

St. Cletus Faith Formation Newsletter

Friday, December 30, 2022



Dear Parents,

As we begin the New Year, we celebrate the Solemnity of Mary. It is fitting that we begin the year celebrating Mary, the Mother of God. Because of Mary's faithfulness to God, she was able to receive the gift of God's Son and accept her role in God's plan for salvation. By doing so, she modeled for us the path of discipleship and is also called "Mother of the Church."

Our discipleship includes regular prayer and reflection on the events of our lives so that we may recognize God's presence and work in our lives. Our discipleship also calls for continuous obedience to God and His will, just as Mary answered her call from God and obeyed Him.

Prayer for a New Year!

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for making all things new! As another new year begins, help us live each day for You.

May we continually have a new song in our heart to sing to You, no matter what comes our way.

*We trust in You because we know that Your mercies are new every morning,
and nothing ahead of us will take You by surprise.*

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Holiday Break: Remember, we will be on holiday break through January 20, 2023. Our Confirmation Retreat will be held on Saturday, January 21. Regular classes will resume on Sunday, January 22, and Monday, January 23. During the break, the R.E. office will be closed on the following days: December 30 through January 3.

Parent Group Needed: We in the Faith Formation office are seeking a group of parents to help plan our annual Catechetical Event on Saturday, January 28. This Parent Group will work together planning the children's fun and educational games/activities; recommending special food & treats; determining

the number of volunteers needed; and directing the general flow of the Event. If you are interested, please e-mail Lawrence Manetti at lmanetti@stcletusparish.com. The planning meeting will be **Monday evening, January 9, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.** You will be notified of the meeting's location.

Sacramental Preparation:

Confirmation: Our Confirmation retreat will be on Saturday, January 21, beginning at 12:00 noon with lunch. More information will be e-mailed to the families of our Confirmation students.

Reminder: if you have not yet submitted your Saint Report, Church Form, and Sponsor Form, you may turn them in at the retreat. Your letter to Father Elmer will also be due. Refer to your RED Book for information on how to complete your pastor's letter. **If your child is missing any item(s), those parents will receive an e-mail next week, itemizing what is still needed.**

Special Sacraments Group: This group is our children in grades 3–7 who have not yet received the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. The next session, which will focus on the Sacrament of Reconciliation, has been moved to Saturday, February 4, from 9:30–11:30 a.m. An agenda for the day will be sent out after the holidays. This Sacramental service will be on Saturday, February 18, at 10:00 a.m. in the Church. Second graders who were absent from the First Reconciliation service in November will be invited to attend this service.

For Our Kids!

Catholic Kids Media - Mary, Mother of God! A fun Catholic reflection for kids based on the readings for the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, Cycle A.

[Readings and Homily for Children](#)

[Gospel Activity for the Solemnity of Mary](#)

[Mary Mother of God Coloring Sheet](#)

What Does the Solemnity of Mary Mean?

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God is a liturgical celebration observed on January 1. It is a holy day of obligation for Catholics, meaning that Mass attendance is required (though the Mass obligation is sometimes waived by the bishop for various reasons—when in doubt, check with your parish.)

The use of the word “solemnity” here is not a statement about Mary’s personality. It is a designation used for certain days within the liturgical (church-based) calendar of the Church. Solemnities are the highest rank of liturgical celebration, higher than feast days or memorials. By celebrating a solemnity dedicated to Mary’s motherhood, the Church highlights the significance of her role in the life of Christ.

Though New Year’s Day may seem more like a day for football than for Mary, there’s a beautiful spiritual significance in celebrating her during the heart of the Christmas season. Pope Paul VI, in his apostolic exhortation *Marialis Cultus* (1974), called the Solemnity of Mary “a fitting occasion

for renewing adoration of the newborn Prince of Peace, for listening once more to the glad tidings of the angels ([Luke 2:14](#)), and for imploring from God, through the Queen of Peace, the supreme gift of peace.” **(From Busted Halo)**.

We wish you and your families a very Happy and Blessed New Year.

God Bless,

Lawrence Manetti
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Associate Director of Faith Formation