

St. Anthony of Padua Church & School



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Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Mass Schedule

Daily Mass: Mon - Thu, & Sat, 6:30 AM
Fri at 7:50AM

Weekend: Saturday at 5:00 PM
(Preceded by Confession 4:00 PM)
Sunday: 7 AM, 9 AM & 11 AM

MISSION STATEMENT

Our parish is a multicultural community brought together by our common faith in Jesus Christ. Our mission is to evangelize, educate, and serve; and to love one another as God loves us.

December 29, 2024

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

TODAY'S GOSPEL

Luke 2:41-52

This celebration of the Holy Family, just a few days after Christmas, is one that puts the coming of Christ into an important context for us. When God sent the Redeemer he did not mysteriously appear from nowhere, nor did he drop down to earth from Heaven. The Redeemer is God himself, the second person of the Trinity. This second person is also the Word of God which is the creating power that made all of creation. In the Prologue of John's Gospel we are told that "the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." God himself as second person of the Trinity, is the Divine Word, who took on flesh and was born into the world just like those who he came to recreate. We have just celebrated his birth to Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem, and today we celebrate how they truly were a family.

The Gospel has us jump ahead twelve years after Bethlehem and tells of Jesus, Mary and Joseph making the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover. The caravan of pilgrims is returning to Nazareth and Mary and Joseph both assume that Jesus is somewhere in the caravan with friends and relatives. After spending a day without success of trying to locate him, Joseph and Mary return to Jerusalem where they searched for three days before finding him in the Temple. Joseph and Mary were looking for and worrying about Jesus for four days. It's easy to imagine the worry and anguish that built up within them as each hour of unsuccessful searching passed by. When they find Jesus, and Mary asks him, why he stayed behind, his response that he must be in his Father's house, reveals to us again his identity of being not only fully human and the son of Mary and Joseph, but also fully divine

and the Son of God. Jesus is a twelve year old boy, who learned a lesson about how his actions affect Mary and Joseph. He returned with them to Nazareth and was obedient to them.

The Feast of the Holy Family reminds us that this family, comprised of Mary, who was conceived and remained without sin, Joseph, the model of faith and justice, and Jesus, fully human and fully divine, were indeed human. What parent cannot identify with the worry, anxiety and even fear that comes from not knowing the whereabouts of their child, if even for a brief period of time? Whether the child unintentionally wandered off or intentionally ran away, the emotions that touch a parent's heart are the same. What adolescent has not thought that they were old enough to exert the authority to make their own decisions, whether out of ignorance and without malice, or out of defiance? These are situations that almost every family experiences in one way or another.

This Feast of the Holy Family presents us with two important reminders that can help us in our faith. The first is that Jesus, Mary and Joseph were the Holy Family, but not the perfect family. Like all families they had their difficult moments. We should not hesitate to take our own family situations to the Holy Family and know that they understand and help us through their intercession and intervention. The second point is that each family is called to be a Holy Family. We grow in holiness by growing in unconditional love for one another, praying for one another, and praying for each other. As Servant of God taught us, Fr. Patrick Peyton taught us, "The family that prays together, stays together."
~Father Killian Loch, O.S.B.



FROM OUR PASTOR'S DESK...

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ!

The Holy Family experienced many of the same joys and trials that all parents and children experience today. And, so, we can look to this Family for help in our own family lives and see in them a model of stewardship in family life. The Gospel passage from Luke starts by telling us something about Jesus' parents: "Each year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover, and when he was 12 years old, they went up according to festival custom." This Family took seriously the stewardship of their time. The "Holy Couple" carefully observed the traditions and practice of their Jewish faith and brought up their Son to do the same. They worshiped as a family, and with their faith community. And they did so faithfully.

We can take their example to heart by making Sunday Mass attendance a priority for our families, by making prayer with our family a priority every day, by making sure that we regularly celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and by observing in our family life the feasts and fasts appropriate to the liturgical calendar. When we, as families, prioritize our Time with God and worship of Him we will be imitating the Holy Family.

On this Feast of the Holy Family, let us reclaim the beauty and importance of family life. Let's commit to steward our families well in the coming year, making time spent with God and practicing our faith the most important appointments on our family calendars.

Moreover, it's been about six months since my arrival to St. Anthony de Padua parish, and you have welcomed me with open arms and hearts. From the bottom of my heart, I want to say thank you so much for your warm welcome and aloha. It is indeed humbling to be part of a faithful community of disciples who love the Lord and who devote their time, talent, and treasure to help build up the Kingdom of God.

I am excited for the new year and to work together towards our 2025 goals. One of these goals is the "Ohana in Christ" annual diocesan appeal for the Catholic Church in Hawaii. Some of you have already donated to this diocesan appeal and for that I am very grateful. As of Oct 31, 2024, parish donations totaled \$2,615.00. As of Nov 30, 2024, St. Anthony parish was at 28% with donations totaling: \$10,965. We still have a ways to go to meet the 2025 Parish goal of \$39,016.00 as set by the Diocese of Honolulu. At the church entrances, please find "Ohana in Christ" forms and envelopes that you can use for your donations which can be placed in the offering baskets, or mailed to the parish office. Together, we can meet our goal. To help keep everyone informed of where we are in our effort to meet this goal, you will see a "Thermometer Goal Chart" near the baptismal font, tracking our donations towards our 2025 goal. Please prayerfully consider making a donation. Thank you sincerely for your generosity to the parish and for your faithful devotion to the Church.

May 2025 bring you and your family abundant blessings.

In Christ – Bread of Life,


Fr. Anthony Pangan

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading (Jeremiah 31:7-9): Joy marks the return of a remnant – a large throng – from exile in the desert. The Lord has delivered his people. Their tears of departure contrast with the happiness upon their return. One point could not be clearer: the Lord has always been and will always be the Father of Israel.

Responsorial Psalm (126:1-6): We rejoice with the people of the Lord brings back and proclaim the great things he has done for us and the joy that now fills us. This Psalm mirrors the movement of the people's emotions from sorrow to joy found in the passage from Jeremiah.

Second Reading (Hebrews 5:1-6): Jesus Christ is the Son of the Father from whom his high priesthood comes. The Father glorifies Christ and makes him a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. Christ deals patiently with our sins because he shares in the filiness of our humanity. He offers himself for our sins because he also shares in the fullness of divinity. — *Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons and Weekdays 2024, the Almanac for Pastoral Liturgy*, © 2024 Archdiocese of Chicago, IL

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

*See what love the Father has given us,
that we should be called children of God;
and so we are. "(1 John 3:1)*

During this season of giving, let us remember the most important gift we have received – being children of God. As God's children, it's important that we express our love for others as well. Tell your spouse, children and other family members and friends that you love them, frequently. —www.thecatholicsteward.com

KNOW THE SAINTS

Saint Sylvester I, (Dec 30)...When you think of this pope, you think of the Edict of Milan, the emergence of the Church from the catacombs, the building of the great basilicas—Saint John Lateran, Saint Pe-

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE: DEC 16-22, 25	
All Masses (Dec 21 & 22)	\$ 8,968.00
Christmas Masses	\$ 19,740.00
Donations Sent to Parish Office	\$ 979.40
Online Donations	\$ 5255.10
TOTAL	\$ 34,942.50

ter's, and others—the Council of Nicaea, and other critical events. But for the most part, these events were planned or brought about by Emperor Constantine.

A great store of legends has grown up around the man who was pope at this most important time, but very little can be established historically. We know for sure that his papacy lasted from 314 until his death in 335. Reading between the lines of history, we are assured that only a very strong and wise man could have preserved the essential independence of the Church in the face of the overpowering figure of the Emperor Constantine. In general, the bishops remained loyal to the Holy See, and at times expressed apologies to Sylvester for undertaking important ecclesiastical projects at the urging of Constantine.

Reflection: It takes deep humility and courage in the face of criticism for a leader to stand aside and let events take their course, when asserting one's authority would only lead to useless tension and strife. Sylvester teaches a valuable lesson for Church leaders, politicians, parents, and others in authority.

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, (Jan 1), Mary's divine motherhood broadens the Christmas spotlight. Mary has an important role to play in the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. She consents to God's invitation conveyed by the angel (Luke 1:26-38).

Elizabeth proclaims: "Most blessed are you among women and blessed is the *fruit of your womb*. And how does this happen to me, that *the mother of my Lord* should come to me?" (Luke 1:42-43, emphasis added). Mary's role as mother of God places her in a unique position in God's redemptive plan. Without naming Mary, Paul asserts that "God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law," (Galatians 4:4). Paul's further statement that "God sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out 'Abba, Father!'" helps us realize that Mary is mother to all the brothers and sisters of Jesus.

Some theologians also insist that Mary's motherhood of Jesus is an important element in God's plan. God's "first" thought in creating was Jesus. Jesus, the incarnate Word, is the one who could give God perfect love and worship on behalf of all creation. As Jesus was "first" in God's mind, Mary was "second" insofar as she was chosen from all eternity to be his mother.

The precise title "Mother of God" goes back at least to the third or fourth century. In the Greek form *Theotokos* (God-bearer), it became the touchstone of the Church's teaching about the Incarnation. The Council of Ephesus in 431 insisted that the holy Fathers were right in calling the holy virgin *Theotokos*. At the end of this particular session, crowds of people marched through the street shouting: "Praised be the *Theotokos*!" The tradition reaches to our own day. In its chapter on Mary's role in the Church, Vatican II's *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* calls Mary "Mother of God" 12 times.

Reflection: Other themes come together at today's celebration. It is the Octave of Christmas: Our remem-

brance of Mary's divine motherhood injects a further note of Christmas joy. It is a day of prayer for world peace: Mary is the mother of the Prince of Peace. It is the first day of a new year: Mary continues to bring new life to her children—who are also God's children.

St Basil the Great, (Jan 2)...Basil was on his way to becoming a famous teacher when he decided to begin a religious life of gospel poverty. After studying various modes of religious life, he founded what was probably the first monastery in Asia Minor. He is to monks of the East what St Benedict is to the West, and Basil's principles influence Eastern monasticism today.

He was ordained a priest, assisted the archbishop of Caesarea—now southeastern Turkey—and ultimately became archbishop himself, in spite of opposition from some of the bishops under him, probably because they foresaw coming reforms.

Arianism, one of the most damaging heresies in the history of the Church which denied the divinity of Christ, was at its height. Emperor Valens persecuted orthodox believers, and put great pressure on Basil to remain silent and admit the heretics to communion. Basil remained firm, and Valens backed down. But trouble remained. When the great Saint Athanasius died, the mantle of defender of the faith against Arianism fell upon Basil. He strove mightily to unite and rally his fellow Catholics who were crushed by tyranny and torn by internal dissension. He was misunderstood, misrepresented, accused of heresy and ambition.

Even appeals to the pope brought no response. "For my sins I seem to be unsuccessful in everything."

Basil was tireless in pastoral care. He preached twice a day to huge crowds, built a hospital that was called a wonder of the world—as a youth he had organized famine relief and worked in a soup kitchen himself—and fought the prostitution business.

Basil was best known as an orator. Though not recognized greatly in his lifetime, his writings rightly place

Let us pray for...

THOSE IN NEED OF WELL-BEING

Rosendo Flores	Lei Freitas
Dolores Gott	Mel Souza
Lorraine McCabe	Herb Asato
Virginia Maddocks	Donlei Darnell
James Noh	Steve & Deni Smith
Helena Gonzales	Cathy Elliazar

OUR BELOVED DEPARTED

Louis Carnazzo	Mike Lauriano
Chuck Furr	Francoise Berg
Bill Pierce	Kapua Harris Jr.
Carson Bryant	Alan Klobe
Clarence Halemano	Barbara Taum

*May God's grace and blessings comfort,
console, and heal those whom we love
and who are in need of prayers.*

him among the great teachers of the Church.

The Most Holy Name of Jesus, (Jan 3)...Although Saint Paul might claim credit for promoting devotion to the Holy Name because Paul wrote in Philippians that God the Father gave Christ Jesus “that name that is above every name” (see 2:9), this devotion became popular because of 12th-century Cistercian monks and nuns but especially through the preaching of Saint Bernardine of Siena, a 15th-century Franciscan.

Bernardine used devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus as a way of overcoming bitter and often bloody class struggles and family rivalries or vendettas in Italian city-states. The devotion grew, partly because of Franciscan and Dominican preachers. It spread even more widely after the Jesuits began promoting it in the 16th century. In 1530, Pope Clement V approved an Office of the Holy Name for the Franciscans. In 1721, Pope Innocent XIII extended this feast to the entire Church.

Reflection: Jesus died and rose for the sake of all people. No one can trademark or copyright Jesus’ name. Jesus is the Son of God and son of Mary. Everything that exists was created in and through the Son of God (see Col 1:15-20). The name of Jesus is de-based if any Christian uses it as justification for berating non-Christians. Jesus reminds us that because we are all related to him we are, therefore, all related to one another.

St Elizabeth Ann Seton, (Jan 4)...Mother Seton is one of the keystones of the American Catholic Church. She founded the first American religious community for women, the Sisters of Charity. She opened the first American parish school and established the first American Catholic orphanage. All this she did in the span of 46 years while raising her five children.

Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton is a true daughter of the American Revolution, born August 28, 1774, just two years before the Declaration of Independence. By birth and marriage, she was linked to the first families of New York & enjoyed the fruits of high society. Reared a staunch Episcopalian, she learned the value of prayer, Scripture and a nightly examination of conscience.

The early deaths of her mother in 1777 and her baby sister in 1778 gave Elizabeth a feel for eternity and the temporariness of the pilgrim life on earth. Far from being brooding and sullen, she faced each new “holocaust,” as she put it, with hopeful cheerfulness.

At 19, Elizabeth was the belle of New York and married a handsome, wealthy businessman, William Magee Seton. They had five children before his business failed and he died of tuberculosis. At 30, Elizabeth was widowed and penniless, with five small children to support.

While in Italy with her dying husband, Elizabeth witnessed Catholicity in action through family friends. Three basic points led her to become a Catholic: belief in the Real Presence, devotion to the Blessed Mother and conviction that the Catholic Church led back to the apostles and to Christ. Many of her family and friends rejected her when she became a Catholic in March 1805.

To support her children, she opened a school in Baltimore. From the beginning, her group followed the lines of a religious community, which was officially founded in 1809.

The thousand or more letters of Mother Seton reveal the development of her spiritual life from ordinary goodness to heroic sanctity. She suffered great trials of sickness, misunderstanding, the death of loved ones (her husband and two young daughters) and the heart-ache of a wayward son. She died January 4, 1821, and became the first American-born citizen to be beatified (1963) and then canonized (1975). She is buried in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

St John Neumann, (Jan 5)...Perhaps because the United States got a later start in the history of the world, it has relatively few canonized saints, but their number is increasing.

John Neumann was born in what is now the Czech Republic. After studying in Prague, he came to New York at 25 and was ordained a priest. He did missionary work in New York until he was 29, when he joined the Redemptorists and became its first member to profess vows in the United States. He continued missionary work in Maryland, Virginia and Ohio, where he became popular with the Germans.

At 41, as bishop of Philadelphia, he organized the parochial school system into a diocesan one, increasing the number of pupils almost twentyfold within a short time. Gifted with outstanding organizing ability, he drew into the city many teaching communities of sisters and the Christian Brothers. During his brief assignment as vice provincial for the Redemptorists, he placed them in the forefront of the parochial movement.

Well-known for his holiness and learning, spiritual writing and preaching, on October 13, 1963, John Neumann became the first American bishop to be beatified. Canonized in 1977, he is buried in St. Peter the Apostle Church in Philadelphia.

ABOUT TODAY’S FEAST

The Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, usually observed on the Sunday in the Octave of Christmas, is quite a new feast, added to the calendar by Pope Leo XIII in 1893. The pope wanted to highlight the importance of the Christian family and to point to the Holy Family as a model for all families to follow. Mary and Joseph could not surround the newborn Jesus with material things: he was born in poverty, with, as we sing in the carol, “no crib for his bed” (“Away in a Manger”). Yet what they had, they lavished on Jesus: love, tenderness, and care. Love transformed the stable, making it a source of light and hope, just as love can transform every home, even the poorest, and make it a place where children can grow as Jesus did, in wisdom, love, and grace. This feast urges us to see in the Holy Family a “shining example” for all family life (Collect). In their mutual love and forbearance, in their patience in times of trial, and in their total obedience to God’s will for them, the Holy Family shows us how to live together in peace.

The Theology of the Sunday Mass—3 of 3 articles

**Offering Sacrifice:
Participating in Christ’s
Heavenly Worship**

The celebration of the Mass is fundamentally an encounter with Jesus Christ, who offers himself as a sacrifice to the Father for the salvation of humanity. By participating in the Mass, we join our own sacrifices to Christ’s perfect and eternal sacrifice on the cross. The Mass is not just a remembrance of Christ’s sacrifice, but rather it is a true participation in the heavenly liturgy where Christ eternally offers himself to the Father in perpetual glorification and adoration.

The book of Revelation gives us a glimpse of this heavenly liturgy: “I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain,” (Revelation 5:6). Jesus Christ is the sacrificial Lamb who was slain on the cross but now stands in the glory of the resurrection and ascension. The Lamb is eternally worshipped by all the angels and saints in heaven singing praises to God. In the earthly liturgy of the Mass, we join with the choirs of angels and saints to offer worship, adoration, and praise to God the Father. As the Catechism states, the Mass is the “heavenly liturgy which is celebrated throughout the earth,” (CCC 1136).

Our participation in the Sunday Mass is more than just an earthly gathering; through the Eucharist we are transported to take part in the eternal worship of heaven. This is why the Mass is so much more than just a social gathering or community meal. The Eucharist is the sacrament that brings us into communion with Christ’s saving sacrifice on Calvary. Jesus instructed us at the Last Supper to “do this in memory of me,” (Luke 22:19). In the Mass, the bread and wine

become the very Body and Blood of Jesus offered on the cross. We do not just remember a past event; Christ’s sacrifice is made truly present to us.

United with Christ’s sacrifice, we join our own prayers and sacrifices to his perfect and holy offering. Saint Paul encourages us, “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God,” (Romans 12:1). Our lives are meant to be offered with Christ for the worship and glory of God the Almighty Father. This is the purpose of our creation—to give praise, honor, and thanks to our Creator through our thoughts, words, and actions.

The Mass is the highest form of worship because it is not just our sacrifice but Christ making his eternal sacrifice truly present for us on the altar. This sets the Mass apart from any other religious services or gatherings. We participate in the saving work of Christ himself through the Eucharist. This obliges us as Catholics to make every effort to attend Mass every Sunday, unless excused

for a serious reason like illness or the care of infants. To willingly miss Mass on Sundays, without a serious reason, damages our communion with Christ and his Church.

Our worship at Mass is a foretaste and glimpse of the heavenly liturgy. When we enter a church, we should be aware that we are stepping into a piece of heaven on earth. Christ is truly and substantially present in the Eucharist—Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. The saints surround us in prayer and intercession as we unite our voices with the angels in songs of praise to God. Our participation in the Sunday Mass connects us to the eternal worship that will continue for all eternity in heaven. This understanding should fill us with joy, reverence, and awe in the presence of our divine Savior.



ABOUT SOLEMNITY of MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

We are still in the midst of Christmas Time, and today the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. This solemnity is the most ancient liturgical observance of Mary in the Church’s calendar. It honours Mary as *theotokos* or “Mother of God,” the title accorded her at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D. Mary is not just the Mother of Jesus: she is the Mother of God, because Jesus is both God and man, divine and human. As other Marian feasts entered the calendar, January 1 acquired a different focus. The eighth day after birth was the traditional day for the circumcision and name of a child, and so this became the Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord (and the naming of Jesus). It was only in 1969 that the Marian character of this ancient feast was restored.

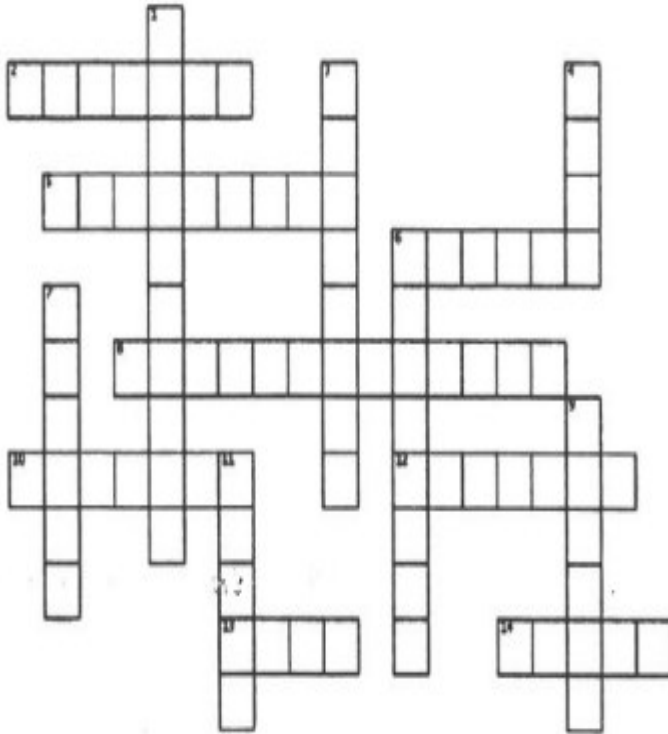
MARY, MODEL FOR ALL MOTHERS

Some young women may be afraid to become mothers because they’ve lacked a positive mothering experience while growing up. Although the kind of mothers our moms were does affect the kind of mothers we will be – to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the individual – it isn’t a life sentence. In other words, we can replace what is lacking and learn how to counteract and compensate for negative mothering experiences.

Those of us who have terrific moms can learn how to enhance the fine qualities we’ve inherited from them. The way to do that is by looking to Mary as example of motherhood and by allowing her to be our Mother.

We tend to forget that Mary is a real woman, a real wife and a real mother who walked on this earth, doing all of the things we do, or will do, as moms... *(Continued p.7)*

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CLUE: Read the Article on the back to find the Answers.

ACROSS

2. The Mass is the _____ form of worship
5. Our worship at Mass is a _____ and glimpse of the heavenly liturgy.
6. angels and saints in _____ singing praises to God
8. Our _____ in the Sunday Mass connects us to the eternal worship
10. we join our own prayers and sacrifices to his _____ and holy offering
12. to take part in the _____ worship of heaven
13. Jesus Christ is the sacrificial _____
14. to give praise, _____, and thanks to our Creator

DOWN

1. Mass is the "heavenly liturgy which is _____ throughout the earth
3. we are _____ into a piece of heaven on earth
4. we _____ with the choirs of angels and saints
6. it is a true participation in the _____ liturgy
7. to make every effort to _____ Mass every Sunday
9. We participate in the _____ work of Christ himself
11. Christ's sacrifice is made _____ present to us

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 28

6:30AM

5:00PM James Fobel (RIP)

Sunday, December 29

7:00AM Jackie Coleman (Blessing)

9:00AM Audrey Yannell (Blessing)

11:00AM James Fobel (RIP)

Monday, December 30

6:30AM Francoise Berg (RIP)

Tuesday, December 31

6:30AM James Fobel (RIP)

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

9:00AM Fr. Tony Pangan (Blessing)

Thursday, January 2

6:30AM Fr. Clement Beerli (Blessing)

Friday, January 3

6:30AM James Fobel (RIP)

*Please submit Mass intentions by Tuesday at noon for inclusion in the following week's bulletin.
Thank you for your understanding!*

DID YOU KNOW?

Last week's question:

Members of this group must be Catholic, male, Swiss nationals between the ages of 19 and 30, at least five-foot-eight in height, and must complete basic military training with the Swiss Armed Forces. What is the name of this group?

Answer to last week's question:

The group is the Swiss Guard, also known as the Pontifical Swiss Guard or Papal Swiss Guard. Founded in 1506 by Pope Julius II, the Swiss Guard's duties include protecting the Pope and his residence, guarding the entrances to Vatican City, and protecting the College of Cardinals when there is no pope. They also serve in ceremonies and audiences, and guard the Papal Conclave when it is session.

This week's question:

When does the season of Christmas end on the liturgical calendar?

QUOTE

*"The family that prays together, stays together, & if they stay together they will love one another as God has loved each one of them.
And works of love are always works of peace."
— St. Mo. Teresa of Calcutta*

Mary, the Holy Mother of God

TODAY'S GOSPEL

Luke 2:16-21

On the Octave of Christmas, we celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. Eight days ago we celebrated Christmas recalling when the Word became Flesh and was born into this world in a manger in Bethlehem. The readings at Christmas spoke of the birth and humanity of Jesus. The Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, emphasizes that this child was not only fully human, but also fully Divine. Jesus, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, is one person with two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man. The theological term for this is the Hypostatic Union, which was defined at the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

Saint Paul describes Jesus very succinctly in the portion of the letter to the Galatians read on this Solemnity. He points out that Jesus is the Son of God, born of a woman (Mary), ransoming us from sin, and sending us the Spirit who enables us to cry out to God, "Father." This is based on the teachings of Jesus himself that are found throughout the Gospel. Jesus refers to God as His Father in Hebrew language that is only used in the most intimate reference of a son to a father. One of the charges brought against Jesus at his trial before the Sanhedrin was that he dared to call God Father. Jesus went beyond that when he told us that God is not only his Father, but that God is our Father. Indeed, he taught that when we pray, to pray, "Our Father, who art in heaven...." Jesus is the son of the Father and is fully divine.

Throughout the Old Testament there are some beautiful images of God's Fatherly love for us. One is found in the Old Testament reading from the Book of Numbers in which God instructs Moses to tell Aaron and his Sons how to bless the Israelites. This Blessing is often times referred to as the Priestly Blessing or Aaronic Blessing. The Blessing has a simple beauty that is so typical of God's revelations to us. Why is it that we tend to make God so complicated and difficult? The blessing is "The Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you! The Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace!" Numbers 6: 24-26

This beauty of God's love for us is seen in the Gospel for today. After the Shepherds had that amazing celestial experience of Angels appearing, announcing and Singing, "Glory to God in High heaven....", they leave the glorious vision in the fields and head to Bethlehem. There they do not find glorious choirs of angels, they come to a manger where they see the Holy Family. The glory of the Lord shown through the poverty, the animals and the manger: the shepherds knew that this is the baby of whom the Angels spoke and sang. They stood in awe as they gazed upon the Human and Divine Natures of God in the baby Jesus.

There are times in our lives when we are so moved by an experience we refer to as, "a religious experience." These moments touch us, and leave no doubt that Jesus is Lord. This is what the Shepherds experienced, and as they returned to their flocks they probably did so with a renewed sense of faith in God. May we recognize and honour the baby born in the manger as not only fully man, but also fully Divine, and carry our experience of God's presence and love with us always.

— Father Killian Loch, O.S.B.

~ Think about the shepherds' reaction to their visit in Bethlehem. How can we follow their example?

DAILY READINGS: DEC 30 — JAN 5	
Dec 30, Monday	1 Jn 2:12-17 Ps 96: 7-10 Lk 2: 36-40
Dec 31, Tuesday <i>St. Sylvester I, Pope</i>	1 Jn 2:18-21 Ps 96: 1-2,11-13 Jn 1: 1-18
Jan 1, Wednesday <i>Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God</i>	Nm 6:22-27 Ps 67:2-3, 5,6,8 Gal 4:4-7 Lk 2:16-21
Jan 2, Thursday <i>Mem. of Sts Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops & Doctors</i>	1 John 2:22-28 Ps 98:1-4 John 1: 19-28
Jan 3, Friday	1 John 2:29-3:6 Ps 98:1,3-6 John 1:29-34
Jan 4, Saturday <i>Memorial of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious</i>	1 John 3:7-10 Ps 98:1, 7-9 John 1:35-42
Jan 5, Sunday <i>The Epiphany of the Lord</i>	Isaiah 60: 1-6 Ps 72: 1-2, 7-8, 10-13 Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6 Mathew 2:1-12

(Cont. from p.5 - Mary, Holy Mother)

...She cooked meals, mended clothing, did laundry, washed dishes, changed diapers, sang lullabies, worried about the choices her child was making, kibitzed with other women, served her husband and child, and went to bed exhausted after a long day of hard work. Mary isn't a statue and she isn't an untouchable goddess. She was and is a mother – Jesus' mother in an actual way, and our mother in a divine way.

When Mary said "yes" to become the mother of God's Son, she also said "yes" to become our mother, since we are united with Jesus in the Mystical Body. What's more, her acceptance of this motherhood continues throughout Eternity.

Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation.

What a tremendous help God has given us for our own motherhood. Mary exemplifies virtue – acceptance, patience, trust, obedience, endurance, courage, strength, hope, faith and joy – in a completely tangible way.

With Mary as model, we have a sure guide for our own motherhood. With Mary as our Mother, we have a sure advocate for the intercession and graces we need to be the mothers we truly yearn to be – regardless of our experiences – and the mothers we truly can be. We only need to open our hearts to her and ask her to lead the way. ~<https://www.osv.com>



As one 'Ohana in Christ', each of us is called to play an important role in our parishes, our communities, and in the lives of others. We are called to support our brothers and sisters in need and share the Good News of Christ's love for all by the love we show, the hope we provide, and the gifts we give. By supporting the 'Ohana in Christ annual appeal, you and our entire 'ohana in Christ, work together to answer this call.

Through your prayerful, sacrificial gift to 'Ohana in Christ, you are:

- Welcoming, supporting and forming our seminarians as they discern their call to the holy priesthood
- Providing food and shelter assistance to families and individuals across the Islands
- Caring for our retired priests after giving their lives in service to the Church
- Enhancing the faith and spiritual growth of the people in our parishes
- Fostering the faith of our youth and young adults through fellowship, community, and Sacramental life.

Thank you for your support, for caring for those around you, and for being a member of our Catholic 'ohana of faith. Donation envelopes are available at the entrances to the church. God bless you for your willingness to help our brothers and sisters in Christ. Mahalo nui loa!

Parish Announcements

THANK YOU...

... to all to have shared their talents, time, resources and effort in making our advent and Christmas preparations, celebrations, charitable drives & activities more meaningful and Christ-filled. Same to all our committed parish leaders, devoted catechists, supportive ministers and dedicated volunteers in hospitality, prayer, formation, and service who, throughout the year selflessly assisted us in realizing our goal of serving our parish community either in big or small events. Your gift of self to the community is truly appreciated and treasured.

Likewise, a word of thanks to everyone for the warm Christmas wishes. And once again, my gratitude to our Parish Pastoral and Finance Council leaders; the school administrative team, faculty and staff; as well as our parish staff and office volunteers for the assistance, dedication, concern and care for our faith community. Thanks also to those who extended their Christmas wishes and their generosity. But I am really thankful to God for those are signs of your support and appreciation of our as ministers of Christ here in the parish. I'll be taking a short break in Manila, please do pray my family, especially for my youngest brother Arnold! Again, thank you!

A BLESSED NEW YEAR TO ALL!

May this first few days of 2025 be a time of reflection...

To count all the blessings we received.

To treasure those who stayed with us
through thick and thin.

To remember our flaws and make ways to be better.

To forgive those who have wronged us,

To be sorry to those whom we caused pain,

To love more, live good and be healthy.

To look forward for a better 2025.

A BLESSED & PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

Join us as we welcome the first day of 2025
with Mass in commemoration of:

"Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God"

January 1, 2025, New Year's Day

Wednesday — 9:00AM Mass

THE JUBILEE PRAYER

Father in heaven,
may the *faith* you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of *charity* enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed *hope*
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within both
humanity and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

— **Pope Francis**

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

Let go of yesterday. Let today be a new beginning and be the best that you can, and you'll get to where God wants you to be..

— **Joel Osteen**