

Greetings and Happy New Year!

There are several smaller items that make-up this week's bulletin. Happy Reading!

EPIPHANY

We begin the first week of the calendar year by celebrating the Epiphany of our Lord. The modern-day secular understanding of 'epiphany' understands this word as something that has been discovered, finally realized, or having an 'ah ha!' moment. In terms of faith, Epiphany celebrates the manifestation or revelation of Christ to the Gentiles. Through the prophecy contained in the scriptures, the long-awaited Messiah, who is born into the human race, is now shown to people who are not of the Jewish faith, thus opening the promises of redemption to all peoples. This is season to rejoice that the long-awaited Messiah is here to save us and that salvation is not limited to a particular race or geographical part of the world. I hope our New Year's Resolution contains a concrete resolution to share the Catholic Faith with those who we meet. Now more than ever is our world in need of witnesses who believe in good news. Let's do our part to make a difference in the year ahead.

CHURCH ENVIRONMENT

It goes without saying that the décor for the Church this Christmas season is nothing short of spectacular. However, there is one new and permanent addition that was installed before Christmas and that may have escaped notice. When you have a moment, please take note of the side altars on the side in the sanctuary. They are adorned with cloths that are combination of both old and new. The 'old' is the lace fringe that was hand-crocheted by Sylvia Baldini. For many years, Sylvia was part of the altar care guild and was responsible for, among many things, the altar cloths. One day several years ago, Sylvia stopped in to see Florence Agosta (who spearheaded the Christmas decorating team for the Church) at her shop when it was still on Market Street. She came in with a bag containing yards and yards of this lace and wanted to know if it could be used at the church. Florence told her she would keep it and someday would find a use for it. It sat for many years in a closet until recently. When Sylvia passed away last February at the age of 98, Florence's mind was jarred into remembering this event. She discovered that after all these years, she still had the lace among her inventory. She spent the last few months attaching the lace that Sylvia made onto new cloths. It is a nice tribute to Sylvia for her years of service at St. Mary's.

MARCH FOR LIFE

The annual March for Life in Washington D.C. is coming up in a few weeks. Pilgrims from All Saints Parish will join Catholics and Christians from the Southern Tier to participate in this event that draws concerned citizens from throughout the world. This year, Bishop Matano will serve as the homilist at one of the principal Masses in the Basilica of the Shrine of Immaculate Conception before the March begins. He is regarded as a strong yet balanced voice on moral issues and challenges that we face in today's struggle for holiness and dignity. Before the pilgrims depart (I will be one of them!) on Thursday, January 23, Mass will be celebrated at 10:00pm. Following Mass, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed in the sanctuary of St. Mary's

Church for the duration of our travels to and from the March, which is scheduled for 11:00pm on Friday, January 24th. This is a way for parishioners who cannot attend to participate. With Mass, the sacraments, events like the March, the intention is not fulfilled, nor the efficacy effected by particular persons or the number of people or who attend. The point is that the intention is because it is offered. The expectation is that the parish participates – either physically and spiritually or spiritually. You can attend a religious event, but does your action reveal that you are actually participating in the intention? Its another thought worth pondering this week.

PARKING ON STATE STREET

We continue to evaluate the traffic situation now that we are at one campus. There has been a lot of feedback based on discussion and observation with members of the parish council, buildings and grounds, school and parish staff, and parishioners. We took these observations to the city and have been working with the Corning Police Department to make safety improvements. The following adjustments to parking on State Street in the area of the school and the church building are now in effect. The police department has installed new signage, effective immediately, as follows:

A new crosswalk sign has been installed; please be mindful of your speed.

No parking is allowed in front of the church or school Monday through Friday.

As a friendly reminder, parking is not allowed in the alleyway adjacent to ASA at any time.

We appreciate your cooperation in following these directives as we are committed to making our campus a safe environment for everyone. I am certain these will not be the last set of adjustments. It is clear that these changes are necessary to accommodate the increased traffic for school, parish office, funerals, daily mass, meetings and events. Ample parking remains available in the parking lot. As we are in the midst of winter weather, I encourage for your own safety to use the lot for parking or at least consider using the side door to access the Church. There have been some slips and falls by parishioners and at least one visitor in recent months. Please err on the side of caution and use the door that is the safest for both you and the people in the parish. Let's work together to prevent accidents before they happen.

With peace,

Fr. Jones