

Church of Saint Sebastian January 13, 2019 - The Baptism of the Lord

From Father Jordan, OP

My Dear Ones,

May the Grace of Our Lord remain always with us!

Today, as we celebrate the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord our liturgical celebration of the Christmas Season comes to its conclusion. Today, we move from the Infancy Narratives of Christ, and begin to mediate upon the life and ministry of the Son of God and His proclamation of the eminence of the Kingdom of God.

As I reflect upon my first Christmas with all of you at Saint Sebastian my heart is very full, and there is so much for which I thank God. The tradition of the Rectory Christmas Open House gives one the feeling that Christmas has arrived! Thanks to Mary Brennan and Ryan Meireles, the Rectory was dressed from top to bottom and a wonderful feast awaited us! There was a great gathering of parishioners and warm spirit filled the house. One of the highlights of that day was the arrival of our parishioner Kevin Dyer (he regularly attends the Saturday 5 pm Mass). Because of another commitment Kevin was afraid he would miss the Open House. Just as the time things were about to end Kevin ran through the front door and proclaimed, "I made it; I made it – I got here in time!" Kevin, myself, and few parishioners sat and talked together as we all enjoyed great food and time with one another.

On December 16th, our Children's Choir traveled to Lindenmeyer to sing for the residents. At the last minute, they needed a piano player and guess who jumped into the breach? I was delighted to accompany our beautiful children! When the choir finished their concert, one of the residents said, "we want more!" We sang a few more Christmas favorites, repeated some of what we had already sang, and then enjoyed punch and cookies with the residents. It was wonderful to see many of our parishioners and their family members among the residents. I got a lump in my throat and a tear in my eye as I saw our parents beaming with joy and pride; as our children visited with the residents; and how poised our children were as they brought Christmas joy our elderly brothers and sisters.

On Saturday the 22nd, Toni Dumville, Donna Pilkington, and Margaret Pleasants decorated our beautiful Church, making it even more beautiful! Thank you to these talented, generous, artistic women!

On December 23rd twenty of our "older" child-like parishioners, led and by Susan and Greg Elliott, went caroling around the area. I am told that they had a great time

and a wonderful reception back at Susan and Greg's home. I turned 62 that day and was treated to a wonderful surprise brunch, so I missed the caroling, but I heard only great things. As the great day was drawing near, Ryan and an assistant worked unbelievable hours to strip and wax the floor --- I learned more than I ever wanted to know about waxing floors!



Finally, the great day was here! Everything was ready, and I prayed that there would be great crowds for our newborn King: **and there were!** The 4 pm was the largest crowd, enhanced by the beautiful singing of the Children's Choir, as well as the moving music of Stephen Higgins and Andrew Garrepy. (Of course, there was that added attraction of your pastor forgetting the collection! Did he flunk pastor school?!? 😞) Lessons and Carols before the 9 pm Mass was a moving service of music, readings, and reflection. At the 9 pm Mass the "Christmas Choir" and instruments were as Greg Elliott said, "WOW! Just WOW!"; and Mass on Christmas Morning had that wonderful feeling which comes after the electricity of Christmas Eve: **"and the Word was made flesh, and He dwells among us!"**

A great "first Christmas", that I pray is one of many more to come!

In the Lord,

Fr. Jordan, O.P.



All families of First Communicants and those preparing for Confirmation are reminded about the Sacramental Family Retreat to be held on Saturday, March 30th. Ms. Marie wrote to you about this in the fall. More details to follow.

The Community of Saint Sebastian's offers our sympathy and prayers to the Joan Tracey and her family of William Tracy, our parishioner who was buried from our Church on Wednesday, January 2nd; and to the family of John Ingalls who was buried from St. Sebastian's on Thursday, January 3rd.

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SECOND COLLECTION - JANUARY 19 & 20

The **Catholic University of America** is the national university of the Catholic Church in the United States, located in Washington, D.C. It provides an academically rigorous education guided by Catholic intellectual tradition to nearly 7,000 students every year. *More than 4,000 students directly receive scholarship aid from this Collection, including many from our diocese.* Next week is the National Collection for The Catholic University of America. Please be generous.

Join parishioners as we gather to [pray the Rosary](#) at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, January 30th here in Church

The [St. Sebastian Parish Book Club](#) will meet on Wednesday, January 23rd at 7:00 pm at the home of Denny Roberts, 132 Everett Avenue to discuss "The Toilers of the Sea" by Victor Hugo.

Tax letters will be mailed by January 31, 2019 to registered parishioners who donated \$500 or more in 2018. If you are a registered parishioner and donated less than this amount but would like a letter for tax purposes please contact the rectory at stsebastian@cox.net or 751-0196. Thank you.

Our hands and hearts are instruments through which God shows his love. Help us wrap each of our lonely homebound or seriously ill relatives and friends with a shawl made by the volunteers of the PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY of our Parish. A shawl and prayers offer special comfort to the sick. Everyone is invited to join in at the next meeting of the [PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY](#) Tuesday, January 22nd at 7:00 pm in the Father Randall Room.

PASTORAL VISITS

Parishioners are encouraged to call the parish office if they or a family member would like a pastoral visit from Father Jordan at the hospital, nursing home, or at home for those who are homebound. Hospitals no longer inform houses of worship of the admission of patients due to the laws protecting the right to privacy.

MITTEN/HAT/SCARF TREE

Please pin new mittens, hats, and scarves to our tree in the vestibule. All items will be for the benefit of Saint Patrick's Mary House.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Prayers are asked for our friends, family, fellow parishioners, and especially for **Frank Dumont, Elie Saroufim, and Stanley Nadal**. If you would like someone included in the Prayers for the Sick, please call the Church Rectory.

St Margaret School Open House will be held on Sunday January 27, 2019 from 11:00am to 1:00pm. The mission of Saint Margaret School is to provide a strong, Christ-centered education in a caring, Catholic environment. The school community, with the support of family and parish, encourages in each student spiritual growth, academic achievement, and social responsibility. The students are given the opportunity to develop their individual gifts and talents enabling them to confidently face the future.

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE!
www.stsebastianri.org

Won't You Join Us?

Sunday	1/13	Religious Education	10:00 am	Classrooms
		Coffee An'	10:00 am	Church Hall
Monday	1/14	Religious Education	4:00 pm	Classrooms
		CGS	4:15 pm	Atrium
		Coffee An'	4:00 pm	Church Hall
		TOWN HALL MEETING	7:00 pm	Church Hall
Wednesday	1/16	Bible Study	7:00 pm	Fr. Randall Rm
		Rosary	8:00 pm	Church

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Founded October 15, 1915

TOWN HALL MEETING

I hope many of you will be able to attend the Town Hall Meeting to be held tomorrow, January 14th at 7:00 pm in the Church Hall. What will take place and the Town Hall and who will be doing what?

What: At the 6th month mark of a new pastor, the Town Hall Meeting offers both parishioners and the pastor the opportunity to discuss what is going well, what needs improvement, and what new directions might both the pastor and the parishioners dream about.

Why: Part of the reputation of Saint Sebastian's is our great sense of community. For a community to be life giving it must be founded upon charity and truth: our charity must be true; and our truth must be charitable. The Town Hall Meeting offers us the opportunity to deepen the virtues of charity and truth; and to explore how as a community we can reclaim these same virtues.

Who: Because I want to be a participant in this endeavor and not its leader, I have asked three individuals to serve as facilitators for the Town Hall Meeting. The facilitators help us establish guidelines and establish boundaries; if we stray from these guideline and boundaries, they also call us back to right practices. I am delighted that our parishioners, Susan and Greg Elliott, have accepted my invitation to be cofacilitators. In addition, I have invited an "outside" person to facilitate this meeting along with Greg and Susan. David Stanford, MSW, is a clinical, certified, social worker, a person of faith, and has established practice of dealing group dynamics.



Annual Potluck Dinner—January 26th, 2019

In honor of St. Sebastian, whose Feast Day is January 20th, all parishioners are invited to a Potluck Dinner to be held in the Church Hall on Saturday, January 26th following the 5:00 pm Feast Day Mass.

- This year we thought we'd try something new:**
- If your last name begins with A through D, please bring a side dish.**
 - If your last name begins with E through J, please bring a main dish.**
 - If your last name begins with K through O, please bring a salad or appetizer.**
 - If your last name begins with P through Z, please bring a dessert.**

Please RSVP to stsebastian@cox.net and let us know how many in your family will be joining us. We hope to see you there!

House Blessing

It is an old and pious custom in our Church to bless our homes in the days following the Epiphany. This blessing is made asking for the safety of those who lives there. As the priest blesses each room with holy water, he prays for those who live there. He "chalks" the main door with 20+C+M+B 19. The initials CMB stand for the names of the wisemen Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. These initials may also "Christus mansionem benedicat", *may Christ bless this house*. If you would like to have your home blessed please contact Father Jordan at the Rectory.

PARISH FINANCES: 12/25/2018 & 1/2/2019

Mass Contributions	\$ 3,485.00
Online Parish Giving	\$ 1,391.00
Total Weekly Donations	<u>\$ 4,876.00</u>
Christmas	\$ 35,223.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$ 1,587.00
Total Parish Expenses	\$ 17,555.00

We sincerely thank you for your continued support!

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MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, January 12, Vigil: The Baptism of the Lord

5:00 pm *Jeremy Gravell*

Sunday, January 13, The Baptism of the Lord

9:00 am Pro Populo

11:00 am *For the Well-Being of our Country*

Monday, January 14

7:00 am *John Francis Ingalls*

Tuesday, January 15

7:00 am *Athalie Cummings, BEQUEST*

7:20 am Novena Prayers - Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Wednesday, January 16

7:00 am *Frank and Helen McCormick*

Thursday, January 17, Saint Anthony, Abbot

7:00 am *Minnie Brennan*

Friday, January 18

7:00 am *For a deeper respect of human life*

Saturday, January 19, Christmas Weekday

9:00 am *For the Healing of the Victims of Clergy Sexual Abuse*

Saturday, January 19, Vigil: Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

5:00 pm *William Tracey, requested by Ann Galligan*

Sunday, January 20, Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 am Pro Populo

11:00 am *Daniel Andrew Landry, month's mind*



*Let us pray for the repose of the soul of
Athalie Cummings
whose love for our parish was shown in a
bequest to St. Sebastian Church.
We remember her in gratitude and offer
Tuesday's 7:00 am Mass for her this week.
May she rest in the peace of the Lord.*

Welcome

In my own name and on behalf of the People of Saint Sebastian's, welcome to our Parish! If you are visiting, coming back to the Church and Mass after some time away, or looking for a Parish, you are most welcome here at Saint Sebastian's.

THANK YOU! Christmas Collection 2018

The day after Christmas was a busy morning here in the Rectory. The collection counters came together to count the collections for both the 4th Sunday of Advent, as well as the Christmas Collection (even from the Mass I almost forgot the collection!). I started to hear, "1,000 five times; 500 ten times..." and I thought to myself – "so far – pretty good!" Different counters would tell me the total thus far, a few minutes later I would get another update, and so it went. When the counters were finished, we were just shy of \$15,000.00. Money for the Christmas Collection has continued to come in during the past two weeks.

One morning a parishioner asked to see me. He told me that he and his family wanted us to reach our goal. He and his family decided to match the Christmas Collection dollar for dollar! They made this extraordinary donation in memory of their deceased sister. I was dumbfounded! Just like that we were at \$30,000.00! I am so grateful. And then, I received a letter from a former parishioner who after many years was able to fulfill a pledge that was made during Father Hayman's pastorate: \$4,200. At this writing the total for the Christmas Collection, excluding these two extraordinary gifts, is \$16,517.00. When these two large gifts are included the total for the Christmas Collection 2018 is \$35,223.00. This money will be well used for both capital and operating expenses.

I am profoundly grateful to all of you for your great generosity – your gifts help us in more ways than you can imagine! Indeed, it is not about equal gift, but equal sacrifice on all of our parts! Thank you for sacrificing for Saint Sebastian! May God reward you ten thousand times ten thousand! *Fr. Jordan, OP*