



MASSES FOR THE WEEK

January 6—January 12

EACH MASS IS OFFERED FOR
THE INTENTIONS OF EVERYONE
PRESENT AND FOR THE FOLLOWING:

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6

- 4:00 p.m. Reverend Van Constant; Peter Hand;
Jonathan McCall; Marie-Josephé May;
Marlene Morris; Toni Ragas
- 5:30 p.m. Alba "Ree" Alario; Nickkolas Sigiliano;
Charles Zimmermann

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7

- 8:00 a.m. Members of St. Patrick's Church
(Propopulo)
- 9:30 a.m. Nellie Aguirre; Mary Chalin Bizo; Marlene
Cascio; Jane O'Brien Chatelain; Cindy
Cook; Peter Ehrensing; Beverly Estes;
Kathleen Fontaine; Charles Gegg; Kelly
Granier; Frank C. Hemelt; Dane Hitt; Jim
Hitt; Jimmy Hitt; Penny Hitt; William L.
Maylie; Patrick J. McCormick; John H.
Schroder, Jr.; Liz Triche; Lena M. Vivola;
Bruce & Allie Wells & Baby
- 11:00 a.m. Burke Family; Mr. & Mrs. Robert Fanning
& Sons & David; Rita M. Fanning; Foley
Nursing Agency; Kathleen Kerry Family;
Sonny & Mary Mahon & Family (Ireland);
Luda Peck; Barbara Mary Ruiz; Dr.
Charles Taggart; Mark & Haydee Von
Sternberg Family

- 5:30 p.m. Reverend Stanley Klores

MONDAY, JANUARY 8

- 11:30 a.m. Purgatorial List
- 12:00 p.m. Adrian Duplantier; Mr. & Mrs. Joe Maggio;
Mark & Haydee Von Sternberg Family

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9

- 11:30 a.m. Mother Angelica
- 12:00 p.m. Sanctification of Priests

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10

- 11:30 a.m. Purgatorial List
- 12:00 p.m. Foley Nursing Home; Stephen Andrew
Losee; Cora O'Connell

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

- 11:30 a.m. Pope John Paul II
- 12:00 p.m. Sanctification of Priests

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12

- 11:30 a.m. Purgatorial List
- 12:00 p.m. Sanctification of Priests

TRIDENTINE LATIN MASS—Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

Holy Family

Solemn High Mass—First Sunday of the month.

Benediction—Third Sunday after the 9:30 a.m. Mass.

NO COFFEE AND DOUGHNUTS

The usual coffee and doughnuts hosted by the Claddaugh Group, after the Sunday morning Masses, will not be held until January 14, 2007

HOME-SCHOOL FAMILIES

St. Patrick's Church extends a warm welcome to the home-schooling families from the diocese who are celebrating with us this weekend.

SUNDAY OFFERING—December 31, 2006

First Collection \$ 8,104

Second Collection* \$ 1,693

* Restoration and Maintenance

ANNUAL PARISH BUFFET

Everyone is cordially invited to attend
the annual parish buffet
in the rectory
Sunday, January 7, 2007
10:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

IN MEMORY OF—FINAL WEEK!

This is the final week for names to be submitted for the "In Memory Of" listing on the back of the Sunday Bulletin. Envelope forms, found in the vestibule of the church, should be completed and returned to the rectory office by **Friday, January 12, 2007**. **Please do not rely on the United States Postal Service to deliver mailed envelopes before the final date Friday, January 12, 2007.**

A final "proof" of the listing can be found in the back of the church. Please take a listing and check for correct spelling, etc. of your request. If a correction is needed please contact the rectory office before **Friday, January 12, 2007**. Corrections or additions cannot be made once the listing has been sent to the printer.

EPIPHANY CHALK

The blessing of Epiphany chalk, to be used in the blessing of our homes, will take place after all Masses this weekend. Everyone is invited to take a packet of blessed chalk, with instructions and special prayers, for the blessing of their homes.

NATIONAL VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK

Today we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany and Monday, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. This week, January 8-12, is *National Vocation Awareness Week*, a special time in which the Church prays for the renewal and strengthening of vocations with dedicated people as married and single people, and men and women to serve as priests, deacons, brothers, and sisters. Choose to make a difference!

SEELOS BIRTHDAY HEALING MASS

Saturday, January 13, 2007 at 11:00 a.m.

National Shrine of Blessed Seelos/St. Mary's Assumption Church
2030 Constance Street; N.O. 70130

Celebrant: Father Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.

Vice Postulator for the Cause of Canonization

LOST AND FOUND

A recent recovery is a Confirmation remembrance card written by Julie Christensen dated March 18, 1959. If you feel that you may have misplaced a personal article while at St. Patrick's, check with the rectory office. Just like this remembrance card, it may be in the "Lost and Found" box.

PRAYERS FOR THE FAITHFUL

For the sick of our parish and those who have asked for our prayers especially: Ree Alario; D. J. Ales; J. Frank Armstrong; Harold Berrigan, Jr.; Michael Brasset; Lillian Capozzi; Margie Case; Michelle Catalanatto; Tony Clesi; Jim Clynych; John Copes; Jackie Dabdoub; Grace Daigle; Ralph DeBlanc; Raymond DeBlanc; Regina Dillon; The Dunlap Family; Joseph Ebberman; Donald Faust, Jr.; Mildred Flynn; Anette Folse; Joseph French; John G. Fulcher; Kelly Granier; Charles Gegg; Frank Hemelt; Marie Herty; Marilyn Kitto; Zivana Kovacevich; Brenda Lawson; Carrie LeBoef; Albert Leonhard; Betty Leonard; Alton Lewis; Glenda Liuzza; Stephen Andrew Losee; Dorothy Luquet; Reverend Val A. McInnes, O.P.; Irene Mackenroth; Carol Mallette; Eric McDonald; Colin McInnis; Joseph Morales; Gerald L. Moran, Jr.; Madeleine Nicoladis; Suzanne Nogues; Lucille Ogden; Beverly Orillion; Robert Plaskas; J. Van Provosty; Hugh Ramsey; Tom Roach; Charlene Taranto; Ashley Turkington.

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

CHRISTMAS MAKES A COMEBACK

'Twas the Night before Christmas and in many a store,

The words "Merry Christmas" could be heard once more...

Each year, it seems, the Register reports on Christmas losing ground in the increasingly secular public square. This Christmas is different. Christians seem to have made progress at winning back some ground. After all, this is the Christmas you could see the Christ Child on screen in *The Nativity Story*.

You could hear "Merry Christmas" at Wal-Mart and other retailers.

And a Zogby poll found that an overwhelming majority of people are not offended by Christian Christmas greetings. According to a Zogby Interactive poll, 95% of consumers said that they are not offended by being greeted with a "Merry Christmas" while shopping. The figure rose to 98% for weekly Wal-Mart shoppers. In fact, as reported in the December issue of Zogby's newsletter *American Consumer*, 46% of respondents said they would be offended by the generic "Happy Holidays" greeting. Thirty-six percent of those who have been greeted with "Happy Holidays" said they have avoided shopping at a store or cut their visit short after being greeted with a secular message.

John Sondag, religious education director at St. Helena Catholic Church in Minneapolis, realized this sentiment a year ago. This year, he produced a red-and-green button with "I Celebrate Christmas" in white lettering and sold about 18,000.

Said Sondag, who also publishes *The Catholic Servant*, a monthly periodical of evangelization, catechesis and apologetics in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis: "People need to keep saying, 'I celebrate Christmas and don't forget that.' "We can either stand on the sidelines eating our popcorn and watch the battle being fought or we can be a part of it," he said. "Wearing these buttons is a small way of stating our case that Christmas is a part of our culture and that we want to continue to make it a part of our culture. It's legitimate for Catholics and all Christians to baptize the culture we live in."

Sacred Symbols

In fact, Christmas is so ingrained in the culture already that many people don't realize it. People may try to sanitize the symbols of Christmas, but those symbols are explicitly Christian. There's holly, for instance. Baylor University patristics professor Michael Foley explained that the plant, with its pointed leaves and red berries, traditionally was meant to represent two things — the burning bush and Christ's crown of thorns and drops of blood. "The point is that we were saying that this babe in the manger that we are now honoring is the same God who appeared to Moses in the burning bush many centuries ago, and is the same God who is going to redeem us on the cross," Foley said. He's struck by the effort to transform Christmas trees into "holiday trees." "Their rationale is that the Christmas tree was a pagan Yule tree to begin with, but that's not true," said Foley, author of *Why Do Catholics Eat Fish on Friday? The Catholic Origin to Just About Everything*. "The Christmas tree is an exclusively Christian custom. It's a Christmas Eve tradition. ... The ball-shaped Christmas ornaments represent the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the candy canes and other sweets represent the tree of life.

"So, even if they call it a 'holiday tree,'" he said, "if they are remotely decorating it to resemble a Christmas tree, the symbols are Christian."

Rabbi Elazar Bogomilsky seemed to recognize that when he complained that there were plenty of Christmas trees in the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport but no menorah, which would recognize the feast of Hanukkah. A couple of weeks before Christmas, the airport removed 14 trees, but when the

rabbi said he would not file a lawsuit, the airport replaced them.

At the same time, several prominent Jewish commentators — Dennis Prager, Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, radio host Barry Farber, Rabbi Aryeh Spero and Michael Medved — have written that they do not find the celebration of Christmas by others to be offensive. "Christmas ... connects people of every color and ethnicity, and binds this generation to the past through family and communal traditions," said Medved. "Even for an outsider like me, this is infinitely preferable to the confused, flavorless, mixed messages that the multiculturalists want to foist on an unwilling populace."

Not a New War

The multicultural argument is what set Bill Donohue off, particularly after the Sea-Tac Airport flap. "The secular crusaders who want to neuter Christmas say ad nauseam that the reason why we have to give more attention to holidays other than Christmas is due to the increasingly diverse composition of our nation and the world," wrote Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, in a press release. "But it is a hoax: The evidence is just the opposite."

Citing scholars such as Dinesh D'Souza, Stephen Prothero, and Philip Jenkins, Donohue concluded that the United States is no more diverse than it was after its founding and that it has even become more Christian. "The diversity hoax is being sold as a rationale to nullify Christmas," Donohue said.

Foley, the patristics scholar, pointed out that the tussle over public expressions of Christmas isn't a new phenomenon. "The war on Christmas began even before the feast did," said Foley, alluding to the attempt by Herod to kill the Christ Child. He also drew attention to efforts by the Puritans in the mid-1600s to outlaw Christmas. Sondag said that while some strides are being made he's not convinced Christians are winning ground. Aside from what's happening in the marketplace, he said there are many other things taking place in the courts and the schools.

"When someone comes into a school and says, 'Take down that crèche,' the principal figures it's easier to remove the crèche than face a \$10,000 legal fee that's not in the budget," he said. "We've lost a lot of symbols in our culture. We need to be reminded of why we celebrate Christmas."

In spite of getting all 15 of the Simon Malls in Massachusetts to restore Christmas, Bob Marley says that there is much work that remains to be done. He says he plans to continue his fight for the holiday. "We're not going to stop," said Marley, who formed the Coalition to Save Christmas in Massachusetts to take on retail stores and malls in the Bay State. He says that his organization's next target is public schools. "They've replaced Christmas plays with Kwanzaa plays. They're singing 'Silent Night, Winter Night,'" said Marley. "We're losing our identity."

But many organizations that keep track of the "war on Christmas" say they've seen an improvement this year. "We've been monitoring and tracking these kind of things for 14 years, but this is the first time we have seen the tide turning in our favor," said Keira McCaffrey, director of communications with the Catholic League, who, in partnership with New York's Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, initiated a "Christmas Watch" this year as a way for individuals to highlight local community assaults on Christmas. "It's very encouraging.

"We were pleased to see *The Nativity* and Wal-Mart changing," said McCaffrey. "They may be one store, but they are a giant. Retailers are waking up. They're realizing: if 85% of this country is Christian, let's give them something Christian."

*Tim Drake
Register Senior Writer*