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GLORY
TO GOD
IN THE
HIGHEST
AND ON
EARTH
PEACE TO
THOSE
ON WHOM
HIS FAVOR
RESTS.

LUKE 2:14

December 24, 2023



Peace

I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.

Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

—John 14:27

Merry Christmas.

Father Angelito, Deacon Dan, Laura Randazzo,

Charles Clarke, Janet Amato

St. Catherine of Siena Roman Catholic Church

Diocese of Trenton

31 Asbury Road · Farmingdale, NJ · 07727

Phone: 732-938-5375 · www.sienachurch.org

Weekday Mass

9:00 AM—Chapel • 1 W Main St. • Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri.

Weekend Mass

Sat. 4:30 PM • Sun. 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 11:30 AM

PARISH OFFICE CHRISTMAS HOURS

The parish office will be **closed** from **Dec. 23 through and including Monday, Jan. 1**. The office will reopen at 9:00 AM on Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024.

While the office is closed during these days of Christmas:

- If there is an urgent need for assistance from a priest or from the parish staff, please call the parish office main number, (732) 938-5375, and leave a voicemail message so your call can be returned.
- Masses will take place at the usual times while the parish office is closed.

A Message from our Pastor

Dear Friends in Christ,

Today is the Fourth Sunday of Advent and we have our regular Sunday Masses at 8,10 and 11:30 all in the morning. We must attend to our Sunday obligations as the Church requires us to do. Christmas Eve Masses today are at 4 PM in Church and the overflow is in the parish hall, and 6 PM and 10 PM Masses in Church. Feast of Christmas day Masses are 8, 10 and 11:30 all in the morning.

Christmas Day is a holy day of obligation; hence we must come to Church as well.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

In today's Gospel we celebrate the extravagant love of God who freely chose Mary to be the mother of his beloved Son. God's choice of Mary made her "full of grace". If grace is God's gift, Mary was full of God's gifts. There's no point in asking what Mary did to deserve that: she did not do anything to deserve it, because it was a sheer gift. Nobody deserves gifts; nobody is entitled to favors. Gifts and favors reflect the generosity of the giver, not the worthiness of the receiver.

The Gospel does not begin with what Mary does; it begins with what God does through Mary. When Mary is chosen to be the mother of God's Son, God's choice of her is not a reward for dedicated work or an answer to Mary's prayer. Rather, God's choice of Mary is the result of God's freedom to choose Mary from among all women. When God chooses Mary, his choice makes her worthy, as his love has made her full of grace.

God's word to Mary in today's Gospel is a word of supreme value: "Rejoice, highly favored." Perhaps we don't really believe that God favors us; maybe we have reached the stage where we don't think we are worth anything anyway. So, today let that be God's word to you: "Rejoice, highly favored, for I have chosen you to be holy and live in my presence. Yes, you! Rejoice." Amen.

FEAST OF CHRISTMAS

The ideal way to celebrate Christmas is to make room for the Savior in this world and in our lives. Somebody said that "Even if Christ is born a thousand times in Bethlehem, it is useless if he is not born in our hearts." For this, we should let our whole worldview, our whole way of thinking, speaking and acting permeated by the spirit of Jesus.

Christmas is not a time or season, but a state of mind. To have the real spirit of Christmas is to love, share and be at peace with God and others. When we open our hearts to the lonely and the frustrated and extend a helping hand to the poor and the sick, we will have the spirit of Christmas and experience the words of the angels who sang, "Peace to all of goodwill." Amen.

St. John of Damascus says:

"For what greater thing is there than that God should become man?"

May God bless you and a Merry Christmas to all,

Father Angelito

Mass Intentions

Sunday • December 24

8:00 AM

† **Domenica Ciaravino**

r/b Ciaravino Family

10:00 AM

† **Ida Piccolo**

r/b Donna Ranieri

11:30 AM

† **John Keegan**

r/b Loving Wife, Cathy

4:00 PM

† **John & Augusta Napoli**

r/b Loving Granddaughter

6:00 PM

† **William O'Dougherty**

r/b Catherine & Dave Runkel

10:00 PM

† **Lou & Anna Lombardi**

r/b Loving Family

Monday • December 25

8:00 AM

† **Wayne Sos**

r/b Loving Wife, Jo Ann

10:00 AM

† **Angelo & Antoinette Pennetti & Family**

r/b Libby Miller



Monday • December 25

11:30 AM

† **Joseph Cocuzza**

r/b Loving Wife, Marianne

Tuesday • December 26

9:00 AM

† **William Stivale**

r/b Dolores & Raymond Clagnan

Thursday • December 28

9:00 AM

† **Lena Rossi**

r/b Loving Niece, Jo Ann

Friday • December 29

9:00 AM

† **James Hilker**

r/b Beloved Wife





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Christmas Flower Memorials



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A Savior is Born

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ST. CATHERINE'S CHAPEL

WEEKDAY MASS • 9:00 AM

DEC 26 • DEC 28 • DEC 29 • JAN 2 • JAN 4 • JAN 5

The Feast of the Holy Family

DECEMBER 30 • 4:30 PM Mass

DECEMBER 31

8:00 AM • 10:00 AM • 11:30 AM

JANUARY 1

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