

## THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

### Fr. Ken's Korner



Greetings and blessing of the week,

Well, I guess that there is no doubt that winter is here after the visit by "Old Man Winter" last week. I'm ready for the warm weather! I hope that the week was a good one for all of us friends and families gathered together to celebrate the feast of God's love wrapped in the flesh of a newborn baby whose birth we commemorate on Christmas Day. It is truly a fitting time to stop and reflect upon the gifts and blessings that we have received from God during this holyday season. The economic downswing has, to some degree, made people stop and reflect upon what this season is about and what it is that we truly celebrate. That spirit was certainly demonstrated thanks to your generosity towards those in need. The outpouring of gifts and food to help both the food pantry and the "Giving Tree" effort was remarkable. We thank you for your help in this effort. Likewise, we thank those who were at the Parish Center Sunday evening to help set up the tables and arrange the gifts for the Monday afternoon giveaway. So too, we are grateful to those parishioners who helped with the actual running of the afternoon, from the greeters to those who helped bring the people around, to those who wrapped the gifts, as well as those who helped bring the gifts to the cars of the people who were here for help.



Speaking of thanking, we are grateful to Lena LeBlanc, Eda Provenzano, Jane Leary, Bob Houston for the decorating of the church for the Christmas holy days, as well as to those who helped bring the wreaths and other decorations from storage.

This week, we did not have time for much news (as is the case next week also because the bulletin has to be sent to the bulletin company on Monday instead of the usual Wednesday. Please keep Gerri Krebs grandson, Jamie, in your prayers. He is a lineman on the Plymouth North football team. He sustained an injury to his ACL during a football game. He had to have surgery on Tuesday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> – which happens to be his birthday! This is a difficult time of year for many families as find loved ones missing at their Christmas tables this year due to a death. Please keep them in your prayers during this bittersweet time.

The week between Christmas and the new year is a busy one for the calendar of saints. December 26<sup>th</sup> is the feast of the saint who is known as the first martyr. It is the feast of St. Stephen. Stephen was one of the seven deacons mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. He was stoned to death around 35AD. Saul of Tarsus, later known as Paul (St. Paul) was present at his martyrdom. At this point in Paul's life, he had not undergone his conversion experience on the road to Damascus. December 27<sup>th</sup> is the feast of a saint whose symbol is the eagle.



Rejoice!

One of the four evangelists (gospel writers), John was one of the original Apostles. He died around the year 100AD at Ephesus. He was one of the sons of Zebedee, along with James. He authored in addition to the gospel according to John, the letters of John in the New Testament, as well as the book of Revelation (known by some as the book of the apocalypse). He is the patron saint of Asiatic Turkey. John's death marks the end of the era in Church history that is known as public revelation. December 28<sup>th</sup> is known as the Feast of the Holy Innocents that recalls the death of the male children under a certain age in Bethlehem at the command of King Herod, who went to any extreme in order to solidify his stronghold on the kingdom by eliminating anything, or anyone, that he perceived as a threat to his power and position. It is a time when we should pray for the innocent who have perished, among other ways, through abortion, starvation and war and violence of all types.



This year, December 28<sup>th</sup> happens to be the Sunday that falls between Christmas and the feast of Mary, the Mother of God. Monday, December 29<sup>th</sup>, is the feast of St. Thomas Becket. He was martyred December 29, 1170. (You may recall the story Murder in the Cathedral). Thomas was killed by the order of King Henry II of England. Thomas served for eight years as the chancellor of England. As the archbishop of Canterbury, he defended the freedoms of the Church. Thomas was canonized three years after his death. He is considered one of the most famous martyrs of the Middle Ages. December 31<sup>st</sup> is the feast of Saint Sylvester who died in 335. He was bishop of Rome from 314-335. He organized public worship and dedicated the first lateran basilica. He is one of the first non-martyrs venerated as a saint.

Significant feast days in the church are designated by an octave (8days) of observance and celebration. January 1<sup>st</sup> is the Octave of Christmas and known as the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. It is a **holyday of obligation!** **Masses** for the holyday here at St. Peter's will be **December 31 at 7:00 PM and January 1 at 9:00 AM.**



January 2 is the feast of Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, both of whom were bishops and doctors of the Church. Basil, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia died January 1, 379. He is one of the four great doctors of the Eastern Church. Gregory Nanzianzen, died January 25, 389 or 390, was the Patriarch of Constantinople and was well known for his knowledge of sacred Scripture.

This coming spring the Boston Catholic Conferences for men and women will be taking place on April 18 and 19, 2009. For further information contact [www.CatholicBoston.com](http://www.CatholicBoston.com) or [info@CatholicBoston.com](mailto:info@CatholicBoston.com).

May the Lord's blessings be with you and yours in the coming week and the new year. Your brother in Christ, Fr. Ken