

St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

A PARISH OF THE WESTERN DIOCESE OF THE POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

January 2026

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40 Days of Christmas

(text adapted from *The Liturgical Year* by Abbott Gueranger)

A bit of history is below regarding the total celebration of 40 days of Christmas in the Catholic Church. It is always around the half-way point of January where the faithful wonder "Are we still doing Christmas stuff?!" Please enjoy the excerpt below that "colors in the numbers" of the 40 day celebration:



We apply the name of Christmas to the 40 days which begin with the Nativity of Our Lord, December 25, and end with *Candlemas*, the Purification/Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, February 2.

It is a period which forms a distinct portion of the Liturgical Year; as distinct, by its own special spirit, from every other, as are Advent, Lent, Easter or [Ordinary Time]. One same Mystery is celebrated and kept in view the whole 40 days. Neither the Feasts of the Saints, which so abound during this Season; nor the time of Septuagesima (Pre-Lent) which often begins before Christmastide is over, seem able to distract our Holy Mother the Church

from the immense joy of which She received the glad tidings from the Angels (Luke 2:10) on that glorious Night for which the world had been longing 4000 years.

The custom of celebrating the Solemnity of Our Savior's Nativity by a Feast or commemoration of 40 days' duration is founded on the Holy Gospel itself; for it tells us that the Blessed Virgin Mary, after spending 40 days in the contemplation of the Divine Fruit of Her glorious Maternity, went to the Temple, there to fulfill, in most perfect humility, the ceremonies which the Law demanded of the daughters of Israel, when they became mothers.

The Feast of Mary's Purification is, therefore, part of that of Jesus' Birth; and the custom of keeping this holy and glorious period of 40 days as one continued Festival has every appearance of being a very ancient one, at least in the Roman Church. And firstly, with regard to Our Savior's Birth on December 25, we have St. John Chrysostom telling us, in his Homily for this Feast, that the Western Churches had, from the very commencement of Christianity, kept it on this day.

He is not satisfied with merely mentioning the tradition; he undertakes to show that it is well founded, inasmuch as the Church of Rome had every means of knowing the true day of Our Savior's Birth; since the acts of the Enrollment, taken in Judea by command of Augustus, were kept in the public archives of Rome. The holy Doctor adduces a second argument, which he founds on the Gospel of St. Luke, and he reasons thus: we know from the sacred Scriptures that it must have been in the fast of the seventh month (Lev. 23, 24 et seq.) that the Priest Zachary had the vision in the Temple; after which Elizabeth, his wife, conceived St. John the Baptist (the 'seventh month'

Opening Article (cont)

corresponded to the end of our September and beginning of our October). Hence it follows that the Blessed Virgin Mary having, as the Evangelist St. Luke relates, received the Archangel Gabriel's visit, and conceived the Savior of the world in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, that is to say, in March, the Birth of Jesus must have taken place in the month of December.

But it was not till the fourth century that the Churches of the East began to keep the Feast of Our Savior's Birth in the month of December. Up to that period they had kept it at one time on the 6th of January, thus uniting it, under the generic term of Epiphany, with the manifestation of our Savior to the Magi, and in them to the Gentiles.

St. John Chrysostom, in the Homily we have just cited, which he gave in 386, tells us that the Roman custom of celebrating the

Birth of Our Savior on December 25 had then only been observed ten years in the Church of Antioch. It is probable that this change had been introduced in obedience to the wishes of the Apostolic See, wishes which received additional weight by the edict of the Emperors Theodosius and Valentinian, which appeared towards the close of the fourth century, and decreed that the Nativity and Epiphany of Our Lord should be made two distinct Festivals.

The Feast of Our Lady's Purification, with which the 40 days of Christmas close, is in the [Western] Church of very great antiquity; so ancient, indeed, as to preclude the possibility of our fixing the date of its institution.

According to the unanimous opinion of Liturgists, it is the most ancient of all the Feasts of the Holy Mother of God; and as Her Purification is related in the Gospel itself, they rightly infer that its anniver-

sary was solemnized at the very commencement of Christianity. Of course, this is only to be understood of the Western Church; for as regards the Oriental Church, we find that this Feast was not definitely fixed to February 2 until the reign of the Emperor Justinian, in

What Is Candlemas?



Candlemas is a Christian holiday celebrated on February 2, marking the presentation of Jesus at the Temple (Luke 2:22-40) and the purification of Mary, forty days after

Christ's birth. Traditionally, it involves the blessing of candles, symbolizing Christ as the Light of the World. Though not widely observed in all denominations today, it remains a reminder of Jesus' fulfillment of the Law and His revelation as the Messiah



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Various Announcements

CANON – For all of January, we will use the 1st Eucharistic Prayer, based on the Tridentine Canon of the Mass, on p. 77.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS – Results from the parish Election of Officers Meeting: Parish Chair: Susan Boehnlein; 1st Vice - Gene Stepanik; 2nd Vice - Mike Wisniewski; Treasurer - Cherie Kugler; Fin. Sec - Pattie Dotson; Rec. Sec - Patty Temesi. Directors: Jim Boehnlein, Carol D'Arcy, Ron Ference, Steve Fesz, Tom Kugler, Stella Pietka, Elaine Repede, Chuck Repede, John Spilka, Barb Wisniewski. Auditors: Barb Bogzevitz, Debbie Moritz, Elaine Ploskonka & Nancy Roharik; Seniorate Representatives: Barb Bogzevitz, Pattie Dotson, Elaine Ploskonka; Parish Tribunal: Bill Zychowski.

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING – We plan to have the Annual Meeting on January 25 – please set aside time that morning for our parish of St. Mary's.

SCHEDULING MASSES – Fr. Jason is now scheduling Masses for 2026. You may offer a Mass for a departed loved one, for the health or in honor of someone who is living.

MONDAY REPORT – thank you to everyone who spent time at St. Mary's this past Monday, January 12, to take down a portion of Christmas as well as to bag-and-tag the clothing from annual

YMSofR Clothing Collection. The work was completed in a timely manner and volunteers enjoyed some pizza and wings to close out a half-of-a-Monday together.

EPIPHANY – Throughout January, Fr. Jason will visit and bless homes of parishioners upon request – please speak to him after Mass, call/text/email him to make an appointment.

ADORATION – Friday, January 9, a one-hour Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament was held, with the Holy Hour of St. Augustine as the guide. On Friday, February 6, a Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament will once again take place. This one, beside the prayers to expose and reserve the sacrament, will be silent, but printed materials will be provided for the faithful. Please consider offering time before the Sacrament – this will be taking place monthly in 2026 and at different times of day.

JANUARY 11 THANKS – Appreciation for everyone who stayed after Holy Mass on January 11th for a pancake breakfast. Our time together began with the blessing of a prayer blanket for our sister Carmen Torres, and oplatek (Christmas Wafers) were shared amongst the parish chair Susan, Fr. Jason, and all of the attendees. Blessings to our incredibly handsome kitchen crew of Steve, Tom,

and Jim, as well as all of those who set up, prepped, cleaned, etc.

CHRISTMAS CARDS – The PTO's Card drop off concludes shortly, and there are still a few envelopes for people to pick up – pop by the card stand and check your envelopes...or make some belated deliveries!

PARISH ORGANIZATIONS – The heads of each parish organization are reminded to submit a summary report of the 2025 year in time for our Annual Meeting. We also remind organizations that their books must be audited before then – A reminder that an audit must be done by someone from outside the organization. Please see parish chair Susan if you have any questions or concerns or need someone to provide an audit.

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP – Info for scholarships from the National United Choirs is available by talking to Chris Paulus or Fr. Jim.

SOCK TREE – Thank you to everyone who submitted new socks, hats, and gloves/mittens to the beautiful sock tree. There were a few blankets as well, and they all have been donated.

PARISH ENVELOPES – Are available after Holy Mass today by stopping by the Board Room.

Scheduled Mass Intentions at St. Mary's

Jan 4 – Open Intention

Jan 11 – Robert Kontur of. by Edyta Schwartz

Jan 18 – Dorothy Ewanko (14th Anv.) of. by daughter Cathy Avondet

Jan 25 – Very Rev. Joseph Soltysiak of. by Arlene Swantek

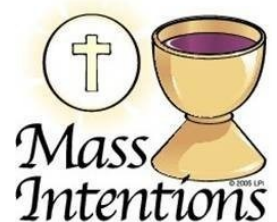
Feb 1 – Sophie & Martin Szpilka of. by John Spilka

Feb 8 – Rt. Rev. Jan & Anna Dawidziuk and Wojciech Fedorowicz of. by daughter/niece Elizabeth Starnawski

Feb 15 – Walter Stepanik of. by son Gene Stepanik

Feb 22 – Open Intention

Fr. Jason is now scheduling Mass intentions for 2026— Sunday Masses open for intentions next 6 months: Feb. 22; Mar. 8, 29; May 3, 24, 31; July 5, 19, 26.



January Days of Note



January Birthdays

- | | |
|----|--------------------|
| 1 | Barbara Wisniewski |
| 2 | Murphy Bengston |
| 5 | Jeffery Tiffe |
| 6 | Katie Repede |
| 7 | Pattie Dotson |
| | Natalie Soltysiak |
| 8 | Mak Mak Petrella |
| 12 | John Kasperczyk |
| 21 | Cheryl DeCara |
| 22 | John Kobalka |
| | Tom Kugler |
| 23 | Pete Moritz |

January Anniversaries

- | | |
|----|------------------------|
| 7 | Andre & Audrey Spanjol |
| 24 | Mike & Barb Wisniewski |
| 24 | Rick & Julie Koehler |



*Have we missed a birthday or anniversary? Just give us a shout so we can fix any errors that have been made :-)
We also will be going around the Fellowship Hall in the coming weeks looking to update parish information*

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You Tube Channel

"Another Year is Dawning"

A poem for the New Year

Another year is dawning,
Dear Master, let it be,
In working, or in waiting,
Another year with Thee.
Another year of mercies,
Of faithfulness and grace;
Another year of gladness
In the shining of Thy face.
Another year of progress,
Another year of praise,
Another year of proving
Thy presence all the days.
Another year of service,
Of witness of Thy love,
Another year of training
For holier work above.
Another year is dawning,
Dear Master, let it be
On earth, or else in heaven
Another year for Thee.

—Francis Ridley Havergal (1874)

Our Prayer List

Praying for St. Mary's Parishioners & Friends

Bill & Pat Glatzer	Bob Kaczmarek
Bill Kastak	Gail Perz
George Makovicka	John Spilka
Johanna Markiewicz	Patrick Kmitt
Eddie Kawa	Lucy-Louise Hoegler
Marty Bengela	Tom Putynski
Jeff Pardy	Millie Dominik
Kathleen Beres	Mike Paulus
Donna Micka	Ron Ference
Ed Pierson	George Bennett
Florence Nemkovich	Pattie Dotson
Nicole McGivern	Jack Spilka
Elaine Repede	David Vaden
Wanda Clark	Beth Chihill
Michael Cosevin	Helen Cummings
Laina Dachtal	Michael McGivern
Jay Grabowsky	Carmen Torres
Cecelia Hall	Caroline Kunes
Linda Marks	Thomas Lill
John & Anne Nemetz	Rhonda Smith
Al Piniecki	Carol Boesch
Joanie True	Daniel Rinella
Penny Dennison	Tom Slomka
Pete James	Tom Pietka
Pam Tropiano	Linda Vect
Dennis and Sue Vect	Marcus Vaughn, Jr.
Bryson Dzuroff	Carl Neutzling
Doreen Stanley	Jane Hunter
Dennis Thome	The Finnie Family
Carlene Fliss	Jim Fliss Jr.
Josephine Ference	Cathy Pieciak
Nan Cramer	Jim Lukas
Sage McLane	Dave Tuma
Phil Repko	Shyanna Tiller
Jim Giles	Kathleen Sobocinski
Bill Zychowski	Loretta Baldwin
Donna Kidd	Paulette Lilli
Joseph Zubel	Margaret & Lew Heifner
Marilyn Girard	Courtney Austin
Stephanie Milla	Shannon Alberino
Jayden Pieciak	Joyce Zeigler
Sam Bass	Katie Stallbaum
Marcia Klein	Kim Penney
Laurie Slominski	Amanda Monyak
Roseanne & George Ziefle	Judy Alexin
Connie Benko	Joe Litto
Matthew Penney	Diane Ellis
Kenneth Parks	John Beno

WE ALSO REMEMBER

ALL ACTIVE & RETIRED CLERGY
ALL SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

Bless them, O Lord.



Do your New Year's Resolutions the Catholic way
St. Ignatius' Examen

1. Become aware of God's presence.
2. Review the year with gratitude.
3. Pay attention to your emotions.
4. Choose a recurring theme, pray from it.
5. Look toward tomorrow.