

**We are pleased and honored
To welcome you to
St. Francis of Assisi Parish**
67 West Town Street, Lebanon, CT 06249
Telephone: 860.642.6711 Fax: 860.642.4032
Rev. Mark Masnicki, Pastor
Rev. Richard Breton
Deacon Michael Puscas



MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday December 24, 2016 Christmas Eve

No Confessions

4:00 PM People of the parish living & deceased

Sunday, December 25, 2016 Christmas Day

8:00 AM People of the parish living & deceased

10:30 AM People of the parish living & deceased

Monday December 26, 2016 St. Stephen, first martyr

NO MASS

Tuesday December 27, 2016 St. John, apostle, evangelist

NO MASS

Wednesday December 28, 2016 The Holy Innocents, martyrs

9:00 AM Frances Flaherty req. by her family

Thursday December 29, 2016 Fifth day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord

NO MASS

Friday December 30, 2016 The Holy Family of Jesus Mary & Joseph

9:00 AM Rev. Roger Lamoureux OMI

9:30 AM Chaplet of Divine Mercy

Saturday December 31, 2016 St. Sylvester I, pope - New Year's Eve

4:00 PM Confessions

5:00 PM David Mott req. by Stanley Baran

Sunday, January 1, 2017 Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God - New Year's Day

8:00 AM

10:30 AM Raoul Pomerleau req. by his family

Monday December 26, 2016 Parish Office is closed.

Monday January 2, 2017 Parish Office is closed.

Offertory to be reported later due to early submission of the bulletin.

Today's second collection is Christmas Gift to the Parish.
Next weekend's second collection is for the Solemnity of Mary.
A very sincere thanks to all those parishioners who make-up their offertory while away.

**Every Thursday ~ Adoration at 8:30pm ~ Rosary at 6:00pm
~ Benediction at 7:00pm at St. Andrew Church.**

Weekend of December 30 & January 1

5:00pm Lector: Dick Lataille

Eucharistic Minister: Pam Flaherty

Altar Servers: CJ Frank, Elizabeth Spedalieri

8:00am Lector: Rosanne Coffey

Eucharistic Minister: Betsy Petrie

Altar Servers: Christian & Jack Terwilliger

10:30am Lector: Angela Coentin

Eucharistic Minister: Paul Pelletier

Altar Servers: Becca Wheaton, Wayne Woodward

Military Service Honor Roll

LCPL Alex Bielawa, U.S. Marines
Lt. Colonel William J. Girard, U.S. Army
Sgt. Derek Keegan, U.S. Army
Major Michael A. Goba, U.S. Army JAG
E-5 Francis Orcutt, U.S. Army
HMC Heather S. Gardipee, U.S. Navy
Pvt. Zachary Berquist, U.S. Army
Pvt. First Class Jacob Grzanowicz
SFC Justin A. VonEdwins, U.S. Army
Sgt. Robert Massicotte U.S. Army
1st Lt. Miles N. Snelgrove USMC 2nd Batt. 6th Marines
Airman Emerson Flannery, U.S. Navy
Seaman Alex R. Paris, U.S. Navy

Prayer for our Men and Women in Military Service

O Prince of Peace, we humbly ask for Your protection for all our men and women in military service. Give them unflinching courage to defend with honor, dignity, and devotion the rights of all who are imperiled by injustice and evil. Guard our churches, our homes, our schools, our hospitals, our factories, our buildings and all those within from harm and peril. Protect our land and its peoples from enemies within and without. Grant an early peace with victory founded upon justice. Instill in the hearts and minds of men and women everywhere a firm purpose to live forever in peace and good will toward all. Amen.

APOSTOLATE OF PRAYER — We pray for Our Holy Father, Rev. Frank McKenna, V. Rev. Ted Tumicki, Rev. Charles McGrail, Rev. Raymond Introvigne, Rev. Robert Buongiorno, Rev. Michael Sequeira, Msgr. Anthony Rosaforte, Rev. Richard Archambault, Rev. Patrick Martin, Rev. Stanley Szczapa, Rev. William Flynn, Rev. Richard Breton.

Heavenly Father, may the Immaculate Virgin prepare our priests for the radiant feast of Christmas so that the Divine Emmanuel might find in each of their hearts a little cradle scented by the purity of His all beautiful and loving Mother. (Mother Catherine Aurelia, foundress)

MEETINGS

Parish Advisory Council Wednesday Jan. 4 @ 6:30pm
Knights of Columbus Thursday Jan. 5 @ 7:00pm
Liturgy Committee Jan. 11 @ 6:30pm

New Year's Masses

Saturday Vigil 5:00pm
Sunday Morning Mass 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM



*Wishing Everyone a Merry Christmas:
Fr. Mark, Fr. Richard, Deacon Michael,
& the Parish Staff*

Christmas Message 2016

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

In Sacred Scripture, the beautiful Christmas narrative begins the account of God's unfathomable, unyielding love for us. By the gift of His Only Son, God embraces the whole world with the mantle of His merciful love. Mary's Child is the Son of God, Christ the Lord. Saint Luke notes that this is news of great joy to be shared by all the people. In Bethlehem, the town of David, a Savior has been born. Jesus' birth gives glory to God and the song of the multitude of angels announces the peace that only Jesus brings to this world.

From generation to generation, we remember the events of that holy night and we celebrate His Nativity. Recounting Jesus' Birth, we rejoice in our Churches, in our families, and in our communities. At the coldest, darkest time of the whole year, God's love warms our hearts and illuminates our journey in this world.

However, the message and meaning of Christmas have been clouded by ever growing distractions that take our focus off the Nativity of Our Savior. Christmas' real significance has been diminished and for some it has been lost, truly forgotten.

In the Christmas narrative, we find a statement that is prophetic. "There was no room for them at the inn." (Luke 2:8) Those stinging words to Mary and Joseph, as they sought shelter, speak to us today of those who have no time, no room, for God in their lives. Thus Jesus is born in a stable and laid in swaddling clothes in a manger, a feeding trough for animals.

In our day, there are several for whom there is no room in their lives for God, for His Son, for the Holy Family. There is no room in the inn of their lives for Jesus. Rather, we should follow the example of the disappointed child who wanted to play Joseph in a Christmas pageant and instead was given the part of the innkeeper. This caused him turmoil and distress. But, you can imagine the "distress" he caused his teacher when in the actual production of the pageant, the youngster-innkeeper instead said, "Mary, Joseph come right in, I have been expecting you!"

That is our sentiment as we prepare for Christmas. Come Lord Jesus, I have been expecting you. Not only at Christmas, but every day, we welcome Mary, Joseph, and the Child Jesus.

Admittedly, those who have no room or time for God's Son and whose love for God has grown cold may not read or hear these words. But you have read them. Through you, those who have turned away from the practice of their faith can hear them. How? By your invitation to join you at Christmas Mass, by your kindnesses and love, by your good deeds and thoughtfulness, by your compassion and understanding, by your prayers and Christmas greeting, you can be that angel who announces Jesus' Birth, who shares the good news that a Savior has been born for all of us. Help them to remember God's love that grips our world in an embrace of eternal love and peace. Help them to remember and make time for Jesus in their lives. The Church welcomes home those who have left

the practice of their faith. God loves them and we, too, invite them to be one with us in His love.

Our focus is clear. We give praise and thanksgiving to God for the gift of His Son. By our words and deeds, by our example, we share Jesus with others. Join me in welcoming Jesus this Christmas! In the words of the pageant innkeeper, "Mary, Joseph, I have been expecting you! Come Lord Jesus into our hearts and homes!" As we welcome Jesus at Christmas, we celebrate the true meaning of Christmas, the Birth of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. May the power of Jesus' love and mercy abide with you throughout the New Year! Merry Christmas!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Michael R. Cote

Bishop of Norwich

ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ THE DIOCESE OF NORWICH

- ✓ **FACEBOOK:** Office of Faith Events Diocese of Norwich Enriching the Faith of Youth, Young Adults, Adults, and Families. Please LIKE us on Facebook www.facebook.com/Office-of-Faith-Events-Diocese-of-Norwich Get up to date info on fun, faith-filled events and help us reach our goal of 1000 likes by 2017!
- ✓ **Charismatic Prayer Meeting** every Tuesday at 2 PM Spiritual Renewal Center, 11 Bath Street, Norwich, CT (860-887-0702) .
- ✓ **Healing Mass** Monday, January 9, 2017 at 2PM Spiritual Renewal Center, 11 Bath Street, Norwich, CT
- ✓ **Nominations are underway for the Longest Married Couple search** sponsored by Worldwide Marriage Encounter. Nominations are open to all husband and wife couples regardless of religious affiliation through January 10, 2017. Email the couple's name, wedding date and city and state where they reside to wwwelmc2017@gmail.com. Include your contact phone or email address. Or, visit the national website at www.wvme.org. For more information, contact the Catholic Family Services Office at 860-848-2237, Ext 306.
- ✓ **Retrouvaille** Is your marriage tearing you apart? Is there little or no meaningful communication? Are you considering separation or divorce? For serious marriage building and repair: Retrouvaille is a lifeline. At Retrouvaille weekend, couples are given tools to re-establish communication, work on their issues, gain new insights and heal. The weekend is presented by three married couples and a priest. A series of 6 post sessions follow the weekend phase. For more information or to sign up for the January 20-22, 2017 weekend in the Hartford area, call 413-525- 1634, or 203-710- 6207, or visit the Website at www.retrouvaille.org.
- ✓ **Natural Family Planning** is scientific, safe, and is 99-percent effective for conceiving or responsibly postponing a baby. A three-session class for married and engaged couples begins on Saturday, January 28 at 7 P.M. in Gales Ferry. For more information, call Craig and Liz Schantz at 860-464- 1184 or to register for a class go to www.ccli.org. Natural Family Planning is scientific, safe, and is 99-percent effective for conceiving or responsibly postponing a baby. A three-session class for married and engaged couples begins on Saturday, January 28 at 7 P.M. in Gales Ferry. For more information, call Craig and Liz Schantz at 860-464- 1184 or to register for a class go to www.ccli.org.

Our Christmas Flowers are in memory of:

Stanley Dudar
Fern Gardner
Real Leclair
Stanley Krawiec
Theresa Baran
Katherine Macht
William & Margaret Fries
Ernie & Mary Sunega
Paul Wengloski
John & Mary Clinch
Mary Kay Clinch
Ed & Christine Clark
Richard & Louise Pratt
Joe Bendoraitis
Henry R. Dabkowski
Jimmy Lesson
Charles Garthwait
Stanley & Elizabeth Wieloch
Jennifer & Robert Chesters
Lil & Jim Chagnon
Stanley & Josephine Misinsky
Michael Russo
M/M John Speno
Peg & Stan Jusyk
Frank, Steve & Joyce Wojciechowski

Dave & Edith Perotti
Rita DeCaprio
Kathy Chambers
Walter Krawiec
Ernest Bastien
Mark Showalter
Roy Showalter
Joyce Wengloski
M/M Kazimierz Wieczorek
Nicholas Kuzel
Janet Lea Gertschitz
Robert & Margaret O'Neill
Richard Chalifoux
Nicholas Wengloski
Ken & Tessie Walden
Catherine Fritz
Rev. Adam Hildebrand
M/M Fred Elmy
Miriam Raymond
Joan Kinkaid Russoniello
John & Barbara Cwikla
Helen Werner
Virginia Speno
Joseph B. Worth

Bill Bourey
Peter DeCaprio Jr.
Jim Mackey
James Mackey Sr.
Gretchen & Homer Therrien
Constance & Wallace Arseneault
Dorothy McFall
M/M Isidore Wengloski
Emil & Erma Kuzel
Abbey Marie Coutu
Ed Coutu
Chester & Isabelle Stygar
Paul & Josephine Mathieu
Maurice Pelletier
Helen & Neil Crowley
Regina Boisvert
Janet Gagnon
M/M Jack Dumond
Darren Fegan
Michael Amato Russoniello
Margaret Dolan
M/M Patsy Raffa
Emma Fisher



Deceased Members of the:

Hull & Nejako Families
Kulynyck Family
Getman & Paris Families
Bosse & Lavertu Families
Pellerin Family
Anastasio & Albrecht Families
Brisson & Lataille Families
Kane & Herving Families
Smutko & Haralson Families
McComber & Petrie Families
Medeiros Family
Leone Family
Diette Family
Flanigan & Carbone Families

Armstrong Family
Lamb Family
Malinowsky Family
Kalinowski Family
Cunningham Family
Adamcewicz Family
Guilbeault Family
Martineau Family
Sikora & Grecki Families
Schnell Family
Nunes Oliveira Family
Lafontaine Family
Coffey & Vos Families

Dudar Family
Pelletier Family
Foley & Dyer Families
Combe Family
Hofmann Family
Aligata Family
Becker Family
Pozarycki Family
Parker Family
Zemantic Family
Ciarcia Family
Valliere Family

Defending Our Religious Liberty Dec. 25, 2016

The Catholic Church is not asking for special treatment when it comes to the federal healthcare mandate, she is simply asking that every American's right to religious freedom be protected. This right is not only about our ability to go to Mass on Sunday, or to pray the rosary at home. It is about adhering to the tenets of our faith, so that we can contribute to the common good of all Americans.

If you haven't done so already, please voice your opposition to the federal health care mandate by calling U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Mathews Burwell at 202-205- 5445, and your elected representatives. Let them know that the mandate is in violation of our First Amendment right to religious freedom.

A Candy Maker's Witness

Anonymous

A candy maker in Indiana wanted to make a candy that would be a witness, so he made the Christmas Candy Cane. He incorporated several symbols for the birth, ministry, and death of Jesus Christ.

He began with a stick of pure white hard candy. White to symbolize the Virgin Birth and the sinless nature of Jesus, and hard to symbolize the Solid Rock, the foundation of the Church, and firmness of the promises of God.

The candy maker made the candy in the form of a "J" to represent the precious name of Jesus, who came to earth as our Savior. It could also represent the staff of the "Good Shepherd" with which He reaches down into the ditches of the world to lift out the fallen lambs who, like all sheep, have gone astray.

Thinking that the candy was somewhat plain, the candy maker stained it with red stripes. He used three small stripes to show the stripes of the scourging Jesus received by which we are healed. The large red stripe was for the blood shed by Christ on the Cross so that we could have the promise of eternal life.

Unfortunately, the candy became known as a candy cane—a meaningless decoration seen at Christmas time. But the meaning is still there for those who "have eyes to see and ears to hear." I pray that this symbol will again be used to witness to the wonder of Jesus and his great love that came down at Christmas and remains the ultimate and dominate force in the universe today.

CCD Project: Twelve Goats for Haiti

Hurricane Matthew devastated southwestern Haiti. The city of Jeremie and surrounding villages were at the storm's epicenter, and 80% of buildings and 90% of crops were destroyed. Over 1,000 lives were lost. Desperate families continue to face homelessness, hunger, and disease.

Since the hurricane the Haitian Health Foundation has been working non-stop to collect food, medicine, and building supplies to ship to Haiti, gather the latest information from Jeremie, respond to donor inquiries and fundraise.

HHF has recently been able to access many of the mountain villages under their care; in many cases HHF is the only agency to reach these rural villages.

HHF continues to work to access more remote locations, which is difficult as flooding, mudslides, and debris still block the roads. This has been made worse by the rain that continued daily since the hurricane struck. Cholera is a growing threat, as the number of cases rise, and other medical conditions – malnutrition, pneumonia, and intestinal problems like diarrhea –are widespread among vulnerable children and pregnant women.

This year we will again work to raise monies for goats for Haiti. The cost for one goat is \$150.00. Each goat given is pregnant. As the people raise their goats, they are provided with milk, meat, and a source of income through the sale of goats as the herds become larger. Our CCD will be able to name the goats. When the goats are presented to the selected families, a picture is taken and sent back to us.

Each class will have a collection jar and one will also be near the giving basket in Church. This project will continue until mid-May.

