

**Dear Parishioners,**

On behalf of our parish and school staff, we wish you a very blessed Christmas season. Thank you to all who helped make our Advent and Christmas seasons so meaningful. Thank you also for your cards, and gifts of food to the Rectory. They are very much appreciated! Please note that January 1<sup>st</sup> is the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. Our Mass schedule will be as follows: Saturday at 5 p.m. and Sunday morning 7:30 and 10:30 a.m.

**Blessings,  
Fr. John**

**God speaks to us in many ways,  
including through this Sunday's Scripture readings.**

***We honor the relationships of parents and children.***

**Reading 1** Isaiah 52:7-10

**Reading 2** Hebrews 1:1-6

**Gospel** John 1:1-18

**Question of the Week – Is a Christmas tree really a religious symbol of  
Christmas equal to a Nativity scene?**

It depends on how *religious symbol* is defined. If it means anything to which religious significance can be attached, then yes, because many Christians have attached religious significance to the Christmas tree (e.g., the Tree of Life, both in Eden and on Calvary). But if a religious symbol of a holiday is considered a tangible object intrinsically attached to that holiday, and without which the holiday wouldn't be the same, then no, because the celebration of Christmas does not require Christmas trees. Christmas trees are a decoration that Christians incorporated into their celebration of the holiday over the centuries. They did not become widespread in the English-speaking world until German relatives of the British royal family brought the custom to Great Britain in the 18th and 19th centuries. Christians justified the custom on religious grounds by explaining that the evergreen tree can symbolize eternal life. Even today in many traditionally Catholic countries, far more emphasis is placed on the much older Christian custom of erecting Nativity scenes, a tradition attributed to St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226). In short, although Christmas trees are a beloved custom in much of the English-speaking world, they are not necessary to the celebration of the holiday and are not nearly as symbolic of the holiday as the crèche. If it is agreed that a religious symbol should be understood to mean *a tangible object intrinsically attached to that holiday*, then Christmas trees are to Christmas what dreidels are to Hanukkah—a beloved custom but not a religious symbol.

<b>PARISH SUPPORT WEEK OF DEC. 11 – 17</b>		<b>DID YOU KNOW...</b> We are very close to the middle of our fiscal year which ends June 30, 2017? As you can see, at this time we have a deficit. With six months until the end of the fiscal year, and with help and support from everyone with the weekly giving, our Mardi Gras celebration and various fundraisers, we will be able to end the year on a positive note.  Happy New Year and let's have a fabulous 2017!
<b>WEEKLY REVENUE</b>	<b>\$25,400.61</b>	
<b>WEEKLY EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$71,035.66</b>	
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>(\$45,635.05)</b>	
<b>YEAR TO DATE REVENUE</b>	<b>\$539,329.58</b>	
<b>YEAR TO DATE EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$648,350.22</b>	
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>(\$45,635.05)</b>	

**THANK YOU TO EACH OF YOU WHO DONATED MONEY FOR POINSETTIAS AND DECORATIONS.** The poinsettias beautifying our Church this Christmas are in honor of or in memory of these loved ones: Merl Core, Joseph Thibodeau, Al Little, Simpson Family, Francis and Margaret Pleiss, John and Agnes Schaffart Sr., Tammy Gatrost, Greg Pinker, David Burke, John Gubbels, Marshall and Mausbach Families – living and deceased, Deceased members of the Pfeiffer and Poell families, Harry Schlotfeld, Mr. and Mrs. Schlotfeld, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, Bill Johnson, Deceased Family Members, Ethel and Joe Mailander, Max, Andy and Bill Mailander, Pauline Stieha, Kathleen W. Smith Family, Gerald and Virginia Toohey, Jeanette and Chris Haman, Dale Taylor, Sharon Lemkau, Cloudt Family Deceased, Jim Kubes, Phil and Ruth Hughes, Elmer and Hazel Wirth, Becky Hughes, Marjorie Henn, Bob, Lula, and Virginia Todd, Gene Kafka, Bertha McCants,

Larry McCants, Gregory Mc Cants, Frankie McCants, Family of Barbara Sims, Deceased Members of the Rossitto and Anderson Families, Mrs. Emelia Robinson, Mr. Herbert Robinson, Mr. Bruno Kozimor, All Unborn Children, Mary Ahrens, Aleman and Hernandez Family, Bev Rawley, Katie and Jerry Zenk, Bill Sammons, Si and Esther Locher, John Locher, Zach Locher, and Donna Wackerhagen.

<p><b>LITURGICAL MINISTERS:</b>  <b>SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31</b>  <b>5:00 PM:</b>  <b>ALTAR SERVERS:</b> Zach Cypress,                  Marianna Stevenson  <b>CANDLE BEARERS:</b> Need Volunteers   <b>LECTOR:</b> Jerry Bexten  <b>EMHCs:</b> Jacquie Dahlin, Kim Hill,                  Mary Ann Taylor, Jennifer Russell,                  Juli Bohnenkamp, Jeanette Pinker  <b>GIFTBEARERS:</b> Need a Volunteer Family  <b>MUSICIANS:</b> Bryan Kinghorn and Friends   <b>NERI DOLLAR SELLER:</b> Lynn Ingraham  <b>USHERS:</b> Fred Bonacci, Dave Sedlacek,                  Jim Coe, Ron Allbright,                  Rock Cramer</p>	<p><b>SUNDAY, JANUARY 1</b>  <b>7:30 AM:</b>   <b>LECTOR:</b> Bruno Kozimor  <b>EMHCs:</b> Bob and Betty Jones,                  George and Marsha Moon,                  Dorie Mittlieder, Bonnie Shea   <b>GIFTBEARERS:</b> Breitreutz Family   <b>NERI DOLLAR SELLER:</b> Nancy Core  <b>USHERS:</b> Bill Wilber, Carl Sedlacek,                  Chuck Holderness,                  Chuck Livengood</p>	<p><b>10:30 AM:</b>  <b>ALTAR SERVERS:</b> Jared Peck,                  Sophia Minturn  <b>CANDLE BEARERS:</b> Nick Meier,                  Andrew Fink  <b>LECTOR:</b> Rita Ziska  <b>EMHCs:</b> Trudie Ahlstrom, Bev Baer,                  Mike Holmgren, Mary Fink,                  Roy Edwards, Dave Parks   <b>GIFTBEARERS:</b> Taborsky Family  <b>MUSICIANS:</b> Colleen Monti and                  The Church Ladies  <b>NERI DOLLAR SELLER:</b> Terri Herman  <b>USHERS:</b> Rick Krebs, Fred Maycock,                  Tim Kiuntke, Carl Cramer,                  Mark Lampe</p>
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**COMMUNION TO THE HOMEBOUND:** Kelli Brock, Bob and Betty Jones, Joni Locher  
**COLLECTION MONEY COUNTERS:** Sharon Olson, April Collamer  
**IMMANUEL EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS – THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29:** Bonnie Shea, Mary Todd

**Mass Intentions December 26 – January 1**

Monday	8:15 AM	Communion Service
Tuesday	8:15 AM	William & DoraLyn Huerter +
Wednesday	8:15 AM	Jack & LaVeta Danek +
Thursday	8:15 AM	Jack & Ann O'Connor +
Friday	8:15 AM	Angela Militti +
Saturday	5:00 PM	John Gubbels + Ethel DeYoung +
Sunday	7:30 AM	Mike Weston + Jerry Goeken +
	10:30 AM	Our Parish Family

**NO NERI DOLLARS SOLD**

**NO FAMILY FAITH FORMATION CLASS**

**NO CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD**

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30**

**RECTORY CLOSED**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31**

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ALUMINUM CAN COLLECTION - Trailer in Parking Lot**

**NERI DOLLARS SOLD AFTER MASS**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 1**

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ALUMINUM CAN COLLECTION – Trailer in Parking Lot**

**NERI DOLLARS SOLD AFTER MASS**

**NO FAMILY FAITH FORMATION CLASS**

**PLEASE MAKE A NOTE!** If you need to add someone to the prayer line, please contact: Mary Beauchene at 402-572-9018 or Judy Gubbels at 402-453-8894. Please keep Rosemary Cushing in your prayers while she is on the mend.

**HAPPY 90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY  
 LOIS WALTERMEYER!**

Lois turned 90 years young on Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Help us shower Lois with birthday best wishes by sending a card to:  
 3436 Sheffield; Omaha, NE 68112.  
 ps Happy 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Dave Parks!



**CHRISTIAN HUMOR** A grandma lovingly gives her granddaughter a kiss on the cheek upon seeing her at a family get-together. Afterwards, she noticed the little girl wiping her cheek. "Are you wiping off my kiss?" she asked. "No", she smartly replied, somewhat embarrassed, but quick on her feet, "I'm just rubbing it in!"

**THE WEEK AHEAD**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 – MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ALUMINUM CAN COLLECTION – Trailer in Parking Lot**

**~ NERI DOLLAR NEWS ~**

Special Thanks to everyone who purchased Neri Dollars over the past year. We appreciate your support! Merry Christmas to all!

