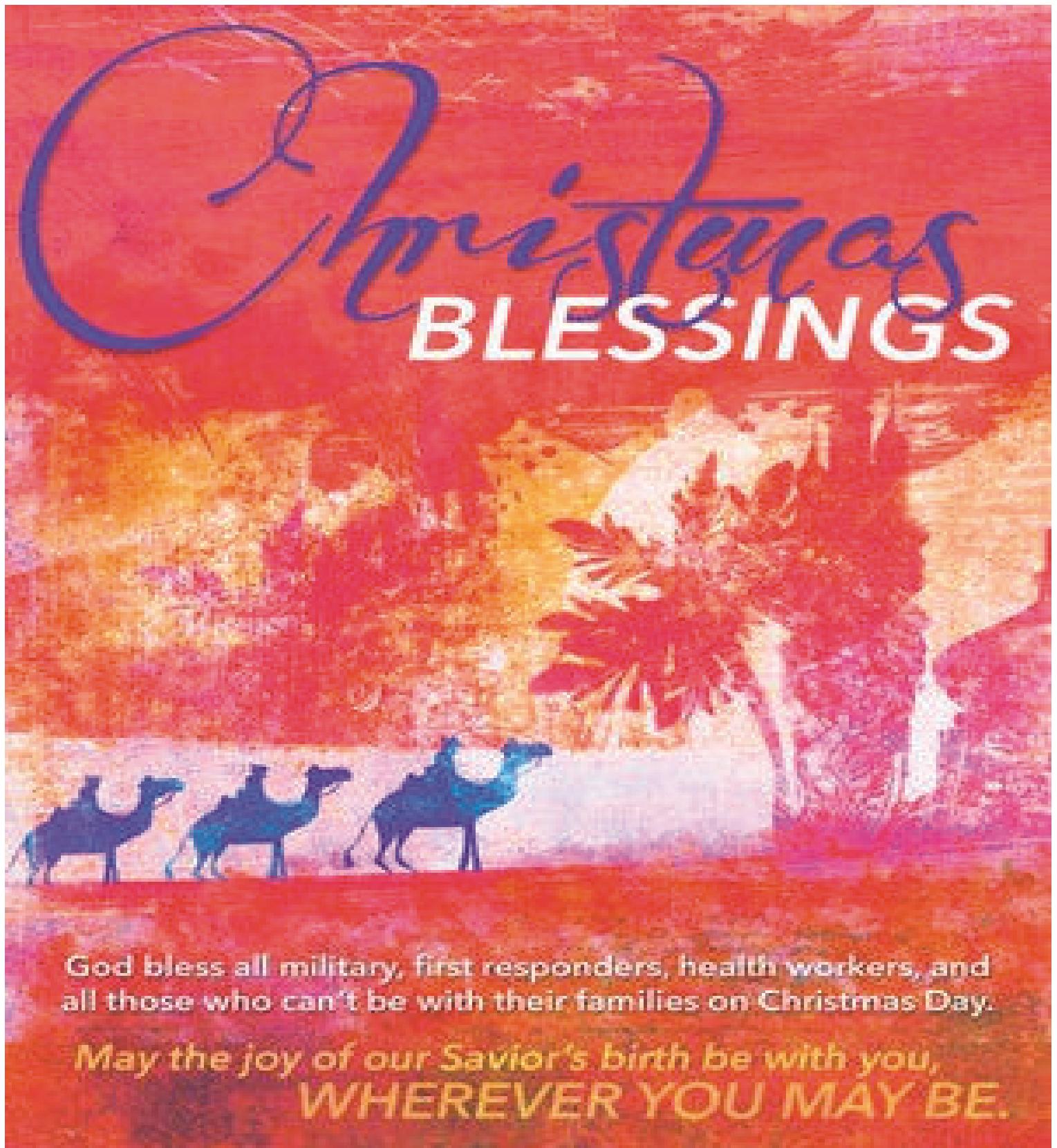


***The Parish Family of
Saint Mary of Czestochowa Church***

Rectory: 79 South Main Street, Middletown, CT 06457

Church Entrance: 28 Hubbard Street (GPS Directions)



God bless all military, first responders, health workers, and all those who can't be with their families on Christmas Day.

*May the joy of our Savior's birth be with you,
WHEREVER YOU MAY BE.*

The Nativity of the Lord~ December 27, 2020

Mass Intentions

Thursday	<u>December 24~Christmas Eve</u>
4:00pm	All Those Committed to Our Prayers
10:00pm	All Those Committed to Our Prayers
Friday	<u>December 25~ Christmas</u>
10:30 am	All Those Committed to Our Prayers
Saturday	<u>December 26</u>
4:00 pm	+Lena Kalita Offered by Her Loving Husband & Daughters
Sunday	<u>December 27</u>
8:30 am	+Matthew Kalinowski Offered By His Loving Family
Polish/English	+Russell Siecienski Birthday Wishes
10:30 am	Offered By Maureen & Steve Czentnar
Monday	<u>December 28</u>
	NO MASS
Wednesday	<u>December 30</u>
6:30 pm	+Mieczyslaw Polkowski Offered by Bozena Malek
Thursday	<u>December 31~New Year's Eve</u>
7:30 am	+Wladyslaw Gacek Offered by His Loving Wife & Family
Friday	<u>January 1~ Solemnity of Mary</u>
10:00 am	All Those Committed to Our Prayers
Saturday	<u>January 2</u>
4:00 pm	+Marion Powell Offered By Barbara Penney & Ann Charton
Sunday	<u>January 3</u>
8:30 am	+Matthew Kalinowski Offered By His Loving Family
Polish/English	

Anyone not comfortable with receiving communion can make and Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Weekly Collections

December 12-13

Offertory~ \$4074.
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Marriage Preparation Classes to Meet Virtually

With the uncertainty surrounding Covid-19, the Catholic Family Services Office will be offering virtual or one-on-one marriage preparation classes for engaged couples. All formal live classes have been suspended through July 1, 2021.

Couples getting married in 2021 or beyond, should contact Mary-Jo McLaughlin at the Catholic Family Services Office to establish class dates. She can be reached Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at **860-848-2237, Ext 312** or by email at mmclaughlin@norwichdiocese.net.

The Sanctuary Lamp

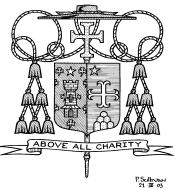
December 27-January 2

Is Lit in Loving Memory for

Russell Siecienski

Offered By Maureen & Steve Czentnar





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MOST REVEREND
MICHAEL R. COTE, D.D.

Christmas Message 2020

**"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
Upon those who lived in a land of gloom a light has shone."
(Isaiah 9:1)**

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

These words of the prophet Isaiah, taken from the first reading proclaimed at the Vigil Mass for the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord, seem particularly poignant for us this year. As we celebrate Christmas and draw near to the end of this calendar year, I think that many of us feel that this has indeed been a year dominated by darkness and gloom. This year has certainly been a difficult one: from the ongoing pandemic that has changed our lives in so many ways and sadly has taken the lives of family members and friends throughout the world, to the devastation wrought by numerous wildfires, hurricanes and natural disasters, continued racial division, as well as what has been one of the most bitterly contentious election cycles in the history of our nation. Chaos and darkness are all around us. It has become increasingly clear, therefore, that our world needs the light of the Lord Jesus now more than ever.

In commemorating His birth at Christmas, it is important we remember that we celebrate something far more profound than simply the Lord's "birthday." What we celebrate is the ultimate triumph of light over darkness. As Saint John writes, referring to the Lord, in the prologue to his account of the Gospel, "...the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5) While the world was yet still in darkness, a great light broke forth on the first Christmas night: the unchanging truth of God's abundant love for His people - a love so pure that it took flesh in the person of Jesus, born in the manger at Bethlehem; a love so deep that it enabled the Lord to endure the agony of His passion and death on the cross; a love so powerful that it would destroy even sin and death itself in the glory of His resurrection, affording each of us the opportunity to share in the eternal joy of Heaven.

While our gatherings and Christmas celebrations will indeed be different this year, it is vitally important that we remember this central truth: nothing and no one can change the fact that God has sent His Divine Son into the world and that He suffered, died and rose again for our redemption. The same risen Lord Jesus likewise continues to be present through His body, the Church, as the true light which can dispel the darkness and gloom present in our own lives as well as in the world around us. As individual members of His Church, the Lord is now calling each of us, in the midst of our present challenges and difficulties, to allow His light to shine brightly through the witness of our lives, that, as His instruments, we may bring much needed love, hope, and peace to our families, communities and world, here and now.

And so, in this season of light and hope, let us give thanks to God for the tremendous gift He has given to the world in the person of Jesus and spend some time in prayer, asking how He is calling us to reflect and radiate the light of His love to others.

May you, your families and loved ones have a truly merry Christmas and a New Year filled God's blessings!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop of Norwich



Raffle Fundraiser

Every year we looked forward to our annual Polish dinner and raffle, but now due to the pandemic we have had to cancel. We decided to have at least a fundraiser by selling raffle tickets.

On March 6, 2021 we will hold a drawing.

1st Prize is \$2000

2nd Prize is \$700

3rd Prize is \$300

Each raffle ticket booklet will contain 10 tickets at \$5.00 each. All proceeds will go towards a new AC System for the church.

In January everyone will receive a mailer with tickets and a letter from our pastor. Please check the bulletin for further announcements.



CHURCH RAFFLE

Christmas Remembrance Masses

At Christmastime we share many different gifts. One of the greatest spiritual gifts for your loved ones would be remembering them at the Masses on

Christmas Eve (4:00pm and 10:00 pm)

Christmas Day (10:30 am)

New Year's Day (10:00 am)

which will be celebrated for their intentions.

If you wish to remember them, you can do so by using the special "Christmas Mass Remembrance" envelope, which you should have received in the envelope packet.

Please complete the envelope and place in any collection basket or mail directly to the rectory. The envelopes will be placed on the altar throughout the Christmas season.

Additional envelopes are available in the church foyer and at the rectory.

O Come All Ye Faithful



If the salutation, “Merry Christmas,” is more than just the expected greeting we use today, then what is the “more” really all about? Today is a sacred day and the birth of Christ has changed not only history but how human beings perceive and relate with God. God has become one with humanity in the Person of Jesus Christ. All of these truths remain just pious sentiments unless they take flesh in the heart and soul of each one of us. We need to absorb and immerse ourselves in what is meant by these truths so that we can be changed by them. Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord!

A woman once recounted her journey with poverty and how she went from “doing” for the poor to “being with” the poor. It’s transforming and life changing. It’s easy to simply give alms to those in need, and yet another thing to be with them in their poverty and become poor ourselves. A change of the axis from vertical to horizon puts a whole new twist on things. Our souls understand the experience in ways that our minds simply cannot. Christmas requires this same change of axis.

It is one thing to sing out the words, “Joy to the World,” and quite another to experience that joy ourselves. Many have not experienced the full impact of that first Holy Night because they choose to keep the manager at a distance rather than make a home with the Holy One who resides there. The birth of Christ levels the playing field of life and we have to allow ourselves to be leveled. There is no way to truly be human unless we understand that God is with us and blesses every fiber of the human experience. We cannot be truly human unless we listen to the words of the Word Made Flesh and work so that justice and peace can be realized by all, and God’s sacred earth cared for and nurtured.

The axis of Christmas begins to shift when we realize it’s not about, “I and me,” but, “we and us,” and there’s an order and purpose to how God fashions and sustains things. The world hasn’t really given Christ a full shot yet to understand that Truth has been born in our midst. We pick and choose what suits us in the message and leave the rest behind.

What needs to change about you so that Christ can truly be born in you?



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