

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2009**  
**THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH**

**PASTOR'S COLUMN**

Today is traditionally the feast day of the Holy Family. It gives me an opportunity to reflect on the importance of the family to our faith and the future of our country.

Tolstoy began his novel "Anna Karenina" by stating that all happy families are happy in the same way and all unhappy families are unhappy in different ways.

I think this statement is basically true. Many things can go wrong in a family be we can all recognize a solid family.

What is essential to family is recognition that this is a gift from God and God needs to be the center of every family. The spiritual underpinning insures that the covenant that the husband and wife make with one another is set on diving grounds and not just on the basis of a social contract.

A contract is made between two parties with very strict rules and limitations. Infringement of those limitations could cause the contract to be broken and hence, no longer binding. It is unfortunate that our society sees it in this way. Divorce is a recognition of the non-fulfillment of the contract. Pre-nuptial agreements make the fragility of these arrangements painfully apparent.

The Sacrament of Matrimony is not a contract. It is a covenant made between the spouses and God himself. "What God joins together let no man put asunder" clearly articulates Christ's vision of the fact that it is God who joins the two together to form one new reality. That this produces children underscores the permanency of the covenant.

One of the reasons the Church insists that Catholics be married in the Church is that only in this way can a sacrament be enacted. There are many marriages in which Catholics live together or have only the benefit of the civil contract. These marriages are not covenants and are not valid in the eyes of God. For this reason the Church invites all Catholics to enter into a sacramental union that is blessed by God.

I have had the pleasure of 'convalidating' the marriages of many Catholic couples who have been together many years and often have

children. Once these couples cross the threshold of Catholic Matrimony, they received many graces that help them to fight so many of the things in our culture which undermine the Family.

A very wise priest by the name of Fr. Peyton once said "The family that prays together stays together." It is my hope that all Catholic marriages be protected by God and that couples who do not have that blessing, seek it.

These 'convalidations' are often privately performed in Church with only close family in attendance. No donation is required and the priest will aid the couple in any way to accept this loving invitation to the graces of the sacrament which protect the marriage in the turbulent world in which we live.

**MASS SCHEDULE**

**MONDAY – December 28<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 a.m. Jane Blank  
9:00 a.m. Filomena Foschini & Family  
12 Noon Antonio Filagrossi

**TUESDAY – December 29<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 a.m. Jose L. Reyna, Jr.  
9:00 a.m. Matthew Haughey  
12 Noon Gino Lofrano

**WEDNESDAY - December 30<sup>th</sup>**

7:00a.m. Manolo Maddela  
9:00 a.m. Denise, Blanche & Jesse Smith  
12 Noon Anne Eiene (5<sup>th</sup> Anniv.)

**THURSDAY- December 31<sup>st</sup>**

7:00 a.m. Giovanna & Joseph Camenzuli  
9:00 a.m. Robert Viacaca (9<sup>th</sup> Anniv.) & Family, Mary Pascual  
12 Noon Kathryn & Lester Frank  
7:00 p.m. Living & Deceased Parishioners

**FRIDAY - January 1, 2010**

9:00 a.m. English – Upper Church  
9:00 a.m. Italian - Lower Church  
10:30 a.m. English  
11:45 a.m. Spanish

**SATURDAY - January 2<sup>nd</sup>**

7:00 a.m. Michael DePace  
9:00 a.m. Esther & Joseph Mule  
12:00 Noon Tina & Pietro Montanari  
5:00 p.m. **Purgatorial Society**

**SUNDAY - January 3<sup>rd</sup>**

7:00 a.m. Living & Deceased Parishioners  
9:00 a.m. Theresa Anderson  
10:30 a.m. Sean Brown & John Prager  
11:45 a.m. **Spanish-** Leonidas Lopez  
1:00 p.m. Antonio Filagrossi (Birth. Remb.)

**Lower Church:**

9:00 a.m. **Italian** – Joseph & Albina Squeri

**THE BREAD AND WINE** are donated this week in loving memory of Irene & James Dunne requested by the Boot Family.

**THE CANDLES ON THE ALTAR** are donated this week in loving memory of Lena Romano requested by Joan & Peter DiMarco.

**THE SANCTUARY LAMP** is burning this week in loving memory of James J. McCauley, Rose, Vito & Sgt. Patsy Rocco requested by Florence McCauley & Family.

**PLEASE KEEP THEM IN YOUR PRAYERS**



**Please pray for the recently deceased:  
Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may  
perpetual light shine on them forever. +**

**CHOIR NEWS**

The choir is seeking men and women who like to sing. Come join them for practice on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. in the choir loft. Enter the church through the front side doors.

*“He gave power to become children of God.”* If you think you may be called to share the Father’s love as a priest, deacon, sister or brother, speak with a priest or religious or contact the Vocation Office at 718-827-2454 or [vocations@diobrook.org](mailto:vocations@diobrook.org).



**NEW YEAR’S SCHEDULE**

**Thursday, December 31<sup>st</sup>- (New Year’s Eve)**

Mass: 7:00 p.m.

**FEAST OF MARY MOTHER OF GOD – NEW YEAR’S DAY - Friday, January 1, 2010**

Upper Church: 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m. (English)  
11:45 a.m. (Spanish)

Lower Church: 9:00 a.m. (Italian)

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE: THERE IS NO 1:00 p.m. Mass\*\***

**ROSARY SOCIETY MASS & MEETING**

Please join us for the Rosary Society mass and meeting on Sunday, January 3. Mass will be at 10:30 a.m. We will pray the rosary at 10:00 a.m. if anyone would like to join us. We will sit in the main area of the church on the left side toward the front if you are facing the altar. After mass, we will have a meeting downstairs in the school hall where coffee and a light snack will be served. Yearly dues will also be collected. New members are always welcome.

**WORK AVAILABLE THROUGH AARP AND THE CATHOLIC MIGRATION OFFICE**

The AARP Foundation WorkSearch, Senior Employment Program is looking for bi-lingual Spanish speakers, 55 and older, on limited income and who live in Queens to answer phones and perform light office work for the Catholic Migration Office, a non-profit legal and social services provider for the Diocese of Brooklyn and Queens. If you are interested please call the AARP at (718) 433-0010 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. and ask to speak with an Employment Specialist or the Catholic Migration Office at (718) 943-4445 and ask for Katie Carew. Please mention this ad.

La Fundaci ón AARP tiene una programa de trabajo para personas mayores de 55 a ños o mAs, con ingreso bajo y que residen en Queens. Para contestar el Tel éfono y trabajo liviano de oficina

para la Oficina de la Migración Católica sin fines de lucro que provee servicios legales y sociales por la Diócesis de Brooklyn y Queens. Si Ud. está interesado llamemos a la oficina AARP al (718)-433-0010 entre las 9 a.m. y 3 p.m. y preguntar por un Especialista de Trabajo, o llamemos a la Oficina de la Migración (718) 943-4445 y preguntar por Katie Carew. Por favor, mencionar este aviso.

### **MARCH 12-14, 2010 YOUTH RETREAT (AGES 15-30) AT IMMAC**

Our parish is pleased to announce that on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>, we will be hosting a **Youth 2000 NY Retreat** weekend. This is a beautiful and unique opportunity for the youth of our parish and surrounding parishes, and they are invited and strongly encouraged to attend the weekend. They will join young people from around the metropolitan area to pray, talk and socialize. Registration forms are available in the back of the Church and in the rectory. Please call Kitty Prager at 917-714-7360 for more information.

Youth 2000 is organized by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal. They have held monthly prayer festivals that have touched the lives of thousands of young people in the Metropolitan area. Their simple life style, love of Christ, and service to the poor present to the young people a powerful and much-needed witness of Christ living in today's world. YOUTH 2000 was invited by the World Youth day committee to lead Eucharistic Adoration at the World Youth Days in Manila in 1995, Paris in 1997, Rome in 2000 and again in Toronto in 2002. YOUTH 2000 Prayer Festivals occur almost every week somewhere in the US. At present, YOUTH 2000 is active in the US, England, Ireland, Germany, Australia, Panama, the West Indies, and hopes to expand into other countries in Europe and in Africa. One may also visit the Youth2000NY website: <http://www.youth2000ny.com/MajorEvent2009/ME09.htm>.

### **KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY**

The Knights of Columbus Immaculate Conception Council #11449, invite you to join them for a Family New Year's Eve Party in the school hall on December 31<sup>st</sup> from 8:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Admission is \$10.00 for adults and children are free. Bring your own food. Beer and wine will be available for purchase. Tickets will be available at the door.

### **HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**

**“He went down with them then, and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother meanwhile kept all these things in memory. Jesus, for his part, progressed steadily in wisdom and age and grace before God and men.”**

During these festive days, the scriptures move in several directions. In relatively few days we find the Holy Family en route to Bethlehem, in Egypt, visited by people from the orient, in Jerusalem and finally at home in Nazareth. As the stories unfold we travel with Mary and Joseph, silent spectators at important events.

We visit Jerusalem today, where the familiar story of lost and found is described. Consider the anxiety and fear which must have touched the hearts of the parents. Although he was twelve, think about a child lost in a crowded mall store prior to Christmas. The child cries, the parents check store security, the busy parking lots surely are a place of danger.

They meet and the adolescent simply states “Why did you search for me?” He asks that question of me today as well. My answer is because of my great need for Christ in my life. Imagine how Mary, once home, sat down after the journey and reflected, or pondered, weighed all the things that transpired. The normal religious pilgrimage certainly took on a new tone a new disaster and for the parents, a nightmare.

We too, as we relax on this last weekend of the year, in a quiet moment at home, or in church, pause to reflect on the celebration of these last days, or summarize the events of this entire year. The headlines have been harsh. Hopes have been dashed. Problems beyond our control persist. Yet the presence of Christ and His grace is able to effect a change.

Like the child who progressed in this threefold way, we too, seek His wisdom, His grace, as we close one year and begin another. His abiding presence with us will be the same source of strength which supported the Holy Family in their need.