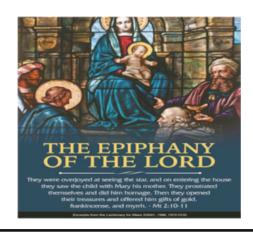
St. Augustine PARISH

381 North Highland Avenue Ossining, NY 10562 Parish Office: (914) 941-0067 Fax: (914) 944-0828

Website: StAugNY.org



JANUARY 5, 2025

REV. BRIAN T. McSWEENEY, PASTOR REV. JOHN FIGUEROA, PAROCHIAL VICAR REV. MATTHEW UGWOJI, IN RESIDENCE **DEACON TIMOTHY E. SLOMINSKI, Ret. DEACON STEVEN A. DeMARTINO DEACON CLIFF C. CALANNI DEACON JOHN A. BARBERA** DEACON JOSEPH L. SERVELLO

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MASSES

SATURDAY: 8:30AM, 5:00PM **SUNDAY**: 8:00AM, 10:00AM

12:00 NOON, 6:00PM

MONDAY - FRIDAY: 6:30AM, 8:30AM

HOLY DAYS: as announced

CONFESSIONS: Saturdays: 9:00-10:00AM

also by appointment

ADORATION: Thursday- 9:00AM to 6:30PM

BAPTISMS: Call the Parish Office

for an appointment

MARRIAGES: Please arrange six months

in advance.

ACTIVITIES Adult Choir

Altar Servers Children's Choir

CYO

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Knights of Columbus

Lectors

Legion of Mary Scouts Boys/Girls Senior Center

Ushers

Youth Group

COMMITTEES

Advocates for People with

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Festival Planning

Finance

Home and School

Parish Council

Parish Social Ministry

St. Vincent de Paul Society

If you would like to make a one-time donation to our Church, please scan this QR code:



If you would like to join our Parish Monthly Giving Plan or to get more information, please scan this QR code; or log on to staugny.churchgiving.com; or call (877) 316-0260.





We continue to pray for those who are ill in our parish and ask Our Loving God to allow our prayers to lift them up in their continued illness. Please keep the following members of our parish family in prayer: Alice Marie Hales, Angela Ceparano, Sharon Manzo, Joe Rodriguez, Gertrude Pinckney, Maria Reynolds, Ellen Mitchell, Barbara O'Donnell, Thomas Albanese, John Contento, Raymond McLoughlin, Vincent Giuliano, Jorge De Los Rios, Theresa Timmons, Christopher Santiago, Donna Paolucci, and Peace Aiden.



ST. AUGUSTINE CHURCH, OSSINING, NEW YORK





The local conference Board of the St. Vincent de Paul Society meets regularly, with prayer and spiritual reflection, at the Parish Office, where volunteers personally serve local persons in desperate circumstances by offering prayer, personal

attention and financial help. Short-term gifts can be offered to assist with rent, utilities, food and clothing. If you are in need, please call Deacon Steven DeMartino at (914) 330-3727 to make a confidential request.



THE BLESSING OF HOMES ON THE FEAST OF EPIPHANY

One popular tradition for Epiphany dates from the Middle Ages – the Blessing of Homes. At Mass today, there will be a blessing of chalk. After Mass is over, take the blessed chalk home with you. Using the blessed chalk, mark the

inside of the main door of the house with the initials of the Magi – Magus Caspar, Magus Melchior, Magus Balthasar – and a code of the current year connected with crosses:

20+C+M+B+25

The real meaning of the initials C+ M+ B are the first letters of the blessing: Christus Mansionem Benedicat (Latin, "May Christ bless this dwelling place"). After marking the doorway, pray:

Leader: "Lord God of Heaven and Earth, Who has revealed Your only-begotten Son to every nation by the guidance of a star: Bless this house and all who inhabit it. Fill them with the light of Christ, that their love for others may truly reflect thy love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen. May we, in this house, and all who come to visit, to work and to play, remember these things throughout the coming year. May all who come and go here find peace, comfort, joy, hope, love and salvation, for Christ has come to dwell in this house and in these hearts. Amen.

All: May we be Christ's light in the world. Amen.

EPIPHANY WATER

From Aleteia: The Roman Ritual provides a strong blessing of Epiphany water that casts out all evil spirits.

While the feast of Epiphany in the Roman Rite is primarily focused on the visit of the Magi, historically it was more focused on the baptism of Jesus Christ in the Jordan River. For this reason, there developed a special blessing of Epiphany water in memory of Jesus sanctifying the waters of Baptism.

This blessing of water on Epiphany was maintained by Eastern Catholics, but Roman Catholics also have an optional ceremony that was approved in 1890 that did homage to this tradition.

The emphasis of the blessing, however, was less on the commemoration of Jesus' baptism and more on the **symbolic nature of water as a cleansing agent**. In this way, the blessing of Epiphany water in the Roman Rite was used to <u>cast out Satan</u> and all his demonic angels.

It is a powerful blessing, one that uses strong language to **invoke the power of God over evil.** It reminds us of the spiritual power of holy water and encourages us to use it in faith, trusting in the protecting help of God over our spiritual enemies.



MONDAY, JANUARY 6:

6:30 AM Delores Cozzi 8:30 AM Julia Hunter

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7:

6:30 AM S. I. for Sr. Mary Raymond/Arthur Brady

8:30 AM Gina Cavallo

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8:

6:30 AM S. I. in Thanksgiving for our Eucharistic Ministers

who serve the homebound

8:30 AM Millie Barreiro/Joan C. Beldotti

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9:

6:30 AM Joseph Leary/Martha, Michael & Dr. John Delfino

8:30 AM Christos, Theresa & Christine Sirakos

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10:

6:30 AM Al Otero/Benny Mussuto

8:30 AM Regina Jones/Herbert & Luise Tamm

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11:

8:30 AM Flavia, Joseph & Peppe Bellantone/

Catherine Collins Bona

5:00 PM Robert "Bobby" Lewis

Martha, Michael & Dr. John Delfino

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12 (The Baptism of the Lord):

8:00 AM Edith Marengo

10:00 AM For all our Parishioners & Benefactors

Anamaria Milio

12:00 PM The Cerulli Family/Carmela Santucci

6:00 PM Stanley Anthony Dunajski/Kathleen Ryan



The Sanctuary Lamp will burn the week of January 6 ~ 12 for *Dawn Marie Beldotti*.



The Altar Bread & Wine for the week of January $6 \sim 12$ were donated in loving memory of *Ezio Sorrentino*.



THIS WEEK'S BULLETIN WAS SENT TO THE PRINTER BEFORE THE COLLECTION AMOUNTS FOR DECEMBER 28/29 WERE CALCULATED.



The St. Joseph's Men's group will meet on Wednesday, January 8th, from 7 to 8:15 pm in the Annex and Saturday, January 18th, from 9:15 to 10:30 am in the Parish Hall.

If you are interested in joining, see the flyer on the table in the Vestibule or contact Deacon Joe Servello at (914) 414-6216 (text only) or deaconjoseph.servello@archny.org

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



LA BEFANA ~ A STORY OF THE EPIPHANY

A long, long time ago there was a small village in the countryside. On the edge of that village was a tiny house that was remarkable for two reasons. First, it was undoubtedly the cleanest house you've ever seen, and second, it smelled better than any home you've ever visited. Inside the little home lived a very old woman whose name was Strega Befana. While other people were happy to go roaming through the village or even travel the world, La Befana was happiest inside the coziness of her little house. She kept busy all winter long by sewing little toys to sell to families who had need for such, or by making herbal remedies and potions to sell to those who were not feeling well, or by baking some of the most amazing bread and cookies you've ever eaten. She also kept busy – very, very busy, by making sure her home was clean. She swept the floors at least three times a day – morning, noon, and night. If there was one thing that Strega Befana hated, it was a dirty home! While she depended on other people to buy the things that she created, La Befana actually didn't like people very well and never admitted them inside her house when she could avoid it. She sold them their toys or their cookies or their ointments, and then she sent them away. She led a clean, quiet, life, and didn't want anyone messing with that! One night, when she had finished sweeping the last stair and had pulled in the lantern and blown out the light, she was presented with a mystery. Her home was not dark! She checked the lantern and it was indeed out – but the light was pouring in through the window. "Why was it so light?" she wondered. She looked out the window and saw a star was shining brightly – it was the brightest star she had ever seen! But she didn't have time to think about what was happening, because she was startled by a knock on the door. "Visitors now?" she complained. "Who is bothering old Befana so late? If it wasn't bad enough with the sky all lit up, now I have company!" No one had ever came so late before. She peeked out her window to see who was there and saw an old man who was magnificently dressed. He looked to be very learned, his face was quite tan, and although his clothes were brightly colored, they were covered with dust from the road. His shoes were very muddy, and he looked worn out from his travel. She opened the door, reluctantly, and he stepped inside – with his dirty shoes and muddy pants. "Good evening!", he said. "I'm sorry to be disturbing you at such a late hour, but I am lost. I'm on a great mission – I've seen a sign that a child has been born - one who will lead us all in the years to come. This child is divine! He is full of joy, hope, and love. I know that he is sent from God above. I've brought gifts to this child, and I want to give him my heart, too.'

The old man saw the little toys and things on the shelves in La Befana's home. "Oh! You could come with us! These things that you sell would be fit for a king like this baby!" Befana wasn't too sure about that, and she didn't like the fact that this man was dressed so funny, and that he was out there following the stars. And he was MUDDY. "No, no, no," she said. "I don't know anything about this child, and I can't help, and I certainly don't want to go out following a star or some such nonsense!" She showed him the way to the door and reached for her broom to start cleaning up the mess. No sooner had she started cleaning when there was another knock on the door. She saw another man, also dressed quite finely. "What do you want?", she yelled through the closed door. He answered, "I need directions, my friend. I am also looking for supplies for a journey." The second gentleman and his friends came inside. Like the first, their boots were covered with grime and dirt. "My friend," he said "We are seeking a child of light – one who will become a King! We go to bring gifts and offer him our hands. He will bring good news to the poor, and to change the world! Why don't you join us as we travel to see him?" Once more she assured them that she was not at all interested in something like that, and so she sold them what they needed and sent them out into the night. She thought that they had all gone, but she looked out and there was still a young boy, holding a camel. "Please, Befana!", he said, "Come with us! We will find the king, and he will be good news for all people! He will love and help the poor.

There's still time! Join us!" But Strega Befana just closed the door and collapsed into her chair. She looked at her room – it had been soooooo clean! She set down her broom and decided that she'd take a quick nap before she cleaned it up again. As soon as she sat to rest, the oak door was pounded on one more time. She didn't even get up – she just yelled at the door: "Go away! I know nothing about this child that everyone is trying to find! Please, leave at once! I will not come, and I'm not interested in selling anything else!" Whoever it was that had knocked went away slowly, and La Befana finally started to finish cleaning up her house. She muttered and sighed as she swept. "Coming to serve the poor...hmph! Old Befana is poor. Does this baby care for her? I think not!" But when she opened the door to sweep the dirt out she let out a small cry. There in the distance, something bright caught her eye. It was a wondrous new star in the deep blue sky. Something in her changed, and she realized that this was not an ordinary star, and it was not an ordinary day.

She thought back to those lost gentlemen, the king they were seeking, and the gifts that they'd brought. "That star – and those visitors - they were right!" she said to herself. "Maybe it's not too late for me to go. I will find them. I will go with them and present my gift to the child king. But what could I take?" She set down her broom and went to the kitchen. All day long she baked. When she was not baking, she was clearing all the little toys from her shelves, throwing everything into a large bag. She put on a shawl, and she opened the door. She grabbed her broom, thinking, "I imagine that when I find that baby his mother will not have had time to clean. I can help her with the sweeping of her home..." But as she stood at the door looking back into her home, La Befana noticed that there was a speck of dust in the corner of the room. She thought, "Well, now, how would it be if I were to go on a trip and leave my own home a mess!" And so La Befana put down her sack and started to sweep. She got the speck of dust. And then she swept the room, and the other room. She swept the steps, and she even thought to sweep the walk outside. Finally – hours later – she was ready to leave. She glimpsed the star all right, and she walked toward it. She was in such a hurry that she began to run, and she ran as fast as she could... but it was a long way, and she was old, and she got tired. She started to walk, and she thought, "This is no good. I'll never find this baby. I don't even know where he is." And, sure enough, when she looked at the sky again, she wasn't sure which star was THE star. She sat down and cried. She got up again, and started to walk when she saw a home with an open window. She looked inside, and there was a child asleep. "I wonder," she said, "Could this be the one? Is this the one who is born to be king? Maybe I better leave something just in case...? The further Old Befana walked, the more sleeping children she passed, and in every home she left a small gift and swept it a little cleaner with her broom, because she said, "After all, I'm not sure which of these was born to bring good news to the poor and to change the world." Well. La Befana never caught up with the wise men, and she never made it to Bethlehem, and she is still not sure which child they came to see.

So now, every year on the eve of the Feast of the Three Kings, the story is told of a sad old lady who flies around on her broom, bringing little treats to all children. She's happy that she can share what she's been given, but she's sad because she wasn't able to welcome the visitors to her home, and she missed her chance to follow them and to greet the Christ child. She's decided that from now on, she'll never miss the chance to show kindness to strangers, or to welcome visitors, and in so doing, to follow the star of Bethlehem.



2025 CALENDARS

A special thanks goes to
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for donating the 2025 calendars
which are on the table in the vestibule.
PLEASE TAKE ONE PER FAMILY.



Your Christmas Offering

OUR COLLECTION OFFERING FOR THIS YEAR AS OF **DECEMBER 27th IS \$ 27,016.**

We would like to thank our Parishioners and friends who contributed to our St. Augustine's Christmas collection. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. If for any reason you were unable to make your Christmas donation, you may do so anytime at the Parish Office.

Be-Informed ~ January 5: We hope you are enjoying the parish subscription to www.formed.org which gives parishioners and members of the community free 24/7 access to over 300 quality Catholic on line programs, 99+ movies, 101+ audios, & 98+ E-Books. Simply register with parish code W3JKWN. Today is the Solemnity of The Epiphany of the Lord. Watch Epiphany/ The True Meaning of Christmas, The Story of the Nativity, Formed Now! Who are the Maji, or for children Brother Francis: O Holy Night. Listen to: Prepare the Way of the King, God Made Man, or The Story of Also Watch: God's Doorkeeper about St. Andre Christmas. Bessette.



The Golden Eagles will meet twice monthly through the winter months. Our first meeting in January will be this Wednesday, January 8 in the parish hall from 9:30 to 11 AM. The book club will meet at 11 AM. All are welcome to

attend. We can be reached on the hotline at (914) 923-2268 or at golden.eagles@staugny.org.



Knights of Columbus Council #311 Youth Free Throw Contest

On Friday, January 10th, the Knights of Columbus will be hosting its annual free throw shooting contest in the St. Augustine's Gym ~ Registration opens at 6 pm/ Competition starts at 7 pm.

All boys and girls, ages 9 to 14, are welcome to participate and compete against boys and girls in each age group. The winners for each age group are then eligible to advance to K of C district and state contests as well.

A parent needs to complete a registration form that is available in the vestibule of the Church. Extra forms will also be available the night of the event. Each child will be required to show proof of their age on the night of the contest. There is no cost to participate and the winners of each age group will win a basketball.

If you have any questions, call Chris at (914) 403-1065 or Stephen at (914) 557-4942 or online at kofc311.org/basketball.



Boy Scout Troop 49 will hold its annual Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser on Saturday, February 1st, in the St. Augustine School cafeteria. Doors open immediately following the 5:00pm Mass. Tickets are \$15 per adult/\$8 per child and can be purchased in advance from any Boy Scout or

at the door the night of the event. In addition to a delicious all-you-caneat dinner, we will be raffling many beautiful theme baskets at the end of the evening. Enjoy a great meal, relax with friends, and support a good cause at the same time.

SAINT AUGUSTINE PARISH FAMILY WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OUR DEDICATED PARISHIONERS WHO HELPED TO MAKE OUR CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS SUCH A BEAUTIFUL AND SPIRITUALLY-UPLIFTING SUCCESS.

With heartfelt gratitude for all who volunteer in so many different ways throughout the year to make our parish the welcoming home to worship The Almighty God that it is.

Thank you to our Deacons, Sacristan, Extraordinary Ministers, Lectors, Altar Servers and Ushers and our Knights of Columbus, who all contribute to ensure the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is celebrated with respect and dignity.

Thank you to Bozena Romano and the members of the Children's & Adult Choirs, who were able to add their voices in song and to Oliver Ellsworth who played the cello so beautifully. As Saint Augustine said, "the one who sings, prays twice".

A Thank-you to the Mann Family for faithfully hanging our wreaths each week of Advent and then transforming them for Christmas; Joan, Gina, Eileen, Shirley, Colette & Andrea for decorating the Altar and Church with the poinsettias; Maria & Antonio Vieira for decorating our Altar Candles and dutifully caring for them; to Gae Savino for always decorating the entrance to our property and the entrances to our Church and Parish Offices; and a very special thank you to Gae Savino and her 4 year-old grandson, Lucas Panagacos, for decorating the windows in our Church so beautifully for the Advent season.

AND FOR ANY THAT WE MAY HAVE OVERLOOKED WHO WORKED "BEHIND THE SCENES" TO MAKE OUR CHRIST-MAS SEASON JOYFUL ~ THANK YOU!!!!

Fr. McSweeney



Join St. Augustine Parish at the 52nd March for Life Rally in Washington, D.C. on Friday, January 24th, 2025. Bus leaves St. Augustine's at 6:00 am & returns at 10:00 pm. Dress for cold weather. You will be outdoors for several hours. Bring snacks, lunch, & water. One rest stop each way. Your \$55 free-will donation secures your seat on the bus. You may donate by debit or credit card through our secure portal on the Parish website: staugny.org/march-for-life. For more information, call Peter Marengo (914) 629-9507.

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