ST. AMBROSE PARISH

St. Augustine Church
30 Caputo Rd.
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St. Monica Church
1321 Middletown Ave.
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gloria in excelsis deo

Merry Christmas

SUNDAY'S READINGS

FIRST READING:
The Lord took Abram outside and said,
"Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can.
Just so," he added, "shall your descendants be." (Gn 15:5)

PSALM:
The Lord remembers his covenant for ever. (Ps 105)

SECOND READING:
By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called
to go out to a place
that he was to receive as an inheritance;
he went out, not knowing where he was to go. (Heb 11:8)

GOSPEL:
The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and
the favor of God was upon him. (Lk 2:40)

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OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 27, 2020

Sunday:	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Monday:	The Holy Innocents, Martyrs
Tuesday:	St. Thomas Becket, Bishop and Martyr
Thursday:	St. Sylvester I, Pope; New Year's Eve
Friday:	Mary, The Holy Mother of God; New Year's Day; World Day of Peace
Saturday:	Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church
Sunday:	The Epiphany of the Lord; National Migration Week

REFLECT

FIRST READING
The story of Abram and Sarah and their struggle to have a family centers on Abram's faith in the Lord. When have you needed to rely on faith when it comes to your family?

SECOND READING
The author of Hebrews holds up Abraham as a model for the faith. When have you had to unconditionally trust in the Lord?

GOSPEL READING
Only Luke records the presentation in the Temple of the baby Jesus. Simeon reveals to Mary and Joseph insights into Jesus and his destiny. How do you imagine Mary and Joseph understood Simeon's words?

THE GIFT OF FAMILY

What a year it has been! How will we speak of these times a decade from now? As time goes by, our impressions of this past year will certainly change. How we feel today about dealing with a killer virus and all the chaos surrounding that is still fresh for all. I would assume that most of us right now are also holding those we love a little closer and hugging them a little harder. Hopefully, even if the fears and concerns of 2020 dissipate in the future, the way we feel toward our family should never leave us.

Stewardship is certainly about everything. God has given us so much, great and small, profound and common. One of the greatest gifts that all have received is family. Families take all shapes and sizes and some look very different than others. For some, family is a caretaker or temporary guardian. For others it is a friend when everyone else seems to have vanished. The bottom line is that, to quote a song from many years ago, "people need people."

When God gave the world His only Son, the Incarnation did not come on a cloud or with a flash of light. He was born into a family. Jesus understood the gift of family all his life. Do you think that if having a family wasn't important God would have still included this in the plan of salvation?
As this year draws to a close, remember your stewardship many days begins and ends with the people closest to you. Don't misuse or take for granted this precious gift. God gives us gifts on purpose, even to His only begotten Son.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

I'VE SEEN PEOPLE HANG ROSARIES OVER THE REAR-VIEW MIRRORS IN THEIR CARS AND A FEW OF THEM WEAR THEM AROUND THEIR NECKS. IS IT OK TO DO THAT?

The practice of hanging a rosary or a religious medal off of the rearview mirror of one's car is a fairly popular custom across many cultures. While there is no particular rule approving or condemning this practice, we should also be mindful of the respect and reverence due to religious objects and devotional items (i.e. sacramentals).

An important point to consider would be the reason why one chooses to place a rosary or religious medal in our cars. Is it a reminder of the protection and intercession of Mary and the saints? Does it encourage us to be mindful of God's presence, even in such a mundane task as driving? Is it an outward expression of our more private devotions?

One advantage of having a rosary or religious medal in our cars is that it can also serve as a reminder to pray when we travel, asking for protection for ourselves and for other motorists or commuters. Certainly, invoking the protection and prayers of the saints is a wonderful practice for families, helping to reinforce our belief in the communion of saints and the care and concern we owe to one another.

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LIVE THE LITURGY

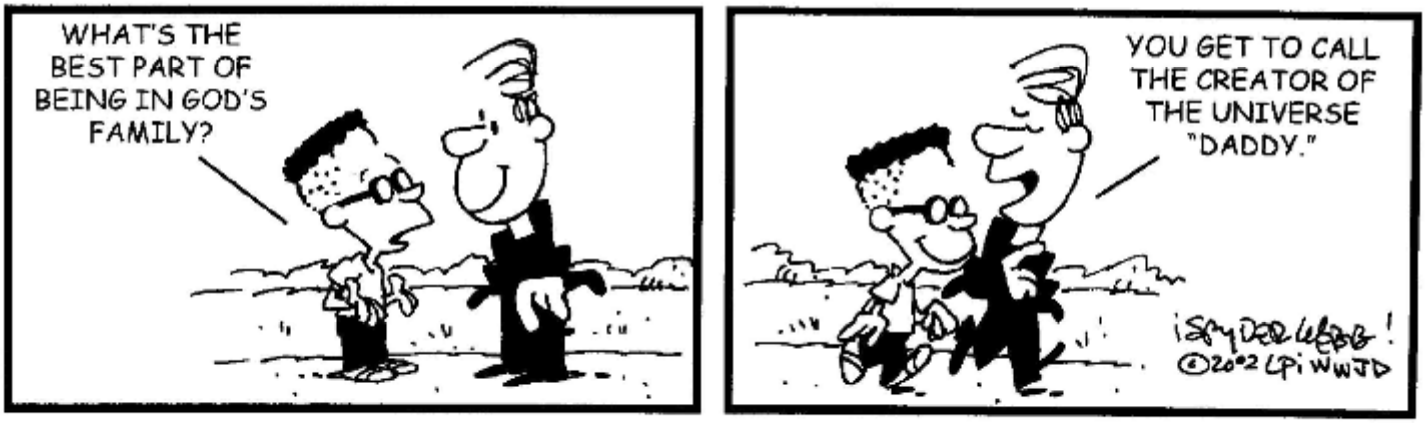
INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

While families come in all shapes and sizes and no two are the same, they all need a common focus and grounding. Fami ies are intended to be pivotal in providing us with a proper social structure and understanding, a support system, lessons about relationships and communication and the unconditional acceptance and love we so desperate y crave. In additional to all of these things, the axis of every family has to be centered on faith. It is here that we can learn about the virtues and discover the windows to God Himself in His gifts of faith, hope, and love. We can learn, mode ing our experience after the Holy Family, how to use these as anchors in our lives so that we can live out the other virtues with greater integrity. Because our human families struggle with weakness and sin, we have to come back to the Holy Family often for inspiration and guidance. In the bond of love that they shared, they clung to the anchor of God Himself and endured challenges far greater than many we will ever face.

PLEASE CONSIDER ONLINE GIVING

Our parish is grateful for your continued support at this time. Thank you!

HOLY FAMILY



THE HOLY FAMILY

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GOSPEL MEDITATION
ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

Tragedy and disappointment are inevitable. What sees you through this? There will be challenges, changes, unexpected circumstances, interrupted plans, hurts, and injustices experienced by every human being at some point in their lives. We will be asked to adjust our plans, change course, and even encounter suffering and death. Where do we learn all of the lessons we need to live life well? Some of them we learn along the way but much of what we bring to life, positive and negative, comes from our early beginnings, our families. This is our early world and provides the blueprint for how we see the bigger, more inclusive world, which unfolds before us.

Our families of origin can be sources of grace, heartache or a combination of both. Families are intended to be pivotal in providing us with proper social structure and understanding, a support system, lessons about relationships and communication, and the unconditional acceptance and love we so desperately crave. They can also determine whether we have an accessible and healthy relationship with God. Many of life's challenges can literally bring us to our knees and require that we possess a strength of character that resides well beyond the superficialities of our world. At some point we will all need three coping gifts that can be given to us only by God: faith, hope, and love. Our families help us learn that we are not the ones responsible for their creation, but God!

Our experience of early family life colors all of our relationships and what we expect to achieve from life in general. Resolving conflicts, dealing with difficulty and suffering, celebrating accomplishments, prioritizing our needs, listening to God's call, understanding relationships, understanding disappointment, learning about the virtues and living a centered focused life are all lessons our families either succeed in teaching or do not. To succeed, as God has designed and ordered our world, is to discover his presence and then trust that Presence. The Holy Family can teach even the most dysfunctional family how to best use God's gifts of faith, hope, and love to find him and do his will. Their simple humble example is always before us, showing us the way. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us!

We extend a big thank you to so many of our parishioners who helped to make this a beautiful Advent season and Christmas! To those who provided gifts for children in need through our giving tree, those who helped wrap, sort and deliver these gifts. To our food pantry ministry and all who donated food and gift baskets and to those who made deliveries. To our wonderful music ministry team and to all of our lectors, ushers, and altar servers. And to those who helped with decorating the church and filming Masses. To all our volunteers serving our Lord and our parish, we thank you, appreciate you and are blessed to have this parish community. We wish you a Merry Christmas!

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DATE	CHURCH	MASS TIME	INTENTION	REQUESTED BY
MONDAY 12/28	St. Augustine	9:00 AM	† Rosann Adamczyk † Ceasar Arquillare † Dr. John Crhistoforo	Lucille Fusco The Marenna Family Terri Cusano
TUESDAY 12/29	St. Augustine	9:00 AM	† Vincent & Teresa Proto	The Proto Family
WEDNESDAY 12/30	St. Augustine	9:00 AM	† Mr. Prather † Billie † Officer Chris Manner	Steven DiNello Steven DiNello Steven DiNello
THURSDAY 12/31		No Mass		
FRIDAY 1/1 *Solemnity of Mary*	St. Augustine	9:00 AM	† Holy Souls in Purgatory	Diane Glynn
SATURDAY 1/2	St. Augustine St. Augustine	9:00 AM 5:00 PM	No intention Parishioners of St. Ambrose	
SUNDAY 1/3	St. Augustine S. Augustine	9:00 AM 11:00 AM	† Bertha Fusco † Mafalda & Enrico Cervoni † Giuseppe Curcio † Deceased members of the Simoes Family	Family Andrea Cervoni & Family Uncle Joey, Aunt Cathy & Family Maria SImoes

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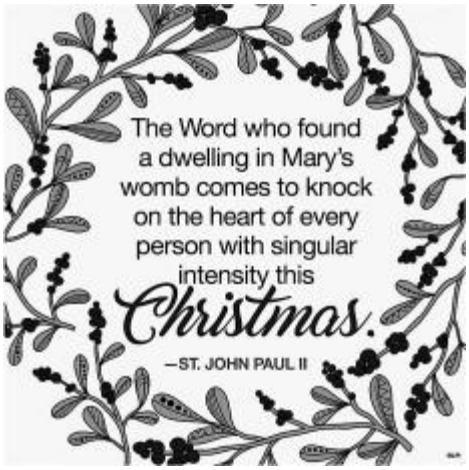

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