

Saint Cletus Parish Canticle

**They shall name him Emmanuel,
which means "God is with us."
— Matthew 1:23**



CHRISTMAS EVE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

There will be no 8:00 a.m. Mass on Tuesday, December 24

2:00pm	Church	Chamber Ensemble
2:15pm	PC-Fr. Clark Hall	Cantor/Piano
3:30pm	Church	Combined Youth Choirs
3:45pm	PC-Fr. Clark Hall	Cantor/Piano
5:30pm	Church	Chamber Ensemble
7:00pm	Church (Spanish)	Hispanic Choir
10:30pm	Church	Chancel Choir

(10:00-10:30pm Christmas Carols prior to Mass)

CHRISTMAS DAY WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25

7:00am	Church	Organ/Congregational Caroling
8:00am	Church	Cantor/Piano
9:30am	Church	Chancel Choir
11:00am	Church	Contemporary Choir

VIGIL OF SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31

5:00pm	Vigil Mass (Holy Day of Obligation)
7:00pm	Vigil Mass in Spanish (Holy Day of Obligation)

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1

9:00am ONLY (Holy Day of Obligation)



PLEASE NOTE: There is no 8am Mass on Tuesday, December 24 and Wednesday, January 1st (9am only).



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Mass Intentions for the Week of December 23 - 29, 2019

Day	Time	Intentions
Monday	8:00 a.m.	Angelo Cumbo, Edward Stec Sr., Josephine Kinastowski
Tuesday	2:00 p.m. 2:15 p.m. 3:30 p.m. 3:45 p.m. 5:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 10:30 p.m.	St. Cletus Parishioners
Wednesday	7:00 a.m. 8:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	St. Cletus Parishioners
Thursday	8:00 a.m.	Virginia Rachford, Josephine Kinastowski, Albert Dybicz, Dan Rosko
Friday	8:00 a.m.	Manuel Rodriguez
Saturday	8:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m.	St. Cletus Parishioners Benjamin Patrick Hyink, Jim Deslauriers, Ken Kakareka, Jim Kozicki, George & Lorraine Kurland
Sunday	7:00 a.m. 8:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 12:30 p.m.	Frank Wojcik, George Duda, Richard Gomez Stacey Baker, Fr. Larry Maddock Jan McNamara, Rosanna Mol Genevieve Malec, Harriet Baczynski, Nenita Bengua St. Cletus Parishioners

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED AND THEIR FAMILIES...

Rosanna Mol

Mother of Rev. Joseph Mol

Joan Klein

Mother of Debbie Lestarczyk

May they rest in peace.

PARISH OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

The St. Cletus Parish Offices will be closed for Christmas and New Years on the following dates:

- Wednesday, December 25
- Thursday, December 26
- Tuesday, December 31
- Wednesday, January 1
- Thursday, January 2

PLEASE REMEMBER OUR SICK IN YOUR PRAYERS:

We always welcome names for the sick. Please note that requests must only be made by the individual or an immediate family member. Names will remain in this prayer list for 3 months.

December - Frank Colonna, Grace Yamamoto, Mary Ramirez, Charles (Bud) Howe, Joseph Gregory Stroude, Jeanie Hills

November - Ed Kutcha, Hermelinda Nevarez, Linda Stoinski, Judy Halvorson, Emily Malec, Rachael Schopp

October - Joan Clark, Gerda E. Dorso, Kim and Tony Fox, Shirley Funk, Don King, Deborah Krueger, Patricia Rodey, Michael Stoinski, Robert Stoinski, John Duda, Chuck Foerster, Stella Fabian, Dr. Max Scheyerer, Rosario Martinez, Edward J McNamara, Jose Perez, Margaret Pirman, Daniella DeRivera, Leo & Gloria Rivera, Ann Scheer, Virginia Skibbe, Laura Terrazino, Carol Witkowski, Ted Buczek, Johnson Dy, Nancy Gibson, Norman Kwak, Kathryn McCord, Jackie Schickel, Nicole Will-Montemagni, Jean Weekley

Also pray for our parishioners who are in nursing homes or are homebound unable to attend Mass.

Notes from Fr. Bob...

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

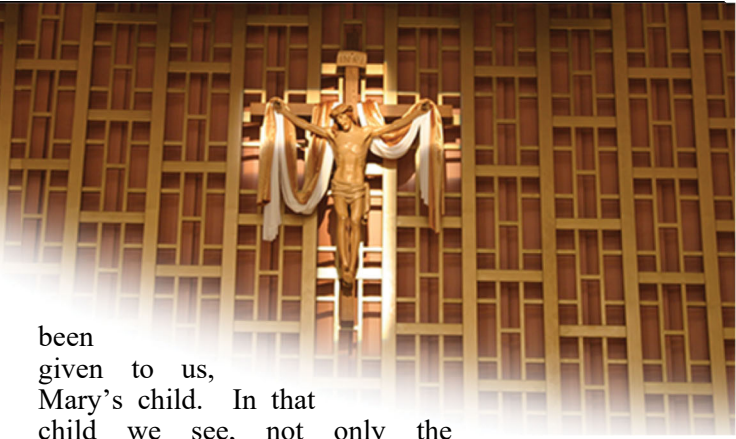
Our faith, which comes to us with fragrant incense, flickering candles, consecration and communion, it now comes to us in the human forms and in the animal shapes of the Christmas crib. If God was mysterious before, coming down on the altar in sacramental sign and raised host, now it is marvelous to see with our own eyes, that he was very, very human also. He loved animals and was surrounded by them. He loved children and came to them like this, a helpless babe, but cozy and warm. This unseen, unknowable God, dwelling in unapproachable light, is here and now with us in flesh and blood. He is part of this world's pageant and part of our parish life. He is part of life, with you and with me. That phrase "God is with us" makes sense now. God is here and I have found him.

Like us, Jesus has a Mom and Dad who love him very much. They watch over him and take care of him, so that, like us, he can grow up safe and sound and surrounded by love. He has a home in a village called Nazareth. His Dad is a carpenter. He grows up and goes to school like all boys and girls do. This is a wonderful kind of God, one who wants to be exactly like we are. This kind of God we can talk to, because we can "see" him and get to know him. From watching his life and how he lives it, from studying his behavior, we can really get to know what kind of person this Jesus is. Risen from the dead and now living forever, this Lord is also flesh and is our brother and friend. For that is why he came...quite simply, to be one of us.

This truth, that God has become a human being, forms the opening statement of Paul's letter to the Romans, read out to us today. My message to you, says Paul, is that the Son of God took on our human nature, becoming a son of David's race. His name is Jesus, and being God's Son, he was raised from the dead, so that everyone would know that he is the Lord. The Lord is now with you, and with all who call on his name. What Paul tells the Romans in his letter, he now tells us today. We are God's beloved, here in this place, and we are called to be saints.

The Christmas crib warms the heart of every person who looks on it. How could it not? For there, in that tender scene, in the form of a helpless child, we see the tenderness of God. That same child will be helpless once again, when his life is snatched from him on a cross, and once more we will look upon the helplessness of God.

What message is this that God is trying to give us? Why this helplessness, why this vulnerability to the pain of the world? The answer lies in a most forgotten word...the word is "INNOCENCE". Innocence is a total inability to hurt others, and so as such, it is the greatest ability of all. Looking upon the crib, many of us have recognized the face of God in a helpless child. This is the sign that has



been given to us, Mary's child. In that child we see, not only the loveliness of God, but also the beauty of every human being.

May the joy and "Innocence" of the Christmas Crib in our Church and homes bring us the realization of how loved we are by this God of LOVE? The prayers and thoughts of all the priests and deacon of the parish, along with your parish staff, wish each of you a blessed, innocent, and holy Christmas. May peace reign in our hearts and homes throughout this holy season and forever.

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

With Christmas just around the corner I would like to offer Christmas Blessings and Prayers to each member of St. Cletus Parish. Myself, along with Fr. Ken Baker, Fr. Lorenzo Gamboa, Deacon Stuart Heyes & Marlene, and the entire St. Cletus Parish Staff wish you good health and a prosperous New Year. May the love of Christ be present to you each day of your lives.

Blessings and Christmas Prayers,



Fr. Bob
Pastor

Parish School



ST. CLETUS SCHOOL DATES TO NOTE

December 23..... Christmas Break Begins
 January 26..... Catholic Schools Week Open House
 March 28..... Spring Auction

FOR INFORMATION OR TO SCHEDULE A TOUR

Gregory Porod, Principal
 (708) 352-4820
 gporod@stcletusparish.com

Christy Schaefer, Asst. Principal
 (708) 352-4820
 cschaefer@stcletusparish.com



Merry Christmas for all of us at St. Cletus School.
 May God Bless you and Your family today and always. It is a Blessed Day to be a Cardinal!

Mark your calendars and join us Sunday, January 26th for our Catholic Schools Week

Open House

Join us to talk with teachers and administrators, and discover why St. Cletus School is the right choice for your family!



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

The 5th grade class organized and led a beautiful Mass in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12th. During the liturgy, students brought to life the apparitions of Our Lady to Juan Diego. During this wonderful tribute to our Blessed Mother, Fr. Lorenzo reminded us of Our Lady's unconditional love, especially for the poor and the less fortunate. Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us.



St. Cletus School

700 W. 55th Street
La Grange, IL 60525


(708) 352-4820 phone
(708) 352-0788 fax
www.stcletusschool.com

St. Cletus School is a national Blue Ribbon school, recognized by the U. S. Department of Education in 2014. St. Cletus School is also a Red Ribbon school, recognized by the Nationwide Red Ribbon Certified Schools Program in 2018 for our efforts to keep our students safe, healthy, and drug-free. Its elementary program offers a strong educational curriculum guided by the Common Core State Standards in English, language arts, and math, the State of Illinois Learning Standards, and benchmarks established by the Archdiocese of Chicago. In addition to our 1st-8th grade program with an average classroom size of 21 students, St. Cletus offers 3- and 4-year-old half and full-day preschool, full day junior kindergarten, and half and full-day kindergarten classes. Our well-rounded academic program offers Spanish, art, music, physical education, library, and computer technology classes. Daily religion classes, service hours, and regular school Masses also help our students develop into mature, responsible young adults. Other opportunities available at St. Cletus School are Student Council, scouting (for boys and girls), athletic programs, band, choir, and before-and after-care programs. If your child is just beginning his/her education, or if you are considering a change, please call the school to make an appointment to visit or to register.

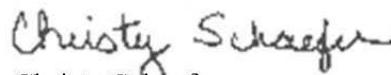
- ◆ Applications are now being accepted for new students for the 2020-21 school year.
- ◆ Catholic Schools Week Open House is Sunday, January 26, 2020. Interested families are welcome to attend our 9:30 a.m. family Mass at St. Cletus Church, followed by our Open House in the education building next door to Church from 10:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Please join us to tour the school and meet our faculty, staff, and school families!

Feel free to call the school office Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. at (708) 352-4820 if you have questions or would like to schedule an appointment to tour our school. St. Cletus School is a great place to be—stop by to learn more!

Sincerely,



Gregory N. Porod
Principal



Christy Schaefer
Assistant Principal



FAITH FAMILY FUTURE



Social Concerns Ministry



ST. CLETUS FOOD PANTRY

THURSDAYS 6-8PM

Most needed at this time:

- Hot chocolate
- Coffee
- Baking goods
- Canned fruit
- Paper and plastic bags

Donations can be dropped off before or after Masses or anytime daily between 7:45am-4pm in Food Pantry bins in the Narthex (at the back of church).

Follow us on facebook: @StCletusFoodPantry

Now on Instagram: @St.CletusFoodPantry

ARE YOU IN AN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP OR ARE YOU AFRAID IN YOUR OWN HOME?

CALL THE 24-HOUR PHONE FOR HELP: 708.485.5254

If you have questions or would like to volunteer with the Social Concerns Ministry contact Kendall Grant (708)215-5418 kgrant@stcletusparish.com

FOOD PANTRY

Many thanks to everyone who supported our Food Pantry in 2019. You can be proud that our Food Pantry continues to meet the need for food support in our community, because of the St. Cletus parishioners' ongoing positive response to Jesus' call to help the less fortunate and to see Him in the faces of those we serve.

We continue to offer a client choice model where families get to pick the items they most want and need. In July we joined the USDA food program, greatly increasing our capacity to provide meat, dairy, and other shelf staples to clients, all free of charge. Our numbers are up again this year over the previous year. We are getting more food to more people more often...and more food they actually can use and prefer. It has been a great year!

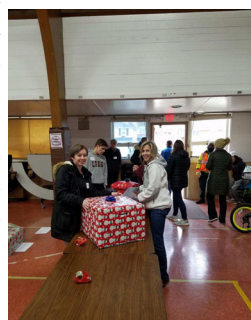
And you all answered the call. Your concern and generosity was apparent every week with your food donations and monetary contributions...you are the foundation of this outreach! Lastly, our food pantry could not operate without the many hours of service provided by our volunteers. THANK YOU for your dedication in sorting and shelving groceries, carrying items up and down stairs, donating hours of service to the Greater Chicago Food Depository, which helps pay for food we order from them each month, and most especially for representing St. Cletus Parish as you serve our clients. As Jesus would say "Well-done, good and faithful servant!" With the continued support of donors and volunteers, in 2020 we will strive to keep our shelves stocked, to adequately serve those who come to us for help.

Thanks, again!

GIVING TREE

2019 ended on a hopeful note for the 414 families who were grateful recipients of Christmas gifts during our Advent Giving Tree Project. We set a record this year with our biggest Giving Tree program yet, reaching more families than ever. We are so grateful to all of you who took another tag or invited a friend, family member or neighbor to participate in the program.

That hope and goodwill was shared by the myriad of parishioners and people in our community who participated in the project by taking and filling gift requests, food pantry items, and grocery gift card envelopes from the trees. By the volunteers who served countless hours to help in the necessary preparation, organization, and distribution of the beautifully wrapped and carefully selected gifts. Those that offered financial assistance to make sure everyone who registered for the program was remembered. Many helped by spreading the word in our community about this project to ensure support even beyond that of our faithful parishioners; or by praying for the struggling families we serve, and for the stamina and health of our volunteers.



Thank you to all –organizations, groups, and individuals, who contributed in any way to the overwhelming success of this year’s Giving Tree Project. The workings of the Holy Spirit were most apparent in every step along the way! A special word of gratitude to several individuals who volunteered countless hours from start to finish on our Giving Tree Committee. There was no job—big or small—which they did not take on with good cheer!

This outreach program continues to give to all volunteers involved an inspiring perspective to the Advent and Christmas Season. We are filled with awe, humility, and gratitude as we act as ambassadors of this caring parish.

As this Christmas and New Year unfolds, may the same Spirit who guides us in this project continue to dwell among us all!

In peace,
Kendall Grant

INTERFAITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS



Interfaith Community Partners is looking for a part-time Volunteer Coordinator to arrange for transportation for clients 60 and better within our community. Hours are Thursday and Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm. Computer skills necessary, pleasant phone communication plus love of working with older adults. Please submit your resume to Janet Garreau at jgarreauicp@gmail.com or call our office for further assistance at 708-354-9328.

ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS LOSS PROGRAM



St. John of the Cross parish will begin hosting a monthly support group for those grieving the loss of a loved one from suicide. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month. L.O.S.S.

(Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide) is a non-denominational program that provides a safe, judgement free environment intended to help survivors and family members share experience, and draw strength and hope within a loving community. Trained counselors are on hand at each meeting. Call LOSS at 312.655.7285 or SJC (708) 246-4404 for more information.

GREATER CHICAGO FOOD DEPOSITORY



**GREATER
CHICAGO
- FOOD -
DEPOSITORY.**

On the 4th Wednesday of each month, 10-15 volunteers work to earn \$15.00 each toward our GCFD food purchase. This is a great financial help since the Food Pantry purchases quality items at low prices each month to supplement donations from our parishioners and friends in the community. Our money goes much further at the food depository!

If you are interested in joining our group on one or more of the upcoming 4th Wednesdays, please e-mail Jerry Mitchell, jerryconverses@gmail.com, or contact Kendall at kgrant@stcletusparish.com, (708)214-5418. See below for answers to some common questions about this service opportunity.

How old do I have to be to volunteer?

Volunteers need to be 11 years old to volunteer at the Food Depository during regular sessions. Ages 16 and older can volunteer self-supervised. Ages 11-15 need to have one adult supervisor per 10 youths.

What should I wear?

Volunteers must wear long pants and close-toed shoes. You will not be permitted to work in the warehouse if you are wearing sandals or shorts/ short skirt. Depending on the project you are assigned to, you may be asked to remove jewelry above the waist (including piercings, but rings are acceptable).

Where is the GCFD located?

4100 W. Ann Lurie Place, Chicago, IL 60632, which is a few blocks from I-55 and Pulaski.

AGING CARE CONNECTIONS



Tuesday, Dec. 31 10am-12:45pm at Salerno's Pizza, 9301 W. 63rd St. Hodgkins. Cost: \$2.50 suggested donation.

Registration: RSVP required. Call 708-354-1323 to RSVP or cancel a reservation the day before attendance at noon.

RESPECT LIFE



“God’s love is generous, sacrificial, life-giving, and forever. As humans made in God’s image, we are called to imitate the eternal giving and receiving of love that is the Holy Trinity.”

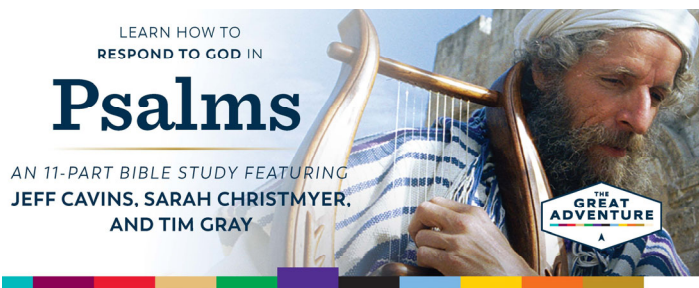
USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities
“Another Look at Contraception”

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

The 19th Annual d’Vine Affair in support of Catholic Charities Self-Sufficiency Programs, will be held on Sunday, January 26, 2020 at the Union League Club of Chicago, 65 W. Jackson Blvd. This premier event features 90 vintners from around the world and over 250 wines for tasting and purchase. An outstanding silent auction featuring many wine, dining and entertainment experiences, a wine grab and a raffle for wine prizes completes the day! Reservations \$125 before 1.6.20 (incr. to \$150 1.7.20) Contact Dave Gardner, Director of Regional & Program Events, at dgardner@catholiccharities.net or 312-655-7907 for information.

Other Ministry News

CREDO



The Holy Spirit inspired them. Israel sang them. Christ himself prayed them, as did our Blessed Mother. At the heart of the Bible are the psalms, prayers from God that help us to pray. In *Psalms: The School of Prayer*, discover how these sacred hymns become our heartfelt response to God's loving and wondrous deeds.

Learn how to meditate fruitfully on the captivating words of the psalms using *lectio divina*, and study the many ways the psalms foretell the life and mission of Jesus.

DATES – TIMES – LOCATION

Monday nights for 12 sessions
starting January 6th, 2020
St. Cletus Parish Center
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

COST – REGISTRATION

Class is free! Book cost \$30.
If you want CREDO to order a book for you, you must register and pay for the book by December 15th.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call Deb Wroblewski at 815-474-6237 for availability.

CREDO

(Continuing Religious EDucation Opportunities)

KOLBE HOUSE JAIL MINISTRY



THE DEACON'S WIFE IS COLLECTING STAMPS AGAIN!

Once again I'm collecting stamps for the Kolbe House Catholic Jail Ministry. These are to be used for the Christmas Card mailings from Detainees to their families. As many of you know I serve as a Catholic Minister for the Kolbe House Jail Ministry at Cook County. In an effort to keep the detainees connected to their families, Kolbe House is again asking for postage stamps to be used for the detainees Christmas greetings to their families. This annual effort this year is looking to collect 7,000 first class stamps.

If you would like to donate stamps in any denomination (1 cent up to first class postage) please put them in an envelope and drop them off at the parish center office marked "Kolbe House Stamps - c/o Marlene".

Thank You on behalf of the detainees at Cook and Lake county jails and the staff and ministers of Kolbe House.

-God Bless You all - Marlene

THE O ANTIPHONS OF ADVENT

In the last week before Christmas, the Church assigns a special antiphon to each day. They come from the Liturgy of the Hours (ancient prayer of the monks), and they are sung/prayed before and after the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) during evening prayer. Each antiphon this week prays for the coming of Christ under a particular title and each addresses him with the word "O" a more formal and polite way of saying, "Hey". These antiphons can be heard in the familiar hymn, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel".

Dec. 22 – O King of All the Nations

Dec. 23 - O Emmanuel, King and Lawgiver

THE JESSE TREE

The Jesse Tree is used to trace God's promise of the Savior and Christ's ancestry. Our Jesse Tree is near the ambo. Each day, simple paper ornaments will be added with a symbol on one side and Scripture passage on the other side. Please come up and take a look.

Dec. 22 – St. Joseph, the Carpenter, Stepfather

Dec. 23 – Mary and Joseph Travel to Bethlehem

Dec. 24 – Wise Men Follow the Star

Dec. 25 – Jesus' Birth

SUPPORT ST. CLETUS WITH AMAZON SMILE



Amazon Smile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping.

We hope you will choose St. Cletus Church. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation.

YOUTH MINISTRY

ALPHA FOR TEENS

A faith formation opportunity offered collaboratively through Saint Cletus and Saint John of the Cross Youth Ministries for teens in our community.

What is Alpha for Teens?

Alpha for Teens is a 9-week course that creates a space where teens can be excited to bring their friends for a conversation about Jesus. The series offers compelling stories, images, questions, and discussion topics well spread throughout each episode to better engage youth, helping them think about how these issues relate to their lives as they discuss with their friends and leaders. In each session, we'll eat food, watch a talk, and discuss questions in small groups.

Food has a way of bringing people together and building community. So whether it's a light snack, sweets or a full meal, Alpha always starts with food.

The talks tackle core questions about life and faith from a Christian perspective. Each episode averages 23 minutes in length.

Throughout each episode, there are three discussion breaks. These breaks give everyone a chance to share thoughts and ideas in small groups without fear of being corrected or judged.

Along the way, there are opportunities to experience worship through music and moments for prayer.

All of this is done in a fun environment where everyone is welcome.

All High School teens are invited to attend our weekly Alpha for Teen Series, beginning Sunday, January 12, 6:15-7:30 PM, in the Saint John of the Cross Parish Center. All are invited to come to share a meal, watch a short video, and talk about questions and topics from the video. Through the next 9 weeks, the Alpha Teen Series explores timeless questions about life, faith and God for a new generation.

How do I sign up?

Registration can be found on the Youth Ministry page on the Saint Cletus Parish Website, as well as on the Saint John of the Cross Parish Website.

Alpha for Teens needs Adult Volunteers!

VIRTUS-compliant adults feeling called to assist in the preparation and implementation of Alpha for Teens, please contact MaryClaire Zurowski.

MaryClaire Zurowski, Youth Ministry Coordinator
 mzurowski@stcletusparish.com
 youth.stcletusparish.com
 Instagram @stcletus.youthministry

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEAM

The Children, Catechists and Aides in the Religious Education program wish everyone a very blessed and Merry Christmas!

This Advent and Christmas season the children participated in many service projects to reach out to our home-bound and ill parishioners who cannot join us at the table each Sunday, as well as our Food Pantry clients, Disabled Adults in our community, and the homeless in Chicago and the surrounding community. They love to impart the joy of this holy season by sharing their wonderful talents in making blankets, Christmas crafts, ornaments and treats, and creating cards with humor and love. Our youngest children in the RE program re-enacted the Christmas story at their annual Christmas Pageant to the delight of their families. Our Special Needs children experienced the Christmas Story in their classroom by working with buddies to re-tell the story with costumes and joy! Children have a way of truly embracing the joy of the season, and teaching us all how we should live each day! May God bless us all this holy season!



UPCOMING RE EVENTS:

December 22 & 23 No Class – Merry Christmas!

January 5 & 6 No Class – Happy New Year!

January 12 & 13 Regular RE Class Schedule

Barb Campbell, Director of Religious Education
 bcampbell@stcletusparish.com | (708) 352-2383
 re.stcletusparish.com

ED WARD FINE ARTS SERIES AT ST. CLETUS

Mark your calendars and play to join us for our annual fundraiser on Friday, February 7th in the St. Cletus Parish Center. Andrew and Tony are back with dueling pianos. You don't want to miss this fun night!

CABARET
 FUNDRAISER FOR THE ED WARD FINE ARTS SERIES

DUELING PIANOS IN THE PARISH CENTER
FRIDAY, FEB. 7
8:00 PM
 DOORS OPEN AT 7:30 PM

FEATURING:
 TONY KIDONAKIS

TICKETS:
 \$40 IN ADVANCE
 \$45 AT THE DOOR

ED WARD
 FINE ARTS SERIES
 AT ST. CLETUS LA GRANGE, IL

RSVP ON ONLINE:
 www.edwardfas.com

Sunday Notes



TRUST IN GOD

On this final Sunday of Advent our scriptures focus on the historical birth of Jesus, who is son of David and Son of God, child and king, Jesus and Emmanuel.

Isaiah the prophet begs Ahaz to ask for a sign, to allow God to offer him reassurance of the survival of the Davidic dynasty. The king hypocritically refuses to “tempt the LORD” in that way (Isaiah 7:12), but the prophet foretells the birth of a son, an heir to the throne, who will prove the Lord’s enduring protection of God’s chosen lineage on the throne of David. The child will be called Emmanuel.

Matthew’s reference to this history in his description of the birth of Jesus highlights the contrast between the faithless refusal of trust shown by Ahaz, and the complete trust in God shown by Mary and Joseph in bringing about the birth of Jesus Christ.

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READINGS FOR THE WEEK

- Monday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-34; Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-10, 14; Lk 1:57-66
- Tuesday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29; Lk 1:67-79
- Wednesday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 [18-25]
Night: Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-3, 11-13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14
Dawn: Is 62:11-12; Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12; Ti 3:4-7; Lk 2:15-20
Day: Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 [1-5, 9-14]
- Thursday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc, 17; Mt 10:17-22
- Friday: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a, 2-8
- Saturday: 1 Jn 1:5-2:2; Ps 124:2-5, 7cd-8; Mt 2:13-18
- Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14; Ps 128:1-5; Col 3:12-21 [12-17]; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

TODAY’S READINGS

First Reading - You will be given this sign: The virgin shall conceive and bear a son (Isaiah 7:10-14).

Psalm - Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory (Psalm 24).

Second Reading - God has called us to belong to Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1-7).

Gospel - The son born of Mary shall be called Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:18-24).

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SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

- Monday: St. John of Kanty; Hanukkah begins
- Tuesday: Vigil of Christmas
- Wednesday: The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
- Thursday: St. Stephen; Kwanzaa begins; Boxing Day
- Friday: St. John
- Saturday: The Holy Innocents

SAINT STEPHEN (FIRST CENTURY)

December 26 - “A man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit” (Acts 6:5): thus Luke introduces Stephen, first of seven deacons chosen by the community for its ministry of charity, first to lay down his life in witness to Christ. As the church’s first martyr, Stephen’s life and death mirror the preaching and passion of Jesus, “the faithful witness” (Greek, martyr) (Revelation 1:5). Like Jesus, Stephen works “great signs and wonders among the people” (Acts 6:8). Like Jesus, when falsely accused, Stephen’s face radiates angelic serenity (Acts 6:15), though his tongue, like Jesus’, is a two-edged sword. As the dying Jesus forgave his executioners, even making excuses for them, then commended his spirit into his Father’s hands (Luke 23:34, 46), so Stephen intercedes for his murderers and begs Jesus to receive his spirit (Acts 7:60, 59). How fruitful both passions! The penitent thief inherits Paradise; Saul, who consented to Stephen’s killing, is transformed into the fearless preacher Paul. Thus Stephen challenges us to bear witness not in words only, but by Christ-like forgiveness toward all.

—Peter Scagnelli, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

CHRISTMAS

A young mother, her eyes shining with fatigue, who is arranging her hair; a father who finds himself alone with his pretty wife and baby, straightening the stable to make himself useful in some way; shepherds who bring cheese and perhaps also some curdled milk; sheep who look at their shepherds while bleating; a donkey who is eyeing his manger changed into a cradle; an adorable swaddled baby whom one calls Savior, Christ and Lord: This is the manifestation of the goodness and the tenderness of God. This is the most fantastic birth in the history of humanity, the one which changed the face of the world! This is how far God humbled and compromised himself with us! This is Emmanuel!

—From God’s Word Is Our Joy, Vol. 1 by Lucien Deiss, CSSp, copyright © 1998, World Library Publications. p. 73



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

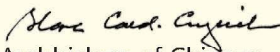
Across this liturgical year, we hear Saint Matthew's Gospel. And in this holy season that celebrates the birth of Jesus, we hear a story unique to Matthew—the journey of the Magi. He writes: "The Magi were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother."

We can imagine their joy. They discovered the one for whom they longed and searched. He is the newborn Jesus. His mother Mary holds him in her arms and, at the same time, presents him to the world. In this simple gesture, she evangelizes, gives us the living good news of her son. Then and now, it is a moment wrapped in joy.

On our journey of renewal in the Archdiocese of Chicago, may this image of Mary, mother of the Lord, inspire and encourage us to carry and present Jesus to a world that is so much in need of him. In our marriages, families, workplaces, and communities, may we joyfully carry and present him who is the great light shining in darkness.

God bless you and all your loved ones in this holy season.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Archbishop of Chicago



Community Bulletin Board

JOYFUL AGAIN! WIDOWED MINISTRY



Widowed and feeling stuck? Come and find ways to move toward inner peace and new hope in life.

Joyful Again! Widowed Ministry program presents a Retreat/workshop for men& women

March 14 &15, 2020 Mt. Assisi Center, Lemont

To register contact us at 708-354-7211, joyfulagain7211@gmail.com, www.joyfulagain.org (incls. Video).

THE WELL SPIRITUALITY CENTER

**Mary Southard Paint Your Soul Retreat
9 AM Thurs., Jan. 16 – 3 PM Sunday, Jan. 19**

Mary Southard, CSJ is a celebrated artist, experienced educator and retreat director in love with Life and with the Creator/Creation. In this retreat, for artists and non-artists alike, we will engage with the energies and images from within our own abundant and beautiful souls. Cost: \$475 (includes overnight accommodations and meals)



The Well Spirituality Center, 1515 Ogden Avenue, LaGrange Park, IL. A Member of the Congregation of St. Joseph Mission. Network. www.csjthewell.org 708-482-5048

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AT SJC

All are welcome to any of the 4 weekly groups for Christian Meditation in the St. John of the Cross Parish Center, room 7. Meetings last 45 to 55 minutes, and no experience is necessary.

Tuesdays, 7:30 pm

Wednesdays, 2:30 pm

Saturdays, 8:00 am

Mondays, 10:30am - Christian Meditation as an 11th Step Practice

For further information contact Betsy at wccmchgo@gmail.com or 708-246-8315.

BULLETIN ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

Please note that all Canticle articles are to be emailed to canticle@stcletusparish.com as text with pictures attached separately. All articles are due 5p.m. Friday a full week (9 days) before Sunday's publication.

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Thank you to our 2019 St. Cletus Parish Fall Fest Major Sponsors. These businesses will be listed in our Parish Canticle for one year as preferred providers.

Week at a Glance

DAY/DATE	TIME	LOCATION	EVENT
Sunday, December 22	7:00pm	Morrissey Hall	Spanish Novena
Monday, December 23	7:00pm	Morrissey Hall	Spanish Novena and Posada
Tuesday, December 24	8:00am		No 8am Mass - See front cover for Mass Schedule
Wednesday, December 25			St. Cletus Facilities Closed
Thursday, December 26			St. Cletus Facilities Closed
Friday, December 27			
Saturday, December 28			
Sunday, December 29			
Monday, December 30	8:00pm	Parish Center Gym	Men's Basketball
Tuesday, December 31	8:00am 5:00pm 7:00pm	Church Church	Facilities Closed after 8am Mass Vigil Mass Vigil Mass in Spanish
Wednesday, January 1	9:00am	Church	St. Cletus Facilities Closed - No 8am Mass Feast Day Mass

Stewardship Report

WEEKLY GIVING REPORT

Due to early printing deadlines, the December 22nd Giving Report will appear in the December 30th Canticle.

ENROLL IN ELECTRONIC GIVING



Do you want to transition away from writing checks and contribute electronically? It is SO EASY! Visit the

St. Cletus Parish website at www.stcletusparish.com and click the "DONATE" BUTTON. Click Sunday donations. We accept checks (ACH), debit and credit cards. If you have questions call Mary Zwolinski 708.352.6209.

DONATING FROM YOUR IRA IN 2019

Most Americans age 70 1/2 and older can transfer tax-free up to \$100,000 from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to one or more charities, such as St. Cletus Church. This could be a benefit for individuals who are required to take minimum distributions from their IRAs. Please contact your plan administrator to make the distribution. The distribution must be made directly to St. Cletus Church for it to be treated as a charitable gift. Please call Mary Zwolinski in the Parish Office for further information 708.352.6209.



YEAR-END STATEMENT BY REQUEST ONLY


As tax time approaches, we ask everyone who would like a year-end statement of their Year 2019 financial offering to the parish to fill out the form below and return it or simply call the office @ (708) 352-6209 with your request. You may also email bkallal@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 # _____

St. Cletus Parish Information

CONTACT US

Parish Center.....(708) 352-6209
 Español(708) 215-5440
 School(708) 352-4820
 www.stcletusparish.com.....  stcletuschurch

PARISH CENTER OFFICE HOURS

Please note that all deliveries and inquiries should be made to the parish center office. Food pantry will remain in the rectory.

Monday-Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
 Sunday 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

MASSES

Saturday Evening..... 5:00 p.m.
 Sunday 7:00 a.m., 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m.,
 11:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m. (SPANISH)
 Weekdays..... Mon. thru Sat. 8:00 a.m.
 Evening before Holy Day 7:00 p.m.
 Holy Day..... 6:30 a.m., 8:00 a.m.

CONFESSIONS

Confessions every Saturday..... 4:15 - 4:45 p.m.

BAPTISMS

1st & 3rd Saturday of most months at 11:00 a.m.
 Parents must be registered parishioners and attend the Baptism Preparation class. Please make arrangements by calling the Parish office. Contact Bobbie Kallal (708) 352-6209.

WEDDINGS

Dates and times are reserved for registered parishioners. Initial arrangements must be completed five months in advance of the wedding date. Contact Bobbie Kallal (708) 352-6209.

HOME/HOSPITAL VISITATION AND COMMUNION CALLS

Please contact the Ministry of Care Office (708) 215-5407

PARISH MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

Mission Statement: St. Cletus is a dynamic Catholic community dedicated to spreading the Good news of Jesus Christ through worship, education, and service.

Vision Statement: We welcome all. We encourage all parishioners to live the Gospel message of Jesus Christ in their daily lives, by sharing their talents and faith with our parish and community.

STAFF

PARISH STAFF

Rev. Robert Clark, Pastor
Rev. Kenneth Baker, Associate Pastor
Rev. Lorenzo Gamboa, Associate Pastor
Rev. Mr. Stuart & Marlene Heyes, Deacon Couple

PASTORAL STAFF

Fr. Baker/Paulette Bolton, Worship (708) 215-5422
Karen Ziemba, Music Ministry (708) 215-5423
MaryClaire Zurowski, Youth Ministry(708) 215-5419
Kendall Grant, Social Concerns (708) 215-5418
Deacon Stuart Heyes, Pastoral Care .. (708) 215-5407
Debbie Lestarczyk, Business Manager (708) 215-5405
Christopher Wagner, Technology (708) 215-5420

HISPANIC MINISTRY STAFF..... (708) 215-5440

Rev. Lorenzo Gamboa, Head of Hispanic Ministry

SCHOOL STAFF (708) 352-4820

Gregory Porod, Principal
Christy Schaefer, Assistant Principal
Mary Lee Krieger, Administrative Assistant
Jeannie Scalzitti, Receptionist/Office Assistant

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF..... (708) 352-2383

Barb Campbell, Director of Religious Education
Deborah Pusinelli, Assistant
Paulette Bolton, Director of Adult Faith Formation and Assistant Director of Worship

PARISH OFFICE STAFF (708) 352-6209

Bobbie Kallal, Human Resources/Records
Mary Zwolinski, Parish Accounting
Elizabeth Goellner-McLean, Bulletin Editor
Carol Scatena, Parish Assistant
Kadie Lestarczyk, Parish Assistant

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CHURCH NAME AND ADDRESS

St. Cletus Church #9238
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La Grange, IL 60525

TELEPHONE

708-352-6209

CONTACT PERSON

Elizabeth Goellner/
Debbie Lestarczyk (Bus Mgr)

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