

ST. FRANCIS POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace! — St. Francis

1752 Harton Avenue • East Meadow, NY • (516) 794-5189
Father Andrew Koterba, Pastor

CHRISTMAS EVE (Shepherd's Mass)

Thursday, December 24, 2009

9:00 PM - Celebration of the Eucharist

Niech Bedze pochwalony Jezus Chrystus. **R/. Na wieki, wiekow Amen.**

Praised be the Lord, Jesus Christ. **R/. Now and forever. Amen.**

ENTRANCE HYMN - "Silent Night"

CONTEMPORARY RITE - Mass Book pg. 63

READING I - Is 9, 1-6

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 96, 12, 2-3, 11-12, 13

R/: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord

Sing to the Lord a new song; Sing to the Lord all you lands.

Sing to the Lord; bless his name.

R/: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord

Announce his salvation, day after day.

Tell his glory among the nations.

Among all peoples, his wondrous deeds.

R/: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord

Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice; let the sea and what fills it resound;

let the plains be joyful and all that is in them! Then shall all the trees of the forest exult.

R/: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord

They shall exult before the Lord, for he comes; for he comes to rule the earth.

He shall rule the world with justice and the peoples with his constancy.

R/: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord

READING II - Ti 2, 11-14

ALLELUIA. Good News and great joy to all the world; today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord. **ALLELUIA.**

GOSPEL - Luke 2, 14

A reading from the holy gospel according to St. Luke. **R./** Glory be to you, O Lord.

In those days Caesar Augustus published a decree ordering a census of the whole world. This first census took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone went to register, each to his own town. And so Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to David's town of Bethlehem—because he was of the house and lineage of David—to register with Mary, his espoused wife, who was with child.

While they were there the days of her confinement were completed. She gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was not room for them in the place where travelers lodged.

There were shepherds in the locality, living in the fields and keeping night watch by turns over their flock. The angel of the Lord appeared to them, as the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were very much afraid. The angel said to them: "You have nothing to fear! I come to proclaim good news to you—tidings of great joy to be shared by the whole people. This day in David's city a savior has been born to you, the Messiah and Lord. Let this be a sign to you: in a manger you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes." Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in high heaven, peace on earth to those on whom his favor rests."

This is the gospel of the Lord.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS - RESPONSE - GOD, HEAR US!

This is the gospel of the Lord. **R/: Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

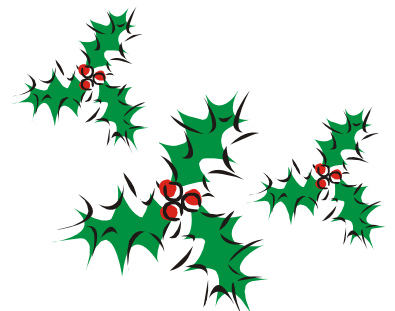
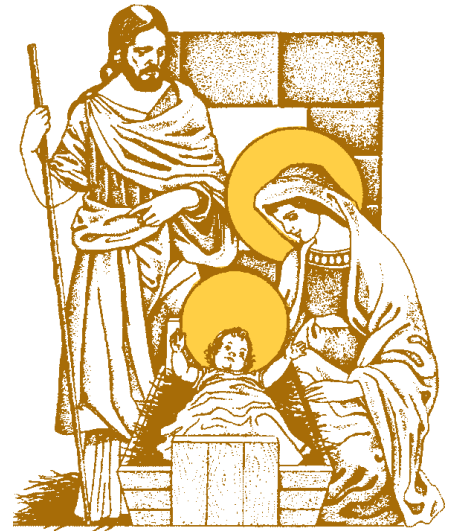
GENERAL CONCESSIONS: God, Hear Us!

OFFERTORY HYMN - "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen"

OUR FATHER - page 95

COMMUNION HYMNS - "O Come All Ye Faithful" and "Angels We Have Heard On High"

RECESSIONAL HYMN - "Joy to the World"



St. Francis Weekly "Kompositions"

REJOICE! REJOICE! THE LORD IS BORN TODAY! CHRISTMAS...2009

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS...THE BIRTH OF JESUS

"Joseph went from the Galilean town of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David's town, for the census. As a descendant of David, he had to go there. He went with, his fiancée, who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. She gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manger, because there was no room in a hostel." —Luke 2:4-7

THE CHRISTMAS CRIB OF ST. FRANCIS ...

It was St. Francis of Assisi, who first popularized the Christmas manger. St. Francis would use the most simple realities of daily life to teach the most profound doctrines. God's loving presence in the world, the sacredness of all living things. These have never been easy topics to talk about or teach.

Francis found readily available teaching aides to help himself and others to understand these truths, or at least to reverence the mystery they involved. He looked to the sun in the sky, to the animals of forest and the farm to lend a hand. And he did not hesitate to use song or poetry to make the lesson more palatable. His good sense and a natural talent for theatrics helped Francis bring home the meaning of the Incarnation, one of the central doctrines of the Christian Faith.

Francis knew that the ordinary people of the towns and villages would likely never journey to the Holy Land, as he had done. To visit Bethlehem, to come to understand the deeply human life lived by the Holy Family. People of the 12th and 13th century understood God and things divine as far removed from their lives. They saw Jesus and Mary and the saints depicted as royalty - jewel-bedecked, powerful, and somewhat frightening.

So one Christmas, Francis and his band of friars set about to bring the Holy Land experience of Christmas to the people around them. They gathered ordinary farm animals, real children and shepherds, and celebrated the birth of Christ with a kind of open-air tableau. In the reenactment of Christ's birth in the humble surroundings that people could identify with their own lives. God who became man in Bethlehem some 1100 years before, they began to understand, knew and experienced what they lived every day; cold in winter, rejection in poverty; joy in human family life and companionship.

So, this tradition grew. Miniature stables became a fixture in churches at Christmas time, and in homes. A tradition with us to this day. We need only observe even the smallest children, gathering with their families around the Creche after Christmas Mass. They understand, in their own way. This year, be sure to have a stable in your own home. Let it be a reminder that the simple faith that permits the child to know Jesus in the Christmas crib is what all of us should be looking for. "Be as little children."

A hearty, sincere THANK YOU to Thomas Kompa for writing our factual and interesting bulletin every week!

BLESSINGS ...

When it came time for God to send His Son to earth, He did not send Him to the palace of some mighty king. He was conceived in the womb of an unwed mother - a virgin! - who lived in a lowly village of Nazareth.

In choosing those who would represent Christ and establish His church, God picked some of the most unusual individuals imaginable; unschooled fishermen, a tax collector(!), a mystic, a doubter, and a former Pharisee who had persecuted Christians. He continued to pick some very unusual persons down through the ages. In fact, He seems to delight in such surprising choices to this very day!

'He has ... exalted those who were humble.' —Luke 1:52

A PRAYER AT THE CHRISTMAS MANGER

God, whose mighty Son was born in Bethlehem those days long ago,
lead us to that same poor place,
where Mary laid her tiny Child.
And as we look on in wonder and praise,
make us welcome him in all new life,
see him in the poor, and care for his handiwork,
the earth, the sky and the sea.
God, bless us again in your great love.
We pray for this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

ONE MINUTE DEVOTIONS...

Helen Steiner Rice...GOD'S PATTERN FOR LIVING

Christmas is more than a day at the end of the year, more than a season of joy and good cheer; Christmas is really God's pattern for living, to be followed all year by unselfish giving.

I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart...for your love and your faithfulness...(You) have exalted above all things your name and your word. —Psalm 138:1-2

Today accept the treasured gift from God called peace! Peace is found in your year-round manner of living when patterned after Jesus' life!

