

ST. ELIZABETH - ST. BRIGID PARISH

December 25, 2020



St. Elizabeth Church

34 Peapack Road, Far Hills, NJ 07931

St. Brigid Church

129 Main Street, Peapack, NJ 07977

Parish Mailing Address: PO Box 33 Peapack, NJ 07977

Parish Phone Number: 908-234-1265

Parish Website: WWW.SaintEB.org

Rev. Msgr. Edward C. Puleo, Pastor



THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

A visitor to Bethlehem, even today, can find a star marking the spot where Jesus was born. The star, pictured on this page, can be found below the altar in the Church of the Nativity.

The site was found by Saint Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine. It was Constantine who made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire in the third century and sent his mother to discover sites in the Holy Land that were connected to the life of Jesus.

When Helena arrived in Bethlehem, she had a basilica built to memorialize the spot identified in the second century by St. Justin Martyr as the birthplace of Jesus. While the original church built by Helena was destroyed in the sixth century, the one that was erected in its place in 529 still stands, making it the oldest church in the Holy Land still in use.

During the time of the Crusades, the main doorway was lowered to discourage riding horses into it. Pilgrims today still have to bend to enter through it. Over the doorway is a mosaic of the Magi. One of the magi is garbed in royal Persian garb—an image which legend says spared the church from destruction by invading Persians in the early years of its existence.

The church, which today is in poor condition, was once richly decorated with mosaics, marble, and frescoes. However, from the sixteenth century it was systematically looted. It is thought that much of the original marble that adorned the church was stripped for use in the Haram-esh-Sharif—the Dome of the Rock, the beautiful Muslim mosque on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Bethlehem is located in the Palestinian territory and has been the site of much conflict in recent years. In 2002, 124 Palestinians barricaded themselves in the church for five weeks. However, when the standoff ended the church was not damaged.

In the midst of turmoil, war and suffering, the Star of Bethlehem has continued to shine, leading all who seek Him to the Prince of Peace. May His Peace shine in your hearts this Christmas with the light and steadfastness of the Star of Bethlehem.



AWAY IN THE MANGER

...
"... Mary gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the place

where travelers lodged." (Luke 2:7)

The scene described by Saint Luke is one that goes to the hearts of Christians the world over. Who can help but be moved by the image of the Baby Jesus laying in a manger, all of His glory wrapped in simple humility. As Christmas approaches, re-creations of this scene begin to appear in homes all over the world. They come in all sizes from larger than life to tiny miniatures that fit in the palm of your hand. They can be made of all kinds of materials from marble to Olive wood to cornhusks. The figures can look like nobles from the renaissance or American Indians or children's toys. No matter the size or style, the message is the same -our God loved us so much that He not only became one of us, but did it in the simplest and most humble of ways imaginable.

Perhaps more than any other person, Saint Francis of Assisi is credited with popularizing the nativity scene. After visiting the Holy Land, Saint Francis wanted to bring as much of what he saw there to the people at home in Italy. In the year 1223, Francis staged a nativity in the small town of Greccio. His was a living nativity with real animals and people. The nativity was such a moving experience that it was soon repeated all over Europe.

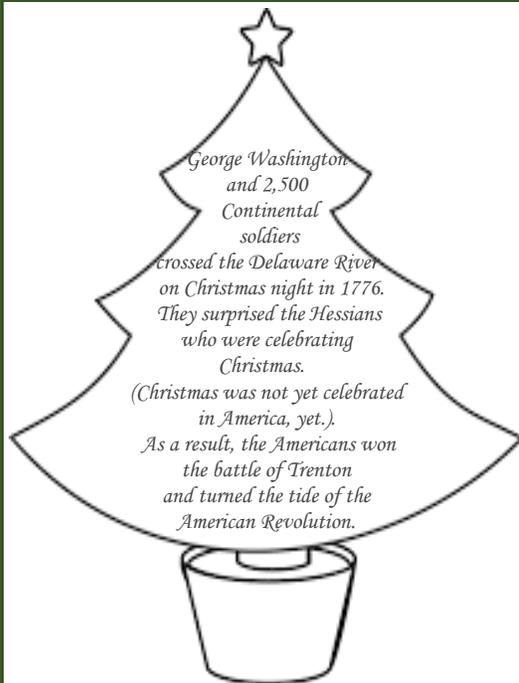
At first, stationary nativity scenes could be found only in churches. Figures were carved and painted and were usually life-sized. By the 15th century, wealthy families began to have nativity scenes made for their homes, one family trying to outdo another, until the scenes became quite ornate and elaborate.

By the 17th century, these large and costly figures were transformed into smaller ones, often crafted of wood or of clay. They became a popular tradition as the figures became affordable to the ordinary people. Craftsman began using materials in plentiful supply in their area. In the heavily forested areas, as in Germany, figures with carved from wood. In more mountainous areas, stone was used. In towns by the sea, sounds by the figures were carved from shell or coral.

Today all types of mangers can be found - from African to Incan, from formal to the whimsical. In the words of Pope Benedict the 13th, "The Nativity scene helps us contemplate the mystery of the love of God, which is revealed to us in the poverty and simplicity of the grotto in Bethlehem.



When the phrase was coined, merry meant blessed and peaceful, "or Blessed and Peaceful Christmas".



CHRISTMAS OUTLAWED!

The Puritans outlawed the celebration of Christmas in England and its colonies in the 16th century. Alabama was the first state to make Christmas an official holiday in 1836. Oklahoma was the last state to do this --in 1907.



The Candy Cane represents the Shepherd's staff and upside down, the letter J for Jesus. The white candy represents purity, the 3 red stripes for the Trinity and 1 large stripe for Jesus' blood later shed.



A Message from Monsignor Puleo:

My dear friends in Jesus Christ,

"It's a Wonderful Life," a 1946 classic movie often associated with the Christmas season was once described by its director, Frank Capra, as a film about "the individual's belief in himself." Capra made the film "to combat a modern trend toward atheism." All these years later the film's message continues. The main character, George Bailey (played by Jimmy Stewart), is a man who has given up his dreams to help others, and whose imminent suicide on Christmas Eve brings about the intervention of his guardian angel, Clarence. The angel shows George how he, George, has in fact touched the lives of many others and how different life would be for his wife Mary, family and his community of Bedford Falls, if he had not been born.

How many of us have contemplated life with or without our personal participation? Saint John XXIII taught us, "Do not walk through time without leaving worthy evidence of your passage."

This past year has been a difficult one, particularly one of reflection and introspection. The only thing positive about the coronavirus just might be the fact that it helped us slow down and take stock of who we are and where we are going in life. Paramount among the matters we often consider is our precious Catholic faith. For all the negatives we have heard or read about our religion, the fact remains that it is only in the Church where we can find Christ fully present in the way He promised He would remain with us. All the rest, for the most part, is on us humans, most especially those who lead the Church in offices where most would never visit.

Our precious faith in Jesus helps us understand that He is always with us in the Eucharist, to help and guide us. That is why we need Him so desperately in Holy Communion and must take every opportunity to visit Him in the Blessed Sacrament. The truth is that Jesus helps move our minds and hearts so we become "givers and not takers." We give of ourselves for Christ every time we do something in charity for a family member, a neighbor and especially the least among us.

During these days of Christmas and throughout 2021, consider how you might fall in love all the more with Jesus, especially when you receive Him in Holy Communion. When we do this and then pursue that life of charity He asks of us, we will again discover, despite our fixation on the coronavirus, that yes, what God has given us - "IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE!"

In Christ Jesus Our Lord,

Reverend Monsignor Edward C. Puleo



BETHLEHEM-

THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE BREAD OF LIFE-MEANS "HOUSE OF BREAD".



LEGEND OF THE POINSETTIA

Once a boy was upset because he had nothing to offer the Christ Child on His Birthday. While the boy was praying at his village church, brilliant red flower with green leaves sprang up for him to give to Jesus.

LAS POSADAS



Las Posadas, in Mexico, candlelight processions with children go from door to door for nine days, like Mary and Joseph searching for room to

lodge. *Las Posadas* ends on Christmas Eve, which is celebrated in earnest, as children get to break open piñatas containing small treats. But Mexicans tend to mark Christmas itself as a quiet day of rest from the events leading up to it.

PRAYER AT THE MANGER

Lord in Heaven
On a blessed night, You saw fit
To send Your Son to live among us
And to bring us to Your Love.

With your grace,
May we live in the light
Of the star that split that night sky,
So we will always
Know the way to You.

May we live in the
Echo of the Angels' song
Telling us to not fear
Because salvation is ours.

May we always hear the laugh
Of the blessed child,
And know in our hearts the miracle
Of that wondrous night.

God our Father, help us to live
In the joy and glory of Christmas
When heaven and earth
Came together in a humble manger
And to always share it
With all we meet.



Amen

ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

*My Jesus,
I believe that You
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things,
and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment
receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there
and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You.
Amen.*



Early Christmas trees had real fruit and flowers along with candles were decorations. German glass blowers made glass balls to replace these heavy decorations. These became known as bulbs.

A gift for you this Christmas from Msgr. Puleo

**A GIFT FOR YOU THIS CHRISTMAS FROM MSGR. PULEO
MERRY CHRISTMAS & A BLESSED NEW YEAR!**

Please take home a copy of *I Heard God Laugh*, by Matthew Kelly, and *Do Something Beautiful for God*, both offered through Dynamic Catholic

IS YOUR LIFE WORKING? Most of us are trying to put together the jigsaw puzzle we call life without a very important piece. Over time this becomes incredibly frustrating. Are you taking care of your soul? Are you feeding it and nurturing it? Or are you ignoring it and neglecting it? The reality is, most people have never really been taught how to tend their souls.

I Heard God Laugh will help you do just that, and so much more.

Do Something Beautiful for God is Mother Theresa's enduring invitation and challenge to the world. This is not an abstract invitation but a deeply personal and intimate one. There is so much happening in the world and so much happening within our own hearts, minds, and souls. All this makes it easy to lose sight of what matters most and get absorbed in what matters least.

Christmas

symbols

Evergreen Tree: Titus 1:2
Eternal Life

Star & Lights: Matthew 2: 9-10
Star that told of Christ's birth

Candy Cane: Luke 2: 8-9, John 10:11
Staff of shepherds who visited the Christ child/Christ is the good shepherd

Bells: John 10:16
Ring out to bring lost sheep back to the fold

Holly & Berries: Titus 1:2, Luke 22:44
Green = Eternal life, Red = Blood of Christ

Gift: Matthew 2:1,11, John 3:16
Wise men's gifts to the Christ child/God's greatest gift to us was the Savior

*God our Loving Father, comforter of the afflicted,
watch over us always, but most especially at this,
our time of urgent need.*

*With heavy hearts we cry out to you ...
We ask that you heal those among us
weighed down with the coronavirus.*

*Inspire with your holy wisdom —
our health professionals: scientists, doctors,
and all medical personnel.
Show special attention to our government officials:
nationally, internationally, and local.
Make them instruments of your love
as they seek to serve your people.*

*Lord and Giver of Life, trusting in your mercy,
we recall the prayer of your prophet Jeremiah:
"heal me, O Lord and I shall be healed;
save me, and I shall be saved" (17:14).*

*When fearful, grant us courage.
When uncertain, strengthen us.
In our sorrow, comfort us.*

*With hearts overflowing with love for you,
we surrender ourselves to your providential care,
and ask only that you consider our sincere request
to remain steadfast in your love — charitable to all
and faithful first and foremost in doing your holy will.
Through Christ Our Lord, Amen
© Reverend John G. Hillier, March 10, 2020*

SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE:

SATURDAY:

ST. BRIGID 4:30 PM

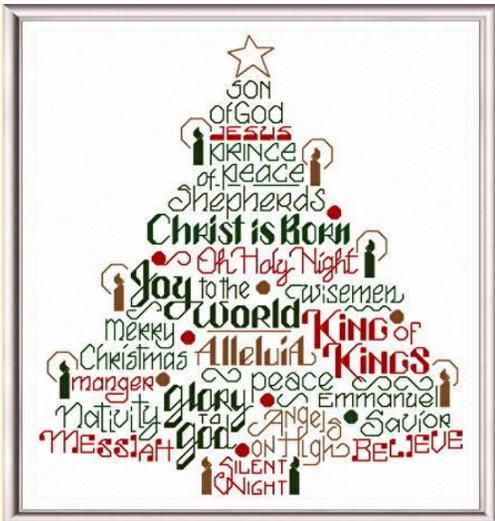
CONFESSIONS AT 3:30 PM IN THE PARISH CENTER LIBRARY

OR BY MUTUAL APPOINTMENT

SUNDAY:

ST. BRIGID: 7:30 AM, 9:30 AM, & 11:30 AM





PRAYER AT THE NATIVITY SCENE

God our Heavenly Father,
 from the moment of creation
 you have never ceased showing your love for us.
 Even when we turned away from you,
 you did not abandon us to the darkness of sin and death.
 Indeed, it was when our need was greatest
 that you sent us a Redeemer—your Son,
 Jesus—to be born of the Virgin Mary.
 Bless us as we look upon this manger.
 May it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus
 and raise our minds to contemplate
 the awesome mystery of God-made-flesh.
 Let this holy season fill us with hope
 that we might join him
 in the eternal Kingdom of peace in heaven.
 Through Christ, our Lord and Savior,
 who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
 Amen.



WELCOME

We are glad you decided to celebrate Christmas with our Parish Family. We hope you will return often. If you would like to become a registered member of our Parish, please complete the form below and place it in the collection basket or mail it to the Parish Office at PO Box 33, Peapack, NJ 07977.

Family Name _____

First Names: _____
(Head of Household)

 (Spouse)

Children (Please include ages, grades, and sacraments received)

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____

A member from our parish will contact you.

ST. ELIZABETH - ST. BRIGID PARISH

December 25, 2020

2020 Christmas Flower Offerings were received from parishioners of St. Elizabeth
and St. Brigid Church

In memory and in honor of their family and friends.

<i>Dr. & Mrs. Louis Allora</i>	<i>Mrs. Teresita Francisco</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Bartolotta</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Gallagher</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. James Baumann</i>	<i>Mrs. Jean Garzillo</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Jeffery Beyer</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Joseph J. Giunta</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Michael Bielawa</i>	<i>Ms. Dawn Marie Gonzalez</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. John Blake</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Fred Grigni</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Walter Blejwas, Jr.</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. William Grutta</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Jeffery Bolash</i>	<i>Rev. John G. Hillier</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Edward Bove</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. David Holleb</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth J. Brach</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Emil J. Hozeny</i>
<i>Mr. Ciro A. Buttacavoli</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Hunnewell</i>
<i>Mr. Daniel Caffrey</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. William K. Jenkins</i>
<i>Mr. Robert Caffrey</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Richard D. Johnson</i>
<i>Mrs. Cameron Calabrese</i>	<i>Mrs. Albert Kalafsky</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. John Carlson</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Paul H. Kochanski</i>
<i>Judy Castillo</i>	<i>Mrs. Jacqueline La Bracio</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Cerza</i>	<i>Mrs. Gloria La Grassa</i>
<i>Ms. Joann H. Coakley</i>	<i>Mrs. Rose La Rosa</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Michael J. Conroy</i>	<i>Dr. & Mrs. David Lipani</i>
<i>Mrs. Dorothy Day-Miller</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Brendan Lynch</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. John Dezio</i>	<i>Ms. Eileen Madden</i>
<i>Ms. Aida L. Diaz</i>	<i>Mrs. Margaret Madden</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Dolan</i>	<i>Michele Mallozzi</i>
<i>Fred Dziurzynski</i>	<i>Mr. Matthew Marciano</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Dennis P Farley</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Antonio Matinho</i>
<i>Joanne Finnen</i>	<i>Mrs. Donald F. Mc Carthy</i>
<i>Mrs. Pasqua Festa</i>	<i>Mrs. Maureen Mc Crory</i>

May you find new meaning and hope

in the joy of the Christ Child's birth and in

His everlasting presence in our world.



*Ms. Karen Mille
Mr. & Mrs. John W. Molka, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Mortko
Miss Margaret Mulrooney
Ms. Frances Nee
Mrs. Arleen Paladino
Mr. & Mrs. Carmen Paterniti
Mr. & Mrs. Angelo Pedicini
Mrs. Maria Pereira
Mr. & Mrs. William Perry
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Pollock
Rev. Msgr. Edward C. Puleo
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Riedel*

*Ms. Florence Riehman
Mr. & Mrs. Jerome J. Saladino
Mr. & Mrs. Sam Santucci
Mr. & Mrs. David C. Sargent
Mr. John R. Sorrenti
Ms. Pamela Tarallo
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Mrs. Danuta A. Willman-Savic
Mr. & Mrs. John Wulf
Mr. & Mrs. William Young
Mrs. Ralph Yunker*

