

MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD

Some people think that Christmas is one holiday and New Year's Day is another holiday, but the Church keeps the first of January as one of the days of Christmastime. The rejoicing of December 25 belongs to January 1 as well.

The Gospel for Mass today is short. It gives us several reasons to rejoice. And it also give us the reasons for the many different titles that the first of January has had over the years. The Gospel, from the second chapter of Luke, is a continuation of the story we began at Midnight Mass on Christmas. We hear that the shepherds found Mary and Joseph and the newborn Jesus. Then they went to tell their neighbors that a savior was born.

Mary treasured what was said about her child. In joy, the shepherds sang the angels' song of glory in heaven and peace on earth. Eight days after his birth, Jesus was circumcised and received his name, which means "savior."

One of the oldest solemnities of the Church, Mary, the Mother of God, has been celebrated since as early as

the 5th century although the date has changed over the years from before Christmas to finally the octave of Christmas after Vatican II's reforms. While we celebrate the solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, the Lutheran and Episcopal Churches celebrate the Holy Name of Jesus, and the Byzantine Church celebrates the Circumcision of Jesus. In Greece, January 1 is also St. Basil's Day. Just about everywhere, feasting is customary on January 1.



In addition, January 1 was designated as World Day of Peace by Pope Pius VI over 40 years ago. As Pope John Paul II was to point out in one of his January 1 homilies, "despite serious, repeated attacks on the peaceful, solidarity of peoples, peace is possible and necessary. Indeed, peace is the most precious good to ask of God and to build with every effort, by means of concrete gestures of peace on the part of every man and women of good will."

The priests and staff of the Cathedral Parish extend their warmest greetings to all for a New Year filled with grace and blessed with the Peace of Christ.

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL PLACEMENT EXAMS

The High School Placement Exam for prospective students of all four Catholic high schools will be held on Saturday, January 28, 2006, at 8:00 am. Registration for the examination should be done at the school one plans to attend in the fall. For information, contact the individual school's admission office as shown below:

● Christian Brothers High School: 733-3690 or www.cbhs-sacramento.org

● Jesuit High School: 482-6060 x 227 or register on line at www.jhssac.org

● Loretto High School: 482-7793 x 103 or www.loretto.net

● St. Francis High School: 452-3461 x 195 or www.stfranchishs.org

Please note there is a \$30 fee for the examination. Recommendation Forms are due on February 10, interviews scheduled in late February with decisions sent out in March.

WANT TO VOLUNTEER? MANY CHOICES

If you would like to participate in more than just showing up on Sundays for Mass, we have a variety of ministries from which you can choose. The following is a list of our ministries and organizations. To volunteer for any one of them just call the rectory at 444-3070.

Religious education: We now have about 445 children who come to class on Saturday mornings (English), Sunday mornings (Spanish), and Monday evenings (English). There is always room for more teachers or teacher aids to help pass on the faith to our children.

St Vincent de Paul Society: They provide an emergency aid to the downtown poor, and also run a hot line for people in need. Over Christmas they will be giving out food baskets to families in need.

Liturgical ministries: Lectors take turns reading at Sunday Masses and weekday Masses. Eucharistic ministers take turns administering Communion at Sunday Masses and weekday Masses. Ushers take up the collection during Mass. Those gifted with good voices sing in the choir. Young people take their turns serving at Masses.

RCIA: sponsors assist those becoming Catholic on their journey to the faith.

Parish Council: new members are needed to replace outgoing members.

CHRISTMAS DINNER UPDATE

On Christmas Eve Day, we celebrated our annual Christmas Dinner in the new modern kitchen of our Cathedral Lower Level. All downtown poor and transients were invited. Our numbers were few, but our Christmas Spirit high. There were toys for the children and live music to serenade our guests. Yes, the Child was there.

CATHEDRAL WEB SITE

The Cathedral Parish maintains an outstanding Web site located at www.cathedralsacramento.org. Current events, bulletins, minister schedules, information on weddings and baptisms, and E-mail are all available along with calendars for Cathedral events. Links to daily readings and the Liturgy of the Hours are also available. Visit our Web site.

Hospitality Committee: make new members welcome in the parish.

Visiting the sick: Eucharistic ministers take Communion to rest homes and the homes of people who cannot come to Mass.

Ethnic ministries: The Hispanic and Filipino communities have committees that organize a variety of cultural activities throughout the year.

Rectory volunteers: These volunteers help answer the phone and door in the rectory, thus freeing up our secretaries to get other work done.

Vocations committee: helps increase awareness of need for religious vocations.

Youth group: will be organized in the New Year. Adult advisors needed.

12:10 PM MASS ON MONDAY

On Monday, January 2, we will have a 12:10 Mass only. Because Monday is a state holiday there will be no evening Mass that day. On regular weekdays we have Masses at 12:10 pm and 5:10 pm.

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

MON 1/2/2006	St. Basil the Great & St. Gregory Nazianzen 12:10 pm: All Souls 5:30 pm NO MASS
TUES 1/3/2006	The Most Holy Name of Jesus 12:10 pm: James Maquire + 5:10 pm Irene Paquin +
WED 1/4/2006	St. Elizabeth Ann Seton 12:10 pm: Reina Avalos & Family, S.I. 5:10 pm: Anthony Pellegrino +
THURS 1/5/2006	St. John Neumann 12:10 pm: Cesar Fernandez Coya, S.I. 5:10 pm: Rod Hackman & Family, S.I.
FRI 1/6/2006	Blessed Andre Bessette 12:10 pm: Nabila Zara, S.I. 5:10 pm: Jeanne Woodford & Family, S.I.