



MONTHLY BULLETIN

December 2024

At Home with the Lord

Imagining a solar system with only one star actually doesn't take any imagination at all. We know of only one star in our solar system. Earth, other planets, comets, and asteroids orbit around that singular star—the sun.

We can gaze upon countless stars in our Milky Way galaxy. Closest to Earth among them all, the sun provides essential light and warmth to the world.

On the first Christmas, an angel appeared in shining glory to shepherds. Telling them to fear not, the angel proclaimed our Savior's birth. As a sign that the Christ had truly come into the world, the shepherds would find the Infant swaddled and lying in a manger.

Astronomers call our sun a yellow dwarf star, unremarkable as stars go but life-sustaining for us.

Glorious Sights

The Infant Jesus came so that we might have eternal life.



Fr. Tony Scannell
Chaplain

He will come again! In the Gospel reading for the beginning of Advent this year, Jesus foretells that celestial signs in the sun and other stars will precede His return in glory. Advent reminds us to get ready.

Quieting our thoughts and hearts to appreciate the Lord's presence in our lives can become a difficult and even penitential task. We may have cards to write, a tree to decorate,

gift lists and recipes to consider, and plans to make. Oh, my stars, Christmas is coming!

For Christ's second coming, sometime after the holidays might seem like a more convenient time.

Strong gravitational pull of the sun keeps the Earth and other celestial bodies in orbit around it. Jesus wants our lives to revolve around Him all the time.

Among celestial events already seen, the *aurora borealis* (Northern Lights) appear in shimmering colors when charged particles released from the sun descend through the Earth's atmosphere. Sent by the Father into the world, our Savior became visibly present. During Advent, prepare to celebrate Christmas as a glorious display of His Light and Love.

Christmas TV Mass

For time and channel information on Christmas TV Masses already scheduled, please see page 2. Heart of the Nation will provide updates by e-mail, on Facebook, and on www.HeartoftheNation.org as scheduling continues.

Online Holy Day Masses

Join Heart of the Nation for online Mass anytime on Christmas and the dates below:

Monday, Dec. 9, 2024
Immaculate Conception
(Holy Day Mass obligation reinstated)

Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2025
Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Christmas TV Mass

Family Entertainment Television Network (FETV)

4:30 a.m. ET / 3:30 CT /
1:30 a.m. PT

Cable channels: Check
local listings.

Satellite: DirecTV ch. 323,
Dish ch. 82

Baltimore, MD

WNUV ch. 54, 7 a.m.

Boston, MA

WSBK ch. 38, 5:30 a.m.

Buffalo, NY

WNYO ch. 49, 8:30 a.m.

Burlington, VT

WFFF ch. 44, time TBD

Charleston, WV

WCHS (Fox 11) ch. 8.2
9 a.m.

Chicago, IL

WJYS ch. 62, 10 a.m.
WMEU ch. 48.1, 6:30 a.m.
WCIU ch. 26.2, 6:30 a.m.

Cleveland, OH

WMFD ch. 68, 9:30 a.m.

Columbus, OH

WWHO ch. 53, 5 a.m.

Flint, MI

WBSF ch. 46 & WEYI
ch. 25.2, 9:30 a.m.

Fresno, CA

KFRE ch. 59.1, 8:30 a.m.

Green Bay, WI

WCWF ch. 14, 8:30 a.m.

Guam

KUAM ch 8.1, 11 a.m.

Harrisburg, PA

WHP-DT3 ch. 21.3, 9:30 a.m.

Houston, TX

KTXH ch. 20, 6:30 a.m.

Los Angeles, CA

KXLA ch. 44, 8:30 a.m.,
12:30 p.m.

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Jesus' Teachings Ring a Bell

Before the advent of sleigh bells and silver bells of Christmas, ancient Israelites wrote "Holy to the Lord" on bells worn by horses during the Festival of Booths—a celebration of God leading His people to the Promised Land. During Advent, we prepare to celebrate the coming of Jesus, who leads us in the promise of salvation.



Picture a spherical sleigh bell, slotted so that it makes a merry, jingling sound. Stopping to think about it, you may wonder how the little "jinglet" gets inside a seamless bell.

William Barton became a prominent bell maker in the days of horse-drawn sleighs and coaches. He made one-piece bells by placing the jinglet inside a packed ball of sand, pouring molten metal over it in an outer mold, and then shaking the sand out.

Horses wore collars with bells to save people from collisions. Jesus came to save us from sin.

Holiday preparations can muffle our need to prepare with a penitential heart for the joyful celebration of Jesus' birth. Advent and Christmas comprise one wondrous piece.

Advent Scripture readings remind us that John the Baptist preached a baptism of repentance. John also announced the coming of One who would Baptize with the Holy Spirit.

Each person has a soul, like the inner jinglet of a bell, and a body miraculously made of water, calcium, and other elements as earthly as grains of sand. Bells get polished to a reflective shine.

Through Baptism, the Holy Spirit enables us to reflect God's grace.

After shaking out the sand through slots in Barton's sleigh bells, those same slots allowed the bells to ring. Jesus would shake things up, yet His words rang with the joyful sound of Good News for believers!

William Barton brought bell making to East Hampton, Connecticut. So many bell shops and factories followed that people called it "Belltown."

God sent His Son, who started small in His ministry. Crowds then followed, listening to His words that resounded with hope, clear as a bell.

Season of Sharing

"What should we do?" John the Baptist answered that question in ways that fit people's circumstances. Your Season of Sharing fund drive donation or pledge will help to provide Sunday Mass and inspirational publications, but what else could you do?



Send your special intentions to Heart of the Nation so that others can share in your prayers and experience oneness in faith.



In Christmas cards, share the Web site www.HeartoftheNation.org to give family and friends the gifts of online Mass and Rosary, daily prayers, a four-minute retreat, and other ways to grow in faith.



Order the free *Prayer & Worship Guide* for someone you love. (Send the recipient's name and address to Heart of the Nation; see page 4.)

Prayer for Joy and Peace

Lord Jesus,

Born to share with us
our life and human need,
I look to You, my Savior,
wellspring of joy
and peace.

As I come to You,
who grant all that I need,
may the gift of faith
received
bring Christmas joy
and peace.

Loving Savior born
for humanity in need,
grant that more will come
to see
in You their joy
and peace.

Amen.

Christmas Prayer



Lord, our Savior,

***To dwell with us on Earth,
You came that all might see
through Your life and birth
the Father's love revealed.***

***As shepherds who kept watch
on a most holy night,
keep us in Your care,
in Your shining, holy Light.***

***With angels who appeared,
may voices join in praise
as we share the joy known
on the first Christmas Day.***

Doors to Peace and Hope

Every 25 years, an “Ordinary Jubilee” in the Catholic Church has the key elements of opening the Holy Doors at St. Peter’s Basilica and other sites, pilgrimages, and indulgences. Among the symbolic doorways to salvation, Pope Francis will open a Holy Door in a prison.

Beginning on December 24, 2024, the Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee will continue through January 6, 2026. Pope Francis has identified primary objectives for this Jubilee of serving as a sign of hope for world peace, increasing hope among people in need, and encouraging young people as the future of the Church and world.



Pilgrimage and Indulgences

Indulgences remove the need for purification in purgatory due to the effects of past sins. Seeking a plenary (full) or partial indulgence requires freedom from mortal sin and stating your desire to God for the indulgence for yourself or a soul in purgatory.

Next, perform an indulgenced action, such as a Jubilee pilgrimage or visit to a designated sacred place. If homebound, imprisoned, or otherwise constrained, you may substitute the following series of actions: Unite in spirit with the Jubilee travelers; offer an Our Father, the Nicene or Apostles’ Creed, and prayers in any words related to the Holy Year objectives (paragraph 2, above); and lift up to God your sufferings and hardships. Other possibilities for Jubilee indulgenced actions include striving for spiritual conversion through certain works of mercy and penance.

Additional Steps for Full Indulgence

Seeking full indulgence requires complete detachment from sin (determination to stop sinning, although you might later fail) and a prayer for the Holy Father’s intentions. Within about 20 days before or after the indulgenced action, you must also receive—or have the intention of receiving as soon as possible—Sacramental Confession and Holy Communion. You may seek Jubilee Indulgences repeatedly, although full indulgences are limited to two per day for souls (if you receive Communion twice) or one for yourself.



Did You Know?



In the Gospel for Mass on December 24, the father of John the Baptist tells his newborn son that he will “go before the Lord to prepare His way” (Luke 1). Today, even the stamp on an envelope offers a way for senders of Christmas cards to proclaim the Lord Jesus.

With art based on a portrayal of the Madonna and Child in a Hans Memling masterpiece, the U.S. Post Office issued its first-ever traditional, religious Christmas stamp in 1966. That same year, a one-way post office opened in the unincorporated town of Christmas, in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula.



From the humble postal station in Christmas, Michigan, issued the first of the 1966 Christmas stamps—one of more than a billion printed.



Christmas, Michigan, got its name after an aspiring small businessman bought some land, built a shop that produced and sold small gift items, and hoped that a town would form around it. With the shop long gone, Christmas remains a small community. Nevertheless, out-of-towners request mailing of their holiday cards by the thousands with the Christmas postmark.

One year after the postage stamp introduced in 1966, the Post Office issued a larger stamp to show more from the Memling painting. Scripture readings for Christmas tell about more than the birth of Jesus, who came into the world to dwell with humanity and enable believers to become children of God (John 1).



Heart of the Nation.
CATHOLIC MASS

For local time and TV
channel information,
please visit

www.HeartoftheNation.org

or

Contact Us:

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Thank You, New Members!

With gratitude, Heart of the Nation includes Circle of the Heart monthly giving club members in perpetual prayers placed before the altar for every Sunday TV Mass.

To join, please mark the box on your donation reply card, and indicate the amount of your pledge.



Christmas TV Mass

(continued from page 2)

Milwaukee, WI

WVTV ch. 24, 9 & 9:30 a.m.

Mobile, AL

WFGX ch. 35, 8:30 a.m.

Nashville, TN

WUXP ch. 30, 8:30 a.m.

New York, NY

WLNY ch. 10/55 11 a.m.

Norfolk, VA

WTVZ ch. 33, 5 a.m.

Oklahoma City, OK

KOCB ch. 34, 8:30 a.m.

Omaha, NE

KPTM-DT3 ch. 42.3, 6 a.m.

Orlando, FL

WRBW ch. 65, 6 a.m.

Philadelphia, PA

WMCN ch. 44, 8:30 a.m.

Phoenix, AZ

KUTP ch. 45, 7:30 a.m.

Raleigh, NC

WLFL ch. 22, 6:30 a.m.

Rochester, NY

WUHF ch. 31.1, 2 p.m.

Sacramento Life TV

cable channels only, 8:30 a.m.

Seattle, WA

KSTW ch. 11, 5 a.m.

St. Louis, MO

KPLR ch. 11, 8:30 a.m.

Springfield-Champaign, IL

WBUI ch. 23, 8:30 a.m.

Tampa, FL

WTOG ch. 44, 5:30 a.m.

West Palm Beach, FL

WTCN (My15) ch. 43, 1 p.m.

Wichita, KS

KSAS-DT2 ch. 24.2, 7 a.m.

Sunday and Holy Day Masses
online all day at
www.HeartoftheNation.org