

St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church

58 Elm Street, Claremont, NH 03743

Established 1920



St Joseph Roman Catholic Church

Website: stjosephclaremont.org

Email: stjosephsclaremont@gmail.com

Pastor, Rev. Maria Sebastian Susairaj, HGN

Pastor's Mailing Address:

32 Pearl Street, Claremont, NH 03743

sebaafri@comcast.net

1-603-322-1644

Parish Finance Council

Rick Logan, Chairman

David Smith

Sharon Wood

Music Director

Richard Brown

Organists

Tristan Smith

Deborah Stone

Parish Office Hours

Wednesday, Dec. 20, 10:00am to 1:00 pm

603-542-5732

Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 17, 9:15 am

For the soul (†) of Grace Hamel

requested by John Hamel and Shirley McNutt

Wednesday December 20, 5:00 pm

For the soul (†) of Fr. Stanley Piwowar

requested by his parish family.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 24, 9:15 am

For the People

Solemn Mass of Christmas by Candlelight

Christmas Eve, 4:30 pm

For the soul (†) of Fr. George Majka

requested by Connie Barth

Today's 2nd collection is for Church Maintenance.

Offertory (Holy Day) Dec. 7, 2023	\$502.10
Christmas Flowers	\$80.00
Candles	\$10.00
Mass Intentions	\$10.00
December 7 TOTAL	\$602.10
Offertory (Sunday) Dec.10, 2023	\$885.00
Religious Retirement Fund	\$527.00
Diocesan Grant	\$750.00
Funeral	\$200.00
Christmas Flowers	\$120.00
Candles	\$18.00
Mass Intentions	\$10.00
December 10 TOTAL	\$2,510.00



Prayer List

Rev Msgr Donald Gilbert
 Fr. John Loughnane Brenda
 Chris Currier Jean Drena
 Frederick Gallant Carol Girard
 Isabella Gowell Stephen Grogan
 Deborah Hemingway Halford Jones
 Tim Roberts Brenda Ruest
 Janet Ruest Roger Sheehan
 Barbara Trask Becky Trombley
 Chee Chee Tyrrell

To add a name to our Prayer List, please ask the person's permission first, and then notify Sherri Smith in the Church Hall after Mass or leave a message on the Rectory answering machine (603-542-5732)



There will be a 2nd Collection for Fuel at the Christmas Mass, December 24, 4:30pm

The Sanctuary Lamp burns 24/7 near the tabernacle in all Catholic Churches in honor of the True Presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It burns this week in memory of Shirley Bunnell requested by Donald and Amarylis Girard.

ONGOING COLLECTIONS

NH Catholic Appeal (24 donors) \$2,366.00
 Grand Annual Collection \$2,430.00

Christmas Flower Fund

Please return envelopes as soon as possible. Due to early publication deadlines, the complete list of donors and memorials may not be published until later in the Christmas Season. Please write your intentions clearly on the envelope so they may be correctly printed.



Masses and Sanctuary Lamp

Intentions may be scheduled with Sherri Smith in the Church Hall after each Mass or at the Rectory during Wednesday office hours by phone (603-542-5732) or in person. Suggested donations are \$10.00.

WHEN WRITING CHECKS

to St. Joseph Church, please mark the name of the collection (Offertory or Specific Collection) to be sure it is put into the right place.

Grand Annual Collection

In October we began our parish's Grand Annual Collection. This will not be a one-time collection taken up at a weekend Mass, but an ongoing collection to build a fund for larger repair and maintenance projects on the various parish buildings, both current and future—similar to our Renovation Fund in past years. Grand Annual Collection envelopes are available at the back of the church. If you are not able to bring your weekly offertory or other donations to Mass, you may mail them to St Joseph Church, 58 Elm Street, Claremont, NH 03743 or bring it to the Rectory during Wednesday office hours. Thank you for your generosity!

Questions *and* Answers

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For Catholics

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One of the best ways to learn is to ask questions. Interestingly, the most significant summary of our Catholic faith was written by St. Thomas Aquinas (called the *Summa Theologica* – Summary of Theology) and is set up in a question-and-answer format. It's hard to believe an answer if you don't understand the question it is addressing. The Q&A below is no *Summa Theologica*, but hopefully some of these reflections will answer questions that are important to you.

Q. Holy Days of Obligation Why do we have these days? And why do we have so many of them?

A. Why so many, you ask? Officially, there are ten holy days of obligation in our Church: Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension, Corpus Christi, Holy Mary Mother of God, Immaculate Conception, Assumption, St. Joseph, Saints Peter & Paul, and All Saints Day. So if you lived in Vatican City, you'd celebrate all of them by attending Mass and getting the day off work!

However, it has been left up to each national conference of Catholic bishops throughout the world to determine how many of these holy days are also to be observed as “a day of obligation.” Canada has made only two of these holy days “days of obligation.” And believe it or not, Hong Kong has made only Christmas a day of obligation!

In the United States there are eight (“kind of”): Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension, Corpus Christi, Holy Mary Mother of God (January 1), Immaculate Conception, Assumption, and All Saints Day. I say “kind of” because most dioceses in the U.S. have moved Epiphany, Ascension, and Corpus Christi to Sundays, which are already holy days of obligation.

When the holy days of Mother of God, Assumption, and All Saints Day fall on a Saturday or Monday, they are still celebrated as holy days but do not carry an “obligation” to attend Mass that day. And when the holy day of the Immaculate Conception falls on a Sunday in Advent, it is celebrated the following Monday, and again, the “obligation” aspect is removed. With those details explained, let me address the bigger picture of what a holy day is all about.

First of all, we have to start with the understanding that it is both a duty and privilege to worship God. As Christians, we celebrate the day of the Resurrection as the obligatory day of worship and rest. To call it an obligation might sound negative. Truthfully, we should see our offering of worship to God every Sunday as a great privilege and sacred duty. We need to worship Him, and we need the Eucharist every week. So it's for our own good we do this.

What about the other holy days? There are many aspects of our faith that are absolutely central. In fact, they are so central that the Church has decided to make them high solemnities. For example, Christmas is the day we celebrate the birth of God into our world. What an important celebration!

It is so important that our Church has set forth the practice of requiring (as a sacred duty) that we all rest that day and worship God by attending Mass. The other holy days of obligation are the same. Even though every country is different as to which day it is required to rest and attend Mass, it doesn't change the fact that all of these days are celebrations of some of the most central mysteries of our faith.

As for your question, “why so many of them?” I'd simply say that we are so abundantly blessed by God, that setting aside these days for worship and to focus upon these specific aspects of our faith should be something we love to do. So look at it as a privilege. What an honor it is to be able to celebrate these great days with all other Catholics throughout the world!

Readings for the Week - December 17, 2023

Sunday, December 17, 2023: Is 61:1-2A, 10-11 Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54 1 Thes 5:16-24 Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

Monday, December 18, 2023: Jer 23:5-8 Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19 Mt 1:18-25

Tuesday, December 19, 2023: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17 Lk 1:5-25

Wednesday, December 20, 2023: Is 7:10-14 Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 Lk 1:26-38

Thursday, December 21, 2023: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21 Lk 1:39-45

Friday, December 22, 2023: 1 Sm 1:24-28 1 Sam 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd Lk 1:46-56

Saturday, December 23, 2023: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24 Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14 Lk 1:57-66

Third Sunday of Advent

Entrance Hymn: No. 190

"Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel"
Verses 1-4

Offertory Hymn: No. 191

"People, Look East"

Communion: (Choir)

Recessional Hymn: No. 194

"On Jordan's Bank"

Third Sunday of
Advent Mass
Readings / B
Page #484.

CHOIR REHEARSAL

Wed. Dec. 20
6:30 pm
New members
welcome!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE 1-20 FUEL RAFFLE!

1st Prize (\$500) winner: David Belisle

2nd Prize (\$200) winner: Henry Ingram

3rd Prize (\$20) winners:

Mike Lafont	David Belisle	Paul Shupenko
Jane Dombroski	Bill Pamplin	Chris Millette
Mark Roberts (2)	Ann-Marie Fowler (2)	
Debbie DeCoteau	Mary Rasco	Bob Davis
Vic Azotea	Buddy Braga	Tim Roberts
Jake Logan	Elizabeth Fontaine	Dennis Shea
Marianne Kepler	Richard Brown	Lisa Arsenault
Alizabeth Roberts		

THANK YOU TO THE 1-20 FUEL RAFFLE COMMITTEE!

Rusty Fowler Ron Gilbert
Richard and Mary Brown

and all who supported this fundraiser!

Catholic Daughters

Today at 1:00 pm
Advent Gathering/Luncheon
St. Joseph Church Hall

NO REGULAR MEETING
this month on the 19th.

Oplatki for Christmas

\$3 for a packages of four traditional
Polish wafers
inside an illustrated envelope with the
story of the
tradition printed on the back. Available
in the church hall after Mass, in the
rectory during Wednesday office
hours or call 603-542- 5732 or
stjosephsclaremont@gmail.com

LESSONS & CAROLS—TODAY!

St Mary Church, Sunday, December 17, 4pm

An hour of Christmas Carols and scripture readings
performed by Mount Royal Academy Sacred Choir
to celebrate the birth of Christ.

Winter Weather Cancellations:

If it becomes necessary to cancel Wednesday Mass,
rectory office hours or choir rehearsal,
we will again be using the WMUR-TV notification system. Please
check the cancellations listed on their website or broadcast on air.

Confessions
at St Mary Church
Fridays 9:30 am
Saturdays 3:00 - 3:45pm

PECANS

"Chocolate Covered
Cinnamon
Turtles and Cashews"

For Sale after Mass in our Church Hall

Homebound?

Schedule a visit with
Fr. Sebastian on the
2nd Monday of the month.
Call St Mary Parish Office
603-542-9518 or email
sebaafri@comcast.net

Safety and Security

Please remember to lock your car doors
while attending any event in the church.

If you use email and would like to be placed on the Parish
email list to receive timely updates to our church schedule,
please send an email to:

stjosephsclaremont@gmail.com

You can view our bulletin, and other valuable
information, on our new website at
stjosephclaremont.org

**PLEASE NOTE: The email address uses St Josephs
(plural) but the website address is singular (St Joseph)**

HAVE YOU HEARD OF "FORMED"?

It's a premier online platform filled with over 4,000 Catholic studies, movies,
audio dramas, talks, e-books and even cartoons for children.

Best of all, it's FREE.

Both St Mary and St Joseph parishioners can access the site
and Fr. Sebastian would like us to take advantage of this opportunity.
Go to formed.org, click on "sign up," type in our church's zip code (03743)
and select the St Mary Church pop-up.

You'll be surprised at what you will find to watch, listen, and learn!

CHANGE IN BULLETIN DEADLINE

Because of the upcoming holiday schedules
at JCCP, our bulletin printers, there are
much earlier deadlines for us to send them
our completed bulletins.

If you have something you would like to see
put into our bulletin in the next two weeks,
please send it ASAP to

stjosephsclaremont@gmail.com

Solemn Mass of Christmas

by Candlelight

Christmas Eve, 4:30 pm

St Joseph Church Sun. Dec. 24th

Confessions beginning at 4:00 pm

**There will not be Mass at
St. Joseph Church
on Christmas morning.**

**St. Mary Church
Christmas Masses**

4pm Christmas Eve, Dec. 24

12am and 9am Christmas Day, Dec. 25



January 1st, 2024

**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
Not a Holy Day of Obligation this year
because it falls on a Monday.**

**There will not be Mass at
St. Joseph Church
on Monday, New Year's Day.**

January 1, 2024, 9:00 am Mass
will be celebrated at St Mary Church.

Feast Days and Memorials

December 17: Third Sunday of Advent (Joy)

Gaudete Sunday

Advent Candles, shining brightly in the midst of darkness, are symbols that remind us of Jesus, who came as Light into our dark world. During this 3rd week of Advent, the rose colored candle is lit and priests may wear rose colored vestments, to express joy in the coming of Jesus, our Savior. This Sunday is called "Gaudete Sunday" because when the Mass was said in Latin, the opening antiphon was "Gaudete in Domino semper" — "Rejoice in the Lord always."

Dec 21: St Peter Canisius, Doctor of the Church: 1521-1597

This Dutch scholar is known for editing and writing several volumes on Church history and theology, serving as a delegate to the Council of Trent, and reforming German universities from heresy. He won the hearts of the German people by ministering to the sick and dying during a plague. Believing strongly in the importance of studying and understanding the Catholic faith, he helped to write several Catholic Catechisms. St Peter Canisius is known as the Second Apostle of Germany.

Dec 23: St. John of Kanty, Priest: 1390-1473

Patron of Poland

Born in Kęty, a small town near Oświęcim, Poland, Jan Kanty was a priest, Dean of Philosophy and Professor of Theology at the University of Cracow, physicist and theologian. Also known by his Latin name, Joannes Cantius, he spent many hours copying manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures and other scholarly works. His work in physics helped to develop theories that anticipated the work of Galileo and Newton. He was well-known in Kraków for his generosity and compassion toward the poor, especially needy students at the university.

Dec 23: St Þorlákur (St Thorlak Thorhallsson)

Patron of Iceland; of the poor and the common folk, and (unofficially) of people with autism

Born to a poor farmer in 1133 in South Iceland, this future saint was recognized for his kindness and intelligence. Educated in seminaries in England and France, he returned to his homeland as a priest and founded the first Augustinian monastery in the country. He became Bishop and is considered one of the most energetic leaders of the Medieval church in Iceland. Unofficially recognized as a saint for centuries, he wasn't canonized until 1984 by Pope John Paul II.



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St. Jude,
Patron of the Impossible.



pray for us!

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SAMANTHA JOSEPHSON

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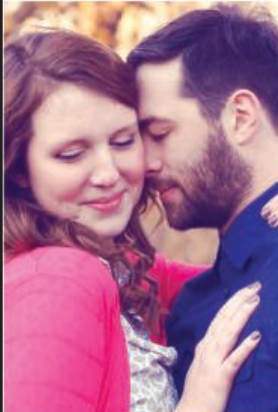
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