



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

## ST ROCH CATHOLIC CHURCH

LUKE 2:14

25022 GIBRALTAR RD, FLAT ROCK, MI / 734-782-4471 / STROCH@STROCHFLATROCK.COM

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2021**

**THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD/THE HOLY FAMILY**

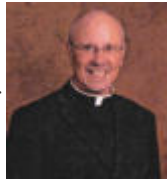
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### **Our Parish Mission Statement**

We, the Catholic-Christian Community of St. Roch Parish, following the work of Jesus Christ, are dedicated to the faith formation, and spiritual growth of our Parish and neighboring communities. As the people of God, we are called through the Holy Spirit to evangelize, to minister, to provide faith-filled experiences of prayer and devotion and to cultivate the Gospel values of Love, Peace and Justice.



**FR. RAY'S XRAYS**



Howdy and Merry Christmas. Our annual celebration of the birth of God in Jesus (the Incarnation) is a joy that we cherish in our very hearts and lives. As Christ believers, God fearers, we are placed in a unique realm of our world. We feel and think differently than others do. We do so because of God's influence. This influence is a positive one and is known through at least the statement, "by the grace of God go I..." This grace upon us is shed in the many ways, means - the interactions, occasions and events that we have read about in scripture but evermore, experience in our day. They are extraordinary moments...Sometimes we think it eerie to have been exposed to such encounters, or think it weird that this occurred...but as believers, we think and believe differently (as I say just above).

One that is most recent is the number 42 (worn by Tate Myre who was murdered along with 3 other students in the Oxford High School shootings on November 30th) and noted in the final score of the Michigan college championship game of December 4th (in which Tate was honored and remembered, as were his parents chosen to be honorary captains of the team that glorious night). They won with a final score of 42 to 3! (The Wolverine players also wore a patch with this number on it and four stars to honor the other three students shot and killed). The next day, the Detroit Lions also honored these four students and won their first game of the season on an 11 yard touchdown (the total number of those shot at Oxford High) and on 4th and 2 play that scored a winning touchdown for them!

For me, this is God with us...speaking to us on our level, so as to help us comprehend the Lord's presence. Another way to understand this is the storm that struck the southern Midwest a few days ago. Following the tornadoes that ravaged parts of Kentucky and Tennessee, one pastor interviewed spoke that God was not in the tornado (or is God found in any event like this) but that God is found..., is seen, experienced in the love shown in the aftermath..., in the caring, the concern shown by so many.

Our ability to express sympathy and care, better, to show empathy to others is a way in which God speaks through us to others. More, we look to find other sources of light, when others stop; we think beyond the box if you will; we even smell the fragrance of something more in

our world.

All of this is given (experienced, celebrated) in an event that brings peace and joy (as I say ) to our lives, even if it's for just a few moments. But we pray that those moments change us - to know that God so loved a world that God created...., that through this act we might learn to do the same! New births or re-births, like Christ's birth, can be abundantly known.

Christmas Blessings, Be safe, be wise. Take care



COLLECTION 12-13-2021	
Registered Families	694
Sunday Envelopes Returned	135
Envelopes	\$ 5,498.00
Loose	\$ 669.00
Children's Collection	\$ 8.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 6,175.00</b>
<b>Weekly Budget</b>	<b>\$ 7,740.00</b>
(Under) Over Budget	<b>\$(1,565.00)</b>
<b>Supplemental Income</b>	
Immaculate Conception	\$ 518.00
All Souls	\$ 25.00
All Saints	\$ 5.00
Christmas	\$ 1,100.00
Christmas Flowers	\$ 296.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$ 5.00
Maintenance	\$ 151.00
Miscellaneous	
(Votives/Masses/Funerals)	\$ 271.00
Religious Education	\$ .00
<b>Total Sunday &amp; Suplm'tl</b>	<b>\$8,546.00</b>
Poor Box	\$ 500.00
Catholic Charities	\$ 5.00
CSA	\$1,500.00
Retired Religious	\$ 628.00

THANK YOU!



**THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER  
BY POPE JOHN XXIII**

O sweet Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in this profound mystery of Christmas.

Put into the hearts of men and women this peace for which they sometimes seek so desperately and which you alone can give to them.

Help them to know one another better, and to live as brothers and sisters, children of the same Father. Reveal to them also your beauty, holiness and purity.

Awaken in their hearts love and gratitude for your infinite goodness.

Join them all together in your love. And give us your heavenly peace. **Amen.**

My prayer for us this Christmas is that the peace and joy we feel today can transform our world, our country, our homes, and our minds. So that we can all move forward being the best disciples of Jesus Christ ever! Our families, country, and world desperately need this now.

God Bless & Merry Christmas, Cheryl



**"Go Make of All Disciples"**

Merry Christmas!

As we come together from our respective communities to learn what it means to be a "Family of Parishes," I certainly come with the joy and expectation of the Holy Family around the events of Christmas. That same joy and expectation can also be realized as we venture into this new reality. Of course, there are a lot of questions, but I am hopeful that this will give us a chance to strengthen the pastoral ministry we are able to provide.

In my first few weeks in this new role, I have been amazed at all of the wonderful things that have been going on and the creative ways our parishes have continued to minister to families, especially during Covid. One main focus moving forward is how to serve whole families, not just children in faith formation. This includes high schoolers, parents, older adults, and everyone in between. The next few months will include plans to strengthen these programs as well as develop new ministries across the family of parishes to serve all of you!

May God bless you this Christmas and New Year!

Sean Calvin  
Director of Discipleship Formation  
Downriver Family of Parishes



**LEST WE FORGET**

Lord, may we remember in prayer, our loved ones. Support them with your Holy Spirit and grant us the courage and grace to embrace your loving ways. With all our heart, strength and love grant them divine consolation and eternal rest.

- Mildred Moses—December 26, 2009*
- Jennie York—December 26, 2009*
- Orrin A. Hoeft—December 28, 1982*
- Diane Ruskowski—December 28, 2004*
- Dolores Balowski—December 28, 2010*
- Jean Hastings—December 28, 2017*
- Phyllis Adams—December 30, 2006*
- Irene M. Deason—December 30, 2007*
- Angela Crock—December 30, 2017*
- Norman Koszuta—December 31, 1994*
- Charles Balan—December 31, 2004*
- Robert Mullin—December 31, 2014*
- James M. Francis—January 1, 2015*

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. Amen*

**Mass Schedule**

**Saturday, December 25th, 2021**  
**Christmas Day**  
**The Nativity of the Lord**  
10:00 am Theresa Lewandowski  
Req. by Joy LaFleur

**Sunday, December 26th, 2021**  
**The Holy Family**  
**of Jesus, Mary & Joseph**  
10:00 am Thomas Steffen & Theresa Illes

Req. by Mark & Karen Ferguson

Req. by Jeanine Fiorelli Family

Req. by Michael Downey Mom

**Calendar of Events**

**Monday, December 27, 2021**

8:30 am Meals on Wheels  
9:00 am Mass

Office Closed  
No Faith Formation Classes

**Tuesday, December 28, 2021**

9:00 am Clive Taylor  
Req. by Clarice

Office Open  
No Faith Formation Classes

**Wednesday, December 29, 2021**

12:30-3:00 pm Bible Study & Sharing

**Thursday, December 30, 2021**

9:00 am Mass  
Noon Offices Close

**Friday, December 31, 2021**  
9:00 am Mass  
Offices Closed

7:00 pm AA

**Mass Schedule**

**Saturday, January 1, 2022**  
**Solemnity of Mary Mother of God**

10:00 am Mass

**Sunday, January 2, 2022**  
**Epiphany of the Lord**

9:00 am Genevieve Zmuda  
Req. by Family

11:30 am Deceased Members  
Of St. Roch Parish

No Wee Worship



Today is the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and so we can celebrate that we all belong to the holy family of God which makes us brothers and sisters to each other.

Is there a family you know who needs assistance? Please call the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that together we can help the suffering and poor to celebrate Christ. St. Roch's Conference number is 734-778-2998

**Pastoral and Sacramental Guidelines**

**Baptism**

Infant baptisms are celebrated on the second Sunday of each month at 11:30 Mass (or after). Parents requesting baptism of their child or children must contact the parish office, be baptized (or at least one parent), registered and active members of the parish. They must attend a baptism class at least one month prior to the baptism. Newly registered members must wait three months prior to a request.



**Marriage**

Couples seeking to be married at St. Roch's must contact the pastor to secure a date, contacting him at least six months or more, prior to their desired date. One member of the party must be a baptized Catholic, active and registered at St. Roch's (or through their parents). The couple will then be instructed in the marriage preparation program. Non-Catholic members (of the party) or previously married members are not restricted from entering into marriage, so long as they are free to marry according to the laws of the Catholic Church.



**Anointing of the Sick**

Any member of the parish may be anointed prior to surgery, beginning therapies, suffering chronic illnesses, having reached old age and/or having been hospitalized. **This sacrament of healing is for the living (conscious and alert) and can be celebrated in church, at home or in the hospital.** Please contact the parish office for a visit to be arranged. Emergencies always take precedence.

**First Eucharist and Confirmation**

Please contact the Faith Formation Office for information regarding these initiation rites, requirements and subsequent celebrations.

**Reconciliation**

This healing sacrament is celebrated every Saturday afternoon at 3Pm in the church or by appointment.

**Catholic School Tuition Assistance**

St. Roch Parish is able to assist families who are active members of the Parish, with Catholic School tuition assistance. Contact Fr. Ray and or the Finance Council for more information.

**RCIA**

Are you thinkin of becoming a Catholic? Call Cheryl @ 734-782-4471 or e-mail her @ knappe@strochflatrock.com



**THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD /  
DECEMBER 25, 2021**



**First Reading:**

All the ends of the earth will behold the salvation of our God. (Is 52:10)



**Psalm:**

All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God. (Ps 98)



**Second Reading:**

In times past, God spoke in partial and various ways to our ancestors through the prophets; in these last days, he has spoken to us through the Son. (Heb 1:1-2)



**Gospel:**

And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. (Jn 1:14)

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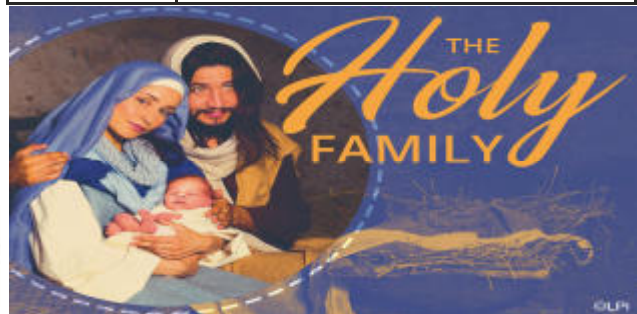
**PRAYER FOR  
MILITARY**

Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord and Savior, Amen



Please keep in prayer ALL the men & women serving in the military & coastguard. Especially these members of our Parish Community: Please let us know of current personnel in the Armed Services  
**Joseph Cooper, CDR US Navy**  
**Mark E. Bomia-LCDR, Navy**  
**John Taylor II, Tim Koscielny, USCG BM2**  
**Noah Holtschlag, USMC**  
**Mark Cordovado, Army**  
**Yahir Macias, Army**  
**Donald Puruleski, Army**

Time	Lector/EM Altar Server
January 1 10:00 am	<b>SATURDAY</b> Pam Munroe/Volunteer
January 2 9:00 am 11:30 am	<b>SUNDAY</b> Lana Cooper, Pat Kehoe/Mary Kehoe Joan Kowalski/Sara Tackett
January 8 4:00 pm	<b>SATURDAY</b> Chris Hensley/Judy Morgan
January 9 9:00 am 11:30am	<b>SUNDAY</b> Kelli Lambrix, Jessica Phillips/Virg Valmassoi Kevin Martin/Lilli Martin
January 15 4 pm	<b>SATURDAY</b> Gayle Malloy/Pat Vassel
January 16 9:00 am 11:30 am	<b>SUNDAY</b> Jay Otten, Mike Hojnowski/Gabe Tamburino Debra Meeks/Tari Lesperance
January 22 4:00 pm	<b>SATURDAY</b> Dan Harnum/Mary Jo Taschler
January 23 9:00 am 11:30am	<b>SUNDAY</b> Tim Stokes, Ed Suchyta/Fio Valmassoi Chris Snow/Lynn Nowicki
January 29 4:00 pm	<b>SATURDAY</b> Judy Morgan/Debbie Weise
January 30 9:00 am 11:30 am	<b>SUNDAY</b> Ed Suchyta, Kelli Lambrix/Tony Figuera Mike Holtschlag/Becky Matzo



**REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS**

Paul Adams  
 SFC Leonard Addams  
 Beverly Asper  
 Debbie Baron  
 Frank R. Beven  
 Janet Beven  
 Krista Bonesteel  
 Bill Bonkowski  
 Amy Bowling  
 Carla Brown  
 Wes & Noni Bulman  
 Victor Campbell  
 Victor Campbell, Jr.  
 David Coffey

Mike Cragg  
 Maxine Crandall  
 Joyce Downey  
 Marlene Elwell  
 Lori Ferguson  
 Sharon Fletcher  
 Rick Fournier  
 Cheryl (Mallon)-Gohlinghorst  
 Louise Griffiths  
 Tom Hartnett  
 Cheryl Hojnowski  
 Rachel Ivey  
 Barb Jennings  
 Rachael Jennings

Roseann Keenan  
 Mary Kehoe  
 Kay Kinsey  
 Cathleen Kornacki  
 Martha LaPrad  
 Tony Lloyd  
 Linda Mackay  
 Mary Ellen Maley  
 Dcn John Malloy  
 Colton McGowan  
 (Deacon Johns grandson)  
 Michael Michalak  
 George Messmore  
 Isabel Metty  
 Harold Peterson

Nick Peterson  
 John Piekarski  
 Barb Pierce  
 Eileen Przybylo  
 Dorothy Ransford  
 Paul Ransford  
 Joanne Rodzewicz  
 Brenda Roll  
 Jennifer Russell  
 Kevin Rzeppa  
 Pamela Sanderson  
 Tanya Setser  
 Hunter Simadon  
 Dolores Smith  
 Margaret Stamper

JulieAnne Steckel  
 Bruce Stevenson  
 Carol Stoughton  
 Tom & Susan Strong  
 Jennie Sute  
 Joanne Tamburino  
 Joshua Tate  
 Greg Tinsler  
 Carol Toporek  
 Mary Wellman  
 Ann Williams  
 Zelinske Family  
 Mary Ann Zukowski  
 David Zurawski, Sr.

**GOSPEL MEDITATION  
ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDER-  
STANDING OF SCRIPTURE**

December 25, 2021

**The Nativity of the Lord**

“He so loved us that for our sake He was made man in time, through Whom all times were made; was in the world less in years than His servants, though older than the world itself in His eternity; was made man, Who made man; was created of a mother, whom He created; was carried by hands which He formed; nursed at the breasts which He had filled; cried in the manger in wordless infancy, He the Word without Whom all human eloquence is mute (St. Augustine, Sermon 188).” The miracle of what happens at Christmas is truly an awesome mystery. Revealed in the silent ordinariness of life is God’s intimate love for humanity and all that he made. The Word, existing for all time, comes and dwells among us. God kisses us. We can seek and soar with playful delight as a joy never known before fills our heart.

Joy is best expressed through dance. There is just something truly wonderful about the self-abandon a beautiful melodic dance reveals. If we are able to let go and really be free, it celebrates life in a way few other experiences really can. With the birth of Jesus Christ, God takes the Divine Dance to a deeper and more tangible level. We can now not only see what we believe but believe what we see! This most perfect dance is a call to beauty, innocence, truth, purpose, hope, faith, and love. Today we know, beyond doubt, that we are a necessary part of God’s beautifully choreographed masterpiece of life and not just a random happening without real intent or purpose. We are loved, treasured, and blessed.

Accepting the truth of God’s birth in time we also accept an invitation to dance with God. We can let go of what tethers us to anxious concerns and superficial securities. Throw caution to the wind and go with God. We have been blessed with talents, gifts, and life eternal. Follow the rhythm of the dance with joy and listen to what the Word who became flesh tells us about what the next steps can be. Today, heaven remains the same, but earth has been profoundly changed. ©LPi



**LIVE THE LITURGY  
INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK**

Merry Christmas! There is something sacred about sun when it dances upon a field of newly iced snow. Lights and colors bounce around in myriad ways flashing prisms of beauty as if in tune with the rhythm of a melodic dance. The Word became flesh and now dwells among us. Humanity can now dance. We sparkle with the beauty and radiance of God and can now walk through life with confidence knowing that we have been divinely kissed. It is a sacred moment, a holy marriage between God and His sons and daughters. All is bright and all is well. Today we celebrate who we are in Christ and rest safely in God’s care. God’s presence, revealed in the humble birth of His Son, dances in our hearts, calling us to beauty, truth, purpose, and love. Today we know, without doubt, that we are not the product of the rambling offerings of a universe that created itself. We are loved, treasured, and blessed. We have a Savior who can show us the way. Accept him. ©LPi

**QUESTIONS FOR THE DAY**

**First Reading:**

The prophet Isaiah offered a song of praise in seeing the Lord’s return and the salvation of his people. How will you celebrate today the birth of the Messiah?

**Second Reading:**

The opening prologue of the Letter to the Hebrews is similar in poetic structure and theology to the prologue of the Gospel of John (today’s Gospel reading). Both texts place heavy emphasis on the divinity of Jesus. In the birth of Jesus where do you see his divinity present?

**Gospel:**

The opening prologue to the Gospel of John offers a beautiful portrait of Jesus: “And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” How does the celebration of Christmas help you sense God’s presence in the world? ©LPi

**EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP  
RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR  
ORDINARY MOMENTS**

**Stewardship Ties**

There is a lot of imagery around Christmas that has to do with adoption — or, more specifically, with a child being loved by another as if they belonged to that person and loved in such a profound way that in time, they do come to belong to that person.

We see this with Joseph and the infant Jesus. Joseph is not Jesus’ biological father. But through a series of actions, and through his faithfulness in small, everyday matters, Joseph becomes the foster father of Jesus.

Perhaps we are parents who have adopted children, or we ourselves were adopted. We have also seen how, through a series of actions of love and sacrifice, someone can become the parent of a person who is not their “blood.” A lot of times these families celebrate the day of the adoption. I’ve heard it called a “gotcha day,” and it’s marked joyously, like a birthday.

Most of us are not descended from the Israelites, God’s Chosen People. But through a series of extraordinary actions of love and sacrifice, God has made Himself our parent, too. And through our own actions, and through faithfulness in small and everyday matters, we are His children.

But in this family, instead of blood ties, we have stewardship ties. It’s not about who we look like, it’s about how we treat one another. How we take care of one another.

So this Christmas, let’s think about how we will celebrate our adoption. As much as it is Jesus’ birthday, it’s also our “gotcha day” — the day we received the gift of eternal family.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS ©LPi

**LIVE THE LITURGY - INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK**

It was the best of times and it was the worst of times. Our families can bring out the best and the worst in us. This is true of our families of origin, the current family of which we are a part, the family of our church, our society, and the like. In all of our family experiences, what stands out as our most challenging memory? Everything human can be found on the pages of family life. But there is also a Divine story to be discovered as well. When life gets difficult and perplexing, today’s Feast of the Holy Family stands to remind us that it is not just by human effort that we tread treacherous waters. We have to remember and learn from the Divine effort too. We need this perspective if our love lessons are going to be learned completely and well. We are all works in progress and we all come from homes that are broken by imperfection. In whatever life brings us and in whatever family we find ourselves, may the promptings we feel toward faith and hope lead us to greater love. ©LPi



## WHY DO WE DO THAT? CATHOLIC LIFE EXPLAINED

**Question:** Our parish has been focusing on issues of peace and justice. What are the principles that guide decision-making and social morality?

**Answer:** There are seven principals of Catholic social teaching that guide our sense of social morality. These seven key points are the hallmarks of a just society, moral laws, and good leadership. They help shape our social “conscience” and lead us to choose those things that characterize social justice. They are 1) respect for the life and dignity of the human person; 2) call to family, community, and participation; 3) rights and responsibilities; 4) a preferential option for the poor; 5) the dignity of work and the rights of workers; 6) solidarity; and 7) care for God’s creation.

Catholic social teaching has had a great influence in our history and continues to guide us well. We must value every person in all walks of life, but especially those who are weak, vulnerable, and least able to defend themselves. We cannot justify the ends with the means, so no life can ever be sacrificed for the sake of another. The basic necessities of life cannot be denied someone: food, shelter, clothing, and medical care. We can and must find ways to put into practice the Gospel values we preach and proclaim, so that all people can know and experience God’s love for them. That might be the greatest principle of all!



## THE HOLY FAMILY / DECEMBER 26,

### First Reading:

“I prayed for this child, and the LORD granted my request. Now I, in turn, give him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he shall be dedicated to the LORD.” (1 Sm 1:27-28)

### Psalm:

Blessed are they who dwell in your house, O Lord. (Ps 84)

### Second Reading:

See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. And so we are. (1 Jn 3:1)

### Gospel:

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. (Lk 2:46)

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 26, 2021

**Sunday: The Holy Family** Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 [cf. 1]/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Lk 2:41-52 or 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28/Ps 84:2-3, 5-6, 9-10 [cf. 5a]/1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24/Lk 2:41-52

**Monday: St. John, Apostle and Evangelist;** 1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 [12]/Jn 20:1a, 2-8

**Tuesday: The Holy Innocents, Martyrs;** 1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8 [7]/Mt 2:13-18

**Wednesday: St. Thomas Becket, Bishop and Martyr;** 1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6 [11a]/Lk 2:22-35

**Thursday:** 1 Jn 2:12-17/Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10 [11a]/Lk 2:36-40

**Friday: St. Sylvester I, Pope; New Year’s Eve;** 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13 [11a]/Jn 1:1-18

**Saturday: New Year’s Day; Mary, The Holy Mother of God; World Day of Peace;** Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 [2a]/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21

**Next Sunday: The Epiphany of the Lord; Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church;** Is 60:1-6/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13 [cf. 11]/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12 ©LPi

## EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

### All in the Family

At first glance, we can often find the image of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and the Christ Child intimidating — who are we to aspire to that level of discipleship? How could we ever hope to conform ourselves to that mold? Sometimes, it can even be painful — perhaps we hail from a broken family or struggle with a broken relationship within our family, or perhaps we long to be a mother or a father ourselves and that state in life has eluded us.

But the image of the Holy Family is, in reality, a beautiful invitation to us all, no matter our vocation or our state in life, and the example of Mary, Joseph and Jesus is rich with the symbolism of stewardship.

You need not be a biological mother who has carried a child in her womb to be a mother in spirit. Who in your world needs you to love them with the heart of a mother?

The same goes for fatherhood. The Church and the world are crying out for the courageous witness of Christian men like St. Joseph. Who can you love with the steadfast, selfless protection of a father?

Who in your life needs you to love them with the faithful, unconditional love of a son? Who needs your gentle and constant love as a daughter?

We are the Body of Christ, friends. Those of us rejoicing in heaven, those of us suffering in purgatory, and those of us struggling here on earth. We are the great family. Let us love each other well. — Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS ©LPi

## GOSPEL MEDITATION ENCOURAGE DEEPER

### UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

December 26, 2021

### The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Families can be very difficult things to negotiate. This is true not only of our families of origin, the current family of which we are a part, the family of our Church, our society, and our global family as well. Everything human can be found in family stories. Those stories speak of wonderful life-giving successes as well as painful spirit-robbing abuses. Our greatest joys and our greatest wounds are usually connected with the experience of family. Our needs, experiences, and unresolved baggage often color what we bring to our familiar relationships. They contribute to our level of defensiveness, how guarded and protected we become, and what prejudices we believe.

In order to break the cycle of dysfunction we have to remember that it is not only by human effort that we negotiate the difficult and challenging events of our lives. There is a Divine Effort at work as well. For sure, the human effort can create quite a mess and easily destroy lives. This is true of any family with which we are associated. Today’s Feast of the Holy Family serves to help us understand that there is a Divine Story being told as well. It is a story of perseverance in the face of hardship, determination in the face of despair, healing when we see nothing but wounds, and light where there is darkness.

Do we believe that God is always working, guiding, restoring, and leading? Unless we do, we will never be free from the imperfections and wounds that bind us and never be able to understand what it really means to forgive. Pope Francis tells us that the “light which comes from the Holy Family encourages us to offer human warmth to other families.” While this is most certainly true, we can only really begin to do this when we realize that we are still works in progress, not anchored to the wounds and sins of our past, and still a leading star in God’s continually unfolding story of love. The Holy Family persevered and radiated warmth because they knew they were not alone. We can too. ©LPi

SOUTHERN DOWNRIVER VICARIATE FAMILY OF PARISHES #3

Our Lady of the Woods, Woodhaven; Sacred Heart, Grosse Ile; St. Cyperian, Riverview; St. Joseph, Trenton; St. Timothy, Trenton; St. Roch, Flat Rock

ST. ROCH PASTORAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Diane Hepner; 734-789-1903 ; dimark7@att.net
Val Peterson; 734-787-1611 , vap48134@yahoo.com

ST ROCH FINANCE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Connie Gladhill; conmgld@att.net
Rolland Cooper; Rollandcooper@icloud.com

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

St. Vincent DePaul—734-778-2998
Meals on Wheels—734-789-7161

PARISH STAFF (734 782-4471) Office Hours M-F 9-12 and 1-4 (Fax # 782-5450)
email: stroch@strochflatrock.com Facebook.com/strochflatrock; web page strochflatrock.com

Pastor: Reverend Raymond H. Lewandowski, M. Div., M. A.
Deacon: Reverend Mr. John Malloy
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Faith Formation Director: Cheryl Knapp: knappe@strochflatrock.com
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