

HOLY NAME OF JESUS

NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH, PNCC
1040 PEARL STREET

SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK 12303-1846

PARISH AND HALL: 518-372-1992

FR. MARK GNIDZINSKI: 518-437-1889

DEACON JIM KONICKI: 518-765-2134 OR 518-522-0944

ON THE WEB: WWW.HOLYNAMENCC.ORG



NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2012

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Preparing for

As we begin December we enter into a season of preparation - Advent. It isn't a long season, four short weeks, and then the big event - Christmas.

As we enter Advent let's consider our spirit of preparation. Some feel that all the Christmas displays, shopping, sales, cookie baking, cooking, and decorating detract from Christmas. They may feel that the Christmas event is almost anti-climactic. Is that it, after all this preparation? It's over?

We should be careful not to condemn what goes on around us. The true spirit of preparation comes from our underlying purpose, how we interact, and how we perceive what we are doing. If our first consideration is about making others happy by our preparations, our baking, shopping, cooking, and decorating, and we do these things in a spirit of prayer, we are doing

them for the right reasons.

Consider someone who shops for others so that they might get great gifts themselves. They are working out of a spirit of selfishness. That is not our Christian spirit, nor the spirit that comes from honest Advent preparation.

Our Christmas preparation, if focused on others, if focused on building our lives into a closer and closer resemblance to the life Jesus taught we should live, is proper preparation. If our preparation is to better live out the Christmas season - which truthfully lasts from December 25th through February 2nd - 40 days - then we are preparing rightly. If our preparation is focused on repentance and reconciliation with God and others - we are preparing completely.

With proper preparedness Christmas will never be anti-climactic, or just 40 days, but a spirit that stays with us throughout our lives.

Planning For:

- December 2: 1st Sunday of Advent
- December 6: Commemoration of St. Nicholas of Myra
- December 8: Feast of Divine Love
- December 9: 2nd Sunday of Advent/Parish Committee Meeting
- December 16: 3rd Sunday of Advent/Parish Vigil Pot-luck and Youth Presentation
- December 21: Feast – St. Thomas
- December 23: 4th Sunday of Advent/Greening of the Church
- December 24: Vigil of the Nativity
- December 25: Nativity of the Lord, Holy Mass at Midnight and Service at 10am
- December 26: Feast – St. Stephen, Proto-Martyr
- December 27: Feast – St. John, Apostle & Evangelist - 7:30pm Service and Blessing of Wine
- December 30: Solemnity of the Humble Shepherds/1st Soup on Sunday event
- December 31: New Year's Eve
- January 1: Solemnity of the Circumcision, 10am Service/Happy 2013!
- January 6: Solemnity of the Epiphany - blessing of chalk, gold, and incense

New Liturgical Year

With the coming of Advent we welcome a new liturgical year –

happy New Church Year! We begin use of the Year C cycle of readings.

Advent themes

Our Advent themes in cycle C focus on Hope - God's Promise Will Be Fulfilled; Peace - All Shall See God's Salvation; Love - God Is Among Us; and Joy - Rejoice! These beautiful themes lead us to the birth of Jesus, the fulfillment of hope, peace, love, and joy – not just for others, but also for each of us.

Blessing of Oplátky and the Advent Wreath - December 2nd

On the First Sunday of Advent we will bless our Advent wreath and the "Bread of Angels," the oplátky that we will share with each other, family, and friends during the Christmas Vigil. Oplátky will be available for you to take home throughout Advent and the Christmas Vigil. Please be with us for Holy Mass at 11am to start the new Church year off right, in a spirit of prayer, repentance, charity, and anticipation.

A time of preparation

This short Advent season will be filled with activities and preparation, for church things and in our homes. Above all, let us prepare our hearts for the newborn King – He is worth preparing for!

Advent Charity - food gathering and fresh water wells

Rather than lamenting the trends of society, and complaining about the secularization of Jesus' birth, let's resolve to do something positive.

Let our preparation focus first on prayer – a prayer of hope and anticipation for God’s coming among us. Pray for reconciliation and an end to greed.

Let us then also sacrifice for those in need.

This Advent we will put out a donation basket. Our contributions will be used toward the purchase of a well for people in need of fresh water through Operation Christmas Child/Samaritan’s Purse. Women and children in developing countries usually walk miles to reach the nearest water source—which might be a stagnant pond or polluted stream. Samaritan’s Purse is working to solve this problem by building and repairing hundreds of wells, along with providing pumps and other equipment, across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Costs range from \$400 for a hand-dug well serving a few families to \$10,000 for a deep-drilled well serving an entire community.

We will also be collecting food, gloves, and hats for those in need in our immediate community. Canned, dried, and non-perishable foods, as well mittens, gloves, and hats are all needed. The latest U.S. census figures show an alarming statistic — 50.8 percent of Schenectady's children live below the poverty line. For a family of four, that means a yearly income of less than \$22,350. That number, provided as part of the 2011 American Community Survey, puts Schenectady 13th in the nation for highest childhood

poverty rate among cities over 65,000 in population.

God bless you for your generosity and sacrifice in preparation for Jesus’ coming.

Vigil pot-luck and student Christmas presentation - December 16th

Our annual Christmas Vigil/Wigilia pot-luck will be held on Sunday, December 16th following services. Please join us, and if you are able, bring a meatless dish to share. Our SOCL students will present a news report from Bethlehem along with musical commercials - come listen for the Good News!

Greening of the Church - December 23rd

Please join in and lend a hand after services on December 23rd so that we might prepare the Church, beautifying it for the arrival of our newborn King.

New Ministry of Charity - Soup on Sunday - December 30th - Volunteers Needed

We look forward to beginning a new ministry of charity within our parish on Sunday, December 30th. On a monthly basis, starting December 30th, we will open our kitchen for those in need of a hot meal in a safe and secure environment. If you would like to volunteer to help, please contact Bob Dominy or Deacon Jim.

Epiphany Home Visits

We continue the wonderful tradition

of offering home visits and blessings for those who would like them.

It is an ancient custom for Christians to have their homes blessed in relation to the feast of the Epiphany, which commemorates the coming of the Wisemen to the house of the Holy Family.

"and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." (Matthew 2:11)

The Magi came to the house of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph and filled it with blessings. The home blessing sets apart your home as a place of Christian Hospitality and blessing for your family and all those who visit in the New Year. By such an action you are saying, "May those who visit our home, also find Christ here in our midst." Please see Deacon Jim to set aside a time.

Remembering All Souls

The Holy Church set aside November to commemorate those who have preceded us in holy death. Thank you to all who prayed with us on All Souls Day and throughout the month as we prayed for all those whose names were placed before us by loving family and friends.

With Thanks

To all who attended our Pampered Chef party and purchased items in support of our parish. God bless

your generosity and your kitchens in the use of these wonderful items.

To all parents and grandparents who have been so faithful in bringing their children for SOCL class and for including them in our parish community. We are overjoyed by their presence and sweet voices.

To all who continue to pray, sacrifice, and serve in Christian love and charity on behalf of our parish.

To the members of our Parish Committee for their hard work and sacrifice!!!!

To our wonderful altar servers, our organist and choir director Liz Battaglia, and to Ed Bertasso for his ministry of hospitality.

To every parishioner, visitor, and member -- you are a blessing and a treasure.

God bless you and reward you! Bóg zapłać! Grazie mille! Thank you!!!

Feast of Divine Love - December 8th

When our church was young, Bp. Hodur and the Church's Holy Synod transformed the so called Feast of the "Immaculate Conception" of B.V. Mary to the Feast of Divine Love.

The entire construct of the so called immaculate conception was based on the Roman Catholic Church's legalistic understanding of "original sin." If everyone is born in a sinful state, in original sin, inherited from their parents through the sexual act of procreation, then there has to be a specially created individual - Mary

- who was preserved from original sin. Some have even extended Mary's uniqueness and separateness from the rest of humanity by arguing that Jesus' birth was a bloodless, painless event where the infant simply floated out of the Blessed Virgin's womb.

St. Thomas Aquinas wrote against the innovation that Mary's birth was unlike that of others. He argued that this contradicted the very purpose of Jesus' Incarnation, which was that He received our human nature through Mary. If her nature is unique, then Jesus' connection with the rest of humanity is severed. (ST 27 2r).

The Roman Catholic Church went so far as to dogmatize this belief - obligating all members of their Church to firmly and constantly believe this. They consider this Divine revelation. Roman Catholics who do not believe this are de facto guilty of the serious sin of heresy and are cast out/excommunicated.

As Polish National Catholics we too believe that Mary was preserved from sin, and remained sinless and pure. But, we do not need to construct a special status for Mary because her birth and our birth are all without sin. We do not countenance the idea of original sin, that children inherit sinfulness from their parents through the sexual act of procreation. Nor do we accept that humans are sinful from birth based on our universal human nature. As such, we do not need a new dogma to specially preserve

one individual.

Instead, we teach that we are all created in the image and likeness of God. We profess that creation is not evil, but that it is an expression of Divine Love. Evil is certainly real, and present in the world, the result of humanity's fall. We all fall into sin, but it is our responsibility for failing to act according to goodness of our creation.

Creation is good says Genesis, and human creation is very good. Rather than speak of the unique status of Mary, the Feast of Divine Love speaks about the goodness of creation in general as an expression of a good Creator.

The Feast of Divine Love encapsulates so much of what is positive about our Church, its focus on love and human potential. To the 1928 Synod our organizer declared: *"Everything else [besides God] is transitory, but this divine element [of love] is immortal."*

Our Church sees Divine Love in God's sharing of wisdom and free will. The Divine Love of creation is that we are made "very good" (Gen. 1:31) in the image and likeness of God. When we fall into sin, we know that we can always turn to God who loved us so much that He sent His only Son to us to redeem humanity from its fall into sinfulness, its propensity to reject God's Divine Love.

Milestones to Celebrate:

Birthdays

- 2 Christian Supinski, Dorothy Morrison, Lisa Houser
- 3 Claudia Bertasso
- 4 Mikayla Jakubiak
- 5 Stephen Martin
- 6 Justin Weglinski
- 7 Helen & Paul Zebrowski
- 9 Christine Rager
- 10 Andrew Zostant
- 13 Justin Kimball, Aleksandra Wheelock
- 14 Susan Dantz, Veralyn Vroman
- 15 Nancy Fredenburg
- 16 Bethany Victoria Normandin
- 19 Carol Kupiec, Frances Liska, Darian DePasquale
- 23 Michael Mazzone
- 24 Edward Jakubiak
- 25 Jesus, Matthew Seidel
- 28 Denise Meyers

Anniversaries

- 19 Bob & Cyndie Williams

Wishing you all many years! Sto Lat!

Coffee Hour/Breakfasts

Coffee hours continue after services each week. In the coming year we are also considering having a monthly breakfast. Come and share worship and wonderful treats with fellowship every week.

Poetry for the Month

New Year by Piotr Sobiech

*At the coming of the New Year
Bid the old year farewell
and remember the best moments*

*Moments of sadness and despair
Moments of joy and love
When the old year passes
Each of us will forget the old year
Everyone wonders what the New
Year will bring
Think of happiness
Raising toasts with wishes
Great joy
Drinking champagne
So that you may always have good
luck
So that fortune will never forget us
Play until the morning
So that you will not sleep through
each new morn*

Translated by Dcn Jim

*Kiedy nadchodzi Nowy Rok
Żegnamy stary Rok
I wspominamy najlepsze chwile
Chwile smutku i rozpaczy
Chwile radości i miłości
Kiedy stary rok przemija
Każdy z nas staje cię starczy o
jeden Rok
Każdy się zastanawia jaką nowinę
niesie Nowy Rok
Myślą że szczęście
Toast wznoszą życzenia
wypowiadają
Wspaniałą radością
Szampanem popijają
Aby szczęściu dobrze się wiodło
Aby szczęście o nas nigdy nie
zapomniało
Bawią się do samego ranna
Aby nie przespać całego rocznego
ranna*

Who is St. Nicholas

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during

the third century in the village of Patara. At the time the area was Greek and is now on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "*sell what you own and give the money to the poor,*" Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to the those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships.

Under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, who ruthlessly persecuted Christians, Bishop Nicholas suffered for his faith, was exiled and imprisoned. The prisons were so full of bishops, priests, and deacons, there was no room for the real criminals—murderers, thieves and robbers.

After his release, Nicholas attended the Council of Nicaea in 325. There he confronted the heretic Arias who taught that Jesus was not equal to God the Father. When Arias unceasingly confronted Nicholas, Nicholas slapped him.

Nicholas died December 6, 343 in Myra and was buried in his cathedral church, where a unique relic, called manna, formed in his grave. This liquid substance, said to have healing powers, fostered the growth of devotion to Nicholas. The

anniversary of his death became a day of celebration, St. Nicholas Day, December 6th.

Through the centuries many stories and legends have been told of St. Nicholas' life and deeds. These accounts help us understand his extraordinary character and why he is so beloved and revered as protector and helper of those in need.

The legend of Nicholas' help for a family with three daughters without a dowry, who were therefore destined to be sold into slavery, led to our gift giving on his commemoration. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in the family home—providing the needed dowries. The bags of gold, tossed through an open window, are said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. So now children hang stockings or put out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from Saint Nicholas.

Through the centuries St. Nicholas has continued to be venerated by the Church. By his example of generosity to those in need, especially children, St. Nicholas continues to be a model for the compassionate life.

Widely celebrated in Europe, St. Nicholas' feast day, December 6th, keeps alive the stories of his goodness and generosity. In Germany and Poland, boys dress as bishops begged alms for the poor—and sometimes for themselves! In

the Netherlands and Belgium, St. Nicholas arrives on a steamship from Spain to ride a white horse on his gift-giving rounds. December 6th is still the main day for gift giving and merrymaking in much of Europe.

Keeping alive this simple gift-giving in early Advent helps preserve a Christmas Day focus on the Christ Child.

Nominations/Annual Meeting

Our annual congregation meeting will be held in January along with the election of a new Parish Committee. So much good has been accomplished this year - it will be a great meeting filled with thankfulness for the many blessings we have experienced - especially for the blessing of having you in our family of faith!!! If you or someone you know would like to be part of the leadership team, please write your name, theirs, or better yet, both of yours down along with the office (Chair, Co-Chair, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Secretary, Trustee) you would like to run for and drop them in the collection basket in an envelope marked nominations.

Parish Organizations and Ministries

Did you know that our Parish has many organizations that need you? God calls us to work together for the good of our community, in support of each other, and for the needs of the Church. The YMSofR – Men’s Society of the Resurrection

Branch 56, ANS – Women’s Adoration Society, Choir, Parish Committee, and a hopefully reconstituted branch of the PNU (Spójnia) all need your help. We also need altar servers and lectors. Please see Deacon Jim.

You can still get a guaranteed 3% return on your money!

The PNUA - our Fraternal Insurance Company offers several programs that help to meet your financial planning needs. If you set up a plan **before December 31st** you will lock in a 3% rate of return. Try to get that at any bank. The PNUA is also a great way to build equity for our young people in preparation for college. PNUA policies make a great Christmas gift. Act now. Call the offices of the Polish National Union of America toll-free at 1-800-724-6352.



December 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 1st Sunday of Advent Service of Worship and Holy Communion, 9:30am Holy Mass, 11am Lector: Claudia Bertasso	3	4 Commemoration – St. Barbara	5	6 Commemoration – St. Nicholas of Myra	7	8 Solemnity – Conception of the B.V.M. Feast of Divine Love
9 2nd Sunday of Advent Service of Worship and Holy Communion, 9:30am Lector: Larry Panfil Parish Committee Meets	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 3rd Sunday of Advent Service of Worship and Holy Communion, 9:30am Lector: Marilyn Heitala Vigil Pot Luck, Youth Christmas Presentation	17	18	19	20	21 Feast – St. Thomas	22
23 4th Sunday of Advent Service of Worship and Holy Communion, 9:30am Lector: Claudia Bertasso Greening of the Church	24 Vigil of the Nativity	25 Solemnity of the Nativity Holy Mass at Midnight Lector: Larry Panfil Service of Worship and Holy Communion, 10am	26 Feast – St. Stephen, Proto-Martyr	27 Feast – St. John, Apostle & Evangelist - 7:30pm Service of Worship and Holy Communion and Blessing of Wine	28 Commemoration of the Holy Innocents	29 Solemnity of the Holy Family
30 Solemnity of the Humble Shepherds Service of Worship and Holy Communion, 9:30am Lector: Marilyn Heitala 1st Soup on Sunday event	31 New Year's Eve					

Events

January 2013 Upcoming

- 1st - Solemnity of the Circumcision, 10am Service/Happy 2013!
- 2nd – Solemnity of the Holy Name, 7:30pm Service
- 6th - Solemnity of the Epiphany - blessing of chalk, gold, and incense
- 13th – Solemnity of the Baptism of the Lord
- 18th – 25th Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- Annual Meeting -- TBA