

The Piarist Fathers

Pastor

Rev. David Powers Sch.P.

Parochial Vicars

Rev. Andrew Berinyuy, Sch.P.

Rev. Luis Alberto Cruz, Sch.P.

Very Rev. Fernando Negro, Sch.P.

Rev. Richard Wyzykiewicz Sch.P.

Parish Staff

Parish Secretary

Mrs. Rosemarie Ortiz

Business Manager

Anne Kathy Rice

Facilities Manager

Lillian Nazario

Music Director

Mr. Daniel Ambe

Musicians

Mr. Jim Donaldson

Mr. Alex Henriquez

December 2019

January 2020

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

<http://www.sthelenaelementary.org>

Early Childhood (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. Kris Keelin

915 Hutchinson River Parkway

Bronx, New York 10465

St. Helena Rectory:

1315 Olmstead Avenue

Bronx, N.Y. 10462

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Alumni: sthelenasalumni@yahoo.com



saint Helena



Mass Schedule (Horario de Misas)

Saturday: 5:30 PM

Sunday: AM

7:30

9:00

PM

12:00 (Español)

1:30

Confessions: Saturday — 4 to 5:30

Sick Or Emergency Calls:

Call the Rectory at 892-3232

Devotions:

- Circulo De Oracion: lunes, 7 a 9.00PM
- 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, 1PM & 7:30PM
and Sunday 11:30AM
- Spanish Bible Study: Tuesday, 7:00PM
- Rosary: Wednesday, 1:00PM

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

Weekdays & Sat.: 6:50AM, 8:30AM, 12:15 PM

Morning Prayer: Daily 8:30AM

Spanish Mass: Sunday, 12:00 Noon

Holy Days—Evenings Before—7:00PM

Wednesday —7:00PM (Español)

Monday 7:00PM (every first Monday of the month in
Español) Primeros lunes

Baptisms: Arrangements must be made at the Rectory for Baptismal Class. Bring a copy of the child's Birth Certificate and Godparent documents.

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 the Rectory.



Handicapped Accessible



CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2019

CONFESSIONS

December 28 4:00-5:30PM

CHRISTMAS

Tuesday, December 24

Trilingual Christmas Concert: 6:00PM

Trilingual Vigil Mass: 7:00PM

Wednesday, December 25

English Mass: 7:30AM

English Mass: 9:00AM

English Choir Mass: 10:30AM

Spanish Family Mass: NOON

English Mass: 1:30PM

English/French Mass: 5:00PM

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Saturday, December 28

Vigil Mass: 5:30 PM (English)

Sunday, December 29

English Mass: 7:30AM

English Mass: 9:00AM

English Family Mass: 10:30AM

Spanish Family Mass: NOON

English Mass: 1:30PM

English Mass: 5:00PM

French Mass: 6:00PM

Tuesday, December 31

Trilingual Vigil Mass: 5:00PM

Parish New Year's Celebration in Gym: 7:30PM—1:30AM

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

Wednesday, January 1, 2020

NO 7:30AM Mass

English Mass: 9:00AM

English Choir Mass: 10:30AM

Spanish Family Mass: NOON

English Mass: 1:30PM

English/French Mass: 5:00PM

The Meaning of Christmas

It's that time of year again. December has arrived and with it all the joys of Christmas. But what is the real meaning of Christmas? Is it the gifts under the tree or the lights in the windows or those shouts of "Merry Christmas" to those who pass us in the streets?

For many people, Christmas is a time of sorrow. They don't have the extra money to buy presents for their children, family, and friends, and many are saddened at Christmastime when they think of their loved ones who will not be able to come home for various reasons. Yet, Christmas can be a season of great joy. It is a time of God showing His great love for us. It can be a time of healing and renewed strength. You see, Christmas is when we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to be born. His birth brought great joy to the entire world. Shepherds, wise men, and angels all shared in the excitement of knowing about this great event. They knew this was no ordinary baby. The prophets had foretold of His coming hundreds of years before. The star stopped over Bethlehem just to mark the way for those who were looking for this special child.

St. Luke writes, "So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the amazed shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." So, why did God send His son to this wonderful but sometimes cruel and hard world? He sent Jesus to us so that one day, He would grow up to become a very important part of history. His story is one of truth, love, peace, and hope. It brought salvation to all of us. Without Jesus, we would all die in our sins.

Jesus was born so one day the price could be paid for the things we have done that are wrong. The Bible says that all have sinned. We are all born with Original Sin. We do things that do not please God. Through the sins of Adam and Eve, we have all inherited that sin nature. We need to have that removed. The only way to do this is through Jesus. Jesus was born so He could die on the cross for ALL of our sins. If we believe that Jesus died for our sins, we can ask Him to come into our hearts and forgive us. Then, we become clean and made whole. We know that heaven is a wonderful place where we can go to when this life is over.

Christ is the reason for the season. Many times children are caught up in the materialistic side of Christmas. If you think about it, it is quite appalling that Christmas has become a huge retail holiday. It overshadows the joy of Christmas by making us stress out about gifts, parties, and too much food. We all sometimes become so agitated that we dread Christmas day. The great fear of disappointing someone, hurting someone's feelings, or perhaps undercooking the turkey can take away from what God intended us to celebrate: the birth of His Son. We really can truly be happy at Christmas! No matter what may be happening, we can know that we are His children. We can then become sons and daughters of God. Heaven will be our home one day. So, this is the year to invite Jesus into your heart. You will all then have a "Merry Christmas." The joy and peace you will receive will last all year as you look to God for all your needs to be met. Remember, Jesus, Is The Reason For The Season! So, Rejoice!



Posadas at St. Helena

The celebration of the Posadas is an important Mexican Christmas tradition. These community celebrations usually take place on each of the nine nights leading up to Christmas. The remaining schedule is as follows, both taking place in the church:

Dec. 22 from 7:30-9PM; and Dec. 23 from 7-8:30PM.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The Christmas Tree

Why do we have Christmas trees in our church sanctuary? Christmas trees are a central part of Christmas celebrations around the world. Families gather around them to exchange gifts, cities put them up in squares and town halls, and you'll find them in nearly every hotel and shopping mall.

While several non-Christian cultures brought evergreen plants indoors at the time of the winter solstice, an ancient legend holds that St. Boniface was the first to co-opt the Christmas tree tradition for Christianity in the 8th century. He was attempting to convert the Druids who worshipped oak trees as the symbol of their idol. After cutting down their "Thunder Oak" and noticing a small evergreen that was growing next to it, he instead offered to them the balsam fir tree, using its triangular shape to describe the Trinity and the fact that his evergreen boughs pointed to heaven, as a symbol of God.

The first use of Christmas trees as they're known today dates back to either Germany or Latvia in the 1500s. Christmas trees, like most Christmas traditions other than Church services, were adopted late in America. The Puritans frowned on all such "pagan" traditions. In 1659, the General Court of Massachusetts made any observance of Christmas other than a church service a penal offense. It wasn't until an influx of German and Irish immigrants came in the 19th century that the Puritan legacy was undermined. In 1846, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert (who was German) were pictured in the London News standing with their children around a Christmas tree. As a result, the popularity of Christmas trees soared, both in England and America. By 1920, the custom was almost universal.

Today, we can firmly claim the symbol as a Christian one. Many families bless their Christmas trees, and the symbol of a tree has deep roots in our faith. "We are reminded that our first parents were not allowed to eat from one tree and that Christ paid the great price for our redemption by hanging on a tree." In addition, the evergreen boughs and the lights that decorate them do remind us that Christ is the light of the world and that His shining light is everlasting. He has come to bring joy and light into our dark world.

John of Kanty - December 23

John was a country lad who made good in the big city and the big university of Kraków, Poland. After brilliant studies, he was then ordained as a priest and became a professor of theology. The inevitable opposition which saints encounter led to his being ousted by rivals and sent to be a parish priest at Olkusz. An extremely humble man, he did his best, but his best was not to the liking of his parishioners. Besides, he was afraid of the great responsibilities of his position. But in the end, he won his people's hearts. After some time he returned to Kraków and taught Sacred Scripture for the remainder of his life. John was a serious man, and humble, but known to all the poor of Kraków for his kindness. His goods and his money were always at their disposal, and time and again they took advantage of him. He kept only the money and clothes absolutely needed to support himself. He slept little, ate sparingly, and took no meat. He once made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, hoping to be martyred by the Turks. Later John made four subsequent pilgrimages to Rome, carrying his luggage on his back. When he was warned to look after his health, he was quick to point out that, for all their austerity, the fathers of the desert lived remarkably long lives.

St. Stephen - December 26

The deacon Stephen, stoned in Jerusalem two years after the death of Christ, has always been the object of very special veneration by the faithful. He is the first martyr. The account in the Acts of the Apostles relating his arrest and the accusations brought against him emphasize the parallel with our Saviour's trial; he was stoned outside the city wall and died, like his Master, praying for his executioners, and Saul of there watching.

Stephen belongs to the group of seven deacons whom the Apostles associated with their work in order to lighten their load. He was "filled with faith and with the Holy Spirit," "full of grace



and strength" he showed himself as a man of God, radiating divine grace and apostolic zeal. As the first witness to Christ, he confronted his opponents with quiet courage and the promise made by Jesus (Mark 13.11) was fulfilled: ". . . Disputing with Stephen they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit that spoke." In St. Stephen, the liturgy emphasizes the imitator of Christ even to the extent of the complete gift of self, to the extent of that great charity which made him pray in his suffering for his executioners. By establishing his feast on the day after Christmas the Church draws an even closer comparison between the disciple and the Master and thus extends his witness to the whole mission of the redeeming Messiah.

St. John the Evangelist - Dec. 27

Today is the third day in the octave of Christmas. The Church celebrates the Feast of St. John, apostle and evangelist. Born in Bethsaida, he was called while mending his nets to follow Jesus. He became the beloved disciple of Jesus. He wrote the fourth Gospel, three Epistles, and the Apocalypse. His passages on the pre-existence of the Word, who by His Incarnation became the light of the world and the life of our souls, are among the finest of the New Testament. He is the evangelist of the divinity of Christ and His fraternal love. With James, his brother, and Simon Peter, he was one of the witnesses of the Transfiguration. At the Last Supper, he leans on the Master's breast. At the foot of the cross, Jesus entrusts His Mother to his care. John's pure life kept him very close to Jesus and Mary in years to come. John was exiled to the island of Patmos under Emperor Domitian.

The Holy Innocents - December 28

The Feast of the Holy Innocents, also known as Childermas, is a holiday that falls on different days in the Western and Eastern Christian churches. In Western churches, it is celebrated on December 28th, and in Eastern churches, it is celebrated on December 29th. The purpose of this holiday is to commemorate the massacre of children by King Herod as he was attempting to kill baby Jesus. These children have been regarded as the first martyrs of the early church and have been celebrated way before the fifth century when it was celebrated as a part of Epiphany. However, by the fifth century, it had become a separate festival and eventually became a saint's feast day.

Holy Innocents as a holiday can be traced back to the year AD485 when it was celebrated as a feast day in the Western Church, or more specifically in the Leonine Sacramentary. However, it wasn't celebrated as its own feast day but was instead a part of the Feast of the Epiphany and was celebrated in early January. However, it was sometime after the 5th century that it became decoupled from Epiphany and became its own feast day.

Matthew 2:1-18 tells this story: Herod was "greatly troubled" when astrologers from the east came asking the whereabouts of "the newborn king of the Jews," whose star they had seen. They were told that the Jewish Scriptures named Bethlehem as the place where the Messiah would be born. Herod cunningly told them to report back to him so that he could also "do him homage." They found Jesus, offered him their gifts, and when warned by an angel, avoided Herod on their way home. Jesus escaped to Egypt. Herod became furious and "ordered the massacre of all the young boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years old and under." The horror of the massacre and the devastation of the mothers and fathers led Matthew to quote Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation; Rachel weeping for her children." (Matthew 2:18). Rachel was the wife of Jacob (Israel). She is pictured as weeping at the place where the Israelites were herded together by the conquering Assyrians for their march into captivity.

This holiday has been practiced in different ways by different people all throughout history. Prior to the 17th century, it was customary for parents to spank their children at sunrise on Holy Innocents to remind them of the suffering that the innocents of Bethlehem had to endure. Today, however, that practice has fortunately died out for the most part. Up until 1962, priests in the Roman Catholic church would wear violet vestments for this holiday. However, it was changed to red vestments during that year. Nowadays, people often attend churches in which the priest says a prayer called the Blessing of the Children. In Mexico, it is celebrated with pranks, in much the same way as April Fools Day.

DECEMBER 22, 2019

DISCERNER LES SIGNES DE LA PRESENCE DE DIEU

Chers freres et soeurs,

Un signe est une chose perçue qui permet de conclure à l'existence ou à la vérité d'une autre chose, à laquelle elle est liée. Simplement dit, un signe renvoie à une plus grande realite. Ainsi nous pouvons comprendre les signes dans la nature qui signifie le changement du temps. De la meme maniere, Dieu s'est annonce par des signes.

Dans la premiere lecture, le Seigneur lui-meme annonce le signe de sa presence en ces mots: "*C'est pourquoi le Seigneur lui-même vous donnera un signe : Voici que la vierge est enceinte, elle enfantera un fils, qu'elle appellera Emmanuel (c'est-à-dire : Dieu-avec-nous).*" Le fait extraordinaire dans cette prophetie est le fait qu'une vierge soit enceinte. En temps normal, on ne peut pas être enceinte sans perdre sa virginité. Ceci veut dire qu'il ne pas possible qu'une personne soit en meme temps vierge et enceinte. Le fait que cela est deja annonce comme une realite nous montre deja qu'il y a quelquechose d'extraordinaire. Ce signe renvera dont a une realite celeste.

Le meme annonce est repris dans l'evangile en ces mots: "*Voici que la Vierge concevra, et elle enfantera un fils; on lui donnera le nom d'Emmanuel, qui se traduit: « Dieu-avec-nous ».*" Le signe de la Vierge enceinte renvoie a la naissance de Dieu parmi les hommes. De son nom nous comprenons sa mission. Il est Emmanuel ce qui veut dire *Dieu-avec-nous*. La bonne nouvelle de Noel est dont la nouvelle de la presence de Dieu. Il n'est plus loin. Il est present pour marcher avec nous, pour nous guider sur le chemin de la paix.

Toutefois, bien que Dieu soit present, par des signes, nous devons apprendre a discerner ces signes. L'evangile de ce jour nous donne un bon exemple duquel nous pouvons tirer des lecons. C'est l'exemple de Joseph, epoux de Marie. Joseph a su discerner les signes de la presence de Dieu. Dans l'evangile, Joseph nous enseigne trois vertus que nous devons cultiver pour discerner la presence de Dieu:

Le Silence: Dans tous les evangiles, Joseph n'a pas dit meme un mot. Nous le voyons present a cote de la Vierge Marie, son epouse. Ce silence n'est pas du tout une attitude passive mais active. C'est dans ce silence qu'il est capable de discerner la volonte de Dieu. Joseph se tait pour bien comprendre les signes de Dieu. Et nous? Trouvons-nous le temps pour garder un peu de silence? Trouvons-nous le temps pour contempler la vie dans le silence? Trouvons-nous le temps pour prier et mediter dans le silence? Il y a un proverbe que dit: "*Silence is not empty, it is full of answers*". Le silence n'est pas vide, il est souvent plein des reponses. Apprenons de Joseph a garder le silence dans notre relation quotidien avec notre Dieu.

L'ecoute: Dans son silence, Joseph est capable d'ecouter l'ange de Dieu. Effectivement il se trouve dans une situation assez compliquer. Avoir une fiancé qui tombe enceinte avant meme qu'ils ne commencent a vivre ensemble est un defi. Tout homme agira autrement. Toutefois, parce que Joseph est capable d'ecouter la voix de l'ange de Dieu, il a vite compris le plan de Dieu et il s'est ajuste pour faire sa volonte. Parcequ'il a ecoute, il est devenu le pere adoptif du fils de Dieu et il a eu le privilege de le nommer. Et toi et moi? Savons-nous ecouter? Savons-nous ecouter pour comprendre les souffrances de nos freres et soeurs? Que devez-vous faire pour cultiver l'attitude d'ecoute?

L'action: Apres avoir ecouter, Joseph a agi. Il est un homme d'action qui n'hesite a mettre en application la volonte de Dieu. Grace a son action ponctuel, le fils de Dieu est protégé de la mechancete d'Herode. Son action juste a pu proteger Marie et Jesus. Son action a permis a Jesus de grandir selon la volonte de Dieu. Sous la protection de Joseph, Dieu est devenu effectivement Emmanuel, Dieu-avec-nous. Sommes-nous capables de pratiquer toujours ce que nous professons? Joseph nous

apprend a être les hommes et les femmes d'action.

Prions: Par le signe merveilleux de la vierge qui enfante, tu fais connaitre au monde, Seigneur, la splendeur de ta gloire; aide-nous a celebrer le mystere de l'Incarnation avec une foi sans defaut et dans l'obeissance du Coeur. Par Jesus le Christ notre Seigneur, Amen.

Pere Andrew Berinyuy

MERRY CHRISTMAS

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2020

THE ORDER OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS

(THE PIARIST FATHERS),

AND THE PROVINCE OF THE U.S.A. AND PUERTO RICO,

WISHES YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

WITH OUR BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR 2020

"The Virgin Mary, intimately united with her son by perfect communion of love, a faithful partner in His Passion and the first to share in His resurrection, lights the way for us to follow Christ.

She will always be present so that we may show in ourselves the image of her Son, and our students may form in themselves the image of Him whom she made known and educated." (C.23)

Winter Wonderland-Head on out to the parking lot where live Christmas Trees (\$45) and fresh Wreaths (\$20) are being sold at St. Helena until **Dec. 24**. Christmas trees are in short supply. The Wonderland is open everyday from 12 noon till 7PM for hot chocolate, funnel cakes and other goodies. Kiddie rides and pictures with Santa are available on the weekends.

Religious give thanks. " 'Thank you' hardly seems adequate to convey what it means to us," says a Catholic sister of the financial assistance her community received from the Retirement Fund for Religious. Prayer-filled thanks for your donation to last weeks second collection for the Retired Religious.

This weekend's second collection is for the lovely **Christmas Flowers** that will beautify our altar and our sanctuary. You are always welcome to bring in your own flowers as well to remember a family member or loved one.

CHRISTMAS NOVENA CARDS are available at the two church entrances. What a good way to remember your loved one whether living or deceased.

O antiphons: The Roman Church has been singing the "O" Antiphons since at least the eighth century. They are the great antiphons that accompany the *Magnificat* canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23. They are a magnificent theology that uses ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes but present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah.

THANKSGIVING RAFFLE RESULTS

Thank you to everyone who made this year's Thanksgiving Raffle such a big success. I am please to report that we sold \$5,616 in tickets, and we look forward to next year's annual tradition. Checks have already been mailed to the lucky winners. And here they are:

\$1000	#19136		
Philip Lim	Pocketbook	#7941	
\$500	#15805	\$100	#4815
\$100	#1003	\$100	#9400
\$100	#0175	\$100	#18196

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **50/50-**Special pink envelopes are available at the two Church entrances or in your packet. It only costs \$5.00 to participate. The December winner will be picked in the afternoon on **Monday, December 30.**

- **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES WILL RESUME ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8.**
- **FIRST COMMUNION FAMILY SESSION** will take place on **Sunday, January 5 at 11:30AM** in the cafeteria.
- **ENGLISH CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP** meets every **Saturday** from **1PM to 3PM**, in the Green Building.
- **THE LEGION OF MARY** is now meeting on Saturdays from **11-12:30PM** in the Peralta downstairs rectory room.
- **ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT** takes place at St. Helena every **Thursday** from **9AM-12PM** and on First Fridays from **1-7PM** in the church.
- **THE DIVINE OFFICE AT ST. HELENA**-We pray morning prayer everyday during the **8:30AM Mass** and **Evening Prayer** every **Tuesday** and **Thursday** in the church at **5:45PM**. Everyone is welcome to attend.
- **BIBLE STUDY**-Today, **Sunday, Dec. 22 at 11:30AM**, we continue our Bible Study, **Meeting Jesus in the Gospel of John**. Our final session will take place on **Sun., Dec. 29 at 11:30AM** in the Green Building. *Follow Me* is your guide to a personal encounter with Christ. He calls us to be his disciples, to trust him, to open ourselves to his merciful love, and to love others as he has loved us.
- **NEXT BAPTISM PREP CLASSES** will be held at **7PM** on **Thurs., January 9 in English** and **January 16 in Spanish**. Prior arrangements must be made at the Rectory to take the Baptismal Class.
- **FINAL REHEARSAL FOR THE CHRISTMAS CHOIR** on **Thursday, December 24 at 4PM** in the choir loft.
- **TRILINGUAL PARISH CHRISTMAS CONCERT** at **6PM** on **Tuesday, December 24** in the church. This is the first time that all three choirs have joined together to sing, so it should be a very good presentation.
- **THE RELIGIOUS GOODS ROOM** is open every **Sunday-8AM-1:30PM**. Spanish Bibles and new rosaries are here.
- **CALASANZ MOVEMENT YOUTH GROUP** meets every **Friday**, from **7-9PM** in the gym.
- **BOY SCOUTS** meet every **Wednesday** at **6:30PM** in the cafeteria. Our **Cub Scouts** meet in the Calasanz Room on **Sat.**
- **THE MOTHER TERESA GROUP** is collecting toys for the children at Jacobi Hospital and clothes for the seniors at Rebekah Nursing Home, and they invite people to purchase items for their drives. In January, they will begin an "Adopt-a-Grandparent" program whereby people can select an elderly person that they will regularly visit.
- **ANNOUNCED MASS INTENTIONS 2020**. Now is the time to come to the rectory and reserve your special Mass Intentions for 2020. Masses are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis, and having a particular Mass celebrated on a particular date may be important for you, so come in early.
- **A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE HEALTHCARE EDUCATION PROJECT** will speak at some Masses this weekend concerning proposed Medicaid cuts and what you can do about it. One-third of all New Yorkers are directly covered by Medicaid, and will be affected by these cuts.
- **PARKCHESTER'S ELEVENTH ANNUAL KWANZAA CELEBRATION** will be held this year at St. Helena's gymnasium, 1315 Olmstead Ave., Bronx, on **Sat., Dec. 28 from 3 - 8 PM**. The guest speaker is Dr. Rosalind Jeffries, curator of African Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

WEEKLY OFFERING ENVELOPES

Sunday, December 15 \$4,603.12
Retired Religious \$1,679.18

Our weekly budget, (Nuestro presupuesto semanal) is \$5,192.31. Thank you all for your generosity and support and for all that you do. Gracias a todos por su generosidad y por todo lo que hacen.

- Kwanzaa is a cultural event that celebrates an area's many diverse cultures and showcases the creative arts. Come and celebrate traditional family values, community responsibility, commerce, self-improvement, and our many diverse cultural connections. This celebration focuses on bringing our African American community together for a wonderful cultural experience. The event will feature African Attire, an African Market, cultural performances, speakers, food, raffles, children's games, and vendors. The Kwanzaa celebration is free and open to the public, but participants are invited to bring a donation of toys or books. Vendors are welcome. The Parkchester celebration is being sponsored by *Creating Unity in the Community*, which has as its mission to honor the work of Dr. Maulana Karenga and to share with the community his universal message that everyone can identify through family traditions. Volunteers are needed for this event. To volunteer or for more info, contact DeBra Oguamah at **718-409-5253** or **347-525-4943**.
- **HOPE FOR US 7th ANNUAL TOY DRIVE**-This season, help bring smiles to the faces of children living in homeless shelters throughout New York City. Thru **Dec. 22**, Hope for Us Inc. will be collecting new, unwrapped toys, money, and gift cards. A **GIVING TREE** is in the narthex of the Church which contains ornaments with all of the information necessary for you to buy toys for specific-aged children. Please bring your gift to the Rectory.
 - **PARISH NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION**-This is our third annual Parish New Year's Celebration. It's a potluck, so bring a covered dish. The party begins at **7:30PM** on **Tuesday, December 31** in the gym. We will have food, music, dancing, and raffles. It is a wonderful way to usher in this special new year of 2020.
 - **MEXICAN PLANT-BASED COOKING**-Our **January 18** cooking class begins at **2PM** and is a collaboration with Tacqueria Tlaxcalli and whoever wants to contribute some of their recipes. We will get some Nixtamalized Tortillas and make some nice Mexican style dishes. The Cost is \$15. Please register for it by **January 15** in the rectory.
 - **GREAT GATSBY GALA**-St. Helena's Great Calasanz Movement Youth Group is hosting a Great Gatsby Gala on **February 29, 2020**, from **7-11PM** in the gym. All funds raised will support the youth group. Tickets are \$30 each or 2 for \$50.00. In January, tickets will be the regular price of \$35 per person and \$60 for couples. This will be a great opportunity to not only dress up like the 1920s but also have fun as a parish community! For more info, send an Email to cmsthelela@gmail.com.
 - **FREE RESOURCES ON FORMED**-We hope you are enjoying the free parish subscription to www.formed.org. Today is the Fourth Sunday of Advent. Study: Advent, session 4: *The Gift*. Wednesday is The Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord. Study: Symbolon, Knowing the Faith, session 4: *The Story of Salvation*, or watch: *The Story of the Nativity*. You can also listen to: *The True Meaning of Christmas*, *The School of Nazareth*, *God Made Man*, or *The King is Born*. Children can watch: *Nicholas: The Boy Who Became Santa*, *Brother Francis- O Holy Night*, or *Kristoph and the First Christmas Tree*. Not on FORMED? There is now a new and easier way to log onto Formed. 1. Log into Formed. org; 2. Type in your parish name, zip code or city. Scroll down, select your correct parish, and click Next; 3. Enter your name and e-mail address; 4. Click on Sign Up and you are logged onto the platform.
 - **AA BIG BOOK STUDY** meets every **Saturday, 7-8:30PM** in the green building. New members are always welcome.
 - **CO-DEPENDENTS ANNONYMOUS (CODA)** meets every **Monday** from **7-8:30PM** in the rectory meeting room. We help confirm and develop healthy relationships.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **HANUKKAH**-The eight-day Jewish celebration known as Hanukkah commemorates the rededication during the second century B.C. of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, where according to legend Jews had risen up against their Greek-Syrian oppressors in the Maccabean Revolt. Hanukkah, which means “dedication” in Hebrew, begins at sunset on the 25th of Kislev on the Hebrew calendar, which this year is **December 22**. Often called the Festival of Lights, the holiday is celebrated with the lighting of the menorah, traditional foods, games and gifts.
- **CONGRATULATIONS POPE FRANCIS**-Pope Francis celebrated his Golden Anniversary of priesthood on **Dec. 13**, and he turned 83 on December 17. He is the 266th head of the Catholic Church and sovereign of the Vatican City state. He is the first Jesuit pope, the first from the Americas, the first from the Southern hemisphere, and the first from outside Europe since the 8th-century Syrian Gregory III.
- **PRO-LIFE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS**, on **Saturday, December 28** at Church of the Holy Innocents, 128 W 37th St., 8AM Pro-Life Mass, **8:45AM** Rosary Procession, & **10:45AM** Eucharistic Adoration.
- **NEW YEAR'S EVE**-The Office of Young Adult Outreach invites you to the CatholicNYC New Year's Eve Bash! Come celebrate New Year's Eve at the best party in New York City, starting with a Vigil Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God at St. Malachy's-The Actor's Chapel on **Tuesday, December 31** at **9PM**. This event is 21+.
- **THE 47th ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE AND MARCH FOR LIFE IN WASHINGTON, DC** is on **Fri., January 24, 2020**. This will be the first March for Life since the passing of the devastating Reproductive Health Act last January, and it is an opportunity for New Yorkers to make a pilgrimage on behalf of life, praying for our state and our nation. A bus from the Bronx is leaving from St. Lucy's Parish. Call Fr. Nikolin Pergjini at **718-882-0710** for more details.
- **ARCHWAYS**-The Winter 2019-20 edition of *Archways*, the quarterly magazine of the Archdiocese of New York, is now available online. To view or download it, go to <https://www.archny.org/archways>.
- **US HAS WORLD'S HIGHEST RATE OF CHILDREN LIVING IN SINGLE-PARENT HOUSEHOLDS**-The US now has the world's highest rate of children living in single-parent households—more than three times the world average - a study by the Pew Forum has found. Today 23% of American children live with a single parent; the worldwide figure is 7%.
- **BOXING DAY**, in Great Britain and some Commonwealth countries, especially Canada, is a holiday that falls on December 26, during which servants, tradespeople, and the poor traditionally were presented with gifts. By the 21st century it had become a day associated with shopping and sporting events.

ACTIVIDADES EN ESPAÑOL

LUNES	7 - 9 pm	Grupo Carismático de Oración. Misa cada primer lunes
MIERC.	10 am	Grupo Santa Madre Teresa de Calcuta: Visita a pacientes de Rebeka Misa en Rebeka: segundos lunes de mes a las 10.30 am
	7 - 9 pm	Coronilla de la Divina Misericordia, Adoración, Eucaristía
VIERNES	7 - 8.30 pm 7.30—9pm	Grupo Juvenil. Edades 12-18. 7-8.30 pm JECAFA. Jesús, Calasanz y la Familia. Grupo de reflexión. Segundos y cuartos Viernes. Edificio verde.
SÁBADO	11-12:30pm	Legión de María. Rosario y reunión.

- **THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**-This December, The Sheen Center brings *The Gospel of John* to the Black Box Theater Stage. True to the original text and reverently performed in an abbreviated format by acclaimed Broadway actor Ken Jennings, this play brings the Gospel to life through the deeply personal gaze of the Beloved Disciple. For 26 performances, beginning Nov. 30 and concluding on **December 29**, Ken will proclaim the Gospel as many first-century audiences may have originally experienced it - as a virtuosic and heartfelt retelling of the greatest story ever told. This unique performance of the St. John's Gospel is a stirring and breathtaking account of the moving life of Jesus, which is as beautiful in verse as it is profound in wisdom. We invite you and your parishes to please come and witness this personal encounter with the Living Word as expressed in this 90-minute theatrical piece. **Tickets are available for purchase at sheencenter.org/shows/john/2019-11-30/** Use Promo Code: ARCH for a 20% discount on tickets
- **ANGIE: HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL HAIR CARE**, 1559 Metropolitan Ave., **347-981-5806**.

Delineando su rostro

En la cultura semítica el nombre indica la realidad de la persona y nunca mejor relacionado el nombre con la misión que en Cristo Jesús. “Dios salva” o bien “Dios es salvación”, nos dicen que es el significado de “Jesús”. Y es lo que nos viene a ofrecer este niño: la verdadera salvación, integral y plena, de todas las personas y de toda persona. La salvación es regalo gratuito que nos ofrece Dios pero que requiere la aceptación y el compromiso del hombre. Ajaz, en la primera lectura, busca la salvación de Dios al sentirse amenazado por naciones vecinas, pero no está dispuesto a correr los riesgos de la fe y se asegura buscando protección en los reyes terrenales. Por eso, argumentando una falsa humildad, se niega a pedir una señal. El profeta Isaías le ofrece una señal que parecería contradicción frente a los poderosos ejércitos que rodean a Israel: “una muchachita concebirá y dará a luz un hijo”. Así es el Señor, ofrece plena salvación, pero exige una fe que se manifieste en la absoluta confianza y se exprese en obras concretas. José es un testimonio de confianza en Dios. Ajaz es el contra-testimonio que aparenta tener fe pero busca sus propias seguridades. José es sacudido por los acontecimientos y hace resaltar su figura forjada en fe y humildad. Pocas explicaciones y en sueños misteriosos, graves compromisos al aceptar ser padre de Dios. Y sin embargo, si en un principio aparece justo abandonando a María, después en silencio respetuoso, en responsabilidad sostenida, en obediencia humilde, cumple la misión maravillosa y difícil que se le ha encomendado. Fe, justicia, silencio para escuchar al Señor, discernimiento para descubrir el mensaje, son cualidades que a primera vista nos ofrece José. Es la enseñanza que nos ofrece para esperar al Mesías. Este niño que nos trae la salvación lo primero que nos pide es fe, una fe comprometida, una fe segura,

Please Pray for the Sick of Our Parish

Carmelle and Nicole Antoine, Indrowdi Sadu, Rosa Pena, Luzvina Vega, Augustine Ayala, Joyce Hoyt, Leena Shaji, Florence Churchill, Myrna Perez, Heyllie Cardona, Genil Alcantara, Maria Barro, Erica Vargas, Gina Fay, Vayron Leah Rodriguez, Alen George, Phillip Williams, Marie Lopez, Jose Vargas, Pat Callahan, Sabina Acosta, Margarita Torres, Thomas Darrigo, Ralphie Lugo, Lydia Sffreda, Stella Caballero, Pylar Pagan, Roseanne and Joseph Pane, Rosa Maria Santos, Mary Brennan, Jenny Mauro, David Sheehan, Jr., Mary Charlotte, Ana Espinosa, Montseratte Rivera, Peggy Ward, Maria Teresa Roque, Nicole Cancel, James Leung, Millie Morales, Gabrielle Tingué, Josefina Gonzalez and Maritza Gonzalez, Sandra Miller, Paul Harper, Nancy Calderon, Miriam Ortiz, Michael Signorini, Linu Kutty and Leena, Terique Collins, Annalee - a newborn baby born with defective lungs and is in the hospital, Jacqueline French and Nancy Rosado, Alex Francis, Miguel A. Maldonado, Baby Ainhua Zoe Marrero Huertas

Please Pray for the Deceased and their Grieving Families:
Maici Belteran, Ismael Collazo Vasquez, Rosanna Aslam, Nelson Melendez, Frances Serrano, Roberto Ovalle, Jr., Enrique Ayala, Fr. Carlos Rodriguez, Darlene Crichlow William, Joseph Pane, Emilia Collazo, Maria Ramos

que nos permita escuchar su palabra y cumplir sus mandamientos. Si pensamos en el significado de los nombres, Jesús y Emmanuel, no encontraremos contradicción como si al Mesías se le quisieran encimar dos nombres: Dios salva y la forma concreta en que nos salva es haciéndose presente en medio de nosotros, estando con nosotros, compartiendo nuestra vida, nuestra historia y nuestros anhelos. El evangelio de San Mateo se abre con la proclamación de que Jesús pertenece a nuestro linaje, a nuestra historia, que es el Emmanuel; y se cierra con el mensaje y promesa del mismo Jesús que dice a sus discípulos: “Sepan que yo estaré con ustedes todos los días

FELICES NAVIDADES

FELIZ AÑO NUEVO 2020

LA ORDEN DE LAS ESCUELAS PÍAS (LOS PADRES ESCOLAPIOS)

EN LA PROVINCIA DE LOS U.S.A. Y PUERTO RICO, LES DESEA UNAS FELICES NAVIDADES,

CON NUESTROS MEJORES DESEOS PARA EL AÑO NUEVO 2020

“La Virgen María, íntimamente unida a su Hijo, en perfecta comunión de amor, compañera fiel en Su Pasión y primer testigo de su resurrección, ilumina el sendero en nuestro seguimiento de Cristo.

Ella estará siempre presente, para que se manifieste en nosotros la imagen de su Hijo, y así, nuestros alumnos irán formando en sí mismos la imagen de Aquel a quien ella dio a conocer, y a quien ella educó”. (C.23)

SANTA HELENA

“TU LUGAR DE ENCUENTRO”

Ene. 16 Clase de Bautismo. 7 pm en la Iglesia. Traer los documentos requeridos. Traer el Certificado de Nacimiento del niño/a. Si los padrinos son casados deben traer el *Certificado de Matrimonio de la Iglesia*. Si el padrino o madrina son solteros deben traer su Certificado de confirmación.

**Inscripciones para Bautismo: Martes de 1 a 4 pm.
Jueves de 1 a 8 pm.**

INFORMACION Y EVENTOS

Las maravillas de invierno-Árboles de Navidad naturales (\$45) y coronas de navidad (\$20) serán vendidos en St. Helena del 29 de noviembre al 24 de diciembre. Habrán juegos para niños, comida y fotos con Santa durante los fines de semana. Las fotos. On Santa tienen un costo de \$10, con la posibilidad de tener entrega gratis o un 50% de descuento si realiza un pedido por adelantado a través del colegio o llamando a la rectoría al **718-892-3232**. Vea los volantes en las entradas de la iglesia.

El grupo de la madre Teresa está recolectando juguetes para los niños en el Hospital Jacobi y ropa para las personas mayores en el Hogar de Ancianos Rebekah, e invitan a las personas a comprar artículos para sus viajes. En enero, comenzarán un programa de "Adopta a un abuelo" por el cual las personas pueden seleccionar a una persona mayor que visitarán regularmente.

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Thanks to John Michael Sullivan (See Luke 2:1-16) 12-23-2005

AT LEAST WE CAN SAY THAT HE WAS BROUGHT UP IN A STABLE HOME

Mass Intentions

SUNDAY, December 22, 2019-Fourth Sunday of Advent

- 7:30** Florence Kuczynski
- 9:00** Elaine Shine-Special Intentions
- 10:30** For a Special Intention
- 12:00** The Sick of St. Helena's Parish; Mariangelys Figueroa Ferrer; Elpidia Trujillo; Teresa Lara-1 Month Deceased; Jacqueline French and Nancy Rosado-Healing Intention
- 1:30** Bernardo Del Valle
- 5:00** Sandra Gresl and Harry Chernoff Intentions
- 6:00** Alina Hernandez

MONDAY, December 23, 2019-St. John of Kanty

- 6:50** Anne McAna
Ismael Olivo
- 8:30** Robert Serrano-Good Health and Birthday Intentions
Jose De La Cruz and Remedios De La Cruz
- 10:00** Funeral Mass: Emilia Seda
- 11:15** Funeral Mass: Joseph Pane
- 12:15** Dianna Schmidt

TUESDAY, December 24, 2019-Sts. Irmina and Adela

- 6:50** David Piazza
- 8:30** Philip E. Parker, Jr. and John Patrick Parker
- 12:15** Mrs. Dorothy J. Wyzkiewicz
- 7:00** Jose Davila-Ortiz and Andres Davila;
Felix Ruiz; Joaquin Torres

WEDNESDAY, December 25, 2019- Christmas Day

- 7:30** Christmas Novena
- 9:00** Catherine Carolan
- 10:30** Murphy and Warneke Families
- 12:00** Alfredo Navarrete
- 1:30** Madeline and Daniel Donovan
In Thanksgiving for All the Blessings and Special Intentions of the Miranda and Arroyo Families
- 5:00** Deceased Members of the Cerbone Family
- 6:00** Parishioners of St. Helena's Parish

THURSDAY, December 26, 2019-St. Stephen

- 6:50** Christmas Novena
- 8:30** Kinsey Joseph Intention
- 12:15** Conor O'Rourke-Healing Intention

FRIDAY, December 27, 2019-St. John the Evangelist

- 6:50** Christmas Novena
- 8:30** Kinsey Joseph Intention
- 12:15** Angel, Lastenia and Guillermo Mendez

SATURDAY, December 28, 2019-Feast of the Holy Innocents

- 6:50** Christmas Novena
- 8:30** Maria Imbrogna and Family
- 10:30** Misa el Divina Nino Jesus
- 12:15** Memorial Mass for Ethel Sistrunk-2nd Year Anniv.
Oreste Blanco, Julieto Collaso, Raphael de Rio,
Raphael Casanova and Rene, Esvaldo & Massima Chiulli
- 5:30** Miguel Angel Maldonado-Healing Intention

SUN., Dec. 29, 2019- The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

- 7:30** Christmas Novena
- 9:00** Florence Kuczynski
- 10:30** In Thanksgiving for Favors
- 12:00** Accion de Gracias a San Juda Thadeus Fa. Hernandez-Flores; Carmen Ramos-2nd Year Anniversary
- 1:30** Benny Del Valle
- 5:00** Deceased of St. Helena Parish
- 6:00** Sick of St. Helena Parish

Names only said in Prayer of the Faithful are in Italics

Readings for the week of December 22, 2019

Sunday: Is 7:10-14/ Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 [7c, 10b]/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24;
Monday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14/Lk 1:57-66; **Tuesday:** 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29 [2]/Lk 1:67-79;
Wednesday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 [2a]/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25; **Midnight:** Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13 [Lk 2:11]/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14; **Dawn:** Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20; **Day:** Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 [3c]/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or Jn 1:1-5, 9-14; **Thursday:** Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17 [6]/Mt 10:17-22; **Friday:** 1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 [12]/Jn 20:1a, 2-8; **Saturday:** 1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8 [7]/Mt 2:13-18; **Next Sunday:** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/ Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 [cf. 1]/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23