



ST. JOHN XXIII Catholic Church

13060 Palomino Lane, Fort Myers, FL 33912 | P 239-561-2245 | F 239-561-3713 | www.johnxxiii.net

December 20, 2020

Peace

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*"He will be named wonderful counselor,
mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."*

- ISAIAH 9:6

Born IS THE King

St. John XXIII Catholic Parish in Fort Myers, Inc. a Florida non-profit corporation

December 20, 2020

Please Note:

There will be
CONFESSIONS
outside the church
Every Saturday
8:30am-9:00am
LIVE streaming
MASSES on
Facebook/Website

PASTOR

Rev. Robert Tabbert

PAROCHIAL VICARS

Fr. Saji Ellickal M.C.B.S.

frsaji@johnxxiii.net

Fr. Simon Dao CRM

frsimon@johnxxiii.net

DEACON

Deacon Rich Klish

DeaconRich@johnxxiii.net

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday,
8:00am-Noon & 1pm-4pm
239-561-2245
239-561-3713 (Fax)

MINISTRY TO THE SICK:

A priest is on call 7 days a week,
24hrs a day for these hospitals:

**Health Park - St. Columbkille
Church** 239-489-3973

**Lee Memorial - St. Francis
Xavier Church** 239-334-2161
Gulf Coast - St. John XXIII
239-561-2245

RECEIVING THE SACRAMENT:

You are encouraged to receive
the Sacrament of the Sick before
being admitted to a facility.

St. Columbkille - Hope Hospice
239-489-3973
9470 Health Park Circle,
Ft. Myers, FL

**St. Raphael - Lehigh Acres
Health & Rehab Center**
239-369-2194
1550 Lee Blvd, Lehigh Acres, FL
Hope Hospice 239-369-1831
1201 Wings Way, Lehigh Acres, FL

St. Leo - Hope Hospice
239-992-0901
27200 Imperial Pkwy,
Bonita Springs, FL

St. Vincent de Paul - Select
2073 Lafayette St. Ft. Myers
239-693-0818

The Mission of St. John XXIII Catholic Church is to actively engage all those who desire to more fully accept and live out the message of Christ, welcoming and respecting all people regardless of background, history, race or color, as we strive to nurture spiritual growth and personal holiness on our journey to become more responsible stewards of God's gifts.

Mass Intentions

PLEASE NOTE: You are welcome to attend 8:00am Daily Mass as well as weekend Holy Masses in the Church. We ask that you please wear a mask, bring sanitizer and practice social distancing. We will continue to livestream Masses on Facebook and the Website.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21

- 8:00 AM † Robert O'Brien by Pat & Ade Humbert

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22

- 8:00 AM † Rosanne Pantuso by Sara Noel

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23

- 8:00 AM † Nick Burnett by his wife, Linda

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE

- 4:00 PM, 6:30 PM, 9:00 PM & 11:00 PM Vietnamese Mass

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25 - CHRISTMAS DAY

- 7:15 AM, 9:15 AM, 11:15 AM & 1:30 PM Spanish Mass

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26

- 8:00 AM † Eddie Burkey by his wife, Yvonne Burkey
- 4:00 PM † Anthony Gody by Marie Mullen
- 8:00 PM - Vietnamese Mass

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27

- 7:15 AM † Guilia Borrelli by Gloria & Carl Larson
- 9:15 AM † Arlene Brummer by Diane Griffin
- 11:15 AM † Alvin Shleinz by friends & family
- 1:30 PM - Spanish Mass

THE 2021 MASS BOOK IS NOW OPEN FOR JANUARY-JUNE

To ensure availability throughout the year, we must limit requests for the English speaking Masses to no more than (2) weekend Masses and (2) weekday Masses for the entire year. Other options will remain available: Tabernacle Candle \$15 per week, Eucharistic Host \$15 per week.

CHRISTMAS DAY 12/25/20

1ST READING IS 52:7-10
PSALM PS 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6
2ND READING HEB 1:1-6
GOSPEL JN 1:1-18

SUNDAY 12/27/20

1ST READING SIR 3:2-6, 12-14
PSALM PS 128:1-2, 3, 4-5
2ND READING COL 3:12-17
GOSPEL LK 2:22-40

DONATION DEADLINE

End of Year Donation Notice:

All donations for the **2020 Tax Year** must be received by the parish office by **December 31, 2020** to be included in your tax statement. In addition, all CFA donations must be received by the Diocese of Venice by **December 31, 2020**



Pastoral Team

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Holly Atkins

holly@johnxxiii.net

239-561-2245

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239-561-2245

Maintenance Assistant

- Dave Mraz

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239-561-7499

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PART-TIME EMPLOYEES:

Faith Formation Assistant

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239-561-7499

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239-561-2245

Admin. Assistant

Barbara Lange

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239-561-2245

THE LESSONS OF ADVENT

What the Church Teaches Us

by: **Stephen Beale - Catholic Exchange**

Be Watchful:

Our associated attitude should be a mixture of hope, expectation, and holy fear. In placing ourselves in the position of the Israelites in the time of Christ we learn how to prepare for His Second Coming. This is the core Church teaching.

Make Wise Use of Your Time:

But there is an added benefit to constantly maintaining an attitude of watchfulness. People who are watchful generally make better use of the time they have than people who aren't. (Credit for this insight goes to a friend at a Bible study who pointed this out.) As Ephesians 5:15-16 says, "Watch carefully then how you live, not as foolish persons but as wise, making the most of the opportunity, because the days are evil." This advice comes in the context of a discussion about the end times. Note the preceding verse: "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." Likewise, there is John 9:4, "We have to do the works of the one who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work."

Christ is the Lord of History:

Advent reminds us that history is in God's hands. In Christ, God intervenes in history, resetting the story of humanity, guiding its development, and determining its conclusion. History is not a runaway train racing into an unknown future. It is not a product of chance or the impersonal laws of evolution, physics, or social science.

History Has an End:

In 1992, a political scientist named Francis Fukuyama wrote a sensational book titled *The End of History and the Last Man*. Fukuyama argued that history, defined narrowly as a debate of ideas, was over. Democracy had won, communism had lost, and global capitalism and technological progress were the future.

A quarter of a century later, amid Islamic terrorism and the resurgence of nationalism in the West, Fukuyama's thesis seems foolish. But he was fundamentally right about one thing. History does have an end. The whole of history — whether you conceive of it as the development of ideas, institutions, nations, or technology — ends in Christ, who is the true last man.

The point is to not just reiterate that Christ is sovereign over history (see lesson 3), but also to make us realize the futility of temporal attachments, whether a particular ideology, system of government, nation, or civilization. These things do have value but we must remember that one day they—like history itself—will pass away.

Christ is Our Origin and Destiny:

Finally, in Advent, we learn again that Christ is our origin and our end. All things that matter have their source in Him and move towards Him as their destination. As Christ said in Revelation 22:13, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign:
the Virgin shall be with child and bear a
son, and He shall be named Immanuel."

- Isaiah 7:14

ADVENT PRAYER

4TH SUNDAY

Peace on Earth

Dear Jesus, you entered our world on Christmas as the Prince of Peace. This Advent, as we strive to become the best versions of ourselves, fill us with a deep and abiding peace. Help us share that peace with everyone we encounter, especially those who need it most. Lord, our God, we praise You for Your Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Wisdom that teaches and guides us. He is the Savior of us all. O Lord, let your blessing come upon us as we light all candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise of salvation. May He come quickly and not delay. We ask this in His holy name.

Amen

Prayer List

Please remember in your prayers all of our parish family and friends who suffer physically, emotionally or spiritually, especially:

Elaine Quan
Ryan Novajasky
Lynne Haughey
Carol Clausen
Marlene LaRose
Erika Arquilla Hlavacek
Jeff Hlavacek
Gary Neubauer
Tom Biedak
Fr. Ed Przygocki
Kevin Natella
Marilyn Kelley
Dan Pieper
James Heaney
Steven Dakin
Neil Soeder
Gene Damm

C. Tony Navy
Anthony Navy
Lou Rescimoto
Nancy Wirick
Linda Sayres
Sue & Craig Edwards
Baby Henry Patrick Koch
Anna Acini
Pauline Reid
Katie Cassidy
Margarita Muratore
Larry Waldsmith
Denny Uhlik
Caroline Ann Toussaint
Ron Hudepohl
Donna Hart
Meaghan Onofrey

These names are kept in the bulletin for one month. If you would like continual prayer, please add your name to the prayer book in the Narthex.

The best way to ensure your loved ones are consistently prayed for within our greater E-Prayer Community - email **Betsy Engelbrecht** at eprayer.stjohn23@gmail.com

Their names will be circulated to an ever-growing list of people who will pray for them by name!

Ways to Memorialize

For requests to memorialize a loved one, please call the parish office at: (239) 561-2245

Prayers for Eternal Life

*Life is changed, not ended.
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord!*
Larry Waldsmith



Tabernacle Candle

In Memory of: **Nick Burnette**
Requested by: **his wife, Linda**



Adoration Chapel

In Memory of: **Arlene Brummer**
Requested by: **The Harley's**





WATCH ON FACEBOOK

DAILY MASS

8:00am Monday - Saturday

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19

- 4:00pm with Fr. Angelo
- 8:00pm Vietnamese Mass

<https://www.facebook.com/fort.myers.5454>

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20

- 11:15am with Fr. Simon
- 1:30pm Spanish Mass

<https://www.facebook.com/ministeriohispano.sanjuan.1>



WATCH AT HOME:

<https://dioceseofvenice.org/offices/offices-departments/communications/tvmass/>

WFTX-TV FOX 4 - Sundays at 10:30am



PLEASE CONSIDER GIVING YOUR

Online Gift



<https://johnxxiii.net/giving/>

WELCOME

New Parishioners

- Frank & Anneke Sarzyniak
- Donna Spreitzer
- Timothy & Katie Frederic
- Kristina Schanz
- Antonio & Gloria Tunales

Those who are new to our Parish this year, and those who've been coming for years without being registered, we need your help in staying organized and planning for our future needs. Thank you to everyone who registered with our Parish. If you have not received a welcome letter, please call the Parish Office to confirm your registration. All new parishioners, and those interested in registering in our parish, are invited to attend the next **New Parishioner Orientation on Sunday, January 17, 2021 after the 11:15am Mass.**

This is your opportunity to become informed and active members of the parish. Registering at St. John XXIII is a declaration of your desire to be part of a Catholic community. Please let the parish office know your email address OR you can even update it on the Parish website! www.johnxxiii.net

Frequently, those seeking to celebrate Marriage, Baptisms or serve as sponsors for Confirmation or Baptism request a letter stating that they are parishioners. To receive such a letter, one must be registered in the parish, attend Mass regularly, and be committed to stewardship of time, talent and treasure. One means of verifying participation is through the use of parish offertory envelopes. If you choose not to participate in the support of the parish or are unable to contribute at this time, please at least note your prayerful support on your envelope and place it in the weekly offertory basket.

PRAYERS FOR

Our Military Personnel

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| PFC Bryan Bard | Christian Troutner, US Navy |
| Sean Ball | Alex Zizzo, US Navy Medic |
| Major Bart Boma | PFC Jordan Feil, USA |
| Staff Sgt. Dennis Cosgrove | Sgt. Hayden Linde, FLARNG |
| Sgt. Phil Dellibovi | Aaron Crump, USCG |
| Staff Sgt. Chris Dominski | Sgt. Nathaniel Broemmel |
| CPT Andrew Dugan, Spec. Forces | Lt. Com. Mark Buonomo |
| Major Andrew Duguay | Col. Scott C. Woodward |
| Sgt. Jared Gaudet | Private Nicholas Loeb, ARNG |
| Tech Sgt Jeffrey K. Green | Andrew Hawkinson, USN |
| Capt. Kellyn C. Hall | Cavalry Scout Specialist, |
| Andrew Herman | Ryan Silva, Army |
| 1st Lt. Paige Hortman | 2nd Lt. Greg Fry, USMC |
| Sgt. Kathleen Hudepohl | Jared Broemmel, US Navy |
| PFC Michael P Hughes | Army 2nd Lieutenant Edward |
| SPC Michael Jednak | Hudson Tillinghast IV |
| PFC Andrew Kanopkh | Jethro Ignacio, US Air Force |
| Michael Klem | 1st Lt. Christopher Dryhurst, |
| Capt. Bradley D. Laux | US Air Force |
| Capt. Jacob Mundo, US Army | Com. Craig Fowler, USN |
| SSGT Anthony Padula | Eric Sanchez, US Air Force |
| LCP James Palenik | Lt. Col. Mike Garry, US Army |
| Master SGT Peter Parison | 82nd ABN |
| Sgt. Justin Pingicer, Army | Lt. Ross Walker, US Navy |
| Lt. Col. Brady Sexton | PFC Eric Lyons, USMC |
| 2nd Lt. Kristen Thompson | 2LT Nicholas Meunier US Army |



Faith Formation

Contact **Chris Biel** | 561-7499 | chrisdre@johnxxiii.net



FAITH FORMATION SCHEDULE:

The next WEDNESDAY Faith Formation Class will be held **JANUARY 13**

The next SUNDAY Family Faith Formation Class will be held **JANUARY 10**

PLEASE NOTE: Due to covid, the pageant portion at the Children's 4pm Christmas Eve Mass will not take place.

SACRAMENT PREPARATION:

BAPTISM: Congratulations on your decision to baptize your child! At St. John XXIII, we are happy to help your family prepare for the celebration. Baptisms are offered for registered members of Saint John XXIII and are scheduled only after the preparation process is completed by the parents. Please do not make arrangements for family members until you have actually received a date. Contact the office at (239) 561-2245 for more information or to begin the process.

FIRST COMMUNION: (also called First Eucharist and First Reconciliation) Children in first grade or above, who have expressed a desire and willingness and are attending Mass, are welcome to begin the two year process of preparing for these Sacraments. The first year consists of regular attendance at Faith Formation classes or through a Diocesan Catholic school. (Either St. Francis Xavier or St. Andrew) The second year continues those classes, but also adds in direct Sacramental Preparation (Reconciliation and Communion) sessions. Please contact Chris at 561-7499 for more information or to begin the process. Parents who home school their children must contact the office during Year I.

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION: Celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation is a two year process that begins at the start of 9th Grade and is celebrated in the Fall of 11th grade. (Older teens are certainly welcome!). Each year consists of Faith Formation through the parish Youth Group or a Diocesan Catholic school (Bishop Verot) as well as scheduled Confirmation classes and a retreat. Please note: Students from Bishop Verot must register and attend the preparation classes at the beginning of 9th grade. If you are entering the 9th grade or would like more information on our program, contact Chris at (239) 561-7499 to begin the process.

Faith is being sure of what you hope for.



ADULT FAITH

Education

Keep in TOUCH with your *Faith* ONLINE:

OPENING THE WORD

YOUR JOURNEY INTO THE SUNDAY READINGS



Watch a short video each week on **Formed.org** to help prepare you for the upcoming Sunday Readings. Register at <https://johnxxiii.formed.org/> and follow the instructions to sign in and watch Opening the Word. View all of the Catholic content 24/7. Please join our weekly Zoom meeting. Email **Linda Stanley** at: lindastanley.ls@gmail.com for more information.

JOIN US ONLINE

Bible Study



The Bible Timeline

The Story of Salvation



JEFF CAVINS, SARAH CHRISTMYER, and TIM GRAY

The Bible Timeline® Study Program takes you on a guided journey through salvation history. Presenter Jeff Cavins, shows you how fourteen of the Bible's narrative books tell the biblical story from beginning to end and gives you the keys to understanding the amazing story woven through Scripture.

We will meet on Zoom, Tuesdays from 6:30-8pm from January 12 through March 30, 2021 for the first 12 weeks. The next 12 weeks will be scheduled in Fall 2021.

To join our study, go to ascensionpress.com and sign in or sign up (if you don't have an account). On your Menu dropdown select Join a Study and select St. John XXIII and order your workbook.

CONTACT:

Edith Trafford - lancith@aol.com



Coordinator of Youth Ministries 561-3022 xt 107
Contact **Kelly Evers** | kelly@johnxxiii.net

Rooted at St. John XXIII

Welcoming all Young Adults 18 - 39

Rooted meets on the first Thursday of each month. Check out our trifold at the welcome desk for planned events.

- **PLEASE NOTE:** Due to the current pandemic, Rooted has been cancelled until further notice.



Join our Facebook Group: *Rooted at St. John XXIII* for updates and local happenings.

Confirmation Program

Mandatory Session - Sunday 5pm to 7pm

- **January 31** is the next Confirmation preparation class. Please check the website for more information.

High School Youth Group

HSYG Social Sessions - Sundays 5pm to 6:30pm

- REGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED. All high school students are welcome and encouraged to attend. We hope to move this to an in-person ministry as soon as it is safe to do so. The sessions will be on the Zoom app. Please email Kelly for invitation link.
- **Classes will resume January 10 through Zoom.**

Middle School Youth Group

MSYG Sessions - Wednesdays 6pm to 7:15pm

- REGISTRATION IS NOT REQUIRED at this time. We will host this program on **Wednesday evenings at 6pm** via the Zoom app. Please check the website under the education tab in the Middle School Youth ministry for more information and email Kelly for link to the Zoom invitation.
- **Classes will resume January 6 through Zoom.**

Volunteer Opportunitites

- For at home Youth Volunteer Opportunities please email Kelly Evers



Hispanic Ministry **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Misas en Español

- Lugar: Iglesia Católica St. John XXIII
- Hora: 1:30pm
- Fecha: Todos los domingos del mes.

Rezo del Santo Rosario

(Antes de la misa los domingos)

- Lugar: Iglesia Católica St. John XXIII
- Hora: 12:50pm
- Fecha: Todos los domingos del mes.

Rezo del Santo Rosario (Via Zoom)

- Lugar: Video conferencia a través de Zoom
- Hora: 6:00pm
- Fecha: Todos los martes del mes.

Charlas pre Bautismales

- Lugar: Iglesia Católica St. John XXIII
- Hora: 10:00am
- Fecha: Todos primeros sabados del mes.

NOTA: Registrarse previamente enviando un email al correo: comunidadhispana@johnxxiii.net

Contactanos

- Para más información sobre el link del rezo del Santo Rosario vía Zoom o preguntas relacionado al ministerio hispano, por favor dejarnos saber al correo comunidadhispana@johnxxiii.net
- Visítenos en www.facebook.com/ministeriohispano.sanjuan.1

RCIA

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

INQUIRY ZOOM MEETINGS:
THURSDAY - 6:30PM

Dec. 24 & 31: NO SESSION - Christmas/
New Year's Eve

For more information, please call or text
GINNY WHELAN at (239) 634-3239 or email:
vwhelan99@gmail.com



ST. JOHN XXIII
Catholic Church

General Announcements

- **Have You Listened to Our Podcasts?** Listen to our weekly inspirational messages from Father Bob and homilies from Mass. Visit our site weekly at johnxxiii.podbean.com
- **Like our Facebook Page:** For all the latest happenings, search "St. John XXIII Catholic Church" and "like" our page.
- **Our Weekly Newsletter:** Visit <https://www.johnxxiii.net/e-newsletter-sign-up/> and enter your email address.
- **Download Our Parish App:** Download our app today at myparishapp.com or search your phone's app store for myparish. You can also text the word "APP" to 88202!
- **Follow us on Instagram:** St. John XXIII is now on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/stjohnxxiiichurch/>
- **St. John XXIII Catholic Church Mass Times:** Stay up to date and visit: <http://johnxxiii.net/info/new-mass-schedule/>
- **Interested in Serving our Parish Family During Mass?** Men, women and teens may serve as a Greeter, Usher, Lector, or Eucharistic Minister. Please contact the parish office at (239) 561-2245, if you feel called to serve in any of these areas, we can use your time and talent!
- **Online Giving:** We appreciate your donations to keep our parish running. You can enroll online through the St. John XXIII website at: <https://johnxxiii.net/giving>
- **Low Gluten Hosts:** If you are interested in receiving low gluten hosts at Mass, please see a Sacristan to make a request.
- **Non-Perishable Donations:** Please consider bringing nonperishable items to church each week to be given to food pantries in our area.
- **St. John XXIII Thrift Store:** Hours are Monday-Friday 10am-5pm and Saturday 10am-4pm. For more information email thrifft@johnxxiii.net
- **Keep Our Database Current:** Have you moved, changed email addresses, dropped a landline or changed your cell number? Please email maryann@johnxxiii.net with any changes or additions to your contact information.
- **FREE Rosary Repair:** Send broken rosaries in a padded envelope to: Betty & Dick Holden, 7930 Estero Blvd., #502, Ft. Myers Beach, FL 33931. Rosaries will be returned within a week of receipt. For more information email: holdenbnd@gmail.com or call Dick at (239) 463-3993
- **Craftie Ladies Order Requests:** Please contact Judy Siegel at: (239) 437-4978 or email craftieladiesxxiii@gmail.com
- **Free Mental Health Services:** Catholic Charities offers free mental health services for adults, children and families. Counselors can help resolve a wide variety of issues such as stress, anger, anxiety, relationship problems, trauma, depression, low self-esteem and grief. Call (239) 337-4193
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SCHEDULE 2020

Christmas & New Year

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24

CHRISTMAS EVE LITURGIES

- 4:00pm Mass
- 6:30pm Mass
- 9:00pm Mass
- 11:00pm Vietnamese Mass

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25

CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

- 7:15am, 9:15am & 11:15am Masses
- 1:30pm Spanish Mass

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

- 6:00pm Vigil Mass for Holy Day

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1, 2021

Feast of Mary Mother of God - HOLY DAY

- 8:00am Mass
- 12:00pm Mass
- 8:00pm Vietnamese Mass

BEGINNING JANUARY 2, 2021

Saturday Vigil Masses resume at 3:30pm and 5:30pm through Palm Sunday, March 28, 2021

Rejoice

FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN

Adoration Chapel

The St. Luke Adoration Chapel is OPEN Monday-Friday 8:30am-4pm and Saturday 8:30am-3pm PLEASE NOTE EXCEPTIONS:

- CHRISTMAS EVE - CLOSED
- CHRISTMAS DAY - CLOSED
- DECEMBER 26 - 8:30AM-3PM

For information on The Adoration Chapel Ministry please visit:

johnxxiii.net/adoration-chapel-ministry/

Keeping Christ in Christmas

By: Fr. Angelo S. Arrando

Here are the rambles of one who loves Christmas and enjoys singing with the best of them “I’m Dreaming of a White Christmas”. Well not really....not white anyway – certainly not this Christmas. But as a Christian who, too often, takes Christmas for granted, I cannot but help to ask myself, “What is it that the non-Christian world perceives about our beliefs and why we celebrate the day.”

Christmas is a big deal for us. Because of the overt activity, everyone else knows that, too. We prepare, we decorate, we illuminate, we dust off the nativity, we write, we mail, we shop, we wrap, we bake, we cook, we carol, we exchange, we visit, we accelerate and we celebrate. And we pray and we worship as well. Some of us even hold firm to being greeted with “Merry Christmas” and not “Happy Holidays”. Christmas is indeed a big deal for us.

But I cannot but wonder, if we truly convey to others why the big deal? Do we help others understand what it is we are celebrating? Why all the fuss? Why all the spent energy? Why all the hoopla?

As Christians, we are familiar with the nativity, the birth of Jesus. We project it in movie houses, we build it on our lawns and we fight to have it placed in public areas. The familiar nativity scene is recognizable to believer and non-believer alike. But is Christmas only about something we believe occurred two millennium ago? I wonder how we can help non-Christians understand what it is we believe, not with our words, but with our lives?

In the Book of Genesis, we are told, “God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them.” That in itself is wonderful and awesome....created in the image and likeness of God. But in Christmas, Christians believe that in the person of Jesus, God comes in the image and likeness of humanity. God takes on human flesh. For us, Jesus truly is literally Emmanuel – God with us. The early Christians struggled to better understand this wonder. The Christians of the first two hundred years rejected the notion that Jesus came only looking like a human but really was not. They rejected the notion that God was play acting in Jesus’ humanity. They held firm to their belief that through Jesus’ coming all humanity is held in ultimate esteem and worth by God. The writings of St. Paul tell us that in Jesus, the invisible God becomes visible.

For two millennium Christian society has made human history a divided highway marked by time, the time recorded before Jesus and the time after marked by his coming. I cannot but wonder if often the rhetoric was and is louder than the actions lived by that marking. This marking of time can easily lead itself into being a barrier, separating people.

With the coming of Jesus, I believe, God definitively placed human beings above systems, above institutions. I believe that in Jesus, God placed us in the care of one another. Simply put, Jesus is religion made simple. People always come first. Not some people in some places.... but all people in every place. Now, for me, that is a Christmas promise!

Because of that first Christmas, I don’t believe we can run, duck, hide, or avoid the fact that for now and for evermore humanity has been touched by a moment in human history when God in Jesus put us in the care of one another.

I believe that in Jesus, God has made our human needs his very own. In Jesus, God asks us to do the same. As a clergy person I know that most Christians know well the words that Jesus spoke. But I wonder as well why it is that we ignore almost everything Jesus asked us to do. We have kept the words but somehow we have lost the passion Jesus felt for human beings. “To forgive as we ourselves want to be forgiven.” “To turn the other cheek.” “Whatever you do to the every least, you do to me and what you fail to do for them, you failed to do for me.”

“I came to serve and not be served, so must you do for one another.”

For Christians it is unthinkable for a world without Jesus, yet too many of us go on as though he never existed. We Christians have allowed Santa Claus, Rudolph, Frosty, the elves and a myriad of other characters cloud what it is Christmas is about to us.

Human life today is still not about human beings. Too often it is about institutions, politics, finances, material goods and material gains. Human beings are exploitable, expendable, disposable and dispensable. If we truly believe in God coming in flesh, Christian energies must move away from fear of the world to care and concern for one another, making others needs our own. This indeed would be the wonder of Christmas.... the miracle of God in our midst and our serving of our God in serving one another.

If that truly became the reality, we would not have to mark our celebration with all the hustle and bustle of Decembers. Our celebration of the coming of Jesus would be in our everyday actions, in our everyday words, in our everyday lives and the world would know what it is we believe and what it is we are about.

So much for my rambling. Happy Holiday. Hmmm....can that be Happy Holy Day I wonder?

A Blessed Christmas to All!



Guardian Angels WALKWAY

PAVER MEMORIALIZATION



St. John XXIII Parish, along with the Knights of Columbus and The Women's Guild, are excited to offer **12x12 pavers**, which will be placed on the walkway around the site for our St. Michael the Archangel statue. **The price for each paver is \$350.** This is a wonderful way to pay tribute to a loved one who has served, or is currently serving in the military or as a first responder.

Defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, Oh Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Guardian Angels WALKWAY

Name _____

Address or PO Box _____

Unit/Apt # _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Payments may be made by cash, credit card or check.

I would like to pay by:

CASH CHECK CREDIT CARD

If paying by check, please make checks payable to the Knights of Columbus.

To order, or check the status of an order, please contact The Knights of Columbus:

LARRY EVENER: larryevener@yahoo.com or
TOM DOLAN: mtd0522@yahoo.com

The Women's Guild Contact:

SUE EDWARDS: sgedwards007@gmail.com

PAVER ORDER FORM

Please circle the graphic to be added to the stone:



Please print clearly. The 12x12 paver has 3 lines.

LINE 1 NAME _____
example: John Doe

LINE 2 RANK _____
example: SGT. USMC

LINE 3 SERVICE _____
example: WWII

Please sign and date verifying all information is correct on the paver.

PRINT NAME _____

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____



ST. JOHN XXIII
Catholic Church

Weekly Financials



	12-06-20	12-08-19	Difference
Offertory	\$35,348.67	\$46,916.00	(\$11,567.33)
Building Fund	\$2,265.00	\$3,896.00	(\$1,631.00)
Total	\$37,613.67	\$50,812.00	(\$13,198.33)
Mass Attendance	1523	3524	
Registered Families	3619	3729	

No money is kept on Church property. Thank you for your continued generosity!

***Please make your checks payable to "St. John XXIII"**

2020 Catholic Faith Appeal - NO UPDATE

2020 Goal	\$492,000.00
Pledge	\$515,636.99
% of Goal	104.80%
% of Households	21.77%
Payments	\$502,832.59

Planning Your Will



Remember St. John XXIII

A bequest is a wonderful way to express gratitude to God for a lifetime of blessings! The gift you give establishes a lasting legacy of love for others by helping the Church to continue our Catholic heritage through its many ministries.

PLEASE NOTE: Leaving money to the Parish in your will is not assessed and 100% goes to the parish.

The following is possible wording for including a bequest in your will:

"I bequeath the greater of \$_____ or _____% of the residue of my estate to Bishop Frank J. Dewane, (or his successor), Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Venice in Florida, a corporation sole, whose principal office is located at 1000 Pinebrook Rd., Venice, FL 34285, For the benefit of St. John XXIII Catholic Parish, in Fort Myers, Inc."

The actual wording in your will should be determined by you and your attorney.

For more information, questions, or wish to consider a gift annuity or trust for St. John XXIII Catholic Church, then please email:

Holly Atkins: holly@johnxxiii.net



OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CHAPEL

Stations of the Cross

MEMORIALIZE A LOVED ONE

Artist Chris Scala has designed the beautiful new Stations of the Cross in the Our Lady of the Rosary Chapel. This is an opportunity for you to memorialize a loved one for **\$5,000 each. (14 TOTAL)**

For more information please contact **Holly Atkins** at **(239) 561-2245**

SEVEN STATIONS have already been memorialized! Please inquire on availability.



Memorialization

The art of commemorating the lives of those we love.



A Christmas Message From Father Bob

My Dear Parishioners,

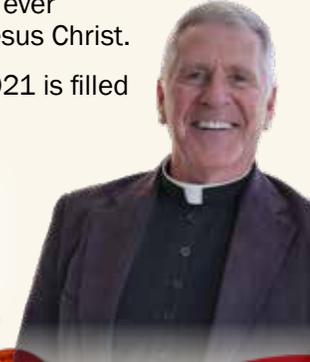
On behalf of Fr. Saji, Fr. Simon, and the entire Parish Staff, I want to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas. May it be filled with countless blessings, good health and an ever deepening relationship with Jesus Christ.

It is my prayer that the year 2021 is filled with peace and love.

Blessings,



Rev. Robert D. Tabbert



Christmas isn't a day or even a season....Christmas is the compass needle that points toward God. The star shining for the Wisemen, The angels singing for the shepherds. Christmas is the illuminated path, across the wilderness of life, our map to this world, and if we follow it, if we surrender, joyfully, to it, Christmas will lead us to where we need to go.

The Christmas Plains by Joe Botum



5 SIMPLE TIPS For Parents to Keep Their Sanity During Holiday Mass

Michele Chronister - Catholic Exchange

1.) SET REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS

Toddlers are not designed to be confined in a pew for an hour. You are not a failure if you have to take a child out of Mass! Figure out how long it usually takes for your child to begin to melt down, and try to leave the pew before that point. Eventually, they're able to stay in the pew for the whole Mass, but in the meantime, reasonable expectations keep everyone happier.

2.) TEACH ONE OR TWO SIMPLE THINGS

Making priorities is to help your little ones to love Jesus in the Eucharist. From the time they are babies, you can teach them to do one simple thing: to blow a kiss to the tabernacle after Mass. It is such a simple thing, but it reinforces a belief in the Real Presence, and it launches a relationship with Jesus. Other simple things to teach: how to make the Sign of the Cross, how to genuflect, and how to bless yourself with holy water.

3.) USE WHATEVER WORKS

If a bag full of books or toys keeps your child happy, then use them! You can have a family policy that they can bring one stuffed animal or doll to Mass, until your Sacramental preparation year.

4.) LOVE IS YOUR PRAYER

Your number one goal as a parent is NOT to teach your child to behave perfectly at Mass. We are surrounded by all of the saints and angels, united to Christ, and all of his mystical body. Of course you should teach your children this doctrine...but your average one or two year old won't understand it, yet. Mass is a good time to snuggle your kids. What other time of week are you all confined together, in a small space, for an hour? So go out of your way to love them a little extra during Mass.

5.) THIS TOO SHALL PASS

Above all, remember that this is a fleeting stage of childhood, and keep persisting in bringing those little stinkers to Mass. There will come a day when you can once again kneel quietly in your pew and pray at Mass. In the meantime, remember the words of Christ, and rest assured that in welcoming these little ones, you are actually welcoming Him...and that prayer is very pleasing to Him, indeed.



OPLATKI TRADITION

Following the time honored tradition, many families will begin their Christmas Eve celebration by waiting for the appearance of the first star in the early evening sky as they look toward the East. This first star appearing symbolizes the Star of Bethlehem which announced that the Great Light was coming into our world, to the "people who lived in darkness."

The table at which the family gathers for the Christmas Eve dinner typically has some straw strewn beneath a fine white tablecloth to commemorate the birth of the Christ Child in the manger or cave where the animals lived. A more modern adaptation includes the use of straw or sprigs of evergreen which are placed on a serving platter and then covered with a fine white napkin on which the Oplatki wafers rest.

The Christmas Eve meal begins with the eldest member of the family taking an Oplatki wafer, breaking it and sharing it with the family member next to him. Each then shares pieces of the Oplatki wafer with everyone else present at the table. Some families, particularly of the Slovak tradition, share the Oplatki with honey on it, as a symbol of the sweetness and joy of the occasion. The sharing ritual is accompanied by embracing and the exchange of good wishes. The symbolism of sharing the wafer with each person and then back and forth, symbolizes the giving and sharing of our lives.

Christmas Oplatki *Bread*

Families of Polish, Slovak and Lithuanian background observe this Christmas Eve Tradition. Family members and guests are each handed an oplatek and they each break off a piece from one another and eat it, expressing best wishes and blessings to each other, and asking for forgiveness. This is a tender, touching family celebration of love and forgiveness. Envelopes of the bread are located in the Office and Church Narthex.

A \$3 donation towards the cost of the Oplatki is greatly appreciated and can be placed in the envelope next to the basket.



relevant
FLORIDA radio
1660 AM / 1410 AM / 106.7 FM
www.relevantradio.com/app



Witnessing the Faith

WITH BISHOP DEWANE

Join Bishop DeWane for his monthly radio program on **Saturday, December 26th at 8:30am.**

Access the program at:
www.dioceseofvenice.org/our-bishop/relevant-radio-podcasts

GIVE TO THE HOMELESS

A group of young moms, working with our Social Justice Ministry are doing a "give to the homeless" in our area.

SUGGESTED ITEMS NEEDED:

- Travel sized toiletries
- Individual snacks like trail mix or granola
- Water bottles, Gatorade or similar
- Gallon sized bags
- Clothing donations such as: gloves, hats socks and jackets

There will be a box in the Narthex of our church for your items. Please help with this worthy drive to help those in need.



VATICAN LANCHES #AGIFTOFWISDOM CAMPAIGN

by: Fr. Benedict Mayaki, SJ - Vatican News



The Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life launches an initiative to promote bonding between young people and the elderly.

Picking up Pope Francis's appeal to young people on the 32nd World Youth Day - in which he reminded them that they need the "wisdom and vision" of the elderly - the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life is launching an initiative called "A Gift of Wisdom" as the Church approaches the season of Christmas.

In a statement on Friday, the Dicastery emphasizes that in spite of the "particular climate in which we are living" due to the pandemic, young people have the opportunity to receive a special gift through bonding with elderly people – many of them living alone because of the ongoing health crisis.

"We can create bonds with each of them," the statement notes, "this is a treasure waiting to be discovered!"

Closeness to the Elderly

This "Gift of Wisdom" initiative comes after the success of the July 2020 campaign, "The elderly are your grandparents." During that campaign, the Dicastery

collected virtual hugs sent by many young people to both their own grandparents and to "adopted grandparents."

With this latest initiative, however, young people from all over the world are invited to "send a message to the elderly and to receive in return the gift of their wisdom."

Share on Social Media Platforms

More precisely, the Dicastery proposes that young people post on social media "a memory, a piece of advice, or a 'gift of wisdom' that they have received from one of the elderly people with whom they have formed a bond in recent months."

As health restrictions are still in force in many countries, the Dicastery encourages that participation in this campaign be done via social media using the hashtag #aGiftOfWisdom.

The best posts will be shared on the social media accounts of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life (@laityfamilylife).

CHRISTMAS FUN FACTS

- December 25 was originally a pagan celebration. Nobody knows when Jesus of Nazareth was born and nobody celebrated his birthday for hundreds of years. December 25 was co-opted from the pagan rites connected with the winter solstice.
- The nativity story resulted in several wars. In the first few centuries of the Christian era, controversy over whether or not Jesus was divine at birth created political and social unrest that frequently burst out into full-scale warfare.
- Mistletoe kissing originated with fertility rites. The hanging sprig is a very ancient symbol of virility and therefore anybody standing beneath it is signaling that he or she is available.
- Santa Claus originated in a newspaper ad. Far from being a quaint medieval legend, Santa Claus first appeared as a recognizable entity was in a newspaper ad for toys and "gift books" in the mid 19th century.
- Christmas is only recently a "family" holiday. It was originally celebrated as an adult form of "trick or treat," but with the "treat" consisting of booze and the threatened "trick" consisting of bodily harm or destruction of property!
- The Christmas Tree is a manufactured tradition. Victorian intellectuals invented the tradition as part of a social movement to consciously reform Christmas away from its tradition of harsh and loud drinking.
- "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" was originally a threat. The ever-popular song was originally sung, loudly and repeatedly, by crowds of rowdy, lower-class servants demanding booze from their masters... or else. (i.e. "We won't go until we get some!")



God never gives someone a gift they are not capable of receiving. If he gives us the *Gift of Christmas*, it is because we all have the ability to understand and receive it."

Pope Francis

ORDINATION

Anniversary



Father Saji

December 27, 2000

20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY



Catholic Community HAPPENINGS

Safe Environment Training: As part of the Safe Environment Program, the Diocese of Venice requires that all employees and those volunteers who work with children and/or vulnerable adults be fingerprinted and trained in Safe Environment prior to beginning employment or volunteering. Visit www.dioceseofvenice.org/safeenvironment for further information.

Do You Need Help? If you need assistance from Catholic Charities for food, financial assistance or tele-mental health counseling, please call the number for your area listed below between the hours of 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday:

- Sarasota/Manatee/DeSoto/Hardee/Highlands Counties: (844) 385-2407
- Charlotte/Lee/Hendry/Glades Counties: (844) 385-2423
- Collier County: (844) 385-240

Livestreamed Mass from Catholic Center: Please join Bishop Frank J. Dewane at 9:15am for daily Mass from the Catholic Center at www.dioceseofvenice.org or <https://www.facebook.com/DioceseofVenice/>

Catholic Charities Support: Financial support is needed during its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To help, please visit www.catholiccharitiesdov.org/donate or send a check to: Catholic Charities, Diocese of Venice Inc., 5824 Bee Ridge Road, PMB 409, Sarasota, FL 34233-5065

Help Your Parish: Parishes face increased risk of financial shortfalls due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on everyday life. Please prayerfully consider an online donation to your parish by visiting <https://dioceseofvenice.org/ways-to-give/parish-donations-online/>

Project Rachel Post-Abortion: Reconciliation and healing is available to you. For more information, please call: Sylvia at (941) 412-5860 e-mail: project.rachel@dioceseofvenice.org or visit: www.hopeafterabortion.com

Spiritual Adoption Program: You are invited to register to spiritually adopt an unborn child in danger of abortion. Visit www.dioceseofvenice.org/offices/respect-life/spiritual-adoption-program and receive monthly updates on the development of the child in the womb. Call (941) 441-1101 or email Berdeaux@dioceseofvenice.org

Novena of Masses for Life: Participate in a Mass near you and pray for life! Visit www.dioceseofvenice.org/respectlife for the monthly schedule of Novena of Masses for Life.

Free Mental Health Counseling: Catholic Charities is providing free mental health counseling services. For help or support, please call our staff at (844) 385-2423 or visit www.catholiccharitiesdov.org

Treatment Center for Teens: This treatment center is for teen substance abuse at the Vince Smith Center. Located at 2450 Prince St. in Ft. Myers. They offer a therapeutic environment for teens ages 13-17. Education is provided by the Lee County School District. For more information call (239) 338-2306

Sign Up Now: The Florida Catholic e-Edition will be FREE for the next year! Keep up to date on the latest news from across the Diocese by signing up now for the weekly digital paper to be sent directly to your inbox at <https://dioceseofvenice.org/news/>



By: *Tim Peterson, MS, LMFT, LPC*

Keep expectations manageable: Don't try to make this holiday season "the best ever". Set realistic goals for yourself, prioritize the most important activities, and pace yourself. Remember that the holidays don't automatically dispel reasons for feeling sad or lonely, so it's okay for you to have these feelings.

Let go of the past: Don't make yourself miserable by thinking everything has to be just like the "good old days". As life brings changes, each holiday season is different and should be enjoyed in its own way.

Avoid relationship conflicts: Make a commitment to set aside unresolved issues. "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all." Now is probably not the best time for problem solving anyway. Try to accept family and friends as they are even if they don't meet your expectations.

Enjoy holiday activities that are free: Drive around to look at holiday decorations. Go window-shopping without buying anything. Be sure to check out the Christmas pageants put on by local churches and schools.

Don't overindulge: Excessive eating and drinking will only make you more depressed. Maintain a consistent sleep schedule, a balanced diet, and regular exercise.

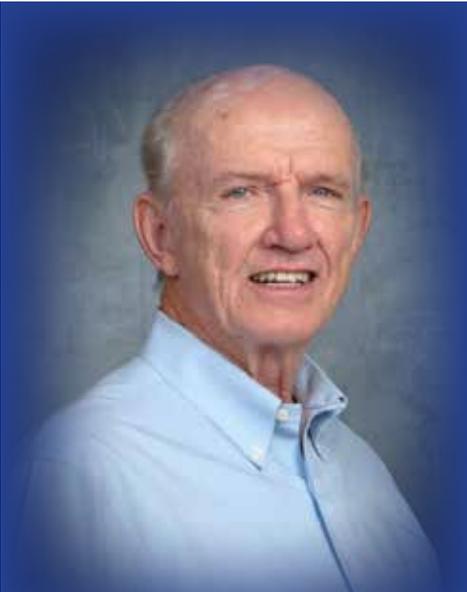
Enjoy time with supportive people who care about you: If you're married, spend time at home with your spouse and children. If you're single, enjoy the company of family and friends. If you're alone, reach out to make new friends or contact an old friend with whom you've lost touch.

Make time for yourself: Don't spend all your time providing activities for family and friends. Whether it's taking a long walk or reading a good book, do something you enjoy.

Build your own family traditions: Along with making nice memories, family traditions enrich family identity and closeness, which helps reduce stress. There are dozens of fun and inexpensive ways to celebrate the season. So don't be afraid to try something new.

Serve others without expecting a reward: Bringing joy or comfort to others gets the focus off yourself and has a way of lifting your spirit.

Remember the reason for the season: Taking time to reflect on the meaning or purpose for the holiday is the best way to prioritize your time and transform your holiday into a joyous celebration of hope.



ABOUT TOM POWER

A HISTORY OF SUCCESS

- Professor, clinical supervisor, marriage and family therapist focusing on the prevention of family problems.
- Mentor and supervisor of therapists.
- Family therapy instructor for MSW and PhD clinicians.
- Educator teaching parents family life skills.
- Interested in enhancing and improving the quality of marital and family relationships through education and consulting services.

EDUCATION

- Family Institute of Westchester, Faculty Member and Director of Community Education
- Ackerman Family Institute
- Member and Approved Supervisor of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy and a member of the Family Therapy Academy for over 20 years.
- Masters Degrees in both Counseling and Social Work, New York University

INVEST

IN YOUR FAMILY'S WELL-BEING PARENTING PROGRAM

Parishioner Tom Power, will be offering a program to strengthen family relationships and build stronger communication skills in a 5 week workshop. The program is for all parents: single, married, divorced, or looking to start a family. Tom's experience in his professional life has gifted him the knowledge and compassion to help other parishioners work on their relationships and hopefully guide the group to stronger personal and community bonds raising their children.

PARENTING PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

Join us on **ZOOM** from **7pm to 8:15pm** starting **Thursday, January 21, 2021**

The sessions will run for 5 weeks (1/21, 1/28, 2/4, 2/11, 2/18)
We are hoping this program can be in person.

COST:

\$25.00 for the family. Scholarships are available through Faith Formation & Youth Ministry.

SIGN UP:

There is limited seating for this program and it will be on a first come basis. To sign up, please contact KELLY EVERS at kelly@johnxxiii.net

