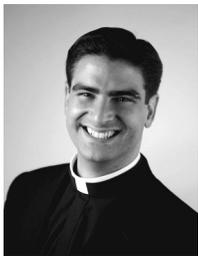

DECEMBER 24 & 25, 2022



Dear Friends in Christ,

The events surrounding the birth of Jesus have been recalled in word and song throughout the centuries. We know the story of a young soon-to-be father whose life is turned upside down by the news of this child and yet who trusts, even if he does not always understand. We know the story of the young couple who has to leave home and family to comply with an imperial edict issued from far away – leaving home at the very time they most needed its comfort and care. We are familiar with the shepherds on the very fringes of society whose lives are considered to be insignificant and unclean, and yet have been chosen by God to be main witnesses to this great and glorious event.

We recall the appearance of the star, a heavenly light that hovers over the manger and illuminates a newborn child so precious, so pure, and so full of love that even the very heavens are in awe. And how could we forget the splendid angels, arrayed in glory, whose heavenly voices fill the night skies with songs of praise and wonder.

Christmas is a time like no other; it unites all generations, all cultures, all races, and all people of good will. For on Christmas morning the very heavens are joined to earth as God takes flesh and dwells among us: *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.*

We hear this so often it no longer shocks us. What “god” stoops to become one of us? To enter our mortal, messy, imperfect world and lives? And yet, on Christmas we gather to celebrate this very thing: God’s greatest gift, his last and greatest revelation of himself in the great drama of our salvation. It is the gift of God’s own presence made real in this holy Child that lifts our hearts and fuels our song of joy.

For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.

So how do we give thanks for this greatest of all gifts? Christmas is a time for giving gifts. We love to share with loved ones, to surprise them with a well-thought-out and unexpected gift. And what an unexpected and glorious gift this Child is to us. What do we offer in return? What gift should we bring to the Christ Child this Christmas night? Nothing less than our whole self, committed to loving others a little more deeply and forgiving a little more easily. Perhaps to be a people of dialogue and

peacebuilding, who see the dignity of others and the potential in the most vulnerable and least among us.

There is joy in our hearts this day as we join the shepherds in adoration: *Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice, for today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord.* May the light of this holy joy be with us this day and always.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Fr. Marco

FIRST FRIDAY AND FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTIONS The next First Friday Mass is January 6. We will have Mass at 9 am and 5:30 pm. First Saturday Mass is at 9 am on Saturday, January 7. All three Masses will be followed by confessions and Eucharistic Exposition.

FIRST TUESDAY COFFEE The next First Tuesday Coffee will be held on Tuesday, January 3rd from 9 until 11 am in Classroom Philip, please bring a friend and a non-perishable food item for the Food Pantry.

MASS WITH HEALING PRAYERS Next month’s Mass with Healing Prayers is at 7 pm on Monday, January 23rd. After Mass, we will have Eucharistic Adoration and prayers for healing with laying on of hands. Confessions begin at 6:30 pm and continue as long as there are penitents.

IHM FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY The Next Fellowship Sunday is on Sunday, January 29th. Join us in the Parish Hall for coffee, donuts, and fellowship after mass!

PRAYER CHAIN The Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Shrine has a prayer line where you can talk and pray with someone over the phone. The prayer line is open Monday thru Friday from 10-5. Call 1-866-202-4934.

MASS IN THE PARKING LOT As a reminder, during IHM’s weekend Masses we have in-parking lot options available. While parked at IHM, if you tune to 99.7 FM you can hear the Mass broadcast live. If you park in the second, smaller parking lot, we will bring out Communion at the appropriate time if you have your hazard lights on.

WOMEN’S NIGHT OF RECOLLECTION on Tuesday, January 10th at 7 pm at St. Cecilia’s Church in St. Mary’s City. You are invited to step away for some quiet time of reflection and prayer. Two talks will be given, “Our Heart’s Epiphany” and “20+C+M+B+23,” by Fr. Larry Swink and a visiting priest. Epiphany is an invitation to anyone and everyone around the world to follow Christ. Bring a friend! The new format includes Adoration, 2 talks, Confessions starting at 6 pm, and Eucharistic Benediction.

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST



December 26 — January 1

Monday	Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3CD-4, 6 and 8AB, 16BC and 17/Mt 10:17-22
9:00 am	Anne Marie Mango (L)
Tuesday	1 Jn 1:1-4/97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12/ Jn 20:1a and 2-8
5:30 pm	Deacon Eugene S. Burroughs (D)
Wednesday	1 Jn 1:5-2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7cd-8/ Mt 2:13-18
9:00 am	Rev. Jose Rodriguez Blandon (D)
Thursday	1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6/ Lk 2:22-35
5:30 pm	Persecuted Church in Nicaragua (L)
Friday	Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5/ Mt 2:13-15, 19-23
9:00 am	Kim Garcia (L)
Saturday	1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13/ Jn 1:1-18
9:00 am	Cristian Izaguirre (D)
4:00 pm	All IHM Parishioners
Sunday	Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8/Gal 4:4-7/ Lk 2:16-21
8:30 am	All IHM Parishioners
11:15 am	All IHM Parishioners
1:00 pm	All IHM Parishioners

BULLETIN DEADLINE Please email your submission to bulletin@ihmrcc.org by Wednesday at 10 am prior to the Sunday of publication. All entries are subject to editing.

MASS INTENTIONS may be requested at the parish office during regular office hours (M—F, 8 am—4 pm) in person or by phone (301-863-8144 x11), or by e-mailing julian@ihmrcc.org. Your desired date may not be available. We now have the ability to accept Mass intention stipends online (but only **after** the date has been accepted by the office).

SMALL GROUP STUDIES ON THE HOLY SPIRIT TO BEGIN JANUARY 11 Two adult small group studies will use The Wild Goose: Discovering a Deeper Relationship with the Holy Spirit by Fr. Dave Pivonka, TOR. Both groups will meet in the IHM large classroom for two seven-week sessions: January 11 to February 22 and April 12 to May 24, Mondays at 7 pm or Wednesdays at 10 am. There is no cost for this study. If interested, please contact Nancy Baysinger at 240-298-4713.

Events Calendar

December 26 — January 1

Mon: All Day

Parish office closed

PERPETUAL ADORATION Did you know our very own Immaculate Heart of Mary offers you the opportunity to participate in Perpetual Adoration? Some may ask "What is Perpetual Adoration?" Perpetual Adoration is a Eucharistic devotion whereby members unite in the adoration before the Most Blessed Sacrament with the goal of adoring The Blessed Sacrament perpetually (24 hours a day). If you are interested, please call our adoration coordinator, Jeff Harmon, at 240-538-5017 or email adoration@ihmrcc.org for more information.

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED On Monday December 26th and Monday, January 2nd.

KoC PANCAKE BREAKFAST The next Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast is Sunday, January 22nd from 9 am until 12 pm. \$10 suggested donation to support Christmas in April.

SECOND COLLECTION next weekend is for both Mary, Mother of God and for the Building and Maintenance Fund. Please be generous in support for these collections!

PLEASE PRAY FOR

THE SICK

THAT THEY MAY BE RESTORED TO FULL HEALTH

Audrey Somers, Helen Daye, Kathleen Floyd, Mary Oliver, Judith Ann Allgood, Vince Guerin, Jane Kenyon, Linda F. Gieser, Ralph Gough Sr., Betty LePore, Bill Wagoner, Joseph Hugh Weiland, Rylee Corliss, Rose Marie Weiland, Alan Stapanon, Ruby Garcia, Mia Garcia, Matthew Riddell, Marie C. Williams, Kaylee Klier, David Kalil, Wanda Slate, Enedina Melendez, Hector Perez, Josephine, Glenn Thompson III, John Worrell, Tim Brosnihan, Jim Makin, Carmen Colby, Tracey Herrera, Gary Green, Grace Miedzinski, Bruce Riddell, Katelyn Corliss, Robert Weaver, Corinne Geraty

Please note: names will remain on this list for two months, unless otherwise notified. To keep a name on the list, please resubmit by contacting bulletin@ihmrcc.org, or call the Parish Office.

PAPAL PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER

We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

Follow us on



DECEMBER 24 & 25, 2022

CATHOLIC TEEN SUMMER CAMP High school teens from St. Mary's County are going to Lifeteen's Covecrest from July 30 to August 5, 2023! Camp Covecrest is a Catholic summer camp in Georgia where parish youth groups from all over the country come together to experience summer camp at its best. Teens are given the opportunity to dive deeply into their Catholic faith and strengthen their relationship with Christ while having unforgettable experiences. For details and local registration, go to <https://www.saintalloysiuschurch.org/camp>.

IT SHOULDN'T HURT AT HOME The Catholic community cares about families experiencing violence and unhealthy relationships. Visit www.CatholicsforFamilyPeace.org to learn more about this issue, how to help, who to call, and the rich Catholic teaching that supports survivors. If you need help now, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 800-799-7233 (24 hours); 800-787-3224 (TTY); www.ndvh.org to find assistance near you.

GARDEN AND GROUNDS MINISTRY We have various projects around the church that need to be completed. Any adult or child would be welcome. If you want to volunteer, please contact Martha Davie by phone or text at 240-434-3510. Thank you!

 **ST. VINCENT DE PAUL OF IHM** Our food pantry provides food to those who need assistance. We'd like to have you help us bag groceries from the food in our food pantry for our clients, or to pick up food from grocery stores in our area that donate to us. We do this throughout the week, excluding weekends. We have meetings just once a month. If you'd like to volunteer in our food pantry, please call 301-863-8193 on Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays from 8:30 to 11:30 am, which is when the pantry is open. Leave your name and number and we will work to get you started as soon as you'd like.

CATHOLIC MOTHERS GROUP St. Aloysius in Leonardtown has started a Catholic Moms Group! Join us on the 2nd Wednesday at 7 pm in the Church Hall. This is a great opportunity to form solid friendships with fellow moms, go deeper into your faith life, and be reminded of the incredible role you play in this world. We welcome moms of all ages and stages. Email StAloysiusMoms@CatholicMomsGroup.com to RSVP. Childcare is not provided.



If you or someone you know is interested in becoming Catholic or you know a Catholic desiring to learn more about the faith, please contact Tess Crowe via email at rcia@ihmrcc.org or contact the office at 301-863-8144 to register.

DO YOU FEEL ALONE IN YOUR MARRIAGE? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue, or have you just stopped talking to each other? Retrouvaille has helped tens of thousands of couples struggling in their marriage. For confidential information or to register for the upcoming program beginning with a weekend on January 20th, please visit: www.HelpOurMarriage.org, call (443) 400-7017, or email us at: 3015@HelpOurMarriage.org.



IHM MUSIC MINISTRY If you are interested in sharing your musical talents with the parish, there is a place for you in this ministry! Please call Mary at 240-434-8876 (leave a message!).

PARISH COOKBOOK SALES Our 75th Anniversary parish cookbook "Favorite Recipes to Feed the Heart" is here and available at the parish office. Each cookbook is \$20. Payment accepted in cash, check or credit/ACH through cookbook.ihmrcc.org.

LAZARUS COMMITTEE The Lazarus Committee provides funeral repasts for the funerals of active and registered parishioners. If interested in joining the Lazarus committee or for more information, please contact Pat at 240-925-0021 or Linda at 240-298-5264.

ALTAR FLOWERS/SANCTUARY CANDLES If you would like to donate the Altar Flowers or Sanctuary Candles in memory or for special intentions of a loved one, please call the Parish Office or email at cindy@ihmrcc.org.

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD MASS TIMES On Saturday, December 31st and Sunday, January 1st are the normal weekend Mass times; there is no special schedule.



ALMOST IMMACULATE IHM THRIFT STORE is in need of help! Please stop by the store during operating hours to check out what we do. Then, if you want to help, please contact Deacon Mike at 240-542-8369. We are located in the Kerr House (white building at the street entrance). The thrift store is open Fridays from 10 am to 3 pm, and Saturdays from 10 am to 4 pm. Donations (no clothing) accepted during those hours. The thrift shop supports the food pantry and our local community, so stop by and see what you can do!

FORMED To sign up for Formed, the premier site to access Catholic Media online, go to www.formed.org and press "sign up" and then "sign up as a parishioner". Type in the ZIP code of the parish "20653", follow the directions to create an account, and then enjoy!



December 25, 2022

The Nativity of the Lord

Is 52:7-10 | Heb 1:1-6 | Jn 1:1-18

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

The day we have been awaiting has arrived: Christ is born! All of our Christmas preparations – wrapping gifts and preparing holiday meals to be shared among family and friends – are meant to glorify and reflect God’s own work for and in us. That is, God’s greatest gift of himself, clothed in mortal flesh, who would one day offer himself as the bread of life: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” Jesus came to the world in the form of the most helpless of us all, a newborn infant, so that through him we would be reconciled to the Father, for “to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God.” We celebrate the Incarnation of the Lord, for Christ is our salvation! It is through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit that we are adopted into God’s family and receive the fullness of his grace. The fullness of God’s truth is revealed in Jesus Christ. “The Lord has made his salvation known”; “he has spoken to us through the Son.” Let us give thanks and rejoice this day!

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

The Good News of Jesus Christ is not meant to be kept to ourselves. Today’s Gospel reading reminds us that John the Baptist testified to the light of Christ before Christ had yet publicly appeared. Sharing the Good News is not optional! Even the earth proclaims the Good News in Isaiah, “announcing salvation, and saying to Zion, ‘Your God is King!’” Indeed, Christ the King – God in human flesh – has arrived. Just as John was sent before the Lord to proclaim his coming, so are we charged: Sent out to the world to go and announce the Gospel of the Lord, “so that all might believe.”

WITNESS How might you go out and proclaim the coming of the Lord? Don’t forget: sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ isn’t limited just to speaking to others. It includes *living* as Christ did – feeding the hungry, caring for the sick and the poor, defending the helpless – because we are Christ’s body in the world.