

January 1, 2017

## Mary, the Holy Mother of God

### MASS INTENTIONS

#### Saturday, December 31

5:00 p.m. +**Norman Baines**  
By The Kappus Family

#### Sunday, January 1

9:00 a.m. **Altar Rosary Society**  
11:00 a.m. +**Anna and Patrick Kane**  
By Susan Reynolds

#### Monday, January 2

8:45 a.m. +**Joseph Magyar**  
By Karl and Rose Strohmaier

#### Tuesday, January 3

8:45 a.m. +**Ludwik Tomiczek**  
By Bernadette and Andy Ryan

#### Wednesday, January 4

8:45 a.m. +**Robert Gross and Charles Folk**  
By Angela Gross

#### Thursday, January 5 **NO MASS**

#### First Friday, January 6

8:45 a.m. +**Theresa Rebinski**  
By Henry Rebinski

#### First Saturday, January 7

8:45 a.m. **In Thanksgiving of Saint Jude**  
By Angela Gross  
5:00 p.m. **Birthday Blessings for Barbara Kovacs**  
By Family

#### Sunday, January 8

8:00 a.m. +**Vincent Perna**  
By Carol Perna  
10:30 a.m. +**Albert Malet**  
By The Saksa Family

**NOTICE:** Starting Thursday, January 5, Father will be changing his day off from Friday to Thursday; hence, there will be no Masses celebrated on Thursdays.



The mother of the messiah has been called many things in the last 2000 years—the Virgin Mary, Our Lady, the Blessed Mother. But call her “the Mother of God,” and you’ll see some Christians squirm.

This is nothing new. One day in the early fifth

century, a priest preached a stirring sermon in the presence of the patriarch of Constantinople. His

subject was the holy mother of Jesus. The preacher continually referred to Mary as the “Theotokos” meaning “God-bearer” or mother of God. This was no innovation—Christians had invoked Mary under this title for at least two hundred years. Nevertheless, at the close of the sermon, the patriarch ascended the steps of the pulpit to correct the preacher. We should call Mary the Mother of Christ, said Patriarch Nestorius, not the Mother of God. She was the mother of his human nature, not the mother of his divinity.

His comment sparked a riot. And the dispute rocked not only the congregation, but the entire empire. Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, Egypt, immediately recognized that Nestorius’ Marian theology was a symptom of a much deeper problem, a problem with the incarnation itself. For to deny Mary the title “Mother of God” makes of Jesus a dichotomy, a split personality. It would mean that God had not really embraced our humanity so as to become human. Rather, the humanity of Christ is hermetically sealed off from the divinity, as if Jesus were two persons, as if human nature was so distasteful that God, in Christ, had to keep it at arm’s distance. It is OK, according to Nestorius, to say that in Jesus, God raised Lazarus, or multiplied the loaves, or walked on water. But it is not OK to say that in Jesus God is born or that God died.

Cyril, aware that this was a challenge to the heart of our faith, demanded that an ecumenical council be called to settle the matter. So in 431, the Council of Ephesus met, under Cyril’s leadership, and solemnly proclaimed that Mary is indeed rightly to be honored as the Theotokos, the Mother of God. It proclaimed that from the moment of his conception, God truly became man. Of course Mary is a creature and could never be the origin of the eternal Trinity, God without beginning or end. But the second person of the blessed Trinity chose to truly become man. He did not just come and borrow a human body and drive it around for awhile, ascend back to heaven, and discard it like an old car. No, at the moment of his conception in the womb of Mary, an amazing thing happened. God the Son united himself with a human nature forever. Humanity

and divinity were so closely bound together in Jesus, son of Mary, that they could never be separated again. Everything that would be done by the son of Mary would be the act both of God and of man. So indeed it would be right to say that a man raised Lazarus from the dead and commanded the wind and waves, that God was born that first Christmas day and that, on Good Friday, God died.

The Council of Ephesus, once confirmed by the Pope, became the third ecumenical council of the Catholic Church, and its teaching in this matter is dogma, truth revealed by God which all are bound to accept.

So why does the Roman liturgy celebrate the Octave of Christmas as the Feast of Mary the Mother of God? Because this paradoxical phrase strikes at the very heart of Christmas. The songs we sing and the cards we write extol the babe of Bethlehem as Emmanuel, God-with-us. He is so with us that after Gabriel's visit to the Virgin of Nazareth, the Divine Word can never again be divided from our humanity. What God has joined, let no man separate.

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Dear Parishioners,  
Thank you so much for the wonderful acts of kindness you demonstrated in remembering me at

Christmas. I am very appreciative of your gifts, prayers and good wishes. May the warmth of Jesus' love and the joy of the Christmas Season remain with you throughout the coming year. May God bless you.

-Father Damian

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Stephen, Anthony Vitale,  
Bridget M., Savannah Paine,  
Bobby Gross, Michael Dante,  
Keira H., Maryann Vaughan,  
Robert Dicheck, Peter, Zachary,  
Logan Peter Saksa, Anna Paine,

Maryann Vaughan, Anna Saksa, Lauren Lane,  
Jay Mildrum, Philip Kinney, Mary D., Kerry Kraft, Patty Mahoney, Cheyann Miller, Cathy Moncello, Louise C., Peter S., Helen Dicheck, Mary Supple

## Tricky Tray Profits

The profit from our 2016 Tricky Tray event was \$13,818.45. Dear Committee Members/Workers and Parishioners—THANK YOU VERY MUCH!! As you know extra money is much needed, since our collections have been going down, unfortunately, operational costs never do. The winter season always brings on increased expenses and we are struggling now to meet our commitments. Your generosity is much appreciated. God bless you. Father Damian

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### Church & Rel. Ed. Schedule

Jan. 2: Parish and Rel. Ed. Offices will be closed

Jan. 2: No Rel. Ed. Classes

Jan. 9, 6:15: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade in church; all others at school

Jan. 14: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Retreat at St. Mary's

Jan. 14, 6 pm: Youth Group Movie Night

Jan. 16: No Rel. Ed. Classes: MLK holiday

Jan. 16: Parish and Rel. Ed. Offices closed

Jan. 28, 6 pm: Youth Group Game Night

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### Annual Diocesan Respect for Life Mass



The annual Diocesan Respect for Life Mass will be held on Sunday, January at 12 noon at St. Francis of Assisi

Cathedral in Metuchen. **Rally for Life in Trenton:**

The Diocese Office of Respect for Life will be running a bus trip to the Rally for Life at the NJ Statehouse in Trenton on Monday, January 23 from 11 am to 1 pm. The bus ride is free; however, space is limited. Therefore, reservations are required.

Passengers will board the bus at the Diocesan Center in Piscataway at 9:30 am. The bus will return everyone to the Diocesan Center at approximately 2 pm. To reserve a seat call 732-562-1900, ext 1543 or 1629 or email [amarshall@diometuchen.org](mailto:amarshall@diometuchen.org)

**March for Life in Washington, DC:** will be held on Friday, January 27 (due to Inauguration on Monday) beginning at noon on the Mall in DC. For additional info: [www.marchforlife.org](http://www.marchforlife.org). The bishop will be concelebrating at opening Mass of the National Prayer Vigil for Life at the Basilica of the National Shrine on Jan. 26 and, on Jan. 27, at the Youth Mass & Rally for Life at the Verizon Ctr. Our diocese will be sending 190 of our youth to the Youth Mass.

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Saint Theodore Church 855 Route 57

P.O. Box 146, Port Murray, NJ 07865

908-689-8318 Father Damian, ext. 4

Parish Office, ext. 1, Rel. Ed., ext. 2

[www.sttheodorenj.com](http://www.sttheodorenj.com) [sttheodorenj@gmail.com](mailto:sttheodorenj@gmail.com)

[sttheodoreled@gmail.com](mailto:sttheodoreled@gmail.com)