

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES, COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND, U.S.A. PHOTOGRAPHED BY THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES, COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND, U.S.A.



BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

et cetera

January is always a time for looking forward and making resolutions. There is something fundamental about setting goals, making resolutions, starting over, beginning anew. Looking ahead and anticipating what is to come, is common to all of us.

In order to effectively plan and design where we hope to be at some future moment, it is imperative to first look backward to see where we have come from. Review and evaluation are the first steps in resolving and directing the future.

Upon reflection, the strongest impulse that is mine at this time is gratitude. I am sincerely thankful for all the support, encouragement, and positive regard that had been extended by you this past year.

I am grateful for the dedicated efforts of our Pastoral Staff at St. Cletus. The women and men who minister here full-time and part-time are committed and sincere, as well as professional and competent. I am grateful for the wonderful priests who help us celebrate the sacraments together. I am grateful for those who teach in our school and form young minds and hearts. I am thankful for our administrative staff and maintenance people who are always so willing to "go the extra mile".

I am grateful for all the volunteers who contribute so much to the life-force of our parish... Our Religious Education catechists, from early childhood through the high school program...our ministers who visit and bring communion...our ministers at liturgy who serve in so many capacities.

I am appreciative of our outreach and social ministries...our spiritual and social and service interaction...that are accomplished only because of so many people's generosity. I am thankful for all the loving efforts of so many committees and groups and causes. They all build up this local body of Christ and continually remind us that we are not alone.

I won't name names, but to all who are so magnanimous and generous, with your time and with your considerable talent, please accept my heartfelt gratitude, on behalf of the whole parish. To all who faithfully embrace St. Cletus as home and whose week would be incomplete and rudderless without coming to church and praying together, thank you! To all who help "build up" this faith family with presence, perseverance, and patience...thank you!

Your commitment to our church is gratefully accepted. Thank you. May your new year's joys be multiplied and sorrows divided by your faithful belonging to this parish community.

Fr. Klees

Giving Tree "Thank You"

What a heartwarming sight it was in the church vestibule on December 11 when adult and teen volunteers began sorting our Giving Tree gifts...seeing brightly wrapped gifts piled high, surrounded by shiny new bikes. These were tangible signs of the incredible generosity of St. Cletus parishioners. Fast forward to December 18 in Morrissey Hall, when Food Baskets and black bags of gifts, filled every possible space. Again volunteers of all ages were busy working to provide some Christmas hope and joy for more than 250 families in our community who are having a tough time. Another tangible sign that God is in our midst and working through our generous parish. Thank you to all - organizations, groups and individuals-who contributed in any way to the overwhelming success of this year's gift and food basket distribution. This outreach program gives an inspiring perspective to our Advent and Christmas Season. May the same Spirit who guided us in this project continue to dwell among us during a Blessed New Year!!!

Mary Beth Ford & Maureen Soldat

Welcome Sunday Next Weekend

Welcome to all St. Cletus newcomers. Registration will be available next weekend, January 7/8. Registration takes place after the 5:00pm Saturday Mass and the 7:00, 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00am Sunday Masses. Please stop by the back of church, say hello, and become members.

Leisure Loafers

The holidays are coming to and end. It is time to unwind. Please come join your friends on Thursday, January 5, 2005 in Morrissey Hall at 1:00pm.

Alice Katzmarek

Holy Name

Please join us for our first meeting of 2006 on Friday, January 6 at 8:00pm in Room 201 of the Education Building. Among our many topics of discussion will be our annual pancake breakfast in March. So start the year off right and join us.

Dan Gibbons

Food Pantry

Many thanks to everyone who supported our Food Pantry in 2005. It was a challenging year with an increased number of working poor who came to us for help. Your concern and generosity was apparent every month with all your contributions. We are grateful, too, for the donations from school and community organizations, as well as the ongoing contributions from two of our neighbors, the First United Methodist Church of Western Springs, and the Highlands Presbyterian Church. We look forward to your continued support to keep our shelves stocked so that we may adequately serve those who come to us for help.

Several reminders:

- All non-perishables are greatly appreciated, especially our staples of rice and dry pinto beans; peanut butter and jelly; soup and meals in a can; macaroni & cheese; tuna; pasta and pasta sauce; canned fruits and vegetables; cereal; paper products and all sizes of diapers.
- Remember to check expiration dates to avoid out of date goods which cannot be used.
- These items should be dropped off in the Minister's Room in church when you come to Mass, especially on the first weekend of the month.
- The Food Pantry distributes groceries from the vestibule of the church on the second Thursday of the month. New hours are 6:30pm - 8:00pm.

Mary Beth Ford
Social Concerns

Please Pray for

...our sick in your prayers: George Mrozek, Lucille Tertinger, Andy Rasch, Mary Jean Sternquist, Agnes Suennen, Joseph Johnson, Rose Ptak, Robert Frost, Robert Salbego, Bridie Boyce, Stephanie Yakowicz, Fran Cirrincione, Louis Cesario, Virginia Wilson, Gail Pankow-Locker, Josie Spoto, Larry Wojnar, Louise Jaunich, Frank Werner, Virginia Tenerelli, Agnes Olszowka, Judy Hofstetter, Michael Karpinski, Emil Chlapecka, Augustin Jaso, Marie Krolicki, Mary O'Rourke, Debbie Broz, Bill Gilmer, Scott May, and Jackie Zaccari. Also pray for our parishioners who are in nursing homes or are homebound and unable to attend Mass.

If you wish to add a name to the prayer list, please call the rectory office at (708) 352-6209. It is just as important to know that the prayers have been answered; please advise us when a person no longer needs to be on our prayer list.

Stewardship

How much should a Christian give to God? When we give from the depths of a cheerful heart, the amount and the substance will be clear.

“Each person should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (Cor. 19:27)



December 25

Budgeted revenue:	\$10,000
Collection Received:	19,800
Surplus last week:	9,800
Revenue to budget	
Surplus for this fiscal year:	2,996
# of envelopes mailed:	3,181
# of envelopes returned:	1,095

Thank you for your continued support. Please remember to use your offertory envelopes. Thank you.

Remember using your envelope allows you to place your gift in the collection basket in a consistent manner. It also allows the parish the latitude to budget effectively. Supplementary offering envelopes are available in the pews each week.

Forgot Your Envelope?

Supplementary Offering envelopes are available in the pews each week. Our envelope company sends out over 3,000 envelopes to our parishioners each month, but less than 1,000 families use them. To help us credit your account properly please use these envelopes, remember to include your name. Both our record keeping and yours will be enhanced. As always thank you for your continued support.

Please Note!

Many parishioners have elected to have their weekly Sunday offering contribution debited out of their checking account once or twice a month. If you would like more information, contact Bobbie, (708) 352-6209, in the rectory office.

News from the Web

Various forms and documents are available on our parish website including the Canticle, Religious Education newsletter, School Board newsletter, MANNA order forms, School “yellow sheets”, and Minister schedules. Visit our home page at www.stcletusparish.com.

Chris Wagner
Information Technology
chris.wagner@stcletusparish.com

Entrance Exams

1) St. Laurence High School will have an entrance exam on Saturday, January 14 at 8:00am for all 8th graders who would like to attend St. Laurence. All test takers need to bring two #2 pencils, a twenty-five dollar testing fee and a calculator with them. Questions? Call (708) 458-6900.

2) Entrance exams for incoming freshmen for the 2006-07 school year will be administered at Benet Academy in Lisle on Saturday, January 14, 2006 at 9:00am. For further information, please phone (630) 969-6550 or visit our website at www.benet.org.

The Cenacle Retreat House

29 W 012 Batavia Rd., Warrenville, IL

Sr. Pam, OSF and Sr. Mary Jane Laffan, rc, will present a “Day of Concern and Retreat for Caregivers of Aging Parents” on January 21, 2006 from 10:00am - 3:00pm. Caregiving is a 24/7 job that frequently leads to stress, isolation and depression. Caregivers need time and space to renew their minds, bodies and spirits. This one-day retreat will provide an opportunity for reflection and relaxation, as well as meeting other caregivers in an atmosphere of sharing and compassion. The cost is \$40 and includes lunch. For further information or to register, please call (630) 393-1231.

Winter Reminder

With inclement winter weather here, please remember to use caution in our parking lot and walkways on the parish grounds.

Chris Wagner
Director of Grounds

Keeping Watch with the Shepherds in Bethlehem

"And Shepherds were keeping watch in the night!"

When the Gospel of Luke recounts the Christmas story, it tells us that, when Jesus was born, shepherds were keeping watch in the night. What were they watching for in the dark? For more than for what might threaten their flocks. They were looking for light, for something to brighten their darkness.

John's Gospel makes this point. It doesn't give us a description of Mary and Joseph in a stable at Bethlehem. Instead it describes the coming of Jesus at Christmas in an image, *a light shone in the darkness*. Notice that John doesn't say that a light shone *into* the darkness, but that it shone *in* the darkness. That's an important distinction.

Christmas, Christ being born in our world, is very much about finding God inside of what's commonplace and inside even the darkness of sin, violence, war, greed, and the indifference that sometimes seem everywhere. Christmas is about light being seen inside of darkness.

And so one of the things that Christmas asks us to do is to imitate the shepherds in the Christmas story and keep watch, hoping to see "*light inside of darkness*". How do we do that?

Our Christian tradition has different ways of expressing it, but it's what Jesus meant when he told us to "*read the signs of the times*" and what John of the Cross meant when he said that "*the language of God is the experience that God writes into our lives.*" God is inside ordinary life and our job is to see God there.

Classically, this was expressed in the concept of "*divine providence*", namely the notion that inside the conspiracy of accidents that shape our lives we can see the finger of God writing history from another point of view. God shines forth, in some way, in everything that happens.

We need therefore to be meteorologists of the spirit, reading inner weather so as to see the deeper movements of God inside the outer events of history. We watch like the shepherds when we look at our world, with all that's in it, both good and bad, and see light there, namely, God's presence, grace, graciousness, forgiveness, love, unselfishness, innocence.

But that's not easy to do. The darkness around us is deep. We live in a world where what we see is often simply bitterness, wound, non-forgiveness, anger, greed, false pride, lust, injustice, and sin. Where do we see light inside of that? Do you see light in the 6:00 news each night?

Christmas tells us that the problem isn't just with the news, but with how we see the news. What we see is very much colored by what we feel and think at any given moment. Philosophers used to express this in the axiom: "*Whatever is received is received according to the mode of the receiver.*" Sound wisdom. The Buddhists put it more simply. They have an axiom that says that we don't see what's outside of us but we see what's inside of us and project it outside. To illustrate this they offer a colorful little anecdote.

A fat, overweight Buddha was sitting under a tree one day. An arrogant, young soldier walked by, saw him, and said: "You look like a pig!" The Buddha looked up at the soldier and said: "And you look like God!" Surprised, the soldier asked him: "Why do you say that I look like God?" The Buddha replied: "You see, we don't see what's outside us, we see what's inside and project it outwards. I sit here all day and think about God and when I look out, that's what I see. You, on the other hand, must be thinking about something else!"

The point, I think, is clear. Our eyesight, even our physical eyesight, is linked to our attitudes, our thoughts, our feelings, our wounds, and our virtues. They form the prism through which we see. The task therefore, *to keep watch in the night*, is to link our eyesight to the virtues of Christmas. What are these?

Christmas speaks of childlikeness, wonder, innocence, joy, love, forgiveness, family, community, and giving. When we are in touch with these we more easily see what's special inside of ordinary life. These make light shine in the darkness.

Sometimes, just as at the first Christmas, we see light in the darkness most clearly in the face of a newborn, a baby, where innocence can still stun us into wonder and soften, for a while, the edges of our cynicism and hardness. That, in fact, is one of the main challenges of Christmas.

Like the shepherds we're asked to watch in the night and we're watching when, in our hearts, there is more wonder than familiarity, more childlike trust than cynicism, more love than indifference, more forgiveness than bitterness, more joy in our innocence than in our sophistication, and more focus on others than on ourselves.

Christmas is meant to soften the heart and it's that which sharpens the eyesight.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com.



**Mass Intentions
for the Week**

Monday, January 2

**8:00 a.m. - Purgatorial Society
Linda Felice, Raymond & Alice Stoinski,³
Nick Lupo**

Tuesday, January 3

**8:00 a.m. - Frank & Lorraine Peck, Rose Baio,
Special Intention**

Wednesday, January 4

**8:00 a.m. - Jeanne O'Brien, Mildred Vendegna,
Rose Baio**

Thursday, January 5

**8:00 a.m. - Monika & Anton Mataitis,
Mary Ricciardone, Calandriello Family,
Tom Benka**

Friday, January 6

**8:00 a.m. - Purgatorial Society
Rev. Robert Shannon, Nan Rettig,
Karen Gorak, Jane White, Eleanor Johnson,
Ken Lesnig**

Saturday, January 7

5:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 8

7:00, 8:00, 9:30, and 11:00am

Altar Servers



January 7/8

**5:00 p.m. - N. Dentamaro, A. Driscoll, M. Gray
7:00 a.m. - T. Christopher, D. DeLaurentis,
K. Baro
8:00 a.m. - N. Ybarra, R. McCollom, B. Funk
9:30 a.m. - M. Philbin, S. Goethals, R. Ward
11:00 a.m. -M. McQuillan, C. Stepuszek,
D. Hebal**

Auxiliary Minister Schedule

Saturday, January 07, 2006

5:00 PM
LR Augustine, Ellie-
SM Burke, Jack C1 Pavlik, Loretta-
B2 Beales, Nadine C2 Beales, Dave
B3 Skupien, Kathy C3 Pagar, Carol
B4 Burke, Ruth C4 Burke, Jack
B5 Ford, Mary Beth- C5 Ryva, James-
B6 Bamberger, MaryA C6 Bozec, Betty

9:30 AM

LR Rapacki, Sandy-
SM Hullinger, Shirley- C1 McCaffray, Paul-
B2 Hagen, Jim C2 Hagen, Colleen
B3 Kelliher, Larry C3 Kelliher, Karen
B4 Keating-Gay, Susa C4 Hullinger, Shirley
B5 Samuelson, Debra- C5 Hagen, Emily-
B6 Severino, Laurie- C6 Curnutt, Rose-

Sunday, January 08, 2006

7:00 AM
LR Malby, Terry-
SM Wouk, Dolores-
B2 Wouk, Dolores-
B3 Fahey, Ann-
B4 Walsh, Mary Jane-
B5 Ward, Laura-
B6 Hinton, Geri-



11:00 AM

LR McMahon, Helen-
SM Dunkovich, Alice- C1 Herzog, Terri-
B2 Hoskins, William C2 Hoskins, Celine
B3 Maday, Josephine- C3 Schump, Cathy-
B4 Augustyn, Ron- C4 Dunkovich, Alice-
B5 Mulderink, Ken- C5 Garske, Elizabeth
B6 Gebka, Mary Lu- C6 Drago, Irene-

8:00 AM

LR Bellisario, Janet-
SM McCartney, Sandra C1 Kalata, Marcie-
B2 Kigin, Tom C2 Kigin, Billie
B3 Karch, John C3 Karch, Terri
B4 Hogue, Kay- C4 McCartney, Sandr
B5 Parlier, Denise C5 Parlier, Jon
B6 Thornton, William C6 Thornton, Madeli

Jesus' Star

Lord Jesus: Your star led the wise men to the manger and they paid homage to you in your mother's arms.

We pray to you: Light each person's star - his/her reason for hope and for love - so that it rises in the heavens of his/her heart and leads him/her to you.

Rest in Peace

Please remember in your prayers these parishioners or loved ones of parishioners who recently died:

- ...Jenna Elizabeth Johnson, daughter of Kurt and Maryanne Johnson**
- ... Mary Radice, mother of Clair Thompson**
- ... Elsie Wagner, mother of John Wagner**

Year-end Statement on Request Only

As tax time approaches, we ask everyone who would like a year-end statement of their Year 2005 financial offering to the parish to fill out the form below and return it or simply call the rectory with your request. **You may also visit our website at www.stcletusparish.com and submit your request electronically.**

Rather than mail statements to everyone in the parish, it seems more prudent and conservative to only mail them to those who need them for tax returns. Of course, your statement is available anytime a need for it may arise. Thank you.

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____ Envelope # _____