

St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

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

January 2024

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What was Jesus' Last Name?

A few weeks ago, my son asked me what Jesus' last name was. Was it Christ?

I gave him an answer that he found satisfactory enough to move on. I thought about it once again at our family Christmas Eve Dinner, which we were blessed to share with my in-laws. Unprompted, Brady announced "If anyone has any questions about Christ, you can ask me now!"

Giving credit to his SOCL teacher, Mrs. Barb Bogzevitz, he fielded a number of questions from each of us, learning a few new things on the way. We enjoyed our meatless dinner (can I still call it "Wigilia" when the main course was penne with vodka sauce?) and, over the next day, a full and wonderful Christmas celebration at church and at home.

On January 1 & 2, the Church celebrates two specific Solemnities in the life of Christ, but each focus of the solemnity occurs within moments of each other in the life of Jesus: the 1st is the Solemnity of the Circumcision, which follows the traditions and covenant with the Jewish people and God; and the 2nd is the Holy Name of Jesus, where "the name above all names" is elevated.

While I heartily enjoy reflecting on the power of the name of God – the scripture that highlights those moments are quite powerful – I was drawn back to something I read earlier on in Advent – how the name "Jesus", though given by the angel to Mary, was a simple and common name for a Jewish boy at that time. It was as if an angel came to a young girl today and told her that her son would be one for the ages, a Messiah, Son of God, destined for greatness....so, name him Keith.

No offense to any Keiths (a name chosen because no men from this parish are named this!), but it always seemed like an odd match; a common name with a great destiny. Nominative Determinism is the phrase that speaks to how people tend to gravitate towards areas of work that fit their names. The examples of this are fun: Usain Bolt – the fastest man alive; Scott Speed – race car driver; Storm Field – meteorologist; Prince & Cecil Fielder – father & son MLB 1st Basemen; and Lieutenant General Sir Manley Power in the 18th century to Lance Corporal Rad Heroman – men whose destiny was always in the military.

Jesus, and others in that time, carried no last name. They would be recognized by their parents (Jesus, son of Mary/Joseph) or geography (Jesus, of Nazareth). Jesus'

JESUS
NAME
ABOVE
ALL NAMES
Philippians 2:9

name was common, and commonly Romanized as Yeshua, or for our clearest translation today, Joshua. Jesus comes from the transliteration of Yeshua into Greek and then English, as the New Testament was written in Greek first, then translated into other languages.

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, or perhaps in portions of Aramaic. The longer version of the "Joshua" name appears a few hundred times in the Old Testament, most famously to the conqueror of Jericho. So why do we call the Hebrew hero of Jericho Joshua and the Christian Messiah Jesus?

Greeks did not use the sound sh, so the evangelists substituted an S sound. Then, to make it a masculine name, they added another S sound at the end. The earliest written version of the name Jesus is Romanized today as Iesous. (Thus the crucifix inscription INRI: "Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum," or "Jesus of Nazareth, King

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Opening Article (Con't)

of the Jews.”) The J did not even replace the I to begin His holy name until just a few hundred years ago – it became implicit to most readers.

Of course, the name was made holy because of all the underlying titles. Isaiah 9:6 said “And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Father, Prince of Peace”. Isaiah 7:14 said “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.” And this came to fruition in Matthew 1:23, when

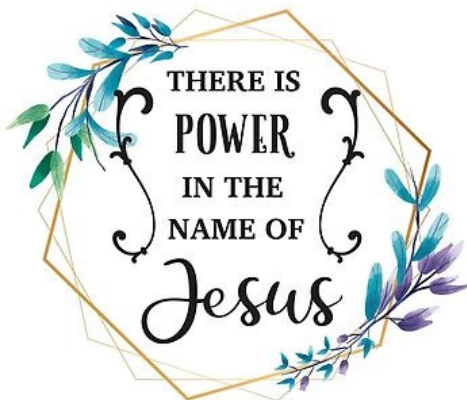
the angel said “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

When Moses asked what the Israelites should call the Lord, Exodus 3:14 said “God said to Moses, “ I AM WHO I AM . This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘ I AM has sent me to you.’ ” And, in John 18:4-6, we see the full power of everything that makes up the strength of the Holy Name: Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, “Who is it you want?” “Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “I AM he,” Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) When Jesus said, “I AM he,” they drew back and fell to the ground.”

All of that makes “the name.” St. Paul infamously wrote to the Philippians (2:10-11) “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that

every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

This message repeats often throughout the Mass for the Holy Name of Jesus. It is why you'll always notice the clergy in the sanctuary bowing at each pronouncement of the Holy Name. Maybe Jesus had no official last name, but his first name certainly carried more than enough weight! Fr. Jason



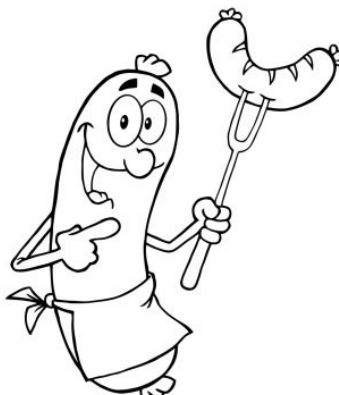
Prince of Peace
Jesus Messiah
Redeemer Holy
King of Kings One
Wonderful Counselor
Jehovah SAVIOR
Awesome Lord A
Immanuel WORK
Living Water
MOST HIGH GOD

Kielbasa Making

The choir continued its Advent Tradition of providing the sale of fresh kielbasa for parishioners and friends alike. On Saturday, December 2, choir members and

helpers came together for a hectic and fellowship-rich morning of kielbasa preparation. Hundreds of pounds of kielbasa

packages were prepared and sold for people to get ready for the holidays.



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1st Sunday of Advent

The First Sunday of Advent was quite a hopping day at our parish of St. Mary's. Our season kicked off with the blessing of the Advent Wreath by Fr. Jim and the prayers of lighting the first Advent Candle by Fr. Greg. Mass concluded with the clergy offering treats that were pre-delivered by St. Nicholas, (with help from the Love of God Sodality) honoring his December 6th Feast Day.

Fr. Jason, pastor of St. Mary's, along with Fr. Greg Gronn (retired) and Fr. Jim Ploskonka (reserve) put their minds together during the month of November to set up an Advent Retreat titled "The Shortest Advent Ever".

The event took place after 9am Holy Mass. There were 5 mini-sessions: "History of Advent" by Fr. Gronn, "Introduction to the Gospel of Mark" and "Prophecy of the Baptist" by Fr. Ploskonka, and "Anticipation & Hope: The Themes" and "Advent Traditions Across the World" by Fr. Soltysiak.

The Retreat was designed to be the "shortest Advent Retreat ever", beginning at 10:45am and concluding at noon. The event followed the schedule a little loose-

ly, but concluding sharply on time. Input from parishioners expressed a desire for a similar event by the priests for the upcoming Lenten Season. All the feedback was appreciated as the priests continue to find ways to minister to God's people.



2nd Sunday of Advent

The Second Sunday of Advent featured the prayers of the lighting of the 2nd Advent Candle and the introduction to John the Baptist during 9am Holy Mass as well as a blessing of the oplatek. After Mass, parishioners responded to the call to exercise their democratic right in the Polish National Catholic Church to elect leadership.

Parish Chair Susan Boehnlein called the meeting to order and shortly after, turned the election of officers portion to Fr. Jason. Those serving as parish executives were re-elected without opposition. Many desired to serve as director, and an election spelled out the twelve who were

chosen to serve the parish in 2024. Auditors, a Tribunal Member, and Seniorate Representatives were elected as well.

Thank you to all who attended this important meeting of our parish. The Installation took place at the New Year's Eve Holy Mass at 9am. See page 6 of this newsletter.



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Cookie Sale

St. Mary's held a Cookie Sale on Saturday December 16 in the parish Fellowship Hall. After some advertising on Facebook, the word reached a number of people, with over 30 shoppers waiting in line as our doors opened at 11am.

Thousands of cookies were baked and ready for friends to come by and purchase them by the pound, whatever flavor they desired. There were about two dozen varieties. Patrons were thrilled with the setup, price, and variety. Of the thousands of cookies baked for the day, only a couple dozen were left, which were donated to our Saturday AA group to share.

Thank you to everyone who took part in this event. People were excited for next year's iteration already. Appreciation to all of our bakers, decorators, organizers, and patrons.

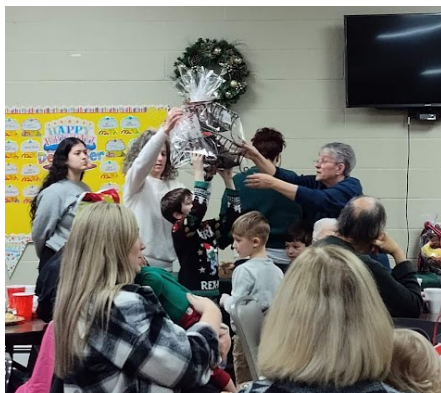


3rd Sunday of Advent

The 3rd Sunday of Advent was celebrated with rose vestments and began with 9am Holy Mass. Fr. Greg offered the prayers over the 3rd Advent Candle, with acolyte Chuck Repede lighting.

The PTO then held its annual Christmas Party and Basket Raffle after 9am Mass. The food was plentiful; the camaraderie was excellent, and the big guy himself, Santa Claus, joined us for some photo opportunities and to provide a few gifts for our parish children. The (awesome!!!) basket raffle was held to conclude the event, with an array of fabulous baskets (thank you Marge!) raffled off to our parishion-

ers. Thank you, as always, to the O'Connor and Moritz families for leading the charge this Sunday and to all else who participated.



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Christmas Eve & Day 2023

The 4th Sunday of Advent was our first celebration on the morning of December 24. Fr. Greg led the prayers over the 4th Candle and an Advent Penitential service preceded 9am Mass. There was no coffee hour after Mass, and after some final decorating was done for the Christmas Services, we were on our way.

After many enjoyed family and friends throughout the day, we had a nice crowd arrive first for the 11:30pm Choir Concert of Carols. Our organist and choir director, Christine Paulus, put in no little extra effort this year, holding multiple rehearsals weekly for almost two months. The choir sounded wonderful, with many favorites and some new tunes sang for the congregation's appreciation.

Midnight Mass began in darkness and gave way to the lighting of the Christ Candle in the middle of the Advent Wreath, along with the blessing of the Manger. Fr. Jason

and Fr. Greg served as con-celebrants of a High Holy Mass, with Chuck Repede assisting. The spirit was strong throughout Mass.

For the first time in many decades, a get-together was held after Midnight Mass. Cookies, kielbasa, coffee, and some light adult beverages were served to anyone who wanted to pop in. Everyone who partook did so with a smile and well into the 2 o'clock hour.

Finally, 10am Mass closed out our Christmas celebrations. It was held in the Traditional Rite and as a High Holy Mass as well, celebrated once again by Fr. Jason and Fr. Greg. Christmastime services continued throughout the week, with Masses for St. Stephen's Day, St. John's Day, Holy Innocents and Holy Family taking place.



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Food Ministry

Happy New Year!

Another busy month for St Mary's Food Ministry- we served 370 meals for the month of December! This brought our total for 2023 to 4,682!

Food ministry volunteers are welcome to join us every Wednesday. We have a blast each week sharing stories and enjoying each other's company while

preparing the meals. If you can donate just 2 hours a week or even just 2 hours a month please see Cathy Avondet, Nancy Roharik or Patty Bennett.

For I was *hungry*
and you gave me food
I was *thirsty*
and you gave me drink
Matthew 25:35-40



Fr. Jim Travels

Fr. Jim Ploskonka spent the closing weekends of 2023 ministering to the parish of All Saints in Sterling Hts., MI.

This included serving as celebrant of Mass on Sunday morning, December 24th for the 4th Sunday of Advent, Evening Mass on Christmas Eve, and Holy Mass of Christmas Day.

After spending most of the week in Ohio, it was back to Michigan to offer Holy Mass on Sunday, December 31st on the Solemnity of Humble Shepherds as well as for New Years Day on Monday. Continued prayers for our clergy and our sister PNCC parishes.



Installation of Parish Committee

Those elected at our December 10 special Parish Meeting were called forward during our 9am Holy Mass on Sunday, December 31 for the formal installation.

Lector Bruce Bogzevitz invited those elected forward during the Prayers of Intercession. Fr. Jason addressed the elected, with newly-elected Parish Chair verifying with words from the Ritual that those present were representative of the election.

Those who were elected and called forward were:
Chair: Susan Boehnlein; 1st Vice: Gene Stepanik; 2nd Vice: Mike Wisniewski; Secretary: Patty Temesi; Treasurer: Cherie Kugler; Fin. Secretary: Pattie Dotson. Directors: Cathy Avondet, Jim Boehnlein, Carole D'Arcy, Josephine Ference, Ron Ference, Steve Fesz, Tom Kugler, Stella Pietka, Elaine Ploskonka, Charles Repede, Elaine Repede, Barb Wisniewski. Parish Tribunal: Bill Zy-

chowski. Seniorate Representatives: Elaine Ploskonka, Charles Repede, Barb Bogzevitz. Auditors: Mark Avondet, George Bennet, Barb Bogzevitz, Nancy Roharik.

Blessings to everyone who will serve our Lord and Savior and our parish of St. Mary's. For those few who missed the formal installation and oath of office, this will be done at the next monthly meeting of the parish committee.



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Various Announcements

CANON –For all Sundays in January, we will use the 2nd Eucharistic Prayer on p. 82, the Canon of St. Hippolytus.

THANK YOU! – To everyone for making Christmas 2023 beautiful and memorable. There was a little bit of a wonky schedule concerning set up for Christmas, but everyone came through – thank you! Appreciation as well for the wonderful idea to share fellowship after the Midnight Mass – a good amount of people enjoyed and shared Christmas joy – what a blessing!

FR. JIM–In his weekly Mass celebrations (Usually Thursdays at 8am) throughout 2024, he will be remembering the parishes and pastors of the Western Diocese – you'll see these noted in the weekly schedule.

FOOD COLLECTION–Thank you for all donations! We'll do another in Lent!

SCHEDULING MASSES – Fr. Jason is now scheduling Masses for 2024. You may offer a Mass for the health or in honor of someone who is living, per-

haps for a particular life event, or you may offer Mass for one who is now living in Heaven. These can be offered at anytime, but often coincide with the day they left this world, a birthday, anniversary, etc.

PARISH ENVELOPES – For 2024 are available – pick yours up!

CLOTHES COLLECTION –The YMSofR Clothing Collection will conclude shortly. Great news, as we are overflowing! The YMSofR will gather after 9am Mass on Monday, January 15th to count and collate the items. Volunteers are welcome to help – lunch will be provided.

OPLATKI – Keep eating any oplatki you brought home! Since it is blessed, you are to use all of what you take and are not to throw any of it in the trash.

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

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING –We tentatively plan to have the Annual Meeting on January 28 – please set aside time that morning for our parish of St.

Mary's.

SAVE THE DATE – St. Mary's will be hosting the National PNCC Bowling Tournament for the first time in over a decade! It will be Memorial Day Weekend, with bowling on May 25.

EPIPHANY – Mass was celebrated this past Saturday for this great Solemnity in the life of the church. 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.

WIGILIA FUNDRAISER–Many thanks to everyone who participated in our now-annual take-home Wigilia Fundraiser. Thanks goes to purchasers, chefs, those who shared on social media, those who packaged items, took orders, waited on order day for customers to arrive, and everything in-between. The “hosting” of this fundraiser rotates among parish groups each year. A real blessing!

SOCK TREE- The Mission Team's sock (and more) tree looks great! Did you chip in any new socks, hats, or gloves?



Scheduled Mass Intentions at St. Mary's

January 7 – Open Intention

January 14 – Open Intention

January 21 – Dorothy Ewanko (12th An.) of. by daughter Cathy Avondet

January 28 – Kayla Gus-Garcia (1st An.) of. by Kathleen Beres & family

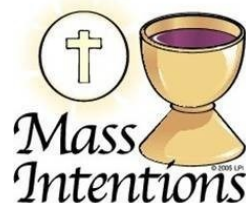
February 4 – Sophie & Martin Szpilka of. by son John Spilka

February 11 — Open Intention

February 18– Open Intention

February 25 – Helen Kasperczyk (birthday) of. by John & Eileen Kasperczyk & family

1st Half 2024 Open: Jan. 7, 14; Feb. 11, 18; Mar. 24.; May 12, 26; June 16, 23, 30



January Days of Note



January Birthdays

- 1 Barbara Wisniewski
- 5 Jeffrey Tiffe
- 6 Katie Repede
- 7 Patti Dotson
- 7 Natalie Soltysiak
- 8 Mak Mak Petrella
- 12 John Kasperczyk
- 22 John Kobalka
- Tom Kugler
- Anna Dawidziuk
- 23 Pete Moritz



January Anniversaries

- 7 Andre & Audrey Spanjol
- 24 Mike & Barb Wisniewski

Have we missed a birthday or anniversary? Just give us a shout so we can fix any errors that have been made :-)

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"A New Year's Poem"

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light;
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow;
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rimes
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

By Lord Alfred Tennyson
(1809-1892)

Our Prayer List

Praying for St. Mary's Parishioners & Friends

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Bill & Pat Glatzer | Bob Kaczmarek |
| Bill Kastak | Anna Dawidziuk |
| George Makovicka | John Spilka |
| Johanna Markiewicz | Patrick Kmitt |
| Jim Boehnlein | Sauna Smullen |
| Marty Bengela | Tom Putynski |
| Jeff Pardy | Millie Dominik |
| Kathleen Beres | Joseph Bischoff |
| David Micka | Jeff Lukas |
| Ed Pierson | George Bennett |
| Daniel Morgan | Pattie Dotson |
| Nicole McGivern | Jack Spilka |
| Elaine Repede | David Vaden |
| Wanda Clark | Beth Chihill |
| Michael Cosevin | Helen Cummings |
| Laina Dachtal | Michael McGivern |
| Jay Grabowsky | Pam Chesar |
| 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 |
| Wojciech Fedorowicz | Ben Soltis |
| Pam Tropiano | Linda Vect |
| Dennis and Sue Vect | Marcus Vaughn, Jr. |
| Bryson Dzuroff | Fr. Sr. Joseph Soltysiak |
| Doreen Stanley | Jane Hunter |
| Dennis Thome | The Finnie Family |
| Carlene Fliss | Jim Fliss Jr. |
| John Wisniewski | Cathy Pieciak |
| Nan Cramer | Barb & Jim Lukas |
| Mike Pescitelli | Kathy Robertson |
| Phil Repko | Richard & Edna Samelson |
| 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 |
| Dan Ewanko | Amanda Monyak |
| Roseanne & George Ziefle | Judy Alexin |
| Greg Hodor | Phil Symons |
| Karsen Winters | |

WE ALSO REMEMBER
ALL ACTIVE & RETIRED CLERGY
ALL SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN
Bless them, O Lord.

