

St. Ambrose Parish

Our 100th Year!
DECEMBER 27, 2015
BEEHIVE

Long before Jesus was condemned by Pontius Pilate and rejected by the authorities, denied by Peter and betrayed by Judas, misunderstood by his followers and chased away by his townspeople – he came onto the scene virtually unnoticed. “There was no room for them in the inn,” Luke reports with understated reserve. Is it not curious that Luke seemingly finds nothing outlandish about the long-awaited messiah’s arrival occasioning practically no response except for one small band of shepherds who were tipped off by a rather singular display of “the glory of the Lord”?

No, Luke is an astute enough chronicler of both the human and the divine to know that God tends to avoid the spotlight and that we are in the habit of alternately overlooking and not looking far enough for God. God, the creator of the universe, became a helpless baby so insignificant and ordinary that not even a single decent room in the inn could be found for him. During the Christmas season, we as a Church collectively recall and celebrate that God is often closer and smaller than we think.

Recently, my wife was pregnant with our second child and was due at the same time that we planned to move. Our “new” old house required considerable work before it was ready to be moved into with a toddler and a soon-to-be newborn. Working on the house took us to the brink of exhaustion – and all of this in the lead-up to welcoming home



An Unnoticed God

means God so characteristically assumes to communicate a bottomless love. Like a secret admirer eager to communicate affection, God employs ingenious creativity in riddling our lives with seemingly unsigned love notes. God seems content to be tucked away in small places not because God does not want to be found, but because God is humble enough to wait for us to go looking. My friend with the ice cream showed me what God desperately wanted me to know in those anxious days: My family is loved. If I had been waiting for a thunderbolt from heaven to tell me that, I would have missed the message. God used a far subtler,

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a tiny, sleepless bundle of joy. Many friends came to our aid. One friend brought us a dozen or so pints of Ben and Jerry’s ice cream and stashed them in our freezer. Each night, bleary-eyed from long hours of working on the house, my wife and I would gather around ice cream and rehash the day’s progress and size up the next day’s projects.

The cache of ice cream steadily diminished. Yet one evening we opened the freezer and found an as-of-yet undiscovered pint of Ben and Jerry’s. God was in that ice cream. I am certain of it. It was not that the last pint miraculously appeared. Its presence – tucked behind a bag of frozen vegetables – was entirely explicable. Our friend obviously had put it there. But that last pint of ice cream revealed something of the humble

An Unnoticed God

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sweeter means of communication that risked being overlooked altogether as something as ordinary as, well, some extraordinarily delicious ice cream.

St. Ignatius Loyola has a memorable phrase for thinking about God's presence all around us. Ignatius said, "*God labors and works for me in all the creatures on the face of the earth.*" His point was that one of the most common ways that God loves us is through other people. We are accustomed to interpreting other people's words and actions toward us as indicating how they themselves feel about us. Ignatius invites us to see how our daily experiences of receiving love also reveal God's own deep care for us.

But life is not all about finding hidden pints of ice cream. Another way that God is also "smaller" than we sometimes think—is God's presence in the most marginalized of our brothers and sisters, including those who are hungry, homeless or in prison. In Chapter 25 of the Gospel according to Matthew, we learn that whatever we do—or do not do—to "the least" of those around us, we do—or do not do—to Jesus himself. Matthew suggests that neither those who served others nor those who ignored others realized that it was Jesus they were encountering. Our eyes are not habituated to seeing God in those around us. It takes practice to perceive God in other people, particularly in those the world pushes to the margins. And the conclusion of Matthew 25 points out that it is no small thing to find God in those we might be tempted to look past: our salvation depends on it.

Part of the reason that no room could be found in the inn for Mary, Joseph and Jesus is that God so often slips by unnoticed in the seemingly small and ordinary. But even if the most lavish hospitality had been shown to the infant Jesus and his fatigued parents that night, no accommodations—not even the universe itself—could be roomy enough to enclose the God who had come to earth. God came to dwell among us. We, however, can never domesticate God. We are always right to name an experience as potentially revelatory of God's presence. And at the same time, God remains beyond our limited human experience and understanding. God was both "in" that surprising last pint of ice cream and is infinitely more than it.

Karl Rahner, a German Jesuit theologian, had a delightful way of talking about this "more-ness" of God. To Father Rahner, God was not an inaccessible, rarified mystery entirely beyond reach. Instead, Father Rahner perceived an unbounded roominess in God such that God is "infinitely knowable." We can know more and more about God and there is always more and more to know. The multiplicity of Gospel portraits of Jesus and the diversity of images of God throughout Scripture bear witness to this "more-ness" of

God. We would do well to frequently revisit lesser-known passages in order to curb the tendency to shrink our image of God to a size and shape that often bears a striking resemblance to our own selves.

We can savor finding God in small moments when we feel surprisingly loved, or in epiphany experiences when we perceive God on the margins where Jesus promised we would find him. Can we also find God in the overwhelming suffering and hardship that exists in our world and in our own lives? God's "bigness" comes into question when it can seem like he is absent from those places where his presence is most needed.

For more than half a century, Dorothy Day worked, wrote and spoke tirelessly in response to the crushing needs of those living in poverty both near and far. Her own life was frequently marked by feelings of bleakness and depression. Even after becoming a national celebrity and being called upon by Mother Teresa and Thomas Merton, Dorothy Day continued to struggle with feeling unwanted, unloved and unloving. Again and again, she turned to the Eucharist and communal meals to find God's presence. She famously concludes her autobiography with the lines: "*We know Him in the breaking of the bread, and we know each other in the breaking of the bread, and we are not alone anymore.*"

Dorothy Day found solace in the Eucharist, which continues to make present the God who, outstretched on the cross, went to the very depths of all that is human out of love for us. The God who was content to arrive almost unnoticed in Bethlehem was lifted up for all to see at Golgotha. She also took comfort in the rhythm of ordinary meals among the poor at the Catholic Worker houses of hospitality because she was familiar with God's penchant for dealing in the commonplace, the overlooked and the downtrodden. Understandably, we may ask of God, "Where are you when there are so many people suffering?" Might God not also be asking the same question of us? As St. Teresa of Avila says, "*Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours.*"

That ragged assortment of shepherds who "went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger" could well be the patron saints of the Christmas season. They were humble enough to be overcome with awe at the glory of the Lord that shone around them. And with eyes still burning from the sight of it, they could equally make out God's tiny, bundled figure in the shadows of the manger. Holy shepherds, pray for us this Christmas that we too might fall in worship surrounded by God's immeasurable heavenly light and run in haste to find God's tiniest trace here on earth.

*By Benjamin John Wilson, for the December 2-28 issue of America Magazine, The National Catholic Review.
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All Things Considered

Even though our parish doesn't officially turn 100 until September, we've already begun celebrating our Centennial year. Things will gradually ramp up with a number of anniversary events taking place in 2016 – social, educational, charitable and spiritual. We also anticipate the retiring of our building debt by the end of that year. For lots of reasons, 2016 will be a memorable year.

We've printed a 2016 Centennial Calendar which highlights our anniversary events and at the same time pays photographic tribute to our history. This is a "Catholic Calendar" in that it contains the seasons, feasts, saints and fasts of our liturgical year. Your prayer-life grows immensely when you are in tune with the cycle of the liturgical year.



In medieval times an evergreen tree was used in Mystery Plays written about the Garden of Paradise — a fir tree was hung with apples, and represented the tree of Eden by which Adam and Eve fell. When the Mystery Plays were banned from inside Church buildings, the Eden tree began to appear outside churches and in homes at Christmastide. It gradually became seen as the symbol of Christ, the true tree of Life.

The Christmas tree in our sanctuary this year is new. The tree we had been using for the past twenty years was largely just wires – as the plastic greens dried and fell off. Our new tree is a much better product and is perceptibly taller by 4 feet. It registers in at a full 20 feet. The tree is a gift to the parish from **Paul Lavins**, in memory of his wife **Dolores**, who was always an avid fan of our St. Ambrose Christmas trees. The tree picks up our Diamond Anniversary theme.

There is always someone who

asks how many lights there are on our tree. Until this year we've never counted, but with this new tree we did. There are 19,900 small lights, 256 specialty lights and 105 lights in the star on top.

This star ornament is a gift from my dad, **Raymond** in memory of my mom, **Genevieve**. For years, Dad, along with **Lee Beard** was in charge of erecting and lighting our parish tree. Now at age 95 he puts his "star of approval" on the work of others!

There are many beautiful legends and much symbolism behind the Christmas tree. The Christmas tree is a sign of the great Tree of the Cross; it is noble because it is by a tree that the whole world has been redeemed. The splendor of the Christmas tree reminds us of the redemption of all material creation by Christ – and recalls the lovely legend that all the trees on earth blossomed on Christmas night. The evergreen reminds us of the everlasting life that Christ won through His Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection.

But rich as is its symbolism, the tree is still only the "background" for our altar, which holds the most prominent place in our assembly. As the ancient Fathers of the Church saw it, the altar – on which lies the bread and wine which is Christ himself – is the new manger of Bethlehem.

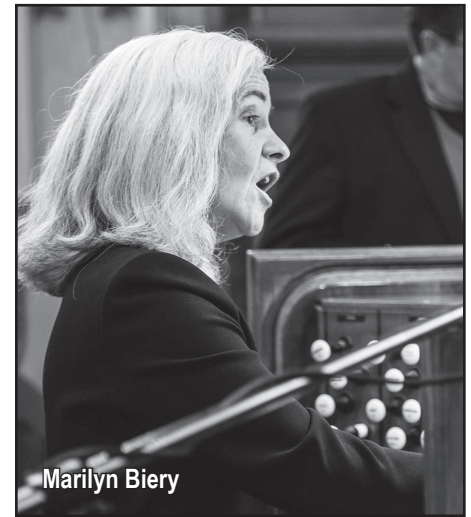
On the altar we once again see how Christ becomes small in the humble appearance of the host; in a small piece of bread, he gives us himself. The blazing lights of our Centennial Tree direct us to what is truly important, Christ in the Eucharist.



The spectacular interior decorations in the church are the work of **Jennifer Drake**, **Kyle Peabody** and **Luis Maldonado** of Organic Matters. **Scott Sellke** along with **Mike Heckman** of our staff were crucial to the set-up, in particular the nativity scene.

Some great volunteer hours came to us from **Mike Mocer** of Mocer Family Landscaping. And Arbor Pro donated their services and

the lights that adorn the large English Oaks at the front of church. Thanks to **Rick Oldfield** and **Jim Bonahoom** for that gift to us.



Marilyn Biery

After gracing us with two years of great music that has enhanced and supported our Sunday liturgies, our Music Minister, **Marilyn Perkins Biery**, is now leaving St. Ambrose. Marilyn has been with us, off and on, since the death of our Music Minister **John Guinn** back in 2013. During her time here, she enabled our congregation to sing much better, brought our choir up to an incredibly high standard, and set us on a course to appreciate and restore our Casavant Pipe Organ – just to name a few things.

A legacy she leaves for us and the larger Church is the metric text for our Centennial Hymn, *Omnia Christus Est Nobis*, the music of which was composed by **Fr. Jan Michael Joncas**.

Marilyn will be composing full-time come January. Two of her publishers (The Gregorian Institute of America (GIA) and Augsburg Fortress) have asked her for more organ collections. GIA is also hoping for more choral arrangements that she could not compose regularly enough while working here at St. Ambrose.

In addition, Marilyn's husband, **Jim** (the Music Minister at Grosse Pointe Memorial Church) has recently had two minor strokes and heart surgery. That convinced Marilyn

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All Things Considered

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that it would be good for her spiritual life to be able to worship weekly with her husband.

Marilyn is a consummate professional and a great talent in Church music in the United States. It's been a blessing to have her here with us. We are grateful for her working at St. Ambrose – for the way she adeptly handled the transition following the passing of our former Music Minister – for her creativity – and for her abilities at organization. She came into a music program that was in trouble and leaves it far better than the way she found it. For that I attribute **St. Ambrose** himself. As the patron saint of Church musicians, he always manages to find an appropriate Music Minister for the parish that bears his name.

So, in the name of our patron saint, I thank Marilyn for sharing her tremendous musical talent with us – and especially for ushering in this Christmas season with beauty, joy and gladness.

TRP

When Your Donation Is Worth 7% More

As we come upon the last days of the calendar year, it means we are also coming up to the end of a fiscal tax period. **If you intend to make an end-of-the-year gift to the parish, you'll need to date it before January 1st and get it into our office in an envelope marked "Christmas Collection." Gifts made in this manner are free from the usual Archdiocesan taxation of 7%.**

When it comes to calculating your charitable deductions for the Internal Revenue Service this coming April, the cutoff date for 2015 deductions is December 31st. So it's now time to review your tax strategy.

A significant portion of our parish 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.

Friar on Fire

My reflections about Advent and Christmas bring a lot of thought about mothers. The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is a feast that brings about the love and joy of Mary. At the same time during this season, our scriptures bring out the story of the Virgin Mary and we are able to see the willingness and love of a Mother that allows Christ to be born in our world.

In the Vietnamese culture, and I know it is the same in other cultures, there is tremendous respect towards women who are mothers. There is a famous Vietnamese song called "*Long Me*" which means, "The Heart of a Mother." The images that are used in the song are images that try to describe the endless love of a mother's heart to the endless sea, the mountains – as far as the eye can see.

I think this is true of our Virgin Mother Mary and how willing her love is as to say "Yes" to allow God's grace and mercy to overflow her life. Her love runs so deep that it reaches to the furthest depths of the ocean. I think we are also called to bear and give birth in this season of Christmas. We are all called to bear the love of Christ in our life and to give birth to new hope and life in all our relationships. We are invited by the example of Mary to love in a way that allows our hearts to reach the furthest depths and bounds of the earth and sea.

I think of my own mother and how her love and willingness for me has given me so much life and how "*Long Me*" has taught me how to love others. It is because of my own mother where I learn how to outpour my own heart to others in ministry, the people of God, and all the friends and family in my life. There is a very important relationship between mother and child that we are invited pay attention to and appreciate in this season of God's grace and mercy. I am so grateful for her and her life.

I am also so grateful that I will be able to spend some time with my wonderful mother in this Christmas season, as St. Ambrose Parish flew her up from Texas to be able to celebrate the holiday here with me this year. This will be her first time in Detroit – seeing the ministry that gives me so much life at this parish, as well as at the Solanus Center. I want her to see the great joy that I get from the amazing people here in my ministry and my fraternity.

May we in this joyful season reflect on all our relationships, especially the great relationships of mother and child. May we see the beauty and love of a mother's love and thank God for the gift of wonderful women that give life to new joy and foster that joy in their children – a joy to be shared with all who may be in need. May you have a blessed and wonderful Christmas.

Br. Tom

Religious Education Update

Today's Feast of the Holy Family reminds us of the importance of the family home and the love and care that should always surround us there. For our part, we always say that a good religious education program works in partnership with parents who are the primary transmitters of the faith. As such, our sacramental programs are family programs in which one or both parents attend sessions of preparation with their child.

In January we have two Parent/Candidate Sessions for you to be aware of: The Parent/Candidate Session for Reconciliation is Monday January 11th at 6:30 p.m. in the ARK and the Parent/Candidate Session for Confirmation is Wednesday, January 27th at 7:00 p.m. in the ARK – this is for current 8th graders. A blessed New Year to all our families!

Betty Haley

The Buzz

Wesołych Świąt i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!

Although this edition of the BEEHIVE is technically dated for the Sunday after Christmas, I'm hoping it will arrive and be available for all who come and celebrate with us on the 24th and 25th as well. Thus my ancestral, ethnic greeting to you all at the outset of this column.

I've sometimes mused over the years that if I had the opportunity to name a parish, I would suggest it be known as the **Church of the Incarnation of Christ**. Sure, it's another name for Christmas, and the parish-centered aspect of the celebration of the patronal feastday would get totally lost . . . but . . . I think it gets right to the heart of what our faith-community – and each one of us who are sacramentally initiated into it – are supposed to be. We are to incarnate (give flesh to) the living presence of Christ right here and now. That's what we say "Amen" to when we receive Holy Communion. We promise we will become what we eat and drink. We dare to say we will "incarnate" the very life and Spirit of Christ to everyone we meet.

So my Christmas prayer for everyone at this great Parish of St. Ambrose during its Centennial Year is that we will more and more each day live out this meaning of Christmas – for one another and for everyone we meet throughout 2016!

20+C+M+B+16

So, as we face a new calendar year on Friday, a traditional time to begin new resolutions, we might ask two things of ourselves: one is – What is my ideal vision for my family? What should or could it be? What are my hopes and dreams for my family? And the other thing to ask is – what must and what will I do to bring that about?! One without the other accomplishes something only by chance. Together, especially when guided and assisted by prayer, there is the powerful possibility of recreating not only our homes, but our city, Church and world as well.

20+C+M+B+16

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 the Gospel for January 1st. 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 is in Mary's family . . . Joseph and Jesus and that's it? From ancient times in the Church Mary has had the title Θεοτοκε, God-bearer, or Mother of God (because Jesus is God). Now jump from the birth of Jesus 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.

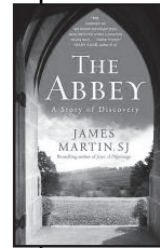
Today, scholars help us identify that the omission of John's name in favor of a more mysterious title was intentional and inspired. So who then is the beloved disciple? You are! I am! And especially in communion with our "brother" Jesus – all children of one and the same Heavenly Father – Mary is given to us as our mother as well. And what does every good mother want? . . . Let's do our part in 2016 to make peace more of a reality in our "family" than it was in 2015.

20+C+M+B+16

More on peace and family – our Holy Father Francis has sent the world a message for the New Year's 49th World Day of Prayer for Peace. The theme of it is "Overcome Indifference and Win Peace." The Pope says, ". . . with the present Jubilee of Mercy I want to invite the Church to pray and work so that every Christian will have a humble and compassionate heart, one capable of proclaiming and witnessing to mercy. It is my hope that all of us will learn to "forgive and give," to become more open "to those living on the outermost fringes of society - fringes which modern society itself creates", and to refuse to fall into "a humiliating indifference or a monotonous routine which prevents us from discovering what is new! Let us ward off destructive cynicism!"

Chuck Dropiewski

Marcellina's Book Club



In his debut novel, *The Abbey: A Story of Discovery*, James Martin, SJ, provides a window into how God works in the spiritual journeys of three very different people. A divorced single mother, Anne struggles to

make sense of her son's death; a former architect, Mark works as a handyman and wonders how his life got off track; Abbot Father Paul sometimes questions how to best live a life that secludes him from the world.

Through the characters' struggles, we see firsthand how God uses our worries, questions, and even anger to help us become whole.

Book club will meet Sunday morning on Sunday, January 17th from 9:45-11:00 am in the ARK. No cost; no preregistration; come join us.

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. Thomas Nguyen, ofm, cap

Pastoral Minister: Charles Dropiewski

Religious Education: Elizabeth Haley

Minister of Music: Marilyn Biery

Office Manager: Lois Sokolowski

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 after 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: (313) 822-2814

Parish Website: stambrosechurch.net

Liturgy Schedule for the Coming Week

Monday, December 28

The Holy Innocents
Office closed - no services

Tuesday, December 29

St. Thomas Becket, Bishop & Martyr
8:30 a.m. - Mass - Fr. Tom Masterson,
Msgr. Thomas Behan, Tom Velkey

Wednesday, December 30

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer

Thursday, December 31

St. Sylvester I, pope
1:30 p.m. - Wedding -
Kathryn Price & Ryan Ochs
4:00 p.m. - Mass - For Peace in the World

Friday, January 1

World Day of Prayer for Peace
10:00 a.m. - Mass - For Peace in the World

Saturday, January 2

St. Basil & St. Gregory Nazianzen
4:00 p.m. - Mass - For All People

Sunday, January 3

The Epiphany of Our Lord
8:30 a.m. - Mass - For All People
1:15 a.m. - Mass - For All People



Scriptures for the Week after Christmas

Monday, December 28

- 1 Jn 1: 5-2: 2
- Ps 124: 2-5, 7c-8
- Mt 2: 13-18

Tuesday, December 29

- 1 Jn 2: 3-11
- Ps 96: 1-3, 5b-6
- Lk 2: 22-35

Wednesday, December 30

- 1 Jn 2: 12-17
- Ps 96: 1-2, 11-13
- Lk 2: 36-40

Thursday, December 31

- 1 Jn 2: 12-17
- Ps 96: 1-2, 11-13
- Jn 1: 1-18

Friday, January 1

- Nm 6: 22-27
- Gal 4: 4-7
- Lk 2: 16-21

Saturday, January 2

- 1 Jn 2: 11-28
- Ps 98: 1-4
- Jn 1: 19-28

Sunday, January 3

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

The Epiphany of Our Lord

January 2nd and January 3rd

4:00 p.m. - Saturday - Celebrant: Bp. Quinn **Lector:** Jeri Krueger
Eucharistic Ministers: Beverly Bennert, Maria Cox- & Adam Borkowski,
Bob Krueger, Mary Helen Quigg-Hillyer
Altar Servers: Jack & Patrick Hern

8:30 a.m. - Sunday - Celebrant: Fr. Bede **Lector:** Norman Cure
Eucharistic Ministers: Maggie Jackson, Joan Jackson,
Liz & Steve Linne, Joellyn Valgoi, Chris Walsh
Altar Servers: Delaney Jackson, Liam O'Byrne

11:15 a.m. - Sunday - Celebrants: Fr. Pelc **Lector:** Pat Sperti
Eucharistic Ministers: Doris Fleming, Mary Ghesquiere, Michele Hodges,
Janis Ramsey, Cristina Swiatkowski, Cynthia Warner
Altar Servers: Sylvia & Effie Hodges

Your Envelope Speaks . . . the Inside Story

To operate, each week our parish requires a *minimum* of \$10,100.00

On Sunday, December 13, 2015

in envelopes we received \$9,082.00
in the loose collection \$511.00
in electronic donations \$1,200.00
in children's envelopes \$19.00
for a total of **\$10,812.00**

Over budget for the week \$ **712.00**
Number of envelopes mailed 800
Number of envelopes used 172

All financial gifts and contributions to St. Ambrose are considered charitable giving and are tax-deductible. According to IRS rules, a contribution is recognized on the date of delivery -- so it must be postmarked no later than December 31, 2015.

To give electronically, go to stambrosechurch.net

Our Sick

Please pray for our parishioners who are seriously ill or hospitalized:

Kay Balas, Peyton Barron, Pat Blake, Laura Bush, Dominic Centorbi, Andrew Chavez, Maria Chinchilla, Maryjane Cullen, Karen Culver, Mary Pat Egan, Kathleen Elberson, Dan Fleming, Mary Ellen Greenup, Angela Hansen, Elizabeth Howard, Bp. Joe Imesch, Ann Sullivan Kay, Donald & Marilyn Miriani, Bonnie McKenna, Mary Myers, Jeanne Noto, Ray Oberly, Elizabeth Robert, Bob Ramsey, David Schumacker, Irene & Bryan Scopel, Fred Schroeder, Matthew Elias, Susan Bucec, Scott Nedoff, Anne Billiu, Felix Checki, Betty Greenia, Emilie Kasper and Angeline Boluk.

Our Dead

On Friday, December 18th, Fr. Pelc celebrated the Mass of the Angels for **Leo James Horman**, who died prematurely at the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor. He is the son of David and Stephanie (Garza) Horman and the brother of Andrew and Nolan.

"You created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book" (Psalm 139:13-16).



Pray Every Day

Daily Prayer 2016 is your guide to prayer that includes scripture, psalmody, a brief reflection,

general intercessions, and a closing prayer. These prayer books are \$12 each — a dollar a month — which is a modest investment in someone's spiritual formation. To pick up a copy of this year's Daily Prayer 2016, stop in the back of church or call the rectory office at 822-2814.

Vincentian Reflection

The Sunday after Christmas is the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph – a feast that calls us to celebrate that we all belong to the holy family of God which makes us brothers and sister to each other. During this Christmas season, through your support of the St. Vincent de Paul Conference here at St. Ambrose, we were able to bring joy and hope to our “brothers and sisters” who live in poverty by assisting over 100 families with food, gifts, rent, and utility bills. THANK YOU! And may God bless your family during the coming new year.



Centennial Pilgrimage

Travel planners **Lisa Morreale** and **Patti Ralko** are readily available to answer questions about our **St. Ambrose Centennial Pilgrimage** to Milan. The dates for the trip are May 25th – June 1st, all in and around the city of St. Ambrose – *Milano*.

The cost for land and airfare per person will be \$3,945 (based on 30 pilgrims) which includes 6 nights' lodging, transfers, guides and some meals. Lisa and Patti are willing to work with those who might want to make other air arrangements outside of the group, including those who might want to use frequent flyer miles, or to add days for an extension to Rome for the Holy Year festivities.

To secure a place on our Centennial Pilgrimage, we would like a deposit of \$800 per person. What a great Christmas gift this would make!

Highlights of this trip would be seeing Da Vinci's masterpiece, The Last Supper; mass at the tomb of our patron, Saint Ambrose; a tour of the City's Brea district and the Brea Gallery; the *Castello Sforzesco*; the *Duomo* (the Cathedral where St. Ambrose baptized St. Augustine); a tour of the *La Scala* Opera house (with an opportunity to take in a performance of Puccini's Girl of the Golden West; participation at a choir mass in the ancient Ambrosian Rite in the *Basilica di Sant' Ambrogio*; an afternoon excursion to Lake Como; plus guided sightseeing in the city and ample time for leisure and shopping. If you want to discuss details with Lisa or Patti, you can contact them at lisa@Travelworld.bz or pralko@hotmail.com

Pregnancy Aid Giving Tree

For 22 years now, we have erected a **Pregnancy Aid Giving Tree** in our church as a demonstrative way of supporting our pro-life convictions.

This Giving Tree outreach program benefits the local Pregnancy Aid Society at 17325 Mack, where women with unplanned pregnancies can find positive alternatives to abortion.

There is still time for you to give a Christmas Present to a newborn in our neighborhood. We will not be transporting gifts until this coming week. So you can still bring your gifts to church before January 1st. So shop the after Christmas sales for some infant needs.

The Pregnancy Aid Society has a wish list which includes: baby clothing (0-12 mos.), sleepers, blankets, bibs, undershirts (one-piece snap-style), bath accessories, baby toiletries, diapers (size 1 and 2), strollers, breast-feeding accessories and informative books like: "You and Your Baby" or support items such as "Baby Einstein" DVDs, books and toys. "Pack 'n Plays," along with Pack 'n Play-sized crib sheets, are also welcomed, as are all gently used baby furniture and car carriers. In short – things that are practical, educational and essential.

Items brought in at Christmas time are part of an inventory from which Pregnancy Aid draws all year long – and you can give a gift to them anytime all year long. Just bring it to their headquarters on Mack.

There are few better ways to give a birthday present today to Jesus than through this Pregnancy Aid project.