

CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING NEWVERNON, NJ

*We are a grateful and welcoming Catholic family of faith,
nourished by the Word and Eucharist,
called to serve as disciples of Christ, the King.*

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 24, 2017



16 Blue Mill Road
PO Box 368
New Vernon, NJ 07976
973.539.4955 phone
973.267.7070 fax
www.churchofchristtheking.org

MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 AM & 5:30 PM
Saturday (vigil) 5:00 PM

Weekdays

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 7:00 AM
Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday 9:00 AM

CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING

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New Vernon, New Jersey 07976
973-539-4955
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CUSTODIAN

Louis Sauchelli, ext. 25

PARISH DEVOTIONS

Novena Prayers in Honor of the Sacred Heart

First Fridays during morning Mass at 7:00am.

Novena Prayer in Honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal

Mondays after the 7:00am Mass

Rosary

Tuesdays and Thursdays after the 9:00am Mass

Holy Hour of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

First Saturday of the month, 8:00am

Reconciliation (Individual Confession)

Saturday 9:30-10:15am

BAPTISMS

Sundays after the 11:00am Mass at 12:15pm, schedule permitting.
Please call the Parish Office to make the necessary arrangements
for a Baptismal Preparation Session.

MARRIAGES

Please contact the Parish Office a year prior to the requested
wedding date so the proper marriage preparation can be
completed. Pre Cana takes place in the spring and fall.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Kindergarten

Optional program for families whose oldest child is in Kindergarten
Monthly on Sunday 10:00-10:45am (as scheduled)

Family Based Model

Grade 5 may select FBRE or Jr. High option
Families with children K-5

Thursday or Friday 6-8pm, (monthly as scheduled)

Junior High – Grades 5-8

Sundays 5:30-8:00pm (twice a month)

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION (RCIA)

September—May

Adults interested in becoming Roman Catholic Christians should
contact Sister Mary Joseph Schultz, SCC, ext. 13.

MINISTRY TO THE SICK & HOMEBOUND

Priests and Ministers of Communion are available to visit the sick
and homebound. Please call the Parish Office to schedule.

NEW PARISHIONERS

We welcome new parishioners to register at any time.
Please call the Parish Office.

eNEWSLETTER (*monthly*)

Do you want to know more of what is happening
in our parish community?

SIGN UP to receive our parish eNewsletter at
www.churchofchristtheking.org

4th Sunday of Advent

Mary is the model of trusting faith.



What is faith? For many, perhaps, the word refers to those truths we profess when we recite the Creed. Those articles of belief are the faith. Faith has another meaning, however: a personal meaning. Faith is not merely mental acceptance of truths. Faith is also personal trust. The Creed itself indicates this in its opening words. Not, "I believe that ..." but, "I believe in ..." The one we believe in, whom we trust, is God.

The greatest model of this trusting faith is the woman the Church places before us in today's Gospel: Mary, the trusting and faith-filled mother of the Lord.

The kind of trusting faith we see in Mary models a faith that is always open to God. She believes in God's love for her and in his promises, and gives herself wholly over to him to do with her and her life whatever he would.

Yet Mary's faith was not blind. She doubted and questioned. How can this be? Mary asked the angel who told her she was to be the mother of God's Son. What Mary questioned, however, was not so much God, as her own ability to understand God and his plan for her life. Even in the midst of perplexity, however, Mary confessed that God knew best, even if she could not understand what he was about: May it be done to me according to your word, she told the angel.

That assent to God's plan for her was not a one-time thing. She lived this faithfulness every day forward from that moment, amid joys and sufferings. We are familiar with some of those: the challenges of traveling to Bethlehem, and childbirth in a stable; searching for the child Jesus for several days when he had remained in the Temple to teach; watching Jesus leave home to begin his ministry; and, of course, standing at the foot of the cross as he was crucified.

Can there be any doubt that it is precisely this trusting faith of Mary's that we need today? We need the kind of faith that Mary had, the faith she models for us: faith which continues to trust in God amid events in our world and our lives we do not understand.

Faith, then, is not something we can summon up by willpower. Faith, the catechism tells us, "is a supernatural gift from God" (179). And who can doubt that this faith will be given to us in the same measure in which it was given to Mary who herself modeled this faith? Her faith allowed Jesus to be born into the world. Let our faith welcome that birth tomorrow, and share it with the world.

Mass Intentions

Tuesday, December 26

9am Michael Drew

Wednesday, December 27

7am Michael Lynch

Thursday, December 28

9am Mary Rowan

Friday, December 29

7am Julia Collins

Saturday, December 30

9am Margaret Feledy

5pm Isabelle Rich

Sunday, December 31

7am John Martin

9am Walker Dillard Kirby

11am Albert Dickson

No 5:30pm Mass Today

If you are a family member or friend of the person being remembered at Sunday Mass, please feel free to approach an usher and offer to bring up the gifts.

Sanctuary Lamp

The Sanctuary Lamp burns this week in memory of Bob Emmens at the request of the Shirley Emmens.

Pray for the Sick

Terry Zimmer, Joan Dagostino, Kristen Johnson, Kathryn Olden, Grant Martin Scruggs, John Allen, Paula Dugan, Tawny Wamack, Rex Linnehan, Randy Brooks, and all those listed in Our Lady's Chapel prayer book of intentions.

Collection

Last Weekend Collection: \$17,294.50*

*Included in this number is Faith Direct average weekly giving of \$5,476.00.

Due to the early bulletin deadlines for Christmas and the New Year, this information will be included in the January 7 bulletin.

Baptism

This weekend we welcome into the Church through the waters of Baptism Charles Thomas Baker, son of Tyler and Laura (Nee Westerhold).

Book of the Month



The next meeting of the *Book of the Month* will take place on **January 9 at 10am** in the Parish Life Center Library. The book to be discussed is *"I Will Have Vengeance; The Winter of Commissario Ricciardi"*, by Maurizio de Giovanni.

All are welcome!

Religious Education



Kindergarten Religious Education

(Monthly Sunday)

January 7, 10am – 10:45am – PLC Library

Family-Based Religious Education

Thursday Session January 4

4 to 6pm – In the Parish Hall

Friday Session January 5

6 to 8pm – In the Parish Hall

Pizza will be served for both sessions at 5:45pm

Junior High Religious Education

(Grades 5, 6, 7 & 8)

Student Sessions

Sunday January 7 & 21, 6:30pm – 8:00pm,

First Communion Preparation Liturgy

Sunday, January 7 – 9am Mass

GRADES 1-5 Learning Session

Wednesday, January 10

4 to 5pm – Parish Life Center

Christmas Concert



Our 7th Annual Christmas Concert happened during the weekend of December 2-3. One more time we joined forces with St. Patrick choir to start the Advent and Christmas seasons. This year's theme was **"Peace to the World"** with a repertoire of carols from around the world. Our choir members sang in several different languages, styles and rhythms to a **standing room audience** – the most attended Christmas Concert ever. Thank you to all who shared with us this moment of celebration and peace. I hope to see you next year!

Communion for the Sick and Homebound



Eucharistic Ministers are available to visit and bring Holy Communion to anyone who is sick or homebound. If you, or someone you know, would like to be visited by a Eucharistic Minister, please call the parish office.

Faith Direct

Faith Direct enables parishioners to make your Church contributions through either direct debit from your checking/savings account or through your credit/debit card. No more writing checks or searching for envelopes on the way out the door. Now you can apply the convenience of direct debit to your parish offerings in much the same way as you may now use it to make your mortgage, car or tuition payments.

Visit www.faithdirect.net to enroll securely online. Our parish code is NJ658.

Saint of the Week

December 26

St. Stephen

Little is known about St. Stephen's life except that he was the very first martyr. He was the oldest of the seven deacons appointed by the apostles, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles. Deacons were initially appointed to care for the needs of Greek-speaking widows. Their work continues today as they serve in parishes in many capacities.

Stephen became known for his preaching and zeal for the name of Jesus. He also worked "wonders and signs" among the people, as recorded in Acts. His popularity did not sit well with the Jewish leaders of the synagogue. He was accused of blasphemy and speaking against Moses and God. Stephen responded with great wisdom from heaven as he charged the Sanhedrin with stubbornness and hardness of heart. When he concluded his famous speech, he reported seeing a vision in the heavens, which only sealed his doom.

As St. Stephen was brutally stoned by the crowd, he forgave his killers, echoing the same words of Jesus as he died. The rabbi, Saul of Tarsus, witnessed the execution. He himself, Paul, would go from being a persecutor of Christians to the greatest evangelist and Apostle to the Gentiles.

Stephen, who died in the year 34, was buried in an unknown location. In the year 415 a Christian priest had a vision and pinpointed the location of the tomb. Upon its excavation, the name of Stephen was found inside the tomb. He is the patron saint of deacons, altar servers, casket makers and stone-workers.

St. Stephen, teach us how to forgive our enemies, even those who do us great harm.



Christmas Vigil

The mystery of Christmas is meant for everyone.

There is a great story about a family with young children, and their manger scene at home. It goes like this: one day, a young mom with five young children decided early in Advent that it was time to set up the manger scene at home. She and the children worked all day getting things set up. Of course, Baby Jesus was left out of the scene, to be placed there late on Christmas Eve. Everyone seemed to be happy to take part in the manger scene project, and it was a good opportunity for a young mom to help her children grow in faith.

A few days later, she noticed that a Star Wars action figure had been carefully placed at the manger. She removed it. The next day, the figure was back, and was joined by a teddy bear. Again, she removed both figures. They returned the next day, joined by a couple of dolls. Instead of removing them, she decided just to watch what would happen next. The following day, Raggedy Andy appeared, joining the others at the manger. It was quite a collection of characters that her children placed at the manger. Finally, she asked the oldest child why they were doing this. She replied, "Because you told us that Christmas is meant for everyone!"

The interesting collection of characters that found their way to this family's manger scene echoes the interesting collection of characters in this evening's beautiful Gospel. This telling of the genealogy of Jesus includes its own curious collection of characters that were a part of the line of people that God used to bring about the Incarnation — Jesus' birth into our world. This history of Jesus' human family includes people who strove to live lives of great holiness, and people who were notorious in their sinfulness. There are men and women who sought to live their lives of faith as well as they could, and there are those who strayed from the path of holiness. Like that bunch at the family's manger scene, they are quite a collection of characters, and each of them, guided in a most mysterious way by God, had a role to play in the unfolding mystery of salvation.

Take a moment and look around this evening's very full church. What an interesting collection of characters gathered here! We are young and old, tall and short, male and female, from near and far, and each of us is here in response to God's invitation. Each of us is here because of the great mystery we celebrate tonight, which is this: that God so loves each of us that he has given us the gift of his only Son, so that through his life we might know true life, eternal life. Each of us has a part to play in the continued unfolding of this mystery of salvation, because, as the young child in our story so wisely noted, looking at that manger scene at home, "Christmas is for everyone!"

Christmas Day

We all have a part to play in the proclamation of the Word becoming flesh.

The pastor and Parish Worship Commission decided one year to do something different in the Christmas pageant than using a doll in the role of Jesus. They debated back and forth what to do instead, then finally settled on putting a light inside the manger that would glow upward at just the right moment during the pageant.

Everything went well during the rehearsals, and then came the big night! When the moment came for Jesus to be born, the stagehand forgot to turn on the light in the manger. Off-stage you could hear the director saying in a loud whisper, "Turn on Jesus."

Saint John wrote: What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. One of the great synonyms used by Saint John for Jesus is Light.

On this great and glorious day, we are reminded once again that no matter how many people try to bring darkness upon the earth, Jesus will always be found dispersing the darkness with his own glorious Light. Some may wonder how this comes about — the darkness of the world being dispersed by the Light of Jesus — but we do not have to wonder.

Every glad tidings we bring by taking warm clothing to the town's shelter disperses the darkness of despair with the light of Jesus' hope. Every glad tidings we bring by supporting our Advent Giving Tree project disperses the darkness of despair with the light of Jesus' hope. Every glad tidings we bring by sharing a meal with a lonely widow disperses the darkness of despair with the light of Jesus' hope.

The suffering that humanity endures must give way to the better angels that dwell within us. While few, if any, of us have the power necessary to end world violence, hunger or disease, all of us have the power to bring the Light of Jesus, where possible, right here to our personal worlds of influence.

We also pray that the littlest and youngest among us — all starry-eyed today over the presents under our trees — will be the diplomat, farmer or researcher who brings lasting peace, the eradication of hunger or the cure to the diseases that plague our world, as they grow up knowing the warm embrace of the Light of the World.

If we understand the meaning of "the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us," then we know when all the presents have been opened, the decorations have come down and the parties have subsided, our Christmas Joy is far from depleted. For our mission as disciples of the newborn King is to always make sure to "Turn on Jesus."

06.26 - 07.05
2018

POLAND

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Pilgrimage with Fr. Artur 908-608-7368 or fratur@churchofchristtheKing.org

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