

## ***Parish Staff***

### ***Pastor***

Rev. David Powers Sch.P.

### ***Parochial Vicars***

Rev. Nelson Henao Sch.P.

Rev. Richard Wyzykiewicz Sch.P.

### ***Parish Secretary***

Mrs. Rosemarie Ortiz

### ***Music Director***

Mr. Patrick Marques

### ***Organists***

Mr. Franco Bonanome

Mr. Jim Donaldson

### ***Cantors***

Mrs. Terry Bonanome

Mr. Alex Henriquez

***December 2016-January 2017***

### ***Development Director***

Mrs. Stephanie Turtle

***St. Helena's School (718) 892-3234***

<http://www.sthelenaelementary.org>

Early Childhood (3Yr Olds & Pre-K for All)

Elementary School (Grades K-8)

Principal: Mr. Richard Meller

2050 Benedict Avenue

Bronx, New York 10462

### ***High School:***

***Monsignor Scanlan H.S. (718) 430-0100***

<http://www.scanlanhs.edu/>

Principal: Mr. Peter Doran

915 Hutchinson River Parkway

Bronx, New York 10465

### ***St. Helena Rectory:***

1315 Olmstead Avenue

Bronx, N.Y. 10462

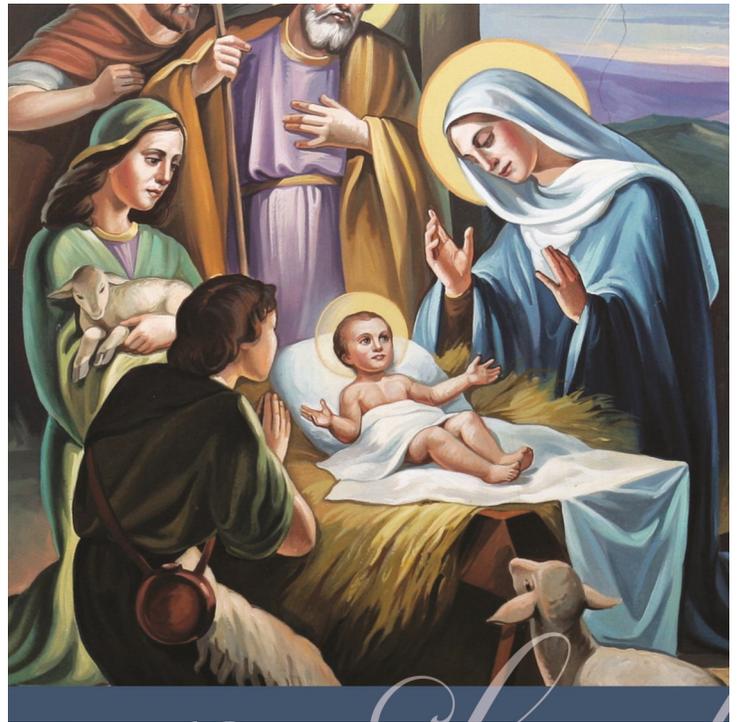
Phone: (718) 892-3232

Fax: (718) 892-7713

[www.churchofsthelenas.com](http://www.churchofsthelenas.com)

Email: [sthelenarc@yahoo.com](mailto:sthelenarc@yahoo.com)

Alumni: [sthelenasalumni@yahoo.com](mailto:sthelenasalumni@yahoo.com)



# ***saint Helena parish***



***Bronx, NY***

## ***Mass Schedule (Horario de Misas)***

***Saturday: 5:30 PM***

***Holy Days: 6:50AM, 8:30 AM, 12:15 PM and 7:30 PM***

***Weekdays: 6:50AM, 8:30 AM and 12:15 PM***

***Morning Prayer—Daily 8:30AM***

***Sunday: AM PM***

7:30 12:00 (Spanish)

9:00 1:30

10:30 (Family) 5:00

***Spanish Mass: Sunday, 12:00 Noon***

***Holy Days — Evenings Before—7:00PM***

***Wednesday —7:00 PM (Spanish)***

***Monday 7:00PM (every first Monday of the month in Spanish)***

***Primeros lunes de mes***

### ***Confessions:***

Saturday — 4 to 5:30

### ***Sick Or Emergency Calls:***

At any time

call the Rectory at 892-3232

### ***Devotions:***

- Circulo De Oracion: lunes, 7 a 9PM,
- Miraculous Medal Novena  
Monday after 12:15 PM Mass
- Exposición del Santísimo y Coronilla de la Divina  
Misericordia: miércoles, 7PM
- Eucharistic Adoration  
Thursday between the 8:30 & 12:15 Masses
- Sacred Heart Novena: Thursday, Noon
- English Bible Study: Tuesday, 7:30PM

### ***Baptisms:***

Arrangements must be made at the  
Rectory for Baptismal Class.

Bring copy of child's Birth Certificate.

### ***Marriages:***

Arrangements for weddings should be  
made as soon as possible at the Rectory.

### ***Parish Registration:***

All Catholics who live within the  
parish boundaries should fill out a  
registration card at Church or Rectory.



**Handicapped Accessible**

## THE GREAT FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

The Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ is one of the oldest Christian feasts, though, throughout the centuries, it has celebrated a variety of things. *Epiphany* comes from a Greek verb meaning "to reveal," and all of the various events celebrated by the Feast of the Epiphany are revelations of Christ to man.

Like many of the most ancient Christian feasts, Epiphany was first celebrated in the East, where it has been held from the beginning almost universally on January 6. Today, among both Eastern Catholics and Eastern Orthodox, the feast is known as Theophany—the revelation of God to man.



Epiphany originally celebrated four different events, in the following order of importance: the Baptism of the Lord; Christ's first miracle, the changing of water into wine at the wedding in Cana; the Nativity of Christ; and the visitation of the Wise Men or Magi. Each of these is a revelation of God to man: At Christ's Baptism, the Holy Spirit descends and the voice of God the Father is heard, declaring that Jesus is His Son; at the wedding in Cana, the miracle reveals Christ's divinity; at the Nativity, the angels bear witness to Christ, and the shepherds, representing the people of Israel, bow down before Him; and at the visitation of the Magi, Christ's divinity is revealed to the Gentiles—the other nations of the earth.

Eventually, the celebration of the Nativity was separated out, in the West, into Christmas; and shortly thereafter, Western Christians adopted the Eastern feast of the Epiphany, still celebrating the Baptism, the first miracle, and the visit from the Wise Men. Thus, Epiphany came to mark the end of Christmastide—the Twelve Days of Christmas (celebrated in the song), which began with the revelation of Christ to Israel in His Birth and ended with the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles at Epiphany. Over the centuries, the various celebrations were further separated in the West, and now the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the Sunday after January 6, and the wedding at Cana is commemorated on the Sunday after the Baptism of the Lord.

We really don't know the names of the magi because the Bible doesn't tell us. In fact, the Bible is silent on how many wise men visited Jesus. However, tradition has it that the three wise men who came to seek and honor the infant Jesus were named Gaspar, Balthasar, and Melchior. The three wise men, also known as magi, were men belonging to various educated classes. Our English word magician comes from this same root. But these wise men were not magicians in the modern sense of sleight-of-hand performers. They were of noble birth, educated, wealthy, and influential. They were philosophers, the counselors of rulers, learned in all the wisdom of the ancient East. The wise men who came seeking the Christ child were not idolaters; they were upright men of integrity. They had apparently studied the Hebrew Scriptures and found there a clear transcript of truth. In particular, the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament must have claimed their attention, and among these they found the words of Balaam: "A Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel" They certainly were acquainted with the prophecy of Micah: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel." They probably also knew and understood the time prophecy of Daniel regarding the appearance of the Messiah and came to the conclusion that His coming was near. They brought him gifts of gold (kingship), frankincense (priesthood), and myrrh (death,) each of which foretold something about what sort of adult Jesus would become.

In many parts of Europe, the celebration of Epiphany is at least as important as the celebration of Christmas. While in England and

her historical colonies, the custom has long been to give gifts on Christmas Day itself, in Italy and other Mediterranean countries, Christians exchange gifts on Epiphany—the day on which the Wise Men brought their gifts to the Christ Child. Epiphany is mainly celebrated by Catholics and Orthodox Christians. It's a big and important festival in Spain, where it's also known as 'The festival of the three Magic Kings' - 'Fiesta de Los tres Reyes Magos', and is when Spanish and some other Catholic children receive their presents - as they are delivered by the Three Kings! In Spain on Epiphany morning you might go to the local bakers and buy a special cake/pastry called a 'Roscón' (meaning a ring shaped roll). They are normally filled with cream or chocolate and decorated with a paper crown. There is normally hidden inside the cake a figure of a king (if you find that, you can wear the crown) and a dried bean (if you find that you're meant to pay for the cake!) In Catalonia it's known as a Tortell or Gâteau des Rois and is stuffed with marzipan.

In Northern Europe, the two traditions have often been combined, with gift-giving on both Christmas and Epiphany (often with smaller gifts on each of the twelve days of Christmas in between). (In the past, though, the main gift-giving day in both Northern and Eastern Europe was usually the feast of Saint Nicholas.) In the United States in recent years, some Catholics have tried to revive the fullness of Christmastide by opening gifts "from Santa" on Christmas Day, and then, on each of the 12 days of Christmas, the children receive one small gift, before giving the rest of the gifts to one another on Epiphany (after attending Mass for the feast of course). Epiphany Eve (also known as Twelfth Night) marks the end of the traditional Christmas celebrations and is the time when people were meant to take Christmas decorations down, although some people leave them up until Candlemas. *Fr. David*

### The Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord - January 9 Christ's Baptism Foreshadows Our Own

At first glance, the Baptism of the Lord might seem an odd feast. Since the Catholic Church teaches that the Sacrament of Baptism is necessary for the remission of sins, particularly Original Sin. So, why was Christ baptized? After all, He was born without Original Sin, and He lived His entire life without sinning. Therefore, He had no need of the sacrament, as we do. The answer is that in submitting Himself humbly to the baptism of St. John the Baptist, Christ provided the example for the rest of us. If even He should be baptized, though He had no need of it, how much more should the rest of us be thankful for this sacrament, which frees us from the darkness of sin and incorporates us into the Church, the life of Christ on earth! His Baptism, therefore, was necessary—not for Him, but for us.



The Baptism of the Lord has historically been associated with the celebration of Epiphany. Even today, the Eastern Christian feast of Theophany, celebrated on January 6 as a counterpart to the Western feast of Epiphany, focuses primarily on the Baptism of the Lord as the revelation of God to man.

After the Nativity of Christ (Christmas) was separated out from Epiphany, the Church in the West continued the process and dedicated a celebration to each of the major epiphanies (revelations) or theophanies (the revelation of God to man): the Birth of Christ at Christmas, which revealed Christ to Israel; the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles, in the visit of the Wise Men at Epiphany; the Baptism of the Lord, which revealed the Trinity; and the miracle at the wedding at Cana, which revealed Christ's transformation of the world. His Flesh blessed the water, and the descent of the Holy Spirit (in the form of a dove) and the voice of God the Father announcing that this was His Son, in Whom He was well pleased, marked the beginning of Christ's public ministry.

## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Thus, the Baptism of the Lord began to be celebrated on the octave (eighth day) of Epiphany, with the miracle at Cana celebrated on the Sunday after that. In the current liturgical calendar, the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the Sunday after January 6, and, a week later, on the Second Sunday of Ordinary Time, we hear the Gospel of the Wedding at Cana.

Many of the Fathers of the Church, as well as the medieval Scholastics, saw Christ's Baptism as the institution of the sacrament. Pope Pius XII instituted in 1955 a separate liturgical commemoration of the Baptism. In his revision of the calendar five years later, Pope John XXIII kept the "Commemoration of the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ" on January 13, with the rank of a second-class feast. A mere 14 years later Pope Paul VI set its date as the first Sunday after January 6 or, if in a particular year or country the Epiphany is celebrated on January 7 or 8, on the following Monday, which is the case this year. Pope John Paul II initiated a custom whereby on this feast the Pope baptizes babies in the Sistine Chapel, and the feast marks the end of the liturgical season of Christmastide. On the following day, the season of Ordinary Time begins.

### ST. HILARY OF POITIERS - January 13 Patron Against Snake Bites

**Hilary of Poitiers** (310 – 367) was Bishop of Poitiers and is a Doctor of the Church. He was sometimes referred to as the "Hammer of the Arians." "They didn't know who they were." This is how Hilary summed up the problem with the Arian heretics of the fourth century. His name comes from the Latin word for happy or cheerful.

Hilary, on the other hand, knew very well who he was -- a child of a loving God who had inherited eternal life through belief in the Son of God. Hilary was born at Poitiers, and his parents were pagans of distinction. He received a good pagan education, which included a high level of Greek. He hadn't been raised as a Christian, but he had felt a wonder at the gift of life and a desire to find out the meaning of that gift. He first discarded the approach of many people who believed the purpose of life was only to satisfy desires. He knew he wasn't a beast grazing in a pasture. The philosophers agreed with him. Human beings should rise above desires and live a life of virtue, they said. But Hilary could see in his own heart that humans were meant for even more than living a good life. If he didn't lead a virtuous life, he would suffer from guilt and be unhappy. His soul seemed to cry out that wasn't enough to justify the enormous gift of life. So Hilary went looking for the gift giver. He was told many things about the divine -- many that we still hear today: that there were many Gods, that God didn't exist but all creation was the result of random acts of nature, that God existed but didn't really care for his creation, that God was in creatures or images. One look in his own soul told him these images of the divine were wrong. God had to be one because no creation could be as great as God. God had to be concerned with God's creation -- otherwise why create it?

At that point, Hilary tells us, he "chanced upon" the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. When he read the verse where God tells Moses "I AM WHO I AM" (Exodus 3:14), Hilary said, "I was frankly amazed at such a clear definition of God, which expressed the incomprehensible knowledge of the divine nature in words most suited to human intelligence."

But still he was troubled. He knew the gift giver now, but what was he, the recipient of the gift? Was he just created for the moment to disappear at death? It only made sense to him that God's purpose in creation should be "that what did not exist began to exist, not that what had begun to exist would cease to exist."

Then he found the Gospels and read John's words including "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God..." (John 1:1-2). From John he learned of the Son of God and how Jesus had been sent to bring eternal life to those who believed. Finally his soul was at rest. "No longer did it look upon the life of this body as troublesome or wearisome, but believed it to be what the alphabet is to children... namely, as the patient endurance of the present trials of life in order to gain a blissful eternity." He had found who he was in discovering God and God's Son Jesus Christ.

After becoming a Christian, he was elected bishop of Poitiers in what is now France by the laity and clergy. He was already married with one daughter named Apra. Not everyone at that time had the same idea of who they were. The Arians did not believe in the divinity of Christ and the Arians had a lot of power including the support of the emperor Constantius. This resulted in many persecutions. When Hilary refused to support their condemnation of Saint Athanasius he was exiled from Poitiers to the East in 356. The Arians couldn't have had a worse plan -- for themselves. Hilary really had known very little of the whole Arian controversy before he was banished. Perhaps he supported Athanasius simply because he didn't like their methods. But being exiled from his home and his duties gave him plenty of time to study and write. He learned everything he could about what the Arians said and what the orthodox Christians answered and then he began to write. "Although in exile we shall speak through these books, and the word of God, which cannot be bound, shall move about in freedom." The writings of his that still exist include *On the Trinity*, a commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, and a commentary on the Psalms. He tells us about the Trinity, "For one to attempt to speak of God in terms more precise than he himself has used: -- to undertake such a thing is to embark upon the boundless, to dare the incomprehensible. He fixed the names of His nature: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Whatever is sought over and above this is beyond the meaning of words, beyond the limits of perception, beyond the embrace of understanding."

After three years the emperor sent him back to Poitiers, because he was tired of having to deal with the troublemaker, "a sower of discord and a disturber of the Orient." But no one told Hilary he had to go straight back to his home and so he took a leisurely route through Greece and Italy, preaching against the Arians as he went. In the East he had also heard the hymns used by Arians and orthodox Christians as propaganda. These hymns were not based on Scripture as Western hymns but full of beliefs about God. Back at home, Hilary started writing hymns of propaganda himself to spread the faith. His hymns are the first in the West with a known writer. Some may wonder at all the trouble over what may seem only words to us now. But Hilary wasn't just fighting a war of words, but a battle for the eternal life of the souls who might hear the Arians and stop believing in the Son of God, their hope of salvation.

The death of Constantius in 361 ended the persecution of the orthodox Christians. Hilary died in 367 or 368 and was proclaimed a doctor of the Church in 1851. From his writing *St. Hilary's* symbol came to be three books and a quill pen.

Hilary is the patron saint of those bitten by snakes and learning disabled children. There is a legend that while visiting an island off the coast of France, Hilary ran all of the snakes into the sea (an incredibly similar legend to that of Patrick of Ireland). Hilary's bed was kept on display in the Cathedral of Poitiers for years. It was said that if a "madman" were to spend a night in the "cradle of St. Hilary" he would be cured.

JANUARY 8, 2017

### Catholics Comprise 31% U.S. Congress

Catholics account for 31% of the members of the new US Congress. The percentage of Catholics in Congress has grown dramatically in the past 55 years: from 19% to 31%. Catholics make up 27% of the Republican majority in Congress, and 37% of the Democratic minority. While the American population has seen a steady slippage in the percentage of people who identify themselves as Christians, that trend is not evident on Capitol Hill. Although the number of Protestant representative in Congress has dropped since 1961, the overall percentage of lawmakers who identify themselves as Christian has remained steady at over 90%, largely because of the growth in the Catholic presence. Of the 293 Republicans in the 115th Congress, all but two identify themselves as Christians; those two are Jewish. On the Democratic side of the aisle, 80% categorize themselves as Christian, but there are also Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, and Unitarian members, and 11 who either decline to identify a religious affiliation or say they have none.

**New Envelope System:** Currently, St. Helena's Parish has 1,200 registered families, and each year about 350 families take offertory envelope boxes, which are given out at the end of December and early January. Of those who take boxes, only about 200 people use them on a regular basis. This year, we are going to try something new. Instead of giving out boxes with envelopes for the entire year, we will instead mail envelopes out every two months. We understand that many people lose or misplace their envelope boxes, and we hope this method will encourage more parishioners to use their envelopes. We only want to mail these envelopes out to those people who would like to use them, so we want to know who would like us to mail them their offertory envelopes. We will automatically mail envelopes only to those parishioners who regularly use them, and we have placed special violet Welcome envelopes in the pews and in the Narthex for anyone to indicate that they would like us to mail them their envelopes. If you have not yet received your envelopes and you would like to, just fill in the envelope and either drop it in the collection basket or bring it to the rectory. Your new envelopes will be sent out in February. Offertory envelopes serve as a symbol of how faithful giving is critical to establishing a long-term sustainable ministry. They also serve as proof of active parish membership as well as documentation for charitable giving deductions when doing your taxes. We encourage all parishioners to either use parish pay on-line giving, available through our parish website: [www.churchofstheleena.com](http://www.churchofstheleena.com) or use the weekly offertory envelopes.

**CATHOLIC COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN**-Today, we are taking up the collection for the Catholic Communication Campaign (CCC). Your support helps the CCC connect people to Christ, here and around the world, through the internet, television, radio, and print media. Half of the funds we collect remains in our diocese to support local efforts. Be a part of this campaign today! To learn more visit [www.usccb.org/cc](http://www.usccb.org/cc).

**EMERGENCY RECOVERY FUND**-Next week's second collection is for any upcoming emergencies for which the Cardinal may ask us to send donations, such as the recent earthquakes and hurricanes that struck some of the poorest countries on earth and for which Catholic Relief agencies have requested financial assistance.

### ST. HELENA ALUMNI INFORMATION AND

**ADDRESSES NEEDED**-We are seeking to update our alumni data base. We realize that many alumni have either moved, married, passed, or are not on the alumni list. If you have not received any recent mailings from St. Helena, please call or email your address to us so we can add you. Also, let us know if anything special has happened in your life so we can share it with

### OFFERING ENVELOPES

Sunday, January 1, 2017	\$4,602.03
The Solemnity of Mary	\$1,638.00
Envelope Start-up	\$869.56

Our weekly budget, (Nuestro presupuesto semanal es) \$4,423.00

Thank you to everyone for your generosity and for your support and for all that you do for St. Helena's Parish. We have some major capital repair expenses on our boilers and air conditioning coming up, and we are pleased to report that this year's New Year's offering exceeded last year's. I ask you to please consider increasing your regular weekly offerings a little so that we can meet or exceed our 2017 weekly budget goal and be able to pay for much needed physical plant improvements.

Gracias a todos por su generosidad y por todo lo que hacen por esta Iglesia de St. Helena.

other alumni. Please contact the rectory if you would like us to mail you your 2016 offering statement for tax purposes.

## PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

### *Banns of Marriage*

#### *S—Leonard Arcos-Melony Rosario*

- **NEW 50/50 DRAWING**-Many parishioners have suggested that we revise our traditional 50/50 drawings to allow for a larger cash prize. Therefore, starting in January, we will no longer have a weekly drawing, but rather a monthly drawing, and the cost to participate in it will be only \$5/month, which is actually \$3 less than if you contributed \$2/week for four weeks. We hope that you will enjoy this new drawing. As we have done previously, pink 50/50 envelopes will be available both in your mailed offertory envelopes as well as at the entrances to the church. The FIRST drawing will take place on January 30. Good luck.
- **CALENDARS**-Our 2017 Calendars were distributed last weekend. There are a few still available in the rectory.
- **MONTHLY SPANISH CHARISMATIC MASS on Monday, January 9 at 7PM** in the church.
- **BIBLE STUDY**-On **January 10**, at both **1PM** and **7:30PM**, in the green Parish Center, we will begin a 24-week study of The Gospel of Matthew. Our Summer Bible Study in July will be Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. Everyone is welcome.
- **NEXT BAPTISM PREP CLASSES** will be held on **January 12 and 26 at 7PM**. Please bring a copy of the child's birth certificate as well as either a letter of suitability for the godparents from their local pastor or a copy of the godparent's Confirmation Certificate and if a godparent is married, a copy of their Catholic Marriage Certificate.
- **PARISH FLEA MARKET** on **Sunday, January 29** from **10AM-3PM** in the Gym. Many new items will be available. This is the event postponed from last November.
- **PARISH BOOKSTORE** is open this weekend and every **Sunday** from **8:30AM to 1PM**.
- **SHORT TERM COUNSELING AVAILABLE**-Let's face it. Life can be so confusing, especially during the holiday season, and we all need counseling sometimes. But costs can keep people away. Now, thanks to the Catholic Charities Parish Counseling Network, St. Helena parishioners now have access to affordable, short-term professional counseling. What's more, counseling is available at convenient locations throughout the Archdiocese. Up to six sessions can take place with just an inexpensive \$10 co-pay

per session. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact one of the priests here at St. Helena.

- **END OF THE YEAR BUSINESS TAX DEDUCTIONS-** This is the time of year that many businesses are looking for last minute business deductions. If your business is a partnership, a limited liability company, or an S corporation (a corporation that has chosen to be taxed like a partnership), your business can make a charitable contribution to St. Helena and pass the deduction through to you, to claim on your individual tax return. If you own a regular (C) corporation, the corporation can deduct the charitable contributions.
- **NEW TAX LEGISLATION-**Did you know that Congress recently passed permanent legislation for parishioners who are: 70 1/2 Years of Age with--Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) and want to withdraw money from their IRA to Give Tax Free to St. Helena. In addition, if you converted your traditional IRA to a Roth IRA this year, you can offset the taxable income generated by the conversion by making a charitable gift to St. Helena.  
We hope everyone will please consider a special gift. The parish has recently done repair work on the boilers that will cost around \$50,000, and we will need to replace the Parish Center roof which will cost about \$20,000, as well as put in a new air conditioning system that could cost around \$300,000. We are still getting estimates, and we need your help with these new capital expenses.
- **AA BIG BOOK STUDY** meets every **Sat., 7-8:30PM** in the green building.
- **FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME MAINTENANCE OR HANDYMAN JOB** position needed. E-mail: [iosecolon1080@gmail.com](mailto:iosecolon1080@gmail.com) or call **347-964-9539**.
- **APARTMENTS WANTED-**Within the Parkchester area. If you know of one that is available, please call the Rectory.
- **THE PIERRE TOUSSAINT SCHOLARSHIP-**provides graduating high school seniors with \$2,000 to be used to attend college and may be renewed for up to three additional years. Applicants must be practicing Catholics within the Archdiocese, have demonstrated academic achievement, and exhibited good character and leadership abilities. Contact the rectory if you wish to apply for this scholarship. Applications must be postmarked no later than **Feb. 17**.
- **A COURSE IN MIRACLES-**Rogier F. van Vliissingen is teaching a 13-week class A Course in Miracles every Sunday at St. Helena's from **3 to 4:30 PM**. For more information, call **917-549-0959**. A suggested donation is \$7/session. The course will resume today, **Sunday, January 8**.
- **EXPLORE A FREE CATHOLIC INTERNET SITE-** St. Helena's Parish has a free subscription to an online platform called **FORMED**, and all parishioners now have unlimited access to faith formation programs, Bible Studies, Catholic-themed movies and programs, enjoy music, e-books and much more. It is very easy to register with **FORMED**. **FIRST** go to [formed.org](http://formed.org) and click the REGISTER link in the middle of the page; enter the parish code **2KQQYD** and your email, then click "Go." Fill in the registration information. After registering, you will receive a message asking you to verify your email address. Check your email (it may be in your spam folder) and click **VERIFY**. You will be prompted to login. You can then enjoy using **FORMED**.

## **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **PUBLIC HEARING** on Unionport Bridge Reconstruction on **Tues., Jan. 10** at **7PM** at 315 Hutchinson River Pkwy.
- **BLOOD DRIVE-**The 43rd Police Precinct will hold its annual Blood Drive on **Thursday, January 12** at **10AM** at the Precinct.
- **DAYS OF PRAYER AND HEALING** offer the opportunity to experience the love and mercy of God and to heal the wound of abortion. Do you know someone who is carrying the grief of a past abortion? There is help and hope available and the pain and sorrow of abortion need not endure for a lifetime. The next *Day of Prayer and Healing* is **Sat, Jan 14** and a *Spanish Day of Prayer and Healing* on **Sat, Feb 4**. For location and confidential registration call the Sisters of Life at **(866)-575-0075**.
- **NEW YORK ENCOUNTER 2017**, a FREE, three-day, Catholic cultural event, will take place **January 13-15** at the Metropolitan Pavillon, 125 West 18th St. This year's event challenges and tests the proposal that reality is attractive. For more information, contact [info@newyorkencounter.org](mailto:info@newyorkencounter.org).
- **FREE ONLINE FAITH FORMATION COURSES** for those in parish ministry and those who simply wish to learn more about their faith. Sign up at: [www.nvcatholicfaith.org/learn](http://www.nvcatholicfaith.org/learn)
- **ENCOURAGE** is a Catholic Apostolate for those who have family members with same sex attraction. A new website has been created to help the faithful who are searching for information about Encourage, the Church's teachings on same sex attraction, and spiritual support: [www.encourageny.com](http://www.encourageny.com)
- **EMERGENCY SNOW LABORERS-**Sign up to be an emergency snow laborer and help remove snow and ice from bus stops, step streets, and other locations throughout the city this winter. Snow laborers will be paid \$15.00 per hour and, \$22.50 per hour after 40 hours are worked in a week. Must be at least 18 and eligible to work in the USA. Sign up at Bronx Yard, Mosholu Ave. & Broadway from **7AM-3PM**.
- **SILENCE** is a 2016 American historical drama film directed by Martin Scorsese and based upon the 1966 novel of the same name. The film was shot entirely in Taipei, Taiwan. The film premiered in Vatican City and was recently released in the United States. In the seventeenth century, two Portuguese Jesuit priests face violence and persecution when they travel to Japan to locate their mentor who had committed apostasy after being tortured. The story takes place in the time of the Kakure Kirishitan ("Hidden Christians").
- **MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY**, a free eight-week course exploring what are the sacramental, spiritual, psychological, and societal aspects of marriage and family life, begins **Monday, January 9** from **7:30-9PM** at the Conference Room, 1573 Zerega Ave. It is not a pre-cana course. For more info, call **718-828-2380**.
- **CATHOLIC VOLUNTEER NETWORK-**Check out **RESPONSE 2017**, which is a free guide listing nearly 200 faith-based volunteer programs. Volunteers serve full-time for periods of one week to one year or more. To receive a free copy of **RESPONSE 2017**, call **800-543-5046** or e-mail [info@catholicvolunteernetwork.org](mailto:info@catholicvolunteernetwork.org). Website: [www.catholicvolunteernetwork.org](http://www.catholicvolunteernetwork.org) for more info.

### *Please Pray for the Sick of our Parish*

Joanne Frances Bernadette Sanabria, Sylvia Carballo,  
Ruben Mercado, Mike Adorno, Catherine Holden,  
Carmelle and Nicole Antoine, Indrowdi Sadu, Rosa Pena,  
Brenda Jackson, James Leunge, Carol Primak, Joan Ricci,  
Lucy Cannavacciuolo, Aaron Sylvester, Sean Gaffney, Bertha Mero,  
Peter Vaccaro, Gino Vaccaro, Veronica Gonzalez, Ronald Horne,  
Doris Waldropt, Milagro Vasquez, Juana Carmen Rodriguez,  
Ynes Tarez, Theresa Delevan, Neil Duggan, Humberto Prieto,  
Jenny Mauro, Jimmy Mauro, Mariana Rivera, Anniisa Ramratsansingh,  
Catherine Gregson, Noemi Cross, Arley Johnson, Josefina Gonzalez,  
Rosa Amelia Escribano Santiago, Fr. Andrew Buechele, Sch.P.

### *Please Pray for the Deceased and their Grieving Families:*

Deacon Robert Schimph, Andrew Franz, Helen de Jesus,  
Lydia Solano, Olga Vazquez

## **ANUNCIOS EN ESPAÑOL**

- **MISA BAUTISMO DEL SEÑOR: Lunes enero 9 a las 7 pm.** Siendo la última misa del tiempo de Navidad será una ocasión muy especial para hacer la renovación de nuestros votos bautismales y comprender más acerca del significado de ser bautizado. Puedes venir vestido todo o alguna prenda de blanco y traer una vela (si lo deseas), para hacer de esta ceremonia algo que le de pleno sentido a tu bautismo.
- **REGALOS PARA LOS NIÑOS DEL JACOBI HOSPITAL:** Gracias por su generosidad. Tuvimos una gran cantidad de regalos para traer a los niños hospitalizados. Fue una linda oportunidad para que los niños y sus padres tuvieran un momento de alegría y que supieran que no están solos. Gracias comunidad de Santa Helena!!!
- **CALENDARIOS DEL 2017:** Nuestros calendarios ya se distribuyeron la semana pasada. Todavía hay algunos en la rectoría.
- **RIFA 50/50:** Desde enero no habrá rifa cada domingo. Debido a la petición de varias personas se hará mensualmente. Se requerirá un mínimo de \$5 dólares. Los sobres para la rifa los encontrará en la caja con los sobres de las ofrendas.
- **PROXIMA SESION DE PREPARACION AL BAUTISMO: Enero 12 a las 7 pm** en la Iglesia. Trae contigo una copia y el original del certificado de nacimiento. Los padrinos deben traer: 1- una carta del pastor de la Iglesia donde pertenecen y 2- si están casados deben traer el certificado de matrimonio de la Iglesia Católica.
- **MIERCOLES DE LA MISERICORDIA:** Durante el último año hemos celebrado los miércoles el “Año de la Misericordia”, gracias al regalo del Papa Francisco que nos ha invitado a conocer y reflexionar más acerca del misterio maravilloso de la misericordia de Dios. De ahora en adelante la meta no es solamente reflexionar acerca de la Misericordia de Dios, sino **“ser misericordia de Dios”**. Ven los miércoles a adorar al Santísimo y a vivir con alegría el misericordioso regalo de la Eucaristía. **Invita a tus amigos y familiares a esta fiesta de amor!!!**
- **LEGION DE MARIA:** Todos los **viernes a las 7 pm**, ven a rezar el Rosario y a planear servicio a la comunidad.
- **SISTEMA DE SOBRES:** Les recomiendo registrarse en la parroquia, es una práctica sana mediante la cual la persona da sus aportes en los sobres que recibe. La Iglesia dará referencias y constancias y de membresía a la persona que esté registrada. Desde este año los sobres se enviarán mensualmente a sus casas.

## **BUEN DIA, HERMANOS:**

Querida familia, Feliz Año Nuevo. Poco a poco iniciamos el recorrido de este nuevo año, que para nosotros los católicos comenzó hace unas seis semanas con el tiempo de Adviento que nos prepara para la Navidad. Recordemos que la Navidad no termina con la celebración del nacimiento de Jesucristo, ella se extiende por ocho días con la llamada *Octava de Navidad* que terminó con la celebración de la **Solemnidad de Santa María, Madre de Dios** y después otros ocho días hasta la **Solemnidad de la Epifanía** (hoy) y la **Fiesta del Bautismo del Señor** (mañana enero 9).

Durante la Eucaristía donde veneramos a la madre de nuestro Salvador, les propuse un lema que nos puede servir como horizonte espiritual para este año: **“María, llévanos a Jesús”**. Yo les pido considerar este lema con mucha atención, pues aunque a primera vista puede parecer muy sencillo, en realidad está cargado de un profundo significado teológico. En ese lema se resume muy bien la razón por la cual ella fue escogida por Dios para ser la madre de Jesús: para que nos enseñe a llegar al centro de su corazón.

Creo que cada vez es más claro para todos nosotros la relación que nos une a Dios y la relación que nos une a María. Confundir estas relaciones puede traer como consecuencia la práctica de una fe que no corresponde a las enseñanzas de nuestra Iglesia Católica: al único que nosotros adoramos es a Dios. Sin embargo, el papel de María es de una importancia vital en el plan de salvación de Dios hacia nosotros y por eso, entre otras muchas razones, rendimos una *veneración* muy especial a aquella a quien Jesús nos dejó como madre. **“María, llévanos a Jesús”**. Siempre vamos de la *veneración* a la Virgen a la *adoración* a Dios Padre, a Dios Hijo y a Dios Espíritu Santo, tres personas diferentes, un solo Dios verdadero.

Como les dije la semana pasada, un libro muy recomendado como lectura espiritual durante esta semana es la Primera Carta de San Juan. Hoy me propongo hacer un resumen de los aspectos más importantes de ella porque es un tesoro que debemos conocer.

Ya en el capítulo primero Juan nos dice que la Palabra de Dios es vida. Esa Palabra se nos ha manifestado en forma progresiva: ha sido manifestada, vista, testimoniada y anunciada. La experiencia de Juan y los demás apóstoles se fundamenta en un contacto muy real y físico con Jesús. Es una realidad histórica que sin embargo trasciende (va más allá) de lo que los sentidos pueden percibir, de allí la necesidad de la fe como parte vital de la experiencia. Es a través de esa experiencia que los apóstoles han creído y después testimoniado el misterio de la persona de Jesús. **“Lo que vimos y oímos se lo anunciamos también a ustedes”**. Los apóstoles nos han comunicado esa experiencia *para que también nuestros corazones se llenen de alegría* y podamos así crear una *fraternidad* que se llama Iglesia y que *participa* de la comunión con Dios Padre y también con Dios Hijo.

Otro aspecto de la carta es la insistencia del apóstol en que somos pecadores. Sin embargo, esta conciencia no debe llevarnos a la desesperación sino a renovar nuestra fe en Cristo, quien siendo la Palabra del Padre, penetra en el creyente hasta transformar toda su vida. Además Cristo es nuestro “abogado” (parakletos), pues es quien intercede por nosotros ante el tribunal de Dios. Lo contrario al pecado es la observancia de los mandamientos, que es señal de nuestra unión con Dios. En otras palabras, “conocer a Dios” no es algo abstracto, sino entrar en una relación muy personal y vivir en comunión con Él.

Una figura muy utilizada en la Biblia para significar nuestra relación con Dios es la de la luz: **“Dios es luz sin tinieblas”**. Por lo tanto, caminar en la luz es andar alejados de las tinieblas (el pecado). Decir que se comparte la vida de Dios pero vivir en tinieblas es una mentira. De allí la necesidad de confesar lo pecados, para que la luz los pueda limpiar. El creyente tiene una **misión**: vencer al Maligno. Pero, quién es el Maligno? Juan nos dice que los poderes que actúan en el mundo: “los malos deseos de la naturaleza humana, la codicia de los ojos y el orgullo de las riquezas.”

El creyente sabe que la victoria sobre el Maligno es un don de Dios, pero al mismo tiempo es una tarea, es un imperativo: **“No amen al mundo ni lo que hay en él.”** En otras palabras, el vencer al Maligno no es una opción para el creyente, ni una alternativa, o simplemente un camino intermedio. No hay camino intermedio: es el amor del Padre o el amor del mundo. Es verdaderamente una decisión existencial y por lo tanto las consecuencias son de vida o muerte: quien sigue la vanidad del mundo *‘pasa’* como la oscuridad ante la luz, pero quien obedece al Padre, como ha hecho Cristo y hacen los que le siguen *“permanece por siempre.”*

La Navidad, que es el Dios hecho hombre, nos ha traído la gran noticia de que somos hijos en el Hijo y hermanos los unos de los otros. **“Miren que amor nos ha tenido el Padre para llamarnos hijos de Dios: pues lo somos.”** Por eso somos llamados a abandonar el estilo del mundo, renunciar al pecado y vivir como vivió Jesús. Hay que desterrar al pecado de nuestras vidas. No se trata solo de desterrar los pecados grandes y escandalosos, sino también las pequeñas infidelidades en nuestra vida de cada día, nuestra pobre generosidad, la poca claridad en nuestro estilo de vida. Eso es vivir con amor el seguimiento a Jesús.

Lo anterior no quiere decir que nunca más pecaremos, sino que nuestra **actitud** no puede ser ya de conformidad con el pecado. Estamos llamados a rechazar el pecado y desear vivir, como Cristo, en la luz y en la santidad de Dios. **“Ustedes han recibido la unción del Espíritu y todos tienen la verdadera sabiduría.”**

Cuando en nuestras opciones prevalece el pecado, por dejadez propia o por tentación del ambiente que nos rodea, no estamos siendo hijos de Dios. Fallamos a su amor. En cambio, cuando renunciamos a nuestros intereses e instintos para seguir a Cristo, entonces si estamos actuando como hijos y estamos celebrando bien la Navidad. Seguir a Cristo es ver, experimentar, estar y convivir con Él, darle espacio para que su vida sea la nuestra. Entonces podemos dar testimonio de Él ante todos.



Por eso celebramos la Eucaristía con la humilde conciencia de que somos pecadores: “por mi culpa, por mi culpa, por mi culpa...” Reconocemos que somos débiles pero le pedimos a Dios su ayuda y su perdón. Está terminando Navidad, te pregunto: ¿Sales de ella convencido/a de que vale la pena ser seguidor y apóstol de Cristo? ¿Tienes una buena noticia para comunicar?

P. Nelson

## Mass Intentions

### SUNDAY, January 8, 2017-The Epiphany of the Lord

7:30 Mabel Schoenthaler

Our Parishioners

9:00 Severia Verlezza

Daisy Rodriguez

10:30 Julio Cruz and Family

12:00 Altagracia, Carmen, José & Manuel Capellan

Mercedes Martinez (1 Year Anniversary)

1:30 Alessandra Mia Savino (Intentions)

5:00 Lorenzo Steve Torrez

### MONDAY, January 9, 2017-Feast of The Baptism of the Lord

6:50 In Thanksgiving for Favors

8:30 Brenda Van de Weghe (Intentions)

12:15 Intentions of Innocentia Gidi and Her

Children for a Good New Year

7:00 Alberto Brinz

### TUES., January 10, 2017-Feast of St. William of Bourges

6:50 Alexi Henry

8:30 Protection of the Faithful Against Unjust

Trials at the End of Time

12:15 Maloney Family Intentions

### WEDNESDAY, Jan. 11, 2017-Feast of St. Theodosius the Cenobiarch

6:50 Clementatina Peña

8:30 Adolfo Guimil Torres

12:15 Michael Guido

7:30 Unidad de las familias-Lizardo Orellana

### THURSDAY, Jan. 12, 2017-Feast of St. Margaret Bourgeoys

6:50 Telma Anith and Family Intentions

8:30 In Thanksgiving for Favors

12:15 In Thanksgiving for Favors

### FRIDAY, January 13, 2017-Feast of St. Hilary

6:50 Cicily Job, Xavier Francis, Meera Job, Staven and Jair Joseph (intentions)

8:30 Msgr. Arthur J. Scanlan

12:15 Msgr. John J. Voight

### SATURDAY, January 14, 2017-Feast of St. Felix of Nola

6:50 Joby George and Family Intentions

8:30 For the Protection of the Faithful Against

Unjust Trials at the End of Time

12:15 Joseph Lopez

2:00 French Mass

5:30 Herminia Ceballo

### SUNDAY, January 15, 2017-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30 For the Safety of Our Country

9:00 In Thanksgiving for Favors

10:30 Annie T. Clarke

12:00 Shirley Vargas

1:30 Sigfredo Batista

5:00 Our Parishioners

### Readings for the Week of January 8, 2017

**Sunday:** Is 60:1-6/Ps 72/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12; **Monday:** Is 42:1-4, 6-7 or Acts 10:34-38/Ps 29/Mt 3:13-17; **Tuesday:** Heb 2:5-12/Ps 8/Mk 1:21-28 or Heb 1:1-6 and 2:5-12/Ps 8/Mk 1:14-20 and 1:21-28

**Wednesday:** Heb 2:14-18/Ps 105/Mk 1:29-39; **Thursday:** Heb 3:7-14/Ps 95/Mk 1:40-45; **Friday:** Heb 4:1-5, 11/Ps 78/Mk 2:1-12

**Saturday:** Heb 4:12-16/Ps 19/Mk 2:13-17; **Next Sunday:** Is 49:3, 5-6/Ps 40/1 Cor 1:1-3/Jn 1:29-34