travis Nelson, Greg Oliver, Lena Ostermann, Tracie Pace, Rita Pearson, Troy Pennartz, Gina Phillips, John Rife, Brighton Riley, Jeff Scheffe, Terry Shefflett, Cassey Schenk, Roch Schenk, Rosalie Schenk, Gerald Schreiber, Nelda Schreiber, Pauline Schreiber, John (Hans) Schroeder, Linda Schroeder, Margaret Schroeder, Debbie Skipper, Caroline Stallcup, Kate Talley, Marie Teichman, Margaret Green Tift, Trent Tipton, Anna Mae Veitenheimer, Frances Veitenheimer, Paul Wachsman, Richard Wachsman, Diana Walker, Mary Williams, Don Windham, Sarah Witten, Bertha Wolf, Dorothy Dell Wolf, Dorothy V. Wolf, Kellar Wolf, Kenny Wolf, Larry Wolf, Lorine Wolf, Martha Wolf, Pauline Wolf, Ronnie Wolf, Alphonse Zotz Jr., Chuck Zotz, Missy Zotz. If you wish your name removed or there are any changes, please call the office. **Prayer of the Faithful:** Lord Jesus, we lift those on our weekly list to you; You are the healer of the sick and we keep praying and hoping for those who are ill. May we continue to pray for all who are sick and hurting and may your peace come to each and every one of us. Amen.

ST. MARY'S 7-DAY LIGHTS: Lena Ostermann by Deacon Don & Helen Brown; Very Special Intention by Donor; Our Family, Mom and Daddy, +Timothy, May he rest in peace, Kenny, Karen and family, All the sick and hurting, Special Intentions by the Lenny Berends; Marlene Marshall, +Karen Foster by their parents; Our Children & Grandchildren & Great Grandchildren, In Thanksgiving for all the prayers from the Windthorst & Scotland people by Floyd & Mildred; +Timothy Berend, Kenny & Karen Berend Family, Jerome Berend Family, Father Michael, Deacon Don & Helen, Better health for Brad, Thanks to Alfred & Cordella, Special Intentions by Leanne Dennis; Aunt Bertha, Kenny Berend Family, Alfred & Cordella, Deacon Don & Helen, Larry Wolf, Geraldine Lindemann, JoAnn Hoff & Bill Veith, Our Family, All the sick & hurting, Merry Christmas To All & A Happy Healthy New Year! by Betty & Doug Wolf; A Blessed Christmas to all our brothers & sisters, Recovery for Edna Anderle, Father Michael, Deacon Don & Helen, Jerome Berend Family, Harold Stallcup, Paul & Rosalie Schenk, Kenny & Karen Berend & Family, Margaret Schroeder, Margie Frazier by James & Pat; Lorine Wolf, Anna Mae Veitenheimer, Geraldine Lindemann, Aunt Leona Koetter, Margaret Ann Beaman, Kenny & Karen Berend Family, Kenny & Martha Wolf, Ann Veitenheimer & Family by Alfred & Cordella; +Tim Berend, Kenny, Karen & Family, Charles & Glenda, +Oliver & Mildred, Our Children, Special Intention by Russell & Judy; Recovery and Good Health for Margaret Schroeder, Gayle Vieth and Margie Frazier by St. Mary's Christian Mother's Society; **YEARLY LIGHTS:** For the safety of all our military, especially for Staff Sgt. Damian Hoffman (Army), Ethan Hoffman (Air Force), and Maj. David Ogura (Army) by Grandmommy; Robert and my family by Lorine Wolf; The Holy Spirit's Daily Guidance in Endeavors for each member of my family by Donor; For the Living & Deceased Members of the Charles & Mary Lindeman family by Benny Lindeman; Safety of Ben Wolf, Gina Loran and Brett Hoff by Benny Lindeman; For my family by Elmer Schroeder; For Students of W.I.S.D. & C.D.A. #296 Members by C. D. A. #296; Joe Schreiber & Joseph Schreiber, Jr. by Agnes Schreiber; Mom by Johnnie & Alice; For our Family by Bernard & Pat Scheffe; For our Family by Henry & Mildred; Our Family by Alfred & Cordella; My Family by Ann Veitenheimer; For our family by Joe & Lugenia Zotz; For our Military Personnel by V.F.W. Ladies Auxiliary; In loving memory of Rusty & Shannon and all dear departed of Lindemann & Green families; For my children & grandchildren to always stay faithful to the Church and its teachings, don't fall away and to keep God in their lives; For peace, Our beloved country and all the brave military; For the sick & elderly of our parishes and for all my dear friends who are so kind and helpful to me; For all the faithful Priests & Religious and for more vocations by Geraldine Lindemann; Thomas & Leona Schlumpf by Danny Schlumpf Family; Arnold & Lillian Lindeman by the

Family; Janice, Ed & Catherine and Lois Luig and Geraldine's health by Eddie Luig; For my Family by Lena Ostermann; Ben's Safety by Mom & Dad; Floyd Humpert by Betty; For our family by Marvin & Elsie Hoff; For my family and for Bruce by Anna Mae Veitenheimer; For my Family by Margaret Beaman; Living & Deceased Members of Catholic Life Insurance Branch #30; For the safety and welfare of Blake Newby (Army) by Grandma Dorothy V. Wolf.

This bulletin compliments of Catholic Life Insurance Union Branch #30 of Windthorst and Branch #36 of Scotland

CATECHISM IN A YEAR

What is a Christian house of prayer?

A Christian house of prayer is both a sign of the ecclesial communion of people at a specific place and also a symbol of the heavenly dwellings that God has prepared for us all. In God's house we gather together to pray in common or alone and to celebrate the sacraments, especially the Eucharist.

"It smells like heaven here." "Here you can be very quiet and reverent." Many churches surround us perceptibly in a thick atmosphere of prayer. We sense that God is present here. The beauty of church buildings directs our attention to the beauty, greatness, and love of God. Churches are not just stone messengers of the faith, but dwelling places of God, who is really and truly and substantially present in the sacrament of the altar.

What liturgical spaces define a house of God?

The central places of a house of God are the altar with the crucifix, the tabernacle, the celebrant's chair, the ambo, the baptismal font, and the confessional.

The altar is the central point of the church. On it Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross and resurrection are made present in the celebration of the Eucharist. It is also the table to which the People of God are invited. The tabernacle, a kind of sacred safe, houses with the greatest honor in a most worthy place in the church the Eucharistic species in which the Lord himself is present. The so-called perpetual lamp indicates that the tabernacle is "occupied". If the lamp is not burning, the tabernacle is empty. The raised chair (Latin cathedra) of the bishop or the priest means that ultimately Christ is the one who leads the congregation. The ambo (from Greek *anabainein* = to climb up), the lectern for the Word of God, should manifest the value and dignity of the biblical readings as the word of the living God. Baptisms are performed at the baptismal font, and the holy water font should be a vivid reminder of our baptismal promises. A confessional or confession room is there so that we can acknowledge our guilt and receive forgiveness.



Holy Family in Egypt, Nicolas Poussin (1655-1657)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2015

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH

Say yes to the unknown

It is good and right to hold Jesus' family in the highest esteem. But in reality we have very few details about their daily lives. When we search scripture for clues we learn that Joseph and Mary each said *yes* to the unknown as they accepted the responsibility of parenthood. In truth, that is the situation encountered by every parent. We embrace the gift of life and do our best to parent and bring our children closer to God. But it is not a clear science. It is indeed entering the unknown with a sacrificial *yes* that allows every parent to share in the creative work of God. On this third day of Christmas, give the gift of gratitude to a parent you know.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28 or Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14; 1 John 3:1-2, 21-24 or Colossians 3:12-21; Luke 2:41-52 (17).*

"Son, why have you done this to us? You see that your father and I have been searching for you."

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28 FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS

Let them be heard

"Children should be seen and not heard." Aristophanes voiced this maxim in 423 B.C. By the 15th century, a clergyman's sermon amended it to "A *maiden* should be seen but not heard," and four centuries later Thackeray agreed that "little girls" are properly silent. B.W. Bellamy's 1915 *Table Rules for Little Folks* restores the original idea that children are best seen and silent. However you say it, this idea leaves the most vulnerable members of society open to bullying, violence, and abuse. On this fourth day of Christmas, give the gift of your attention to children.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 1:5-2:2; Matthew 2:13-18 (698). "A voice was heard in Ramah . . . Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be consoled."*

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29 FEAST OF THOMAS BECKET, BISHOP, MARTYR

Speak truth to power

In 1162, King Henry II of England appointed his good friend Thomas Becket as archbishop of Canterbury, which was the most powerful church position in the country. The king was hoping Becket would be his political puppet, but Becket realized his duty and out of principle refused to yield control of the church in England to the throne, and because of his stance he was martyred. When you're given responsibilities, remember that you're responsible to the people you serve, not the ones who got you there.



Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time.

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TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 2:3-11; Luke 2:22-35 (202). "... whoever keeps his word, the love of God is truly perfected in him."*

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30

SIXTH DAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

In praise of praise

Criticism is easy to dispense. We can always find the dust on the relative's bookshelves, the imperfection in the child's homework, the moral fault in our neighbor. But how often do we offer praise where praise is due? The epistle writers of the New Testament take equal time to strengthen and encourage the community with words of affirmation and to steer it with corrections. On this sixth day of Christmas, give the gift of encouragement to someone who hasn't heard it lately.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 2:12-17; Luke 2:36-40 (203). "I am writing to you, young men, because you have conquered the Evil One."*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

SEVENTH DAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Sharing the light of faith

How do we talk about our faith to others? Some may cringe: "Heavens, what a question!" Proselytizing is a game we'd prefer to leave to religious hustlers, and rightly so. But the witness of our faith is something to share generously, starting with our families and friends. If you had a plate of amazing cookies, wouldn't you eagerly bring them out to pass around? How much more the Good News of God's love and forgiveness? On this seventh day of Christmas, give the gift of a favorite Bible verse to someone you love.

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 2:18-21; John 1:1-18 (204). "He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him."*

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1, 2016 OCTAVE DAY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD; SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

Celebrate all that is new

The feast of Mary as Mother of God occurs this year at the start of the new calendar year. Both are times of new beginnings. We celebrate Mary, who through her "yes" has borne Emmanuel, "God with us," marking a new moment in history. We also celebrate the New Year, with many of us resolving to make some kind of change for the better. How might Mary inspire you to newness this year? How might you inspire others? On this eighth day of Christmas, give the gift of gratitude for Mary's example of openness to God's calling.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Numbers 6:22-27; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:16-21 (18). "And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart."*

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2 FEAST OF BASIL THE GREAT AND GREGORY NAZIANZUS, BISHOPS, DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH

Holiness can be a family affair

Several giants of the Early Church, including today's saints Basil and Gregory Nazianzus, were inspired by Basil's older sister Macrina (whose brothers also included two other saints, Gregory of Nyssa and Peter of Sebaste). Macrina deeply influenced her family with her asceticism. With the help of her younger brother, Peter, Macrina turned the family estate into a monastery and convent, providing a peaceful shelter for study and meditation. What inspiration can you draw from family members as you resolve to deepen your commitment to Christ in this new year dedicated to mercy?

TODAY'S READINGS: *1 John 2:22-28; John 1:19-28 (205). "I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Make straight the way of the Lord.'"*

Decisión para el Año Nuevo
Resolution for 2015

Jesus was born into a harsh world, where Herod was doing the unthinkable: killing babies.

Is there any doubt that our world today needs Jesus to come and dwell among us?

As a new year begins, let us resolve to be a more effective and dedicated instruments of Jesus. Let us do more to promote love and peace. Let us do more to help Moms turn the unplanned into a loving plan that embraces their innocent baby child.

Let us do more to change our culture of death.

Decisión para el Año Nuevo

Jesús nació en un mundo severo adonde Herodes estaba haciendo lo inconcebible: matando bebés.

¿Habrà alguna duda de que nuestro mundo hoy en día necesita que Jesús venga y habite entre nosotros?

En cuanto empiece el nuevo año, vayamos a resolver a ser más efectivos y dedicados a ser instrumentos de Jesús. Vayamos a hacer más para promover el amor y la paz. Vayamos a hacer más para ayudar a las madrecitas a convertir lo no planeado a un plan cariñoso que abraza la vida inocente.

Vayamos a hacer más para cambiar nuestra cultura de muerte.