

Dear Parishioners,

As you know, the Common Council recently passed a resolution asking Orange County to close the Probation and Social Services offices in Port as a cost-saving measure. This has prompted something of a debate on both sides of the issue.

At a recent Common Council meeting, one citizen suggested that, in caring for those in need, the government had taken on a responsibility that was traditionally tended to by churches. The suggestion was made that the local churches need to step up to the plate (I'm paraphrasing here) and take care of the hungry, unwed mothers, etc.

I don't take offense very easily, but to suggest that the churches in our community have somehow fallen down on the job in this regard is, if nothing else, a gross distortion of the truth. Many local congregations sponsor food pantries (Drew United Methodist Church, Grace Episcopal Church, First Assembly of God, the Salvation Army, the Seventh Day Adventist Church, and St. Mary's). Temple Beth-El is home to Easter Seals, which does tremendous work for those in need. First Presbyterian Church spearheads the annual CROP Walk, which raises a substantial amount of money for all of the local pantries. When Empowering Port Jervis was looking to establish a warming station last year, St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church lost no time in offering its facilities. Deerpark Reformed Church sponsors a soup kitchen each month; it's our hope that St. Mary's will be able to do the same very shortly (more on that next week). Catholic Charities Community Services of Orange County has increased its activity in Port substantially in recent years. In addition to the well-utilized and desperately-needed substance abuse treatment program on Sussex Street, CCCSOC provides us with a case manager one day a week; she fields countless calls for all sorts of needs. The fact that we have a case manager at all is a testament both to the persistence of Sr. Joanne Dress, the former head of CCCSOC, and Gina Torres's excellent record-keeping of the stream of people in need who find their way to St. Mary's. If I've left out any churches here, it's simply an oversight on my part. This is not to mention the excellent work done by the Tri-State Pregnancy Center in Milford, which aids countless women and men in crisis pregnancies.

To be continued.

Faithfully your priest,
Fr. George Hafemann

The **SCHEDULE OF MASSES AT CHRISTMAS** is the same as years past. On Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24, Mass will be celebrated at 4:00pm (with a special homily for the children) and at 7:00pm. On Christmas Day, Thursday, December 25, Mass will be celebrated at Midnight (the choral prelude begins at 11:30pm) and at 10:00am. *Please note that Midnight ushers out Christmas Eve and begins Christmas itself, which is why the Mass at Midnight is listed as being on Christmas.* Thursday, January 1, 2015 is the **SOLEMNITY OF MARY**; Mass will be celebrated on Wednesday, December 31 at 5:15pm and on Thursday, January 1 at 9:00am.

The **second collection next weekend** is for the support of the **RETIRED RELIGIOUS PRIESTS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS** who serve in the Archdiocese of New York. Cardinal Dolan writes, "The annual collection is an opportunity for us to give thanks to the Lord for our senior religious."

In the spirit of Christmas, we are continuing our tradition of a **GIVING TREE**. We are supporting both the local Elks Lodge and Catholic Charities Community Services of Orange County in their efforts to provide winter outerwear items for needy children and teens in our community. A donation of \$10 or more would be greatly appreciated; every \$50 will sponsor one child. Doves will be on the Christmas tree in the narthex for your convenience. They may be returned in the attached envelope, in the collection basket or at the parish office, by Monday, December 15. Checks may be made payable to St. Mary's. Thank you for your support!

The collection for November 29/30 was \$4,426.
Thank you for your continued generosity.

Perhaps your family (or a group of coworkers, friends, business, etc.) is looking for a way to give back this year. Would you consider **ADOPTING A FAMILY**? All you need to do is contact Ali Curtis, CCCSOC's director of community outreach; she may be reached by phone at 562-4733, or by e-mail at alice.curtis@archny.org.

We are looking for new **lectors**; there's no minimum age, so if you'd like to serve the parish in proclaiming the Scriptures at Mass, training will be next Saturday, December 13 at 1:00pm. Adults age 18 and up are invited to become **special ministers of Holy Communion**. Training will take place next Saturday at 11:00am. If you'd like to be a lector or special minister, but cannot make it next weekend, just let Fr. George know, and he'll find a mutually agreeable time.

If you're looking for good, inexpensive gifts or cards that convey the true meaning of Christmas and support religious brothers and sisters at the same time, visit www.monasterygreetings.com or www.printeryhouse.org.



This Monday, December 8 is the **SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**, our parish feast day and a holy day of obligation. Mass will be celebrated at 9:00am and 7:30pm.

COURT MADONNA NO. 114 (Catholic Daughters of the Americas) will meet this Tuesday, December 9 at 7:00pm in the church hall.

Please join us for **CHRISTMAS CAROLING** this Thursday, December 11 beginning at 4:15pm. We'll meet at Bon Secours Community Hospital and sing for the residents of St. Joseph's Place. Then we'll move on to Water's Edge, followed by pizza in the parish center meeting room. Finally, we'll visit some of our local neighborhoods. We expect to be done by 7:45pm. All are invited!



On Monday, December 15, priests in every parish in the Archdiocese of New York will be available for **THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE** from 4:00 to 8:00pm. Confessions are also heard every Saturday from 3:00 to 3:45pm, or any other time upon request or by appointment. Just call or e-mail Fr. George.

All parishioners are invited to attend **St. Mary's Little Lambs' ANNUAL SILENT AUCTION AND CHRISTMAS PAGEANT** on Friday, December 19 in the church hall. The auction opens at 9:00, with winners called at 10:30am. The Pageant will begin at 11:00am; a reception of milk and cookies will follow. We are hoping for a visit from St. Nick following the pageant. If you know of a jolly gentleman who would be willing to volunteer, please call 858-4208 or email littlelambs@stmarysportjervis.com. While most Little Lambs fundraisers this school year will go towards upgrading our fire alarm system to meet New York State standards, we have also begun collecting donations for our **PLAYGROUND RENOVATION PROJECT**. Thanks to a \$500 donation from the Court Madonna No. 114, a \$50 donation from Marge O'Connor, and a \$25 donation from alumnae Mikayla and Nicole Maresca, we are able to begin renovations by purchasing indoor/outdoor gross motor equipment that will meet state playground requirements and keep us active inside on cold winter days. Thank you to Court Madonna, Marge, and Mikayla and Nicole; may God bless you for your generosity! Finally, **support LITTLE LAMBS while you shop!** Shop for children's clothing from Crazy 8, Gymboree, and Janie & Jack online at www.littlelambs.onlinefundraiser.net, and Little Lambs will receive 10% of the proceeds.

ANNOUNCED MASSES

Monday, December 8 (IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY)

9:00am the parishioners of St. Mary's
7:30pm Living and deceased members of the Brady family, by Eleanor Brady

Tuesday, December 9 (Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin)

9:00am A special intention, by Fr. George Hafemann

Thursday, December 11 (Damasus I, pope)

9:00am Blaise Joseph Zurich, by Dr. Jane Brooks
Edith Kovacs, by Pauline Kreckel

Friday, December 12 (Our Lady of Guadalupe)

9:00am Anita Grillo, by Steven and Chris Grillo

Saturday, December 13 (Lucy, virgin and martyr)

4:00pm Anthony and Antoinette Peloso, by Angela and Joseph Portella

Sunday, December 14

8:30am the parishioners of St. Mary's
11:30am Joseph Kucher, by Mom and Dad

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Ida Lissner, Joann Wilcox, Jonathan Saletto, Marion Rohner, Nick Moscatiello, Andrea Fedoruk, Richard Samek, Betty Brennan, Joe Brennan, Angela Portella, Mike Castle, Walter Szpakowicz, Danielle Scibek, Pauline Portella, John McKean, Katie Onofry, John Launt, Theresa Fuller, David Drasba, Jeremiah Stasilli, Daniel Bonet, Maureen Hildrbrandt, Joseph Portella, Catherine Simons, Mary Platania, Vada Glass, Donald Wolff, Michael Barnes, William Linclon, Joseph Livingston, Jeff Sauschuck, Bernard Clune, Amanda Evelech, Anna Onuschak, Joseph Kham, Patsy Soletro, Sue Dennington, Andrew Witkowski, Thomas Scott, Jackie Mundy, Makara Craig, Barbara Nachand, Betty Corcoran, Joe Brennan, Allen Van Starrex, and Carol Wittine.

Donations of **non-perishable food items** for the **CHRISTMAS BASKETS** may be left in the containers in the narthex. Turkeys, hams and chickens will be collected on Wednesday, December 17 from 5:00 to 6:00pm; baskets will be distributed on Saturday, December 20 from 12:00 to 2:00pm. *We are especially in need of spaghetti sauce, peanut butter, jelly, cereal, and canned fruit.*

Parishioners may sign up to receive notices from the parish via e-mail or text through **FLOCKNOTES**. You can even choose what notices you'd like to receive. There are two ways to sign up:

1. Visit flocknote.com/stmaryspj, and follow the instructions.
2. Text **sm pj** to 84576.

Liturgical Ministers for December 13/14, 2014

MASS	LECTOR	MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION	ALTAR SERVERS
4:00PM	L. AVELLA	N. SMITH, M. O'CONNOR, H. ECKES	Q. KRENTZ, J. LEGATO, K. CULLENY
8:30AM	H. MARINARO	M. ADAMCIK, J. HENDRICK, T. HOPPEY	J. MALDONADO, S. MOREJON, Z. IRWIN
11:30AM	P. CAL	R. DENNINGTON, L. BUCZEK, A. WITKOWSKI	V. & E. WITKOWSKI, J. EDWARDS