



The Parish of Saints Philip and James  
1 Carow Place, St. James, NY 11780  
631-584-5454

# December 22nd, 2019

## Fourth Sunday of Advent



*"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
And they shall name him Emmanuel,  
Which means "God is with us."  
Matthew 1: 23*

*"With Philip & James we pray to live lives worthy of the call to be  
Apostles of Hope"*

Daily Mass: 7:30am and 9:15 am  
Saturday 5pm Sunday: 8am 10 am 12noon

## STS. PHILIP & JAMES PASTORAL STAFF

Parish Center Phone: 631-584-5454 Parish Fax: 631-862-9675  
Website—www.sspj.org

### PARISH CENTER OFFICE HOURS

Open Monday, Tuesday Wednesday 9am-8pm  
Open Thursday 9am-5pm  
Open Saturday 10am-2pm  
Closed Friday and Sunday

### CLERGY

Father Tom Haggerty, Pastor  
Father Patrick Osei-Poku-Associate Pastor  
Deacon Ronald Blasius  
Deacon John Keenan  
Deacon Ken Maher  
**PASTORAL ASSOCIATE**  
Sister Theresita Donach, CSFN

### BUSINESS MANAGER

Virginia Portanova

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR

Catherine Darrow

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 1-2

Charlotte Czujko

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 3-6

Barbara Luna

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 7-8

Dominick Avento

### MUSIC DIRECTOR

Margaret Adams

### COORDINATOR OF PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY

Lynn Sisti

### DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES

John Cordes

### SSPJ SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Diane M. Anderson

School Phone-631-584-7896 School Fax: 631-584-3258

### TRUSTEES

Jerry Linder ~ Tina Cafaro

### PASTORAL COUNCIL

Michael Sharkey, Lou Guerra, Cynthia Lombardi, Paul Damato  
Martin Marut, Maureen Burke, Erin Nicastro

### Stewardship, A Way of Life...

You heard our plea and graciously answered ...  
Thank you for sharing your treasure, small acts filled  
with hope make great things happen!

**THANK YOU**

### Sacraments

**Baptism**— Celebrated twice per month. Parents are asked to register at the Pastoral Center for Pre-Baptism Program.

**Marriage**— Couples are asked to contact the Pastoral Center before visiting the reception hall. The Marriage Preparation process is nine months before your proposed wedding date.

**Confirmation**— Seventh and Eighth grade students are prepared to celebrate through Religious Ed or SSPJ School. Adults prepare through RCIA.

**Reconciliation**— Available Saturdays from 4:00pm-5:00pm in the Church or by contacting the Parish Center for an appointment.

**Anointing of the Sick**— In case of serious, unexpected illness, please contact the Parish Center office to arrange for a Priest to pray with the person who is ill. Anointing of the Sick is held on the first Sunday of the month following the 12:00mass please see the Sacristan before mass.

**R.C.I.A.**— Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (non-Catholic adults desiring to become Catholic) are asked to contact the Parish Center Office.

**Eucharistic Adoration In The Church**— Thursday 2-4pm  
Friday 8-9pm

### PLEASE REMEMBER THOSE WHO SERVE FOR US IN YOUR PRAYERS



LCDR. MEGAN M. SHUTKA-VIK, USN  
CAPT. WILSON MARKS- USN  
CAPTAIN MICHAEL DOLAN- JR.  
LT. COL. JOHN KAIRES  
SPC. NICOLE A. CANNON  
SGM. MICHAEL P. BORRELLI-US ARMY  
CAPT. JOHN TULLY- USN  
LT. COL. JAMES TULLY-US ARMY  
JOSEPH SAGGIO- USNC  
CAPTAIN PAUL WILLMS  
STAFF SGT. MICHAEL LONGHENRY  
LT. COL. PAUL T. JACKSON-  
STAFF SGT ALEXANDER PARRELLA-USAF  
RICHARD SOTOMAYER- USAF  
SGT. CONNOR F. SCOTT- USMC  
SGT. CORY O'HARA -USMC  
CDR. ROBERT J. MARSH-USN  
PFC. CHARLES CHRISTOPHER HOWELL  
STEVEN CAVA-USN  
ERIC SEELIN- USMC  
CW2 CHRIS MUNZ  
CW2 NATASHA WORTMAN  
CORPORAL JAMES T. CASEY-USMC  
GREGORY DEVANEY- USMC  
SGT. JOSHUA MAHONEY- US ARMY  
KEVIN JONES-USCG  
PRIVATE JOSHUA OLSEN-USARNG  
GLEN CRIMA-US ARMY  
SGT. ANTHONY SCIAMETTA- US ARMY  
MARIO CATANIA-USMC  
RYAN ANTHONY NASCIMENTO-USMC  
KYLE ANTHONY NASCIMENTO-US ARMY  
ENS. RYAN M. SHOWS -USN  
STAFF SGT. RYAN REXRODE-USMC  
DR. KARA VANDEKIEFT, COL.-USAF  
SGT. STEPHEN D. OUTCAULT-USMC  
PAUL MUMOLO-USN  
VICTORIA ZEMAN, USCG  
KYLE J. GRUNER -US ARMY  
MARK GIORDANO—US COASTGUARD  
KELLI MCLAUGHLIN- 2ND LT. US ARMY NATL. GUARD  
STAFF SGT MICHAEL J BANG SPECIAL FORCES US ARMY

**Financial Support Needed weekly to meet Parish budget:**

**Weekly Collection: Sunday, December 15th, 2019**

**Faith Direct:**

**\$ 13,593.**

**\$ 2,877.**

**\$17,800.**

**Total Weekly Collection:**

**\$16,470.**

**MANY THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY**



# Father Tom's Letter

Dear Friends,

In today's Gospel - Matthew's version of Jesus' birth - the whole grand event depends on Joseph, whose life has been turned upside down by the angel's news. Joseph accepts the son as his own, not as a matter of biology, but as a matter of love and compassion, of trust and faith. God's birth in our midst depends on human partners - a Mary, a Joseph, a you, a me - willing to claim the unwanted, to love the helpless and neediest, to put aside our fears and dare to hope that God is with us. In this season and in every season, may we imitate the compassion and faith of Joseph: to seek understanding and acceptance within our families even at the cost of our own expectations and hopes, to be sources of affirmation and support for our spouses and children, and for one another.

The Christmas celebration soon to be upon us calls each of us to "ring a bell and get our wings"! Though we may not be Gabriel nor "Clarence" in an old movie favorite, we each herald the birth of our Savior and in His Light prompt others to find in our vulnerable and fragile Church, Christ the Lord! Please, let's each promise to make every effort to herald tidings of great joy as we are privileged to welcome so many to our "manger" for Christmas Mass. Unlike the well-known Innkeeper role, our role can demonstrate delight in making room, in giving full voice, and in encouraging a "stay here with us" hope filled witness. This is our special time to be Apostles of Hope! How wonderful if people left Mass on Christmas having experienced what the earliest disciples experienced described in the Acts of the Apostles - "the place shook with joy"! Let's do it!

On Christmas our young ones in both Religious Education and SSPJ School will be distributing the latest edition of The Gabriel. Please be sure to receive one! Special thanks to our Dynamite Editor, Elena Mingione, layout super star Peter Rooney, and the entire staff for all the heart and hope they put into this and every edition.

Merry Christmas and may God continue to bless each of you and your families during this holy time. Thank you for being SSPJ!

## A Christmas Prayer

(Perhaps your family might pray this prayer as a special grace before Christmas dinner. The blank lines are for family members to name the fun, food and family they want to pray for.)

Loving God, at Christmas we celebrate the gift of Jesus, and we thank you for all the many and different gifts in our lives.

Thanks for fun -

- for football and baseball and bowling,
- for Monopoly and Candyland and Words With Friends,
- for singing and dancing and moments of laughter,
- for \_\_\_\_\_.

Thanks for food -

- for turkey and ham and pasta,
- for Christmas cookies, candy canes and apple pie,
- for stuffing and gravy and even some vegetables,
- for \_\_\_\_\_.

Thanks for family -

- for moms, dads, kids, brothers, and sisters,
- for grandmas, grandpas, aunts, uncles and cousins,
- for extended family - our neighbours, our friends, our parish,
- for \_\_\_\_\_.

Finally, thank you for the gift of Jesus being born and being with us every day in every way.

Jesus, you bring us joy and hope. You show us how to love one another.

Help us to share our many gifts with others.

Jesus, you are our best gift! Amen!

Peace,

*Father Tom*

*Apostles: We Who Are Sent...Hope: God's constant gift of new possibilities*

Christmas Eve  
Tuesday, December 24, 2019

4:00pm in the Main Church

4:00pm in the Auditorium

6:00pm in the Main Church

10:00pm in the Main Church



Christmas Day  
Wednesday, December 25, 2019

8:00am in the Main Church

10:00am in the Main Church

12:00 Noon in the Main Church

*TO ALL SSPJ Eucharistic Ministers...*

*Thank you for the offering the gift of your hands and hearts to our Parish Family and all who enter our doors this holiday season and always.*

*We would appreciate it if you could offer your help during our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day celebrations.*

*There is a sign-in sheet located in the prayer room inside the closet door.*

***KINDLY REMEMBER TO SIGN INTO THE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE BOOK LOCATED IN THE PRAYER ROOM .***

*Thank you*



Congratulations to SSPJ  
SCHOOL CHRISTMAS  
RAFFLE WINNERS!!

**1st Prize -**

\$5,000.00 -

Taylor Shubert

**2nd Prize -**

\$2,000.00 -

Nancy Greubel

**3rd Prize -**

\$1500.00 -

Kelly McGovern

**4th Prize -**

\$1,000.00 -

Mildred Kelly

**5th Prize -**

\$500.00 - Theresa Rosner

Congratulations and  
thank you all for  
supporting our Christmas  
Raffle and the students at  
Sts. Philip and James

Christmas Now and Christmas Then

It seems like Thanksgiving Day was only last week,  
Yet in a few days, kids will be anxious to be taking a peek;

They are eager to see what goodies are under the tree,  
That just hopefully will be just what they want it to be;  
From shirts, hats, skates, Xbox, a tablet or even a game,  
They all do hope on Santa's list definitely was their name;

Their excitement and joy are simply unbound,  
When under the tree there are so many gifts to be found;

It is such a joyful time of the year,  
Yet it started so simply when Mary's time was near;

Mary and Joseph traveled many miles,  
When she was with child;

There was no special place for them to even stay,  
Jesus, was born on just a simple bed of hay;

There were no presents, or gifts, for the Christ Child,  
On that night so peaceful and mild;

There were animals that watched over Him,  
And a bright star shone just over the rim;

But that night God gave the greatest gift to all on the earth,  
When we received the gift of Jesus' birth;

With His birth we were blessed with the joy of new life and  
grace,

Which was freely given to be shared by the whole human  
race;

This year as we celebrate on Christmas Day with gifts and  
cheer,

We all should be thankful that Jesus the Christ Child is  
always near. Author R. Byrne





DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Christmas 2019

To the People of God of the Diocese of Rockville Centre:

In his December 1, 2019 Apostolic Letter *Admirabile Signum: On the Meaning and Importance of the Nativity Scene*, Our Holy Father Pope Francis writes:

“The nativity scene is like a living Gospel rising up from the pages of sacred Scripture...I wish to encourage the beautiful family tradition of preparing the nativity scene in the days before Christmas, but also the custom of setting it up in the workplace, in schools, hospitals, prisons and town squares.

Great imagination and creativity is always shown in employing the most diverse materials to create small masterpieces of beauty. As children, we learn from our parents and grandparents to carry on this joyful tradition, which encapsulates a wealth of popular piety. *It is my hope that this custom will never be lost and that, wherever it has fallen into disuse, it can be discovered and revived.*”

The Holy Father captures so poignantly how we creatively share our Catholic faith generation to generation through the Nativity sets and creches that bring Christ’s light and love into our homes, our parishes and our public squares.

He also captures how the poor, the outcast, the ignored, the forgotten and the vulnerable have a privileged place in every Nativity scene: “The presence of the poor and the lowly in the nativity scene remind us that God became man for the sake of those who feel most in need of his love and who ask him to draw near to them. Jesus, ‘gentle and humble in heart’ (Mt 11:29), was born in poverty and led a simple life in order to teach us to recognize what is essential and to act accordingly. The nativity scene clearly teaches that we cannot let ourselves be fooled by wealth and fleeting promises of happiness. We see Herod’s palace in the background, closed and deaf to the tidings of joy. By being born in a manger, God himself launches the only true revolution that can give hope and dignity to the disinherited and the outcast: the revolution of love, the revolution of tenderness. From the manger, Jesus proclaims, in a meek yet powerful way, the need for sharing with the poor as the path to a more human and fraternal world in which no one is excluded or marginalized.”

As we celebrate the joy of Christmas and the power and presence of the Prince of Peace in our families, in the Church and in the World, we realize at the same time that the Christmas Crib can never be separated from the agony of Calvary’s Cross.

Even as we rejoice this Christmas of 2019, we remember and stand with the poor, the hungry, the addicted, the mentally ill, the global refugees and non-documented immigrants, and survivors of sexual abuse.

As we pray before the Christmas manger and see the beauty, the hope, the possibility in the birth of Jesus, we are compelled to remember that far too many children do not receive the welcome and joy they deserve for the miracle of their existence.

We cannot forget this Christmas season the great sadness that New York State, through the passage of the horrific Reproductive Health Act<sup>1</sup>, has enshrined into law the killing of innocent human beings through abortion up until the moment of actual birth and beyond, as this radical law permits the killing of those children who survive abortion.

Together, we invoke the power of the Prince of Peace and His compassionate Word found in the Beatitudes and in His call to serve the poor and the most vulnerable among us in Matthew 25. Our Lord gives us the courage and the voice as the Catholic Church in New York State and around the world to speak of the beauty, the sanctity and the dignity of every human life.

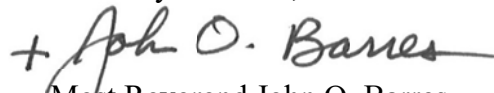
We will continue to be “a sign of contradiction” by witnessing relentlessly and courageously to the Gospel of Human Life. As is said in the first words of the *Didache*, the earliest known non-Scriptural Christian writing: “There are two Ways, one of Life and one of Death...” We will always stand with our earliest ancestors in the Christian faith in favor of the Way of Life and opposed to the Way of Death.

We will continue to seek the intercession of St. Thomas More, patron of statesmen, politicians and lawyers for the conversion of the public servants who have supported this tragic legislation.

The Cistercian biblical scholar Father Simeon writes: “The Child, while present only in Bethlehem by his poverty and weakness, is already present in the pattern of the constellations by his splendor and his glory.”<sup>2</sup>

May our praise and glory of the Prince of Peace fill our hearts and homes and give us the courage and prayerful determination to bring the Joy of the Gospel and the Splendor of Truth to every public square in New York State and throughout the world.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend John O. Barres  
Bishop of Rockville Centre

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.drvc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ReproductiveHealthCareAct.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (Fr. Simeon), *Fire of Mercy Heart of the World: Meditations on the Gospel according to St. Matthew Volume 1* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 76.

## *Remembering...2019 Christmas Lights of Love*

*Called to be remembered by – Margaret & Tim Adams  
Mary Castiglie, Joseph Castiglie, Margaret Castiglie*

*Called to be remembered by – Diane Anderson  
Antoinette Genco*

*Called to be remembered by - Phyllis Angello  
Roman Barba, Frank & Antoinetta Angello, Pina Novelli, Joseph & Mary D'Ambrosio  
Anna & Frances Fiore, Fannie Barba*

*Called to be remembered by – The Ballard, Pagano and Frezza Families  
Carmela Punziano, Mary Ricca, Pat Punziano, Michael Punziano*

*Called to be remembered by - Robert & Christine Ballard  
David Lynn Ballard, James Denison, James Martin, Phoebe Ballard*

*Called to be remembered by - Sylvia Byrns  
Rose & Peter LoMurno, Elena Bottitta*

*Called to be remembered by - Sylvia Byrns  
Arthur Byrns*

*Called to be remembered by – The Cafaro Family  
Frankie Cafaro Jr.*

*Called to be remembered by – Janice Caltabiano  
Joey Morda, Benedetta Caltabiano, Joseph Caltabiano*

*Called to be remembered by - Frances Chiorando  
Louis R. Chiorando, Mary & Luigi Chiorando*

*Called to be remembered by – Kitty & Michael Cronin  
Joe Keane*

*Called to be remembered by - The Cullen Family  
Frances Alduino*

*Called to be remembered by – The Curti Family  
Robert P. Curti*

*Called to be remembered by – Charlotte Czujko  
Paul J. Czujko*

*Called to be remembered by - Paul, Rita and Jimmy Damato  
Mary Marino*

*Called to be remembered by – Ruth G. Diaz  
Gregoria Diaz, Sixto E. Diaz, Agapito Gibe, Zenaida G. Mordin, Violeta G. Villan  
Manuel Gibe, Richard Walsh, John Gibe, Dominga M. Gibe, Macario Gibe*

*Called to be remembered by - The Dorrian Family  
Jack & Ginny Kelly, Tom & Miriam Dorrian, James Dorrian, Anne Dorrian*

*Called to be remembered by – The Drechsler Family  
Grandpa Walter Drechsler*



## *Remembering...2019 Christmas Lights of Love*

*Called to be remembered by - Jackie Duffy  
Jack Duffy, Margaret Olsen William Olsen*

*Called to be remembered by - Mr. & Mrs Adrian Erias  
Bernie Erias*

*Called to be remembered by – Mr. & Mrs Don Earl  
James Earl, Lola Earl*

*Called to be remembered by – The Fazzini Family  
Carol Case,Douglas Case,Lucia Fazzini*

*Called to be remembered by - Patricia Fisher  
Wendell Fisher, William Fisher*

*Called to be remembered by - The Gill Family  
James Davis,Shirley Davis,Albert Gill,Evelyn Gill, Nicholas Gill*

*Called to be remembered by – Sheila & Thomas Ginty  
Julia & Johnny Murphy,Annie & James Ginty*

*Called to be remembered by – Peggy & Lou Guerra  
Karen Markowski, Ginny Taylor Cummings*

*Called to be remembered by – The Harmon Family  
Lucille Wilson,John Wilson,David Wilson,John Cicio,Sean Sullivan  
Teresa Harmon,Thomas Harmon*

*Called to be remembered by – Margaret Hartigan  
Stella Hartigan,Charles Hartigan*

*Called to be remembered by - Carol Angela Lotarski-Heffron  
Leon Peter Heffron*

*Called to be remembered by – Chris Hensen  
Mary C. Michalek,John J. Michalek*

*Called to be remembered by – The Hurney Family  
Peter Hurney*

*Called to be remembered by – The Kieran Family  
Lawrence M. Kenney, Dorothy Kieran, Howard Jubrey, Regina M. Kenney*

*Called to be remembered by - Patricia Krug  
Eugene Krug,Francis Parkes ,Helen Klecher, Walter Frank Klecher,Donald Klecher  
Charles (Kashu) Klecher ,Agnes Kielbasa, Jack Lemire, Catherine Klecher*

*Called to be remembered by – William Likourezos  
Vasilios Likourezos, Phillip & Katherine Diacatos*

*Called to be remembered by – Jerry Linder  
Mary and Val Linder*

*Called to be remembered by – Yenny & Frank Locastro  
Ignazio Locastro, Sadie Locastro, Pedro Denegri, Judy Denegri, Michael Kaplon*



## *Remembering...2019 Christmas Lights of Love*

*Called to be remembered by - Barbara Luna  
Vincent Luna*

*Called to be remembered by – Thomas G McCormick  
Dr. Colene Young MD*

*Called to be remembered by – Catherine McKeown  
John McKeown*

*Called to be remembered by – Paul, Sue and Jack McKie  
Don McDonald, Joseph McKie, Ann McKie,, Baby Claire Fredeman, Baby Brycen McDonald*

*Called to be remembered by – The Melo and Gampel Families  
Ignatius Griffo, Antonina Griffo, Joachim Melo, Marie Melo*

*Called to be remembered by - Dominick Morreale  
Gail E. Morreale*

*Called to be remembered by - Mary A. Nicholas  
Robert (Bob) Nicholas*

*Called to be remembered by – Phil & Dorothy Nunziata  
Fay & John Nunziata, Catherine & Walter Zettwoch*

*Called to be remembered by - The O'Hara and Cross Families  
Walter J. Cross Jr., MaryLouise O'Hara, Richard Viehl*

*Called to be remembered by – Paula Klee Parish  
RoseJean Sgarlato, Santo P. Sgarlato*

*Called to be remembered by - The Pelletier Family  
Mary Davin, Denis Davin, Ronyl Pelletier*

*Called to be remembered by – The Pizzulli Family  
Marilyn T. Casinover, Vincent J. Pizzulli, Sr.*

*Called to be remembered by - The Pollina and Urce Families  
Dena Pollina*

*Called to be remembered by – The Portanova Family  
Lydia Portanova, Pasquale Campano, Jelinek babies, Campano – Portanova Family members*

*Called to be remembered by - Georgia Priebe  
Vincent Priebe*

*Called to be remembered by - Ann Marie Brady & John Puleio  
Santo & Elaine Puleio*

*Called to be remembered by - K. Claire Rathjen  
Connolly Family Members, Rathjen Family members*

*Called to be remembered by – Jennifer & Sam Rennie  
Grandma Peg Barry*

*Called to be remembered by – Joanne & Charles Ruf  
The Minieri Family, The Ruf Family, The Platia Family*

## *Remembering...2019 Christmas Lights of Love*

*Called to be remembered by – Kate Ruggieri  
Matilda Ruggieri, Jeanne Forbell*

*Called to be remembered by – Faye Saladino  
Gail Attong-Alibocus, Wycliffe Stephen Alibocus, Walter Attong, Mavis Tang-Alibocus  
Wycliffe Doc Alibocus, George Saladino, Pearl Foglia*

*Called to be remembered by Mr. & Mrs Rich Scarpelli  
Eugene Kranz, Ida Scarpelli, Peter Scarpelli*

*Called to be remembered by - Lorraine Schmitt  
Gasper Romeo, Marion Romeo, Leonard Romeo, Anne Kissam, Frank Marchiano*

*Called to be remembered by – The Seebachan & Parlamento Family  
Robert Ippolito*

*Called to be remembered by – The Sehne Family  
Eva & Philip Alaimo*

*Called to be remembered by – Lynn Sisti  
Anthony Sisti*

*Called to be remembered by – The Stephen Family  
Jenny Colangelo, Milton & Birdie Block, Lawrence & Clara Riccio*

*Called to be remembered by- The Spector Family  
Felicta Soto, Andre Rodrigues, Pakito Rodrigues Lloyd Spector, Joseph Padilla*

*Called to be remembered by – The Talarek Family  
Samantha Lins*

*Called to be remembered by - Linda & Peter Taurassi  
Michael Stephen McDermott*

*Called to be remembered by - Patricia Triptree  
Thomas Anthony Triptree*

*Called to be remembered by - Rosemarie Willms  
Rose & Fredrick Jaeger, John Jaeger, Marilyn A. Weldon*

*Called to be remembered –  
Ryan Michael Jack Birbiglia*

*Called to be remembered –  
Burke John Samson*

*Called to be remembered –  
Paul & Vincenza Fabrizio, Veronica & Bernhardt Wehman  
Mary & Charles Brown, John Brown*

# *Those Irish Eyes are Smilin Upon SSPJ*

*Dear Friends,*

*Have you ever dreamed about finding the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow? It's very possible, since the "2nd Annual Magic of Ireland" is returning to SSPJ! And we're all invited to participate!*

*As you see from the flyer on the opposite page, this March we're celebrating in a big way. Beginning with prayer and Mass, moving on to dining and dancing, The Magic of Ireland is an exciting opportunity for our parish community to come together, remembering tales from the past and creating wonders for the future while thoroughly enjoying the present.*

*As we come together, we deepen old friendships and birth new ones. As we pray, laugh, dance and toast one another, we celebrate the graced history of SSPJ, recognizing the Lord's constant presence on our journeys. And as our journeys continue, we gratefully ask the Lord's guidance as we move forward.*

*This community-building event will also be a fund raiser. Through the generosity of many sponsors along with support of our parishioners, we'll be able to continue our efforts to restore and revitalize our parish community. Please prayerfully consider sponsorship of this event to help us reach our goal.*

*This special evening promises to be a rainbow of wonder. The gift of Mass, Irish prayers and hymns, good food and drink, Irish music and dance, caring, fun-loving people (and perhaps a few leprechauns) all lead to that amazing pot of gold – the SSPJ community - rooted in God's love, hope and promise.*

*Together, let us all be Irish for a night.*

*Father Tom O'Haggerty*

***I am interested in becoming a:***

**Saint Patrick's Sponsor at \$1,000** \_\_\_\_\_

**Shamrock Sponsor at \$500.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Celtic Sponsor at \$250.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Leprechaun Sponsor at \$100.** \_\_\_\_\_

**My Contact Information :**

***Name as you would like it to appear in acknowledgement***

**Contact Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Accepting sponsorship from December 22nd, 2019 ~ February 24th, 2020**

**Kindly return Sponsorship form to Parish Center Office**

**For more information please contact Marianne Koke at 631-335-7111**



Save the Date!! **March 7th, 2020**

**The Parish of Sts. Philip & James is planning their**

**"2nd Annual: Magic of Ireland Extravaganza!"**

## ***The Magic of Ireland...***

### **A Night when EVERYONE IS IRISH!**

*Be prepared to be whisked away to the land where all the hills are green, where shamrocks greet you upon your journey, and Leprechauns leap for that "Pot O' Gold"*

*This wonderful evening will be graced by the fellowship of our wonderful parishioners and the gift of song*

From~ **Gerry Finlay and the Cara Band**

*Renowned Irish musicians who have graced the St. Patrick's Day parade in NYC for many years!*

**We are seeking Sponsors to lead the way to the "Pot O' Gold"**

#### *Saint Patrick Sponsor ~ \$1,000*

*Includes prominent acknowledgement in the church lobby, church bulletin, and*

*2 "Grand Prize Pot O' Gold" raffle books (\$100 value)*

#### *Shamrock Sponsor ~ \$500*

*Includes prominent acknowledgement in the church lobby, church bulletin and,*

*1 "Grand Prize Pot O' Gold" raffle book (\$50 value)*

#### *Celtic Sponsor ~ \$250*

*Includes acknowledgement in church lobby, church bulletin and*

*2 "Grand Prize Pot O' Gold TICKETS (\$20. value)*

#### *Leprechaun Sponsor ~ \$100.*

*Includes acknowledgement in the church bulletin*

**Sponsors are being accepted between December 22, 2019 and February 24th, 2020**

*See you at the end of the rainbow in the land of Saints and Scholars...*



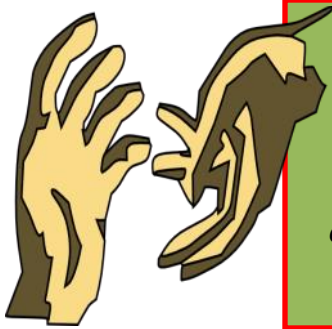
## SSPJ Parish Social Ministry Pick A Star~ Hands of Generosity

*It was hard to find Lynn Sisti in the Office of Parish Social Ministry, since our Annual Pick A Star Program began!*

*Packages of generosity, compassion and hope, filled our church, confessional booths, and Parish Center Offices!*

*From your hands to the grace filled hands of their recipients~ Thank you...*

*That is Christmas at SSPJ*



**WAY TO GO WASH KIT GANG!!!**

**DURING THEIR DECEMBER GATHERING THEY MADE 547 CHRISTMAS WASH KIT PACKAGES!**

*The packages are brought to Saint Anne's in Brentwood and distributed to homeless shelters throughout Long Island ... hands of mercy and kindness....*

## THE MEN'S FORUM

AT THE CHURCH OF SAINTS PHILIP & JAMES

*A brotherhood of men dedicated to growing in their faith & discipleship in the Lord Jesus Christ.*



**MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2020**

*Speaker and Topic: To Be Announced*

The men of the Men's Forum joins the Parish of Sts. Philip and James in rejoicing at the birth of our Savior Lord Jesus Christ. We thank God for the blessings of this past year and through the intercession of the Mother of God, we ask for God's grace and peace in the New Year.



### 2020 Meeting Dates

Jan. 6	March 23
Jan. 27	April 13
Feb. 10	May 4
Feb. 24	May 18
March 9	June 8

*Join us for inspiring talks and fellowship. Experience new opportunities to be open to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit in how the Lord is calling us to grow as Catholic men of faith.*

**NEW MEETING TIMES:** Holy Hour: 7-8 PM, Main Church

**Speaker Presentation:** 8-9 PM, Bethany Center (Old Church) • **Coffee & Cake Social:** 9-9:30 PM

*Come for all, or part of our evening's schedule • No membership required. Open to all men!*

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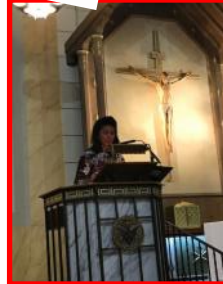
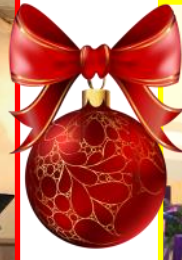
**Website:** [www.sspjmensforum.org](http://www.sspjmensforum.org)

Church of Saints Philip & James • 359 Clinton Avenue • St. James, NY 11780 • 631-584-5454





# *Music Ministry Fabulous Christmas Concert!*





# *The True Meaning of Christmas Poster Contest*

*Artist: Cole Nordin Age 6~ Selected from age 5-7 category*





***"The True Meaning of Christmas" Poster Contest***

***Artist: Julianna Carey Age 8~ Selected from age 8-10 category***





**"The True Meaning of Christmas" Poster Contest**

**Artist: Rose Hughes Age 11~ Selected from age 11-14category**





# Celebrating the Sacrament of the Sick

Beginning Sunday, January 5th, 2020 we will celebrate this beautiful sacrament on the  
**FIRST SUNDAY** of the Month

**IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE 8AM MASS**

**Prayer Shawls, lovingly made by members of the Prayer Shawl ministry will be blessed during Mass**

## Anointing of the Sick

*"By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of the priests the whole Church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that he may raise them up and save them. And indeed she exhorts them to contribute to the good of the People of God by freely uniting themselves to the passion and death of Christ."*  
(Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1499 - cf Lumen Gentium 11)

### A Little Background

Sickness is part of our human condition. God is present to us in times of illness as well as in times of health. God desires our well being, which has many aspects. Throughout his life, Jesus reached out to those who were ill. Jesus offered comfort and healing to the ill. Sometimes that healing included physical healing, but that was not the only or even the primary aspect of his healing. While God does not will our suffering, we can find ways of growing and learning through suffering that can bring us closer to God. By acting as Jesus did, by reaching out to those who are sick, by offering comfort, assistance, prayer for healing the whole person, we become united with those who are ill and with God.

Think of some of the actions used when a person is sick. Often, touch is very important. ***Have you ever placed your hand on an aching head or shoulder or back? Have you ever rubbed ointment onto an aching muscle, or sponged off a fevered body?*** We see Jesus using touch in his comfort of the sick, and certain of those actions have become rituals associated with this sacrament that celebrates God's love for the sick person and God's desire for healing of the whole person.

In the New Testament, in the letter of James, we find the early Christian community aware that the healing desire and power of Jesus is still present. *"Is there anyone sick among you? That one should ask for the elders of the church. They in turn are to pray over the sick person, anointing the person with oil in the name of the Lord."* (James 5:14-15)

Here we find the roots of the sacrament we know as the Anointing of the Sick. During the early centuries of the church, there was no formal rite for anointing, but blessed oil was used to sign the senses and the laying on of hands was common.



*"From ancient times in the liturgical traditions of both East and West, we have testimonies to the practice of anointings of the sick with blessed oil. Over the centuries the Anointing of the Sick was conferred more and more exclusively on those at the point of death. Because of this it received the name 'Extreme Unction'."*  
(CCC #1512)

This perception of the sacrament lasted well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and indeed, today many people still have that perception. The Second Vatican Council called for the revision of this rite of anointing, incorporating the understanding we have gained about its origins.

The new rite, as with all the other sacramental revisions, emphasizes the role of the community. The community is called on not only to pray for the sick, but to pray *with* the sick. We are interdependent. We can do much for those who are ill, but they do for us as well. We share with each other. Anyone involved in healthcare professions or who has cared for a loved one knows the mutuality involved in that caring relationship.

The new rite also makes clear that this sacrament is intended not only for those who are dying, but for those who face serious illness but are not facing death. This includes those with chronic illness, those facing surgery, those dealing with illness other than physical, those becoming frail from illness or age. With this understanding, it is clear that a person may celebrate this sacrament more than once, though there are guidelines to help discern when celebrating

*To think about... Were you ever present when someone else was anointed? What was it like to be present to that person at that time? How might we strengthen the community connection with those who are ill?*

**Next week: How and when the Anointing of the Sick is celebrated today.**

### **CELEBRATING THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK AT SSPJ**

***Anointing of the Sick will be celebrated on the first Sunday of the month following the 8am Mass, beginning January 5th.***

## *SSPJ Parish Calendar For The Week of December 22nd, 2019*

### **Sunday, December 22nd, 2019**

8:30am RCIA Cantina  
 12:00pm Guild Christmas Tree Sale Monte Lot  
 7:00pm AA Meeting Monte Building

### **Thursday, December 26th, 2019**

2:00pm Eucharistic Adoration Church

### **Friday, December 27th, 2019**

7:00pm AA Meeting Philip & James Roo  
 8:00pm Eucharistic Adoration Church

### **Monday, December 23rd, 2019:**

6:00pm Christmas Tree Sale Monte Lot

### **Saturday, December 28th, 2019**

*No events scheduled*

### **Tuesday, December 24th, 2019:**

**Vigil of Christmas**

**No events scheduled**

### **Sunday, December 29th, 2019:**

8:30am RCIA Sessions SSPJ Room  
 7:00pm AA Meeting Sts. Philip & James Room

### **Wednesday, December 25th, 2019:**

**The Nativity of the Lord**

**No events scheduled**

## *Religious Education Ministry*

**URGENT! TO ALL PARENTS OF STUDENTS  
 REGISTERED IN THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
 PROGRAM: YOU MUST REGISTER YOUR FAMILY  
 WITH FLOCK NOTES**

**PER THE DIRECTIONS BELOW:**

As we approach the Winter season all relevant information regarding cancellations will be posted using Flocknotes: If you have any questions, please contact the Religious Ed office at 631-584-5454

**First and Second Grade Parents or Catechists:**

TEXT the word

SSPJ-Communion (no spaces) to number 84576 and follow the instructions on your phone



**For Third thru Sixth Grade Parents or**

**Catechists: TEXT the word**

SSPJ-CRE (no spaces) to number 84576 and follow the instructions.

**For Seventh and Eighth Grade Parents or**

**Catechists: TEXT the word**

SSPJ-Confirm (no spaces) to number 84576 and follow the instructions on your phone

Thank you for your attention to this very important issue.

**Growing  
 Together  
 in Faith**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES  
 WILL NOT BE HELD:**

**DECEMBER 23, 2019 THRU  
 JANUARY 3RD, 2020**

**CLASSES WILL RESUME:  
 THE WEEK OF  
 JANUARY 6TH, 2020**

***Wishing all our students and  
 their families a wonderful  
 Christmas and a Blessed New Year!***



*For the month of January 2020*

## *This Weekend We Celebrate The Fourth Sunday of Advent*

An angel appears to Joseph, directing him to take Mary as his wife and telling him that the child she will bear will be called Emmanuel..

Student Name:	Grade (Please circle)	Teacher Name:
	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8	
	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8	
	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8	

Yes, Jesus knows what you need before you even ask" (Matthew 6:8).

*Together as a family, we offer the following prayer intention...*

[illegible]

*Thank you Jesus, for always being by our side, and always hearing our prayers. Amen*



# THE MEN'S FORUM

AT THE CHURCH OF SAINTS PHILIP & JAMES

*A brotherhood of men dedicated to growing in their faith & discipleship in the Lord Jesus Christ.*



## 2020 Meeting Dates

Jan. 6	March 23
Jan. 27	April 13
Feb. 10	May 4
Feb. 24	May 18
March 9	June 8

**MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2020**

*Speaker and Topic: To Be Announced*

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*Join us for inspiring talks and fellowship. Experience new opportunities to be open to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit in how the Lord is calling us to grow as Catholic men of faith.*

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## Altar Memorials for the Week of December 22nd, 2019

### Our Bread & Wine

*For the Week of December 22nd, 2019*

*Are Offered,  
In Loving Memory of,  
William Thomas Fisher  
Your Loving Family*



### Our Altar Candles

*For the Week of December 22nd, 2019*

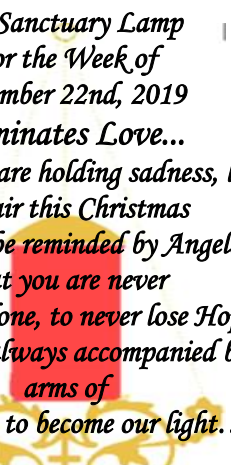
*Are burning  
In Loving Memory of,  
William Thomas Fisher  
On your 7th Anniversary in Heaven  
With Love,  
From your loving family*



*The Sanctuary Lamp  
For the Week of  
December 22nd, 2019  
Illuminates Love...*

*For all whose hearts are holding sadness, loneliness, or  
despair this Christmas  
May you be reminded by Angels,  
that you are never  
walking alone, to never lose Hope.  
For Your journey is always accompanied by the loving  
arms of  
Jesus born to become our light...*

*In Loving Memory of  
Eva Maria Alaimo*



*Our Pro-Life Rose  
For the Week of  
December 22nd, 2019  
Is Offered for*

*William Thomas Fisher  
Beloved Son, Husband,  
Father & Brother  
"Love is Forever"  
Your Family*



# Mass Intentions, For the week of December 22nd, 2019

## Saturday, December 21st, 2019

5:00pm Charles V. Masterson

## Sunday, December 22nd, 2019

8:00am For the Parishioners of SSPJ  
10:00am Eva Maria & Philip Alaimo  
12:00 Noon Collective Mass:  
Russell Armstrong  
Matthew Ryan Martin  
Helen T. Duffy  
Ryan Birbiglia  
Vincent Danese

## Monday, December 23rd, 2019

7:30am Living~Father Tom  
9:15am William Thomas Fisher

## Tuesday, December 24th, 2019~Christmas Eve

7:30am No Intentions  
9:15am No Intentions  
4:00pm  
6:00pm  
10:00pm

## Wednesday, December 25th, 2019~Christmas Day

8:00am Christmas Novena  
10:00am Christmas Novena  
12:00noon Christmas Novena

## Thursday, December 26th, 2019~St. Stephen

7:30am Christmas Novena  
9:15am Collective Mass:  
Rocco Toto

## Friday, December 27th, 2019~St. John

7:30am Christmas Novena  
9:15am Frankie Cafaro

## Saturday, December 28th, 2019~The Holy Innocents

9:15am Christmas Novena  
5:00pm Jack Duffy

## Sunday, December 29th, 2019

8:00am Christmas Novena  
10:00am Phillip Giarraputo Sr., Angelo & Theresa Marinello  
12:00 Noon Collective Mass:  
Cecelia Murray  
Margaret Schmitz  
James B. Ficht  
Tom Kovacik

## Prayer for Families

Loving God,  
During this holy season of Christmas,  
we ask for your blessing on all  
families.  
Let Mary's openness to your  
wondrous ways be an inspiration  
to place all trust in you.  
Let Joseph's courage provide hope  
during times of anxiety and  
uncertainty.  
Let Jesus' life ignite all families with  
a spirit of light and love.  
May the grace that encircled the  
Holy Family widen to embrace all  
families.  
For this we pray.  
Amen.



## Prayer for Comfort

Lord Jesus, who went about doing good and healing all, we ask you to  
bless your friends who are sick. Give them the strength in body, courage in  
spirit, and patience in pain.

Let them recover their health, so that, restored to the Christian community,  
they may joyfully praise your name, for you live and reign for ever and  
ever. Amen

To add a name to prayers for the sick, kindly contact the Parish Center  
Office at 631-584-5454

Allison Ioli,  
Angela Amoroso  
Angelo Peluso  
Anthony A  
Antoinette Rotolo  
Anna Capizzio  
Baby Adeline  
Baby Kennedy  
Baby Mattia Rose Lubrano  
Belinda Vega  
Brian R.  
Bob Keenan,  
Charles Morgan  
Daniel Radice  
Donalea Donach & Peter  
Ellie Walsh  
Elinor Glasser  
Gregory Parker  
Gwen Dilgen  
Helen McDowell  
Ian Dowling  
Jeanine Esposito-Tansey  
Joan Kranz  
J.C.  
Joann Boccia  
John Cuccia  
John DeStefano

Joseph  
Judy Hanrahan  
Julie Scott  
Karlyn Phillips,  
Kathleen N.,  
Kitty Cronin  
Leon Donach  
Maria Clark  
Marie Sabry,  
Matthew  
Melissa C.  
Michael Fisher  
Michael J. Forker  
Michael LaVecchia  
Pat I.  
Patricia Fontana  
Patrick McDonnell  
Patricia Monetti  
Peter McGreevy  
Remi Ann Rexrode  
Robin Graham Denis,  
Sara Jean Andersen  
Tim Cavooris,  
Vicki Archdeacon-Gibb,  
Vivien Cordes,  
Zachary Esposito-Tansey



# SSPJ School Annual Christmas Concert!

Nursery through Grade 3 Students, Primary and Senior Choir, and past Alumni shared their special talents and reminded us all of what the true meaning of Christmas is.





# Celebrating the Liturgy- With Grateful Hearts We Serve

## *PRESIDER SCHEDULE-FOR December 28th & 29th, 2019*

Saturday, December 28, 2019 5:00pm	Sunday, December 29, 2019 8:00 AM MASS	Sunday, December 29, 2019 10:00 AM MASS	Sunday, December 29, 2019 12:00 MASS
Father Tom Haggerty	Father Tom Haggerty	Father Patrick Osei-Poku	Father Patrick Osei-Poku
Deacon Ron	Deacon Ron	Deacon John	Deacon John

## *Eucharistic Minister Schedule-For December 28th & 29th, 2019*

Saturday, December 28, 2019	Sunday, December 29, 2019	Sunday, December 29, 2019	Sunday, December 29, 2019
5:00PM	8:00 AM MASS	10:00 AM MASS	12:00 NOON MASS
D. Doran	M. Koke	P. Rizzo	B. Luna
G. Alfano	M. Morbillo	C. Lombardi	P. Agoglia
A. Mantia	C. Czujko	O. Laiz	M. Peykar
D. Anderson	R. Doda, Sr.	J. Lavan	P. Roman
C. Lombardi	M. Dunn	D. McCormick	C. Rubano
L. Tepedino	R. Fabian	C. Napolitano	V. Rubano
B. Carey	C. Haff	H. Orlando	J. Linder
C. Zito	W. Haff	W. Rodriguez	M. Napoli
G. Zito	J. Harvey	P. Schfilliti	T. Pace
	P. Kanuika	J. Scott	A. Santo

*We kindly ask all scheduled Ministers to arrive in the Prayer Room 15 minutes before mass begins, for prayer  
Thank you*

## *ALTAR SERVERS SCHEDULE-FOR December 28th & 29th, 2019*

Saturday, December 28, 2019	Sunday, December 29, 2019	Sunday, December 29, 2019	Sunday, December 29, 2019
5:00PM MASS	8:00AM MASS	10:00 AM MASS	12:00 NOON MASS
B. Kieran	E. Nicastro	J. Carey	C. D'Agostino
E. Kieran	K. Nicastro	S. Herin	G. D'Agostino
C. Nigro	M. Page	J & R Hurlbert	A. Frankenberger
S. Nigro	M. Saladino	J. Prew	B. Frankenberger

## *LECTOR SCHEDULE-FOR December 28th & 29th, 2019*

Saturday, December 28, 2019	Sunday, December 29, 2019	Sunday, December 29, 2019	Sunday, December 29, 2019
5:00PM MASS	8:00 AM MASS	10:00AM MASS	12:00 NOON MASS
E. Burke	A. Willman	A. Kaiser	A. Latino
J. Contrino	L. Auleta	L. Just	M. Hoonhout

December 29, 2019 • Feast of the Holy Family • Year A

## A Holy, Human Family

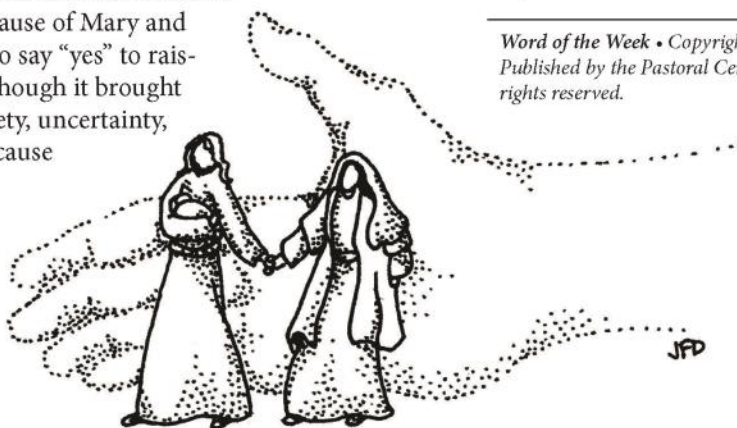
*This Week's Readings at Mass*

- Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 - Duties toward parents
- Colossians 3:12-21 - The practice of virtues
- Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23 - The flight to Egypt

With the story of Jesus' birth still fresh in our minds on this first Sunday after Christmas, the church uses the opportunity to celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family with all of the readings focused on families. The Gospel readings are from Matthew this year, so the focus this week is on Jesus' earthly father, Joseph. (When we read from the Gospel of Luke, the focus is on his mother, Mary.)

If the story of Jesus' birth warmed our hearts with its tale of the star over Bethlehem and the magi who traveled long distances to worship and bring him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, the story today takes a terrible turn. Mary and Joseph have no time to savor his birth or let the wonder of the magi's visit sink in because suddenly their baby's life is in danger. Like millions of refugees throughout history, they must flee their home country on short notice with just a vague sense of a distant destination. Because they trust the guidance the angel gave Joseph in a dream, they save their son's life.

Tragically, however, many families lost sons to Herod's cruelty when he ordered all baby boys killed in his efforts to kill Jesus. (These verses are omitted from the Gospel passage today.) So the Feast of the Holy Family is not "The Feast of the Perfect Family in a Perfect World." The Church celebrates this family today because of Mary and Joseph's willingness to say "yes" to raising God's son, even though it brought them great fear, anxiety, uncertainty, and even anguish because of the evil one man, Herod, wreaked on so many families. They were a holy family, but



"Put on love. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body."

**Sheepish Question:**  
When have I been less than understanding with members of my own family or faith community?

they did not escape any challenges of being a human family.

## Questions of the Week

- 1 Does it change anything for you to think about Jesus' family in terms of being a refugee family like so many millions today and throughout history? How so?
- 2 Mary and Joseph changed course unexpectedly when they needed to in order to protect Jesus' life. When have you had to change direction suddenly? Can you see the hand of God at work in that change??

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## Deep Incarnation – Another Meaning of Christmas

Some years ago at a religious conference a man approached the microphone and after apologizing for what he felt would be an inappropriate question, asked this: “I love my dog. When he dies will he go to heaven? Do animals have eternal life?”

The answer to that might come as a surprise to many of us, but, looked at through the eyes of Christian faith, yes, his dog can go to heaven. It's one of the meanings of Christmas. God came into the world to save the world, not just the people living in it. The incarnation has meaning for humanity, but also for the cosmos itself. We don't know exactly what that means, and our imaginations aren't up to the task of picturing it, but, because of the incarnation, dogs too can go to heaven. Is this fanciful? No, it's scriptural teaching.

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus and see in his birth the beginning of the mystery of the incarnation unfolding in history, the mystery of God becoming human in physical flesh in order to save the world. What we tend to struggle with though is how we understand what's meant by Christ saving the world. Most of us take that to mean that Christ came into the world to save the people, those of us with self-awareness and eternal souls.

That's true, but our faith also asks us to believe that God's saving activity in the Christ extends to more than only human beings and more than even animals and other living things. God's saving activity in Christ reaches so deep that it saves creation itself – the oceans, the mountains, the soil that grows our food, the desert sands, and the earth itself. Christ came to save all of those things too, not just us, the people.

Where, you might ask, does scripture teach this? It teaches it most everywhere in implicit ways though it teaches it quite explicitly in a number of different places. For example, in the Epistle to the Romans (8, 19-22) St. Paul writes: I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

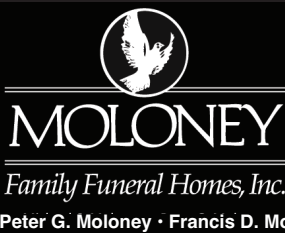
This may come as a surprise to us since, until quite recently, our preaching and catechesis has not often made this explicit. However what St. Paul is saying here is that physical creation itself, the cosmic world, will, at the end of time, be transformed in some glorious way and enter into heaven, just as human beings do. He's also saying that, like us, it too somehow senses its mortality and groans to be set free from its present limits.

We need to ask ourselves this question? What do we believe will happen to physical creation at the end of time? Will it be destroyed, burnt-up, annihilated? Or, will it simply be abandoned and left empty and deserted like a stage after a play has ended, while we go on to life elsewhere? Scripture informs us otherwise, that is, it tells us that physical creation itself, our planet earth, will also be transformed (“liberated from its bondage to decay”) and enter into heaven with us. How will this happen? We can't imagine it, just as we can't imagine our own transformed state. But scripture assures us that it will happen because, like ourselves, our world, physical creation, is also destined to die, and, like us, it intuitively senses its mortality and groans under that sentence, aching to be set free from its limitations and become immortal.

Science agrees. It tells us that physical creation is mortal, that the sun is burning out, that energy is ever-so-slowly decreasing and that the earth as we know it will someday die. The earth is as mortal as we are and so if it's to have a future it needs to be saved by Something or Someone from outside itself. That Something and Someone are revealed in the mystery of the incarnation within which God takes on physical flesh in Christ in order to save the world – and what he came to save was not just us, the people living on this earth, but rather, “the world”, the planet itself, and everything on it.

Jesus assured us that nothing is ever ultimately lost. No hair falls from someone's head and no sparrow falls from the sky and simply disappears forever, as if it had never been. God created, loves, cares for, and ultimately resurrects every bit of creation for all eternity – including a beloved dog.





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