



Dawn Breaks Upon Us

The Sun of Justice spreads his warming rays across a dark and icy world. The images of the Christmas season evoke liberation from oppressive times. They announce new life and a new order of things. “Justice and peace embrace.” It is a welcome message at all times, but particularly this year, the fourth since the Great Recession began.

While the official unemployment figures have only just dropped below 9 percent, the unofficial figure may be 16 percent or higher. Recent college graduates cannot find jobs. Discouraged workers have spent years looking for new work without securing it. Many seniors have either lost their pension benefits or have to make due with diminished savings. Governments and families are tightening their belts. Anxiety haunts the land. We sorely need Christ, the Light of the Nations, to shine into our lives.

Christmas is intended for everyone, but it has a special relevance for the poor and oppressed, for God “lifts up the lowly.” According to the Gospels, Mary identifies herself as a “lowly handmaid.” The shepherds in the Judean hills to whom the angels reveal the good news live on the edge of Israelite society. The Holy Family has to seek out makeshift shelter for the Savior’s birth and then, as refugees, find asylum in Egypt. Later, Jesus begins his own ministry proclaiming “good news to the poor,” and his very first blessings are for the poor and the landless (the meek). These details of the Gospels are intended to speak to the poor but also to draw the rest of us into their company as the new family of God.

It’s time for us to strengthen our bonds of solidarity with the poor, to join in God’s work of “raising up the lowly”. In the United States of 2011, this solidarity is needed more than ever. New York City is attempting to deny access for single adults to city shelters unless they can prove they have no place else to go. In Maine, where 80% of homes are heated by oil, a 60% cut in federal subsidies for home heating fuel this year will expose the state’s sizable poor population to the cruelties of a Northeast winter. Using deceptive practices and robo-signing legal papers, banks foreclosed illegally on thousands of homes. After three years of economic distress, we can hardly speak any longer of “a social safety net.” For the poor and resourceless, it is “every man for himself.”

In an environment so hostile to the poor and working people, what can be done to lift up the lowly? How can we participate in Christ’s liberation of the oppressed? First, even as we try to rebuild a

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Dawn Breaks Upon Us

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dangerously unstable economy, we must resist every effort to blame the victims, whether the poor, workers or Occupy protesters, and instead create a public ethos that favors the common good.

Second, we should demand that government redirect needed spending cuts away from programs for the poor and take them instead from expensive giveaways to commodity producers, hedgefund managers and extravagant purchases of military hardware. If that is not enough, government can institute a Tobin tax on financial transactions, as the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace recently proposed, to fund poverty reduction and economic development.

Last, we can promote economic policies that, unlike those of the last 30 years, hold economic inequalities in check. For decades now the German social market economy has succeeded in producing prosperity with justice. We should be able to do the same in the United States.

For some years it has been fashionable to depoliticize the Gospel, to make Christ's saving work solely a spiritual liberation from personal sin. In the history of Israel, however, religion and social justice were intermingled. The sin condemned by the prophets was social sin, and God's fidelity to Israel was conditioned on people and king upholding justice in the land. The infancy narratives echo those same themes. Luke's Magnificat holds a message of political renewal:

*He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
and exalted those of low degree;
He has filled the hungry with good things;
the rich he has sent empty away.*

Details of Matthew's Gospel, like Herod's fear of John the Baptist and the massacre of the innocents, set Jesus' birth and public ministry amid a political struggle. Taking up the challenge of social responsibility, therefore, is integral to full faith in the Incarnation. For, as the psalm of the Christmas Mass at Dawn declares:

*Light dawns for the just; and gladness for the upright of heart.
Be glad in the Lord, you just, and give thanks to his holy name.*

By the editors of America Magazine, reprinted from Americamagazine.org.

Stuff for Your Sweetie

A great *Valentine's Dinner, Dance & Auction* in the ARK will be held on Saturday, February 11th. Singles, couples, friends, lovers ... everyone is welcome! Building on last year's popularity, we will once again include a fabulous silent auction with a variety of gifts and services. Proceeds will benefit the ARC, the St. Ambrose Rebuilding Campaign. Individual reservations (no table reservations) will be taken beginning Wednesday, January 11th.

To make the auction as fabulous as last year's, we again need your help. Would you please consider donating to the silent auction? Maybe it's something you got as a gift for Christmas that you really don't like or need! Start gleaning some treasures from your collections to offer for the event. Obviously, the high-end items produce more revenue for the parish, with vacation packages, antiques, jewelry and sports tickets and memorabilia selling particularly well. Written appraisals and donation letters can be given for high-end items that may be used as a deduction for tax purposes. To discuss donations or to arrange for pick-up or delivery, contact Bob or Jan at (313) 885-4784. To make a donation, or to ask auction questions, call Bob or Jan Ramsey at 313-885-4784



Name

Home Phone

Work Phone

Email Address

- I would simply like to learn more about the Catholic Faith.
- I desire to prepare for my Baptism into Christianity.
- I've been Baptized as a Christian and now desire to join in Catholic Communion.
- I'm non-Catholic, but married to a Catholic, and now wish to join the Catholic Church.
- I'm Catholic and I would like to complete my initiation into the Catholic Church by celebrating Confirmation and/or Communion.
- I'm Baptized Catholic and would like to learn more about my faith and how to practice it.
- I want to propose someone for Catholic Church membership and offer to serve as their sponsor.
- I would be willing to help with an R.C.I.A. program.
- I have other needs, requests, and questions. Please contact me.

Return this to the Parish Rectory or place it in the Collection basket.

All Things Considered

It was just after the 7:00 a.m. Christmas Day mass had finished and worshippers were leaving out the front door when the first explosion struck at St. Theresa Catholic Church in Lagos, Nigeria. That attack killed 35 people and wounded another 52.

This was only the most recently publicized attack on Christians. In the year 2011, on average, a Christian, somewhere in the world, was martyred every five minutes — killed because of their faith.

Zenit.org and CatholicCulture.org reported this alarming statistic in a presentation by **Massimo Introvigne** of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe that he gave this summer at the International Conference on Inter-religious Dialogue Between Christians, Jews and Muslims. Introvigne told the conference that the number of Christians killed every year for their faith is about 105,000. And these are only the ones who were put to death because they were Christians. It does not include those killed as victims of war. That is between 287 and 288 martyrs per day: twelve per hour, or one every five minutes.

It was a surprise to me to learn that more Christians have been killed for their faith in modern times than during the early three centuries of ancient Roman persecution. Introvigne, writing for the Center for Studies on New Religions website, explains more behind the numbers. Using statistics from **David Barrett** and the Center for the Study of Global Christianity, he notes that from AD 30 to 2000, 70 million Christians died as martyrs. The majority of those martyrs were *not* in ancient times. There were 45 million Christian martyrs in the 20th century alone.

Introvigne emphasized these figures “exclude those killed for na-

tional, ethnic or political reasons who just happened to be Christian — only those who were killed because of their being Christian.”

And who are the perpetrators of all this killing? Barrett’s figures attribute 31.6 million of those 70 million Christian martyrs to atheist persecutors. Muslims killed another 9.1 million Christians. Another way they broke it down was that 63.9 million of the deaths were at the hands of non-Christians and 5.5 million were from other Christians.

Today on the first day of the New Year, we celebrate a World Day of Peace. Since **Pope Paul VI** established the practice in 1969, his successors have used the first day of the New Year to issue a call for prayer and renewed activity in the pursuit of peace — political and religious.

On Christmas Day, in the wake of the Nigerian massacre, **Pope Benedict XVI** issued a strong cry, saying: “In this time of ours, in this world of ours, may the oppressors’ rods, the cloaks rolled in blood and the foot gear of battle be burned, so that God’s peace may triumph in this world of ours!”

The 2011 World Day of Peace message from our Holy Father was precisely on this issue: “Religious Freedom: The Path to Peace”. He began his message remembering another massacre of Catholics — where in October, at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Baghdad, two priests and over fifty faithful were killed as they gathered for the celebration of mass.

Spend some time during the

holiday today reading the Holy Father’s messages and formulas for attaining peace in our troubled world. You can access these messages at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/index_en.htm

Then, spend some time in prayer, through the intercession of Blessed Mary, that our faith can be strong, our forgiveness large, and our will powerful enough to bear peace into the world.



The month of December was a particularly active one for us here at St. Ambrose. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all those who worked so diligently in bringing us through Advent into the glorious Christmas season.

This would include our regular staff: our pastoral minister **Chuck Dropiewski**, our office personnel, **Terri Harthen** and **Mary Urbanski**. Thanks also to **John Guinn** in our music ministry and our maintenance staff, **Scott Sellke**, **Mike Heckman** and **George Bush**. Thanks to **Betty Haley** in producing our Christmas Eve Children’s Liturgy and to **Bernadette Gutowski**, who returned from retirement to give us a “Night in Bethlehem”. And we need also include **Chef Fred Whaley**, **Mary Oberly**, **Laura Blake** and all the folks who work in the ARK.

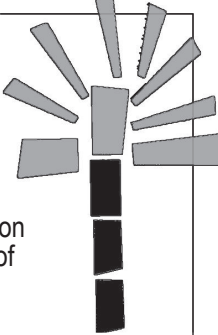
We are a “little parish” that “acts big”. We can do that because of the hard work of these individuals and the assistance of many, many volunteers. That includes those who volunteer for our religious education programs, our choir, our liturgical ministers and the members of our St. Vincent de Paul Society who take care of the needs of the poor in our neighborhood.

To these, and to all who sacrifice for the sake of our parish and outreach ministries, let me say “God Bless you for all your work!”



I was concerned that the sluggish state of the economy would be reflected in the charitable gifts brought for the Pregnancy Aid Society. My fears proved unfounded. Under the great tree

Continued on next page...



Toward the
St. Ambrose
Centennial 2016

St. Ambrose Renovation
and Building Debt as of

January 2011
\$3,830,668.82

Balance as of November 2011
\$3,025,454.11

All Things Considered

Continued from Page 3

in our sanctuary last week, you saw a huge outpouring of practical love. The Pregnancy Aid Society, which operates a local branch on Mack near St. Clair St., is on the frontline of helping children, born in less than perfect conditions, find material, medical and mental strength from a caring community. The gifts collected were trucked over to the Pregnancy Aid offices this past week where they will be parceled out over the next eleven months to needy moms and newborns. Contributions and help can be offered directly to the Pregnancy Aid Society at any time during the year. These gifts do not have to be new. If you have some good infant furniture or car seats that you no longer are using, these can be repurposed. Give them a call at (313) 882-1000.

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Look at the chart on the previous page, and you'll see that we were able to pay down a whopping \$805,000 on our parish debt in eleven months of 2011. With the Centennial of our parish coming up in 2016, our parish pastoral council enacted a five-year program aimed at making us debt-free by the time that anniversary arrives. As a result, it's been a pretty spectacular year in terms of our debt reduction. Lots of people have been *very* generous with St. Ambrose Parish this past year. But there are a number of households in our parish who hold back in their donations until the end of the year.

If that is you, December 31st is the day to make your contributions in order to receive a deduction on your 2011 IRA filing. If you mark your donation, "Christmas Collection" that gives St. Ambrose a 7% boost inasmuch as our Archbishop will forgo the normal cathedradicum tax on donations.

My sincere thanks to everyone who participated in our very successful Changing Lives Together Campaign, and to those who support the parish in their envelopes and through the Christmas collection. All these things are an investment in your parish and in the future of our Catholic faith.

TRP

Religious Education Update

The celebration of Confirmation will take place next Saturday, January 7th at the 4 pm liturgy. We are honored to have **Cardinal Edmund Szoka** visit us again this year to confer the sacrament of Confirmation on our 27 9th grade candidates. Rehearsal for Confirmation is this Friday, January 6th at 6:30 pm in the church building. Confirmation candidates and their sponsors need to be there.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES RESUME Sunday classes for Religious Education resume next Sunday, January 8th. It will be nice to see everyone again! At the 11:15 mass we'll celebrate the Epiphany in a special way.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION PREPARATION Keep in mind that on Tuesday, January 17th we have the next Parent-Candidate Meeting for parents of children preparing for the sacrament of Reconciliation. We will meet in the Ark from 6:30-8:00 pm.

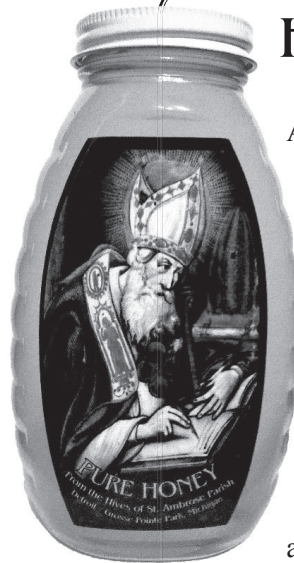
FIRST EUCHARIST The Rite of Enrollment for children preparing for First Eucharist this spring is scheduled for Sunday, January 22nd at the 11:15 Mass.

CATECHIST RETREAT All of our catechists are invited to attend a special Retreat for Catechists that will be extended to the entire SERF vicariate but hosted here at St. Ambrose on Saturday, February 4th from 9:00-3:00 pm. Sr. Janet Schaeffler is our facilitator, our own Chef Fred Whaley is preparing a special meal, and Fr. Gary Smetanka, of Star of the Sea Parish, is on board to preside at a special liturgy planned for the day.

May the Lord bless you and keep you each day of the coming New Year!
Betty Haley

Marriage Encounter Weekend

Enrich your marriage relationship...turn we're good into we are great! Attend the WorldWide Marriage Encounter weekend at St. John Vianney, on Jan. 13th-15th. This weekend is offered as an "In Parish Weekend", so you go home to the comfort of your own place each evening. Other weekends are available both away at hotels or at other locations. For more information or to apply: wwme-detroit.org or call Rick and Miriam Mikulak at (888) 322-9963 or email detwwme@gmail.com.



Honey from Our Hives

After two seasons, the first "vintage" of our St. Ambrose honey has been processed. There are a few jars that we can offer for sale at \$20, half of which is a donation to the parish. If you are looking for a unique gift, one that literally is a "taste of St. Ambrose", contact us.

With a name like "Ambrose", it has to be good! And it is. Honey, like wine, takes on the character of the place where it is produced. Our St. Ambrose honey is delightfully light flavored and colored. Our honey jar comes with Ambrose featured on it, the patron saint of bees and beekeepers. These one-pound jars (in very limited supply) come gift-boxed, and are available at our office. Call (313) 822-2814.

The Buzz

A blessed and peaceful New Year to you and yours!

There is a special emphasis on world peace every January 1st in the Church. For a while under **Pope Paul VI**, it seemed to be growing as the preferred theme to be celebrated for New Year's Day. But then under the very Marian **Pope John Paul II** it swung back to another long-standing focus: the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God.

I think they both fit together. Read again today's Gospel. It continues the infancy story from Luke with the shepherds' visit to the manger, their understanding the message, and then going out to proclaim to others what the angels had told them. Meanwhile, Mary reflected on all these things in her heart.

All good moms want peace in their families. Who's in Mary's family ... Joseph and Jesus and that's it? From ancient times in the Church, Mary has had the title "*Theotokos*", God-bearer, or Mother of God (because Jesus is God). Now jump from the birth of Christ ahead to the cross. In John's Gospel, at the foot of the cross are standing two people – Mary and the "beloved disciple". Jesus gives her to him as his mother, and he to her as her son. Who is the "beloved disciple"? Over the years he has very handily been identified as the Apostle John himself. Today, scholars help us identify that the omission of a particular name in favor of a more mysterious title was intentional and inspired. Who is the beloved disciple? We are! And especially in communion with our "brother" Jesus – all children of one and the same Heavenly Father – Mary is given to us as our mother as well. And what does every good mother want? . . . ! Let's do our part in 2012 to make peace more of a reality in our "family" than it was in 2011.

20+C+M+B+12

Next weekend we celebrate another truth about Jesus that comes to us from the infancy story in Matthew. Epiphany always makes me wonder how billions of Christians have come to discover the Lord. What's your story? Is it one of dramatic personal encounter (ala St. Paul); is it one of cultural expectation (ala many of us through family, parish, school, etc.); is it one of personal search (ala the Magi)?

There are many valid encounter storylines about people with Emmanuel. Our scriptures and tradition assure us that they are often full of irony and surprises. The Magi were mysterious foreigners and Gentiles who used pagan, forbidden means (reading the stars) to search for a (most surprising) king. They responded well in their quest. Yet the people who were better prepared with the wisdom of scripture and history ... missed the point!

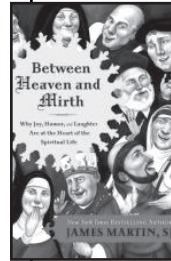
At the beginning of 2012, how are you and I doing at "getting the point"? We have a great foundation for faith prepared for us. It points us in the right direction; it warmly invites us to journey to meet Him. If you are reading this, it probably means you have come to this "house of bread" (beth-lehem). Did you find Him? Did you get the point of it all? The beginning of a new year is a good time to make a resolution to spend 2012 prayerfully ready to see Emmanuel in every surprising way He comes to us ... and to grow closer to Him each and every day. That would make for the best year ever!

20+C+M+B+12

Next Saturday at the 4:00 Epiphany Liturgy, **Cardinal Edmund Szoka** will be here to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation with our 9th Grade candidates. Come join us and pray for them that the Holy Spirit will always be close to give them peace, and to help them more and more throughout their lives "get the point" of living as a wise and beloved disciple of the Lord.

Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!
Chuck Dropiewski

Marcellina's Book Club



In Between Heaven and Mirth, author James Martin, SJ, assures us that God wants us to experience joy, to cultivate a sense of holy humor, and to laugh at life's absurdities – not to

mention our own humanity. Fr Martin invites believers to rediscover the importance of humor and laughter in their daily lives and to embrace an essential truth: faith leads to joy.

Fr. Martin offers countless examples of healthy humor and purposeful levity in the stories of biblical heroes and heroines, and in the lives of the saints and the world's great spiritual masters.

Marcellina's Book Club will meet, on Wednesday, February 8, 2012 in the ARK at 7 p.m.

The Beehive

is the parish weekly bulletin of the St. Ambrose Catholic Community Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

Pastor: Rev. Timothy R. Pelc

Deacon: Rev. Mr. Michael Cummins

Pastoral Minister: Charles Dropiewski

Adult Ed. Director: Michael Maras

Religious Education: Elizabeth Haley

Minister of Music: John Guinn

Office Manager: Theresa Harthen

Sacramental Celebrations

Masses: On the Lord's Day –

Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:30 and 11:15 a.m.

Baptism: Arrangements for both adults and infants to be made by contacting the rectory.

Penance: As announced and by appointment.

Marriage: Couples should contact the rectory office a minimum of six months in advance of the proposed date to make arrangements.

Funeral: Normally celebrated within one week of the deceased's passing.

Directory

Parish Office: 15020 Hampton

Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230

Tel: (313) 822-2814 **Fax:** (313) 822-9838

Email address: stambrose@comcast.net

Religious Education: (313) 822-1248

Ark Scheduling: Laura Blake (313) 822-2814

School Archives: 313-237-5846

Parish Website: stambrosechurch.net

Liturgy Schedule for the Coming Week

Monday, January 2

No Communion Service; offices closed

Tuesday, January 3

Most Holy Name of Jesus

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Pauline Sebastian

Wednesday, January 4

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious

8:30 - Communion Service

Thursday, January 5

St. John Neumann, Bishop

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Joseph Allemon

George Schackermeyer

Friday, January 6

St. André Bessette, religious

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Robert Rownd -

Dr. Franklin McDonald - Joan Convery

Saturday, January 7

St. Raymond of Penyafort, priest

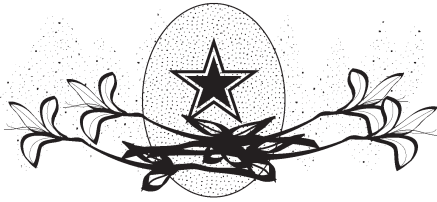
4:00 p.m. - Mass - Confirmation Liturgy

Sunday, January 8

The Epiphany of the Lord

8:30 a.m. - Mass - For All People

11:15 a.m. - Mass - For All People



Scriptures for the Week within the Christmas Season

Monday, January 2

- 1 Jn 2: 22-28
- Ps 98: 1-4
- Jn 1: 19-28

Tuesday, January 3

- 1 Jn 2: 19-3: 6
- Ps 98: 1-3, 6
- Jn 1: 29-34

Wednesday, January 4

- 1 Jn 3: 7-10
- Ps 98: 1, 7-9
- Jn 1: 35-42

Thursday, January 5

- 1 Jn 3: 11-21
- Ps 100: 1-5
- Jn 1: 43-51

Friday, January 6

- 1 Jn 5: 5-13
- Ps 147: 12-15, 19-20
- Mk 1: 7-11 or Lk 3: 23-28 or Lk 3: 23, 31-34, 36-38

Saturday, January 7

- 1 Jn 5: 14-21
- Ps 149: 1-6a, 9b
- Jn 2: 1-11

Sunday, January 8

- Is 60: 1-6
- Eph 3: 2-3a, 5-6
- Mt 2: 1-12

The Epiphany of the Lord

January 7th and January 8th

4:00 p.m. - Saturday - Celebrants: Cardinal Szoka & Fr. Pelc

Readers: Laura Zajac, Steve Peck **Eucharistic Ministers:** Beverly Bennett, Margaret Hern, Peter Hern, Karen McShane, Lorrie Peck, Mary Urbanski

Altar Servers: Joseph & Nicholas Kurta, Patrick Hern

8:30 a.m. - Sunday - Celebrant: Fr. Naessens **Reader:** Bob Gatzke

Eucharistic Ministers: Liz Linne, Judy & Al Ramberger, Chris Walsh, Liz & John Witherell

Altar Servers: Rozzie, Ally, & Kathleen Vern

11:15 a.m. - Sunday - Celebrant: Fr. Pelc **Reader:** Elizabeth Puleo-Tague

Eucharistic Ministers: Anne & Carter Billiu, Lynn Brocklehurst, Doris Fleming, Michele Hodges, Lou Rondini, Cindy Warner

Altar Servers: Emilio & Diego Garcia

Your Envelope ... Speaks the Inside Story

To operate, each week our parish requires a *minimum* of.....\$9,645.00

On Sunday, December 25, 2011

envelopes we received\$4,507.00
 in the loose collection\$ 662.65
 in electronic donations\$1,060.00
 in children's envelopes\$

for a total of **\$6,229.65**

Under budget for the week by ..\$3,415.35

Year-to-date under budget by ... \$18,651.03

Number of envelopes mailed 800

Number of envelopes used 175

ARC Building loan remittance \$6,995

Our Sick

Please pray for our parishioners who are seriously ill or hospitalized: Roma Affelt, Grace Weise, Daniel Bonior, Terry Pfaendtner, Kay Schwarz, Rip Prem, Anthony Hicks, Kay Balas, Yvonne Smith, Daniel O'Callaghan, Sophie Haas, Steve Lagae, Elizabeth Howard, Faith Smith, Mark Haas, Joan Carroll, Amanda Westfall, Charles Ebner, Dorothy Allen, Charlene Hyslop, John Peraras, Elizabeth Oberly, Mary Howard, Audrey Decker, Barbara Mucha, Barbara Gase, Maria Chinchilla, Jim Carroll, Bob VanTiem, Liz Conlan, Edward Andrzejczak, Bonnie McKenna, David Jackson, Lee Beard, James Sweeney, Paul Gushelin, Karen Caudil, Lynn Kiley, Joseph MacEachern, Grace Huvaere, Bernice Phillips, Ellen Fecher, Irene Scopel, George Culver, Lyle Eagle, James McKenna, Miriam Levant, Steve Linne, Kathleen Elberson, and Pam Stanley.

Our Dead

A funeral liturgy was celebrated by Fr. Tim Pelc on December 23rd for **Paul Geshel**, age 69.

Paul was born and raised in Detroit and was the Chief Financial Officer at the old Burroughs Corporation. He loved traveling, golf and fishing. Paul enjoyed his retirement over the past fifteen years and spent his time reading, cooking and going to the movies. Most of all, he loved to dote on his granddaughter, Alexandra. She lovingly referred to him as "Teddy."

Paul was predeceased by his parents, John and Angela, son, Christopher, brothers, Dennis, Jack and Peter. He is survived by his wife, Elaine, sons, Greg (Darcy), Jamie and granddaughter, Alexandra. Paul will also be missed by the rest of his family and friends. Please remember to keep Paul in your prayers.

A Family Perspective

The Gospel on the Feast of the Holy Family shows Mary and Joseph weren't "perfect" parents. If you have ever been "amazed" and "astonished" at what came out of your child's mouth, then you are in good company. If there were times you "didn't understand" your children or felt "anxious" about their behavior - so did Mary and Joseph. Parenting is tough, but it is also the stuff of holiness.

Greeting by Fr. Paul Turner

When the priest greets the people at the beginning of mass, he has three options. The simplest is, "The Lord be with you," which has a biblical origin in the Book of Ruth. There, Boaz greets the reapers in the field. Ruth, a young widow who has come there as an immigrant trying to support her mother-in-law on what she can glean after the reapers are done, hears these words of comfort. She may have nothing, but she has the Lord.

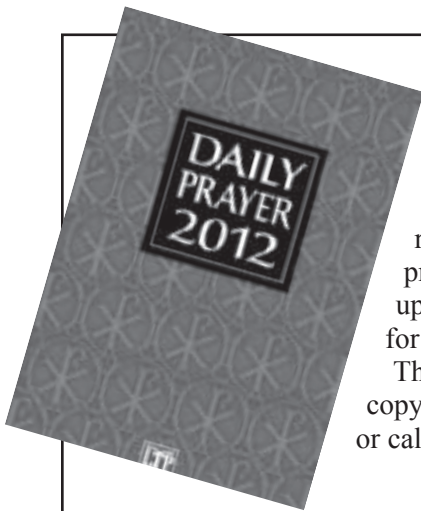
The priest may use instead a more expanded greeting taken from the end of Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all." This is the only place in his epistles where St. Paul greets the community in the name of the entire Trinity. It makes an expansive, solemn greeting to begin the Eucharist today.

The other greeting the priest may use is this: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." This occurs many times in the letters of St. Paul (for example Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3), twice in the letters of St. Peter (1:2 in both letters), and twice in books attributed to St. John (2Jn 1:3; Rv 1:4). Its repetition in these books indicates that it probably served as a liturgical formula in the time of the apostles. The word feels a little unusual; "Grace and peace to you" would be more natural. Perhaps this greeting served as a kind of password among the first Christians. This formula has been an option ever since the Second Vatican Council, but the revised English translation restored its biblical word order, letting us hear it now in our own language for the first time in history.

Pray Every Day

Searching for a fresh way to pray every day of the year? Daily Prayer 2012 is your guide to prayer that includes scripture, psalmody, a brief reflection, general intercessions, and a closing prayer. It is ideal for personal and family reflection upon the word of God. This makes an excellent gift for Confirmation or a student away at college.

These prayer books are \$12 each. To pick up a copy of Daily Prayer 2012, stop by the rectory office or call 822-2814.



End of the Year Giving

As we finish the last week of the calendar year, it means we are also finishing up the end of a fiscal tax period. When it comes to calculating your charitable deductions for the Internal Revenue Service this coming April, the cutoff date for 2011 deductions is December 31st. It's now time to review your tax strategy. If you intend to make an end-of-the-year gift to the parish, it needs to be written and dated before January 1st and submitted to our office in an envelope marked "Christmas Collection". Gifts made in this manner are free from the usual Archdiocesan taxation.

A significant portion of our operating revenue comes from end-of-the-year contributions which can be in the form of cash, securities, stock, real estate and other negotiables. Consult your tax preparer who can guide you as to the best way of making a donation to St. Ambrose. Or our own parish accountant can also be of assistance if you call the rectory.



Christmas Continues

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Saturday, January 7, 2012

CONFIRMATION MASS

AT 4:00 P.M.

Sunday, January 8, 2012

MASSES AT 8:30 A.M.

& 11:15 A.M.

HOSPITALITY IN THE ARK

AFTER ALL MASSES



Electronic Donations

St. Ambrose Parish is equipped to make electronic transfers from your checking account or credit card on our website. Christian Financial Credit Union brings parishioners and friends the ability to make an electronic contribution to St. Ambrose on a regular or on a one-time basis. This is especially helpful to us when you go away for a weekend, go on vacation, or go to a winter residence.

Your checking account or credit card may be used to make a single donation; or you may set up automatic weekly, monthly or quarterly contributions on a schedule. This solution is not meant to replace the current envelope method of collection, but instead to provide an additional alternative for individuals who might prefer to make their contribution electronically.

We hope that this additional financial service allows you another way of managing your stewardship to St. Ambrose. Go to stambrosechurch.net for more information.