

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

December 25, 2022

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday, December 24 - Christmas Eve - 4:00 pm at Holy Cross

**Saturday, December 24 - MIDNIGHT - at St. Martin's
Elsie Smith by Linda and Bob Columbus**

Sunday, December 25 - 10 am at Holy Cross

Monday - *No Mass* at Holy Cross, 9 am at St. Vincent de Paul

Tuesday - 8 am at Holy Cross, 9 am at St. Vincent

Wednesday - 8 am at Holy Cross

Saturday, December 31 - 4:30 pm at Holy Cross

Sunday, January 1 - 8 am at Holy Cross

**Sunday, January 1 - 10 am at St. Martin's
Ruth Alie by the family**

December 18 weekly collection: \$620 Fuel: \$330

PRAY FOR SICK AND SHUT INS

Please pray for Philip Lefebvre, Thomas Lupaczyk, Mark Hanks, Kate Nicholson, Maryann Robinson, Marguerite Pouliot, Raymond Emond, Janet Clark, Marie Quader, Trey Niles, Sandy Kulvete, Mary Amistadi, Dylan Murray, Anne Marie Beliveau, Alicia Wieszorek, Emma Blais, George Yackowski, Donald Leblanc... and all those affected by the Corona virus.

Our Lady, Health of the Sick, we pray for the comfort of your love.

PRAY THE ROSARY

Come to church 30 minutes before Mass to join in praying the Rosary each Sunday.

WINTER WEEKDAY MASSES

When conditions warrant Delays or School cancellations, there will be NO MASS also. In that case, Mass intentions will be transferred to the next available Mass. We value the lives of our parishioners. Stay Safe!

St. Martin's Catholic Church

248 State Road, Otter River, MA 01436

Rev. Patrick Ssekoyole, Pastor • Dennis J. Cormier, Deacon

Telephone 978-939-5588 • www.saintmartinchurch.org

NEXT WEEK'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Get more out of Sunday Mass, by reading ahead...

January 1, 2023 - Solemnity of Mary

NUMBERS 6:22-27 • GALATIANS 4:4-7 • LUKE 2:16-21

HOLIDAY MASSES

This year, Christmas and New Year's Day fall on a Sunday. The weekend Masses will be altered, with the exception of Saturday, Dec. 31, which will be the regular 4:30 pm Mass. See schedule at left for details.

MARCH FOR LIFE REGISTRATION DEADLINE EXTENDED!

Register now to attend the 50th annual March for Life in Washington, DC on Friday, Jan. 20, 2023! **Registration deadline extended to Dec. 28 or when buses are full**, whichever comes first. We understand that Christmas week can be challenging and sometimes mail is a bit slower, so if you are planning to register, or if you have any questions, please email aledoux@worcesterdiocese.org and let us know.

Buses will leave from St. Paul's Cathedral on Thurs., Jan. 19 following the Respect Life Mass at 7:30 p.m., and will travel to the Basilica of National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC in time for Friday morning Mass followed by the March for Life at noon.

Thanks to the overturning of Roe v Wade, the March will end at the U.S. Capitol instead of the Supreme Court, in recognition of the fact that the halls of Congress are where much advocacy for life must be done going forward.

Buses will return to Worcester immediately following the March, arriving back at St. Paul's at approximately 1:00 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 21. For more details and to download registration forms, visit www.worcesterdiocese.org/respect-life or contact the Respect Life Office at 508-929-4311 or aledoux@worcesterdiocese.org.

WORD OF LIFE

"The infant Christ 'came into our world in a state of great vulnerability. He needed to be defended, protected, cared for and raised by Joseph' (PC 5). The humble and often hidden carpenter of Nazareth accompanied Mary in her pregnancy, assisted at the birth of the Messiah in a stable, presented Jesus in the Temple, fled with his family far from their homeland to protect them, and lovingly raised Jesus as his own son in the years to come... Joseph's devotion helps reveal to us our own call to show special care for the lives of those whom God has entrusted to us."

— USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities *Respect Life Reflection: St. Joseph, Defender of Life*

Please see the Bishop's Christmas Greetings ... available in the Vestibule.

The time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

— Lk 2:6b-7



MERRY CHRISTMAS, DEAR PARISH FAMILY!

We are joyfully thankful that, this year also, God has given us yet another opportunity to celebrate the birth of his only Begotten Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ into the world. Certainly, there are other things that we are thankful for as we celebrate this year's Christmas. Surely, some of us are celebrating this year's Christmas with grieving hearts for a loss of a loved one or a job, or because of any other misfortune. But when we remember the Paschal mystery events Jesus went through, our hearts get filled with strength and hope on Christmas because Jesus' birth renews us amid all challenges.

During this year's Advent Season, we have realized that as the Lord comes to us, we too have to go to him. And our encounter with the Lord changes us profoundly and fills us with love, joy, and happiness. It also moves us to work for peace within ourselves, among peoples, and nations. This Advent Season's readings have taught us that we need to emulate Jesus Christ in caring about the poor, unprivileged, abandoned, afflicted, abused, sidelined, and oppressed. This is one of the major reasons we are always called to "go to the house of the Lord" (Ps. 122:1, 4) – for every time God feeds us with his word in his house where we gather for worship, we get more enlightened and increasingly become people of Christ's light and "throw off the works of darkness" (Rm. 13:12b). Therefore, let us embrace and live in the Lord's light, not only on Christmas Day, but every day of our lives. Let us be messengers of Jesus' glad tidings to everyone in the world as we allow God's word (the holy Scriptures) to instruct us in our day-to-day engagements.

This Advent Season has taught us that when we heed God's word, our lives get and remain filled with exuberance because our spiritual blindness and deafness disappear. We get to realize that God's love and faithfulness are forever; and we are able to remain hopefully patient amidst the challenges of life – because God does not disappoint. And, as our hearts reel in the salvation the Lord brings, joy and happiness abound in us.

Throughout the Christmas Season, we remember that Jesus – Emmanuel (God is with us) – is the ultimate sign of God's love for people and the world. Thus, we should never allow the lures or challenges of earthly life to separate us from him. He is the Lord and Master of the universe and history whose identity and mission are well delineated in the holy Scriptures. So, let us, by regular introspection, stand sinless before him and proclaim him to the world.

May you all be filled with the joys of Christmas.

Fr. Patrick Ssekyole