

## Welcome

Welcome to Our Lady of Lourdes and Immaculate Conception! We are glad you are here with us today. If you would like to join our Faith Community, please contact our parish office or stop by any time.

## Our Lady of Lourdes

Established - 1875

534 N. Wood Street  
Gibson City, IL 60936

## Mass Schedule

Saturday 5 pm

Sunday 10:30 am

Monday 8 am

Tuesday 8 am

Wednesday 8am

Thursday 5:30 pm

Friday 8 am

Holy Days: 7 am & 7 pm

## Eucharistic Adoration

Tuesday 8:30-9:30 am

Thursday 6-7 pm (except first

Thursday of month-no Adoration)

First Friday of Month 8:30-9:30

## Confession

Saturday 4:30 pm (OLOL)

Any time by Appointment



## Immaculate Conception

202 E. Green Street  
Roberts, IL 60962

## Mass Schedule

Sunday 8:00 am

## Confession

Sunday 7:45 am (IC)



## Parish Office

Phone & Fax:  
(217) 784-4671

General Information  
pastor@ololgc.org

Address:

534 N. Wood St.  
Gibson City, IL 60936

**Website**

www.ololgc.org

# DECEMBER 25, 2016 THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



*Merry Christmas*

## THE TRUE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS CAPTURED

Don't lose sight of Christmas' true meaning. All of us I think have enjoyed again and again the Christmas classic "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," which was first broadcast nearly 45 years ago and is still a holiday TV staple.

Toward the end of this wonderful story by Dr. Seuss, after the "mean one, Mr. Grinch" has stolen just about every possible sign of Christmas from the Whos down in Whoville, he gleefully sits atop his mountaintop anxiously awaiting the angst that a Christmas-less Christmas morning will bring.

Instead, the narrator tells us, the Grinch gets a very big surprise. The sounds of the Whos' voices rise to his ears. "This sound wasn't sad. Why ... this sound sounded glad! Every Who down in Whoville, the tall and the small, was singing, without any presents at all! He hadn't stopped Christmas from coming. It came! Somehow or other, it came just the same. ... It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more?"

Fantasy aside, I wonder how any of us would react to waking up to a barren Christmas, one without decorations, a brightly lit tree, sans all the glitter and mounds of presents we have come to associate with a good Christmas Day.

Optimist that I am, I think most of us would shuck off our shock and react like the Whos down in Whoville. While many of us, myself included, take part in all the glittering of Christmas that has been going on for decades, I do think that most of us truly understand that its true meaning does not depend on and rises well above all attempts to commercialize it.

What it means, of course, is that our loving God gave us the greatest gift possible: his own Son. God gave us a savior, the Prince of Peace, the promise of eternal life -- and all the wisdom, peace and comfort the little child Jesus would grow to give us as a very way of life and a pathway to God.

This gift that changed humanity forever came to a couple without much means, without the ability to lavish presents on anyone, in the form of an innocent child born in a simple manger full of animals and straw. All they really had was each other and a love that gave them the drive and confidence to endure all, and to do God's will.

There is a lesson for us all in this. God could just as well have chosen a rich woman to give birth to Jesus, but he chose a poor one. God could just as easily have ensured Jesus was born in the finest beds surrounded by silk sheets and servants. God could just as easily have chosen to make life easy for Mary and Joseph, but instead they faced many obstacles and hardships before and after Jesus was born.

I think the lesson of this first Christmas is that the trappings of this world do not really matter in the end. Yes, we are blessed to have them and should be grateful for every comfort and for the security they bring, but none of that matters in the larger scheme of things.

Presents are wonderful, of course, and we do well to make others happy by giving them, but Christmas and what it means for us would be as powerful and as life-changing without them. Lights, tinsel, candy canes and all those things that have come to symbolize this magical holiday are fun and do make Christmas special. There is nothing wrong with that.

But would you agree that what really matters -- 2,000 years ago and today -- is the spirit of love that is Christmas -- God's love for us and our love for each other? Just ask any modern-day family struggling to make ends meet and who survive on little but the warmth of their love for each other.

Dr. Seuss said it very well: "Christmas Day will always be, just as long as we have we."

Peace to all, and Merry Christmas! -

~Bishop Matthew H. Clark



**Pastor**

Rev. Thomas Theneth, CMI  
(217)784-4671  
ttheneth@lolgc.org

**Deacon**

Paul Sarantakos  
p.sarantakos@hotmail.com

**Parish Secretary**

Patti Meunier  
pastor@lolgc.org

**Religious Education**

Alyce Hafer

**Youth Ministry**

Bruce Killian

**Music Director**

If interested contact  
pastor@lolgc.org

**Parish Council  
President**

Eric Rosenbaum (OLOL)

**THIS WEEK'S INTENTIONS**

If you wish to have a Mass intention for a loved one, anniversary or other occasion, please contact the parish office. Mass

<b>MON</b> December 26	8:00AM	NO MASS <i>St. Stephen</i>
<b>TUE</b> December 27	8:00AM	Kutemeier Family <i>St. John</i> Lange Family
<b>WED</b> December 28	8:00AM	Priest Intentions <i>The Holy Innocents</i>
<b>THU</b> December 29	5:30PM	Laughery Family Leonard Family
<b>FRI</b> December 30	8:00AM	+Anthony Coons <i>The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary &amp; Joseph</i>
<b>SAT</b> December 31	4:00PM (OLL)	Parish Family <i>New Year's Eve</i>
<b>SUN</b> January 1	8:00AM (IC) 10:30AM (OLL)	Jeffrey Zick Mardis Family Meunier Family <i>Solemnity of Mary</i> <i>Holy Mother of God</i>

**Thank You  
For Your Gifts  
OLOL**

Sunday Total	\$1897.50
Capital Imp.	\$0
Food Pantry Dec. Total	\$79.12 \$181.12
Yr to Date FP	\$3619.01

**Imm Conception**

Sunday Total	\$75.00
Capital Imp.	\$0

When we meet our CMAA Goals! OLOL and IC will get back 65% of every dollar received above our goals. Reaching our goals is a great achievement, and continuing to give is even greater!

**2016 CMAA Goals**  
OLOL: 15,825  
Goal: (\$12,712)  
IC: \$1370  
(Goal: \$905)

**MINISTRY SCHEDULES**

Date	Altar Servers	Lectors	Euch. Minister	Ushers	Homebound Ministry
Sat, December 31 4:00PM	Daxter Chaddock	Lisa Heap	Stan Alt	Joe Allen Jerry Brown	Jean Wilhelmi
Sun, January 1 10:30AM	Caine Jost Cecilia Goodin	Maggie Davis	Paul Sarantakos	Michael Smith Craig Davis	

The first Friday of the month adoration will follow 8AM Mass. The remaining weeks of every month Adoration will be on the usual Thursday evening following 5:30PM Mass and always Tuesday following 8AM Mass.

**Baptism**

Call the Rectory at least four weeks before the baptism. Instruction for the parents and God-parents is required.

**Sick??**

If you or a family member is sick or admitted to the hospital or makes a trip to the Emergency Room, please contact Fr. Thomas at (630) 639-0502 .

**Marriage**

Call the Rectory at least six months before. A six month preparation time is required.

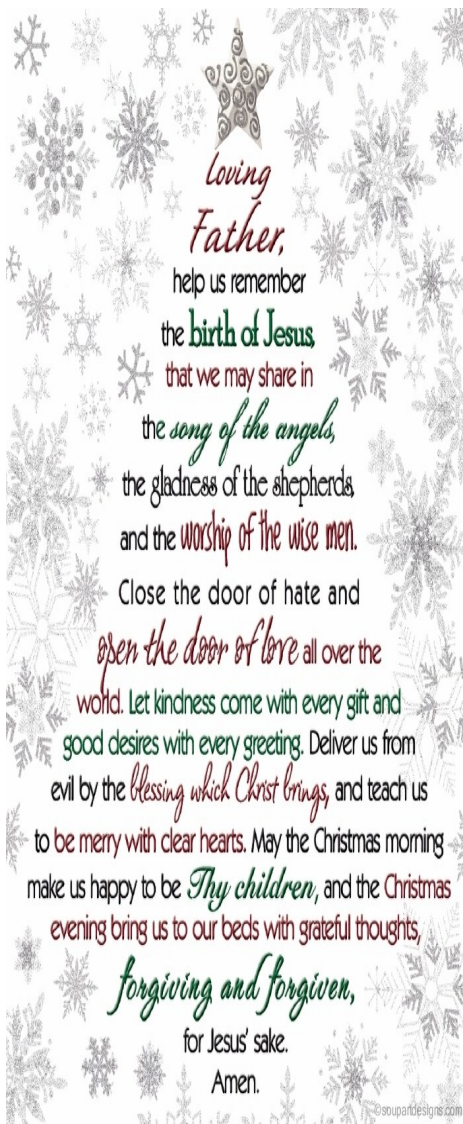
**FOOD PANTRY**

Our Lady of Lourdes is scheduled to provide volunteers for the Saturday, December 31 Pantry date. It is a time of year for giving. Please consider participating in this great community effort.

Set-up Date: Friday, December 30      Time: TBA  
Distribution Date: Saturday, December 31      Time: 8:30AM

**Contact Person:** Chuck Aubry  
**Email:** caubry55@gmail.com  
**Phone:** (217)249-8304

**Future Saturday Dates: February 11 & May 27**



*Loving  
Father,*

help us remember

the **birth of Jesus**

that we may share in

the *song of the angels,*

the gladness of the shepherds

and the *worship of the wise men.*

Close the door of hate and

*open the door of love* all over the

world. Let kindness come with every gift and

good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from

evil by the *blessing which Christ brings,* and teach us

to be merry with clear hearts. May the Christmas morning

make us happy to be *Thy children,* and the Christmas

evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts,

*forgiving and forgiven,*

for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

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Father Thomas will be visiting his family in India from January 1-January 29. If anyone needs to contact him, please do so before December 31. In the event of an emergency during his time away, please contact Fr. Scaria in Paxton at (217)379-4033. Father asks for your prayers for safe travel and will be praying for all of us as we begin the new year.



## The Word From Father Thomas

### REJOICING WITH MARY



If therefore there was ever a good reason to rejoice over the birth of any child, it must surely be today on the birthday of Jesus, the Son of Mary, who alone of all men is called and truly is God with us—of whom alone it can be said that the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. Christmas Day is nothing if not a day of universal joy.

Children should rejoice because on this day God himself became as one of them; virgins, because a Virgin brought forth and remained unstained even after giving birth; wives, because one of their number became the Mother of God; sinners, because their Mediator and Savior and Healer has come to redeem them; the just, because their Reward exceeding great has been born into the world. In fine, all faithful Christians should rejoice that their Creator and Lord has taken on human flesh and begun his reign over the hearts of men, not only as God, but also as the Son of Man among the children of men.

Were we not to celebrate the feast of Christmas as joyfully and as solemnly as we should, we would be worse than unbelieving pagans, who for all their sins at least were not wanting in due respect for the birthdays of the great ones who lorded over them. Do I say worse than infidels? Worse than the beasts of the field who cannot show their appreciation of God's becoming man because they do not know him. But we know him and know what his coming in our flesh has meant to us.

If you do not believe me, believe the Catholic Church which for so many centuries has gone to the limit of propriety in exulting over the birth of her Redeemer. If you will not even believe the Church, at least listen to the angel who was sent from heaven to announce the tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people, believers and pagans, Jews and Gentiles—to all without exception..

## PARISH EVENTS



**Saturday, December 31**

- Food Pantry 9AM-12Noon  
**HOSTED BY OLL**



Braden Roesch (12/26)  
Janet Townsend (12/26)  
Joyce Hutchcraft (12/26)  
Andrew Killian (12/29)  
Charley Ulrich (12/30)  
Sophie Hafer (1/1)  
Tannie Smith (1/1)  
Steve Killian (1/1)  
Kerry Tredennick (1/1)  
Mark Andreae (1/1)

### MY CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Heavenly Father,  
I want to thank You for the Christmas tree,  
That reminds me of Your love for me.  
And under the tree, gifts with ribbons curled,  
Remind me Jesus is Your gift to the world.  
The colors of Christmas are so bright,  
Red, green, blue, yellow, and white.  
They tell me about the birth of the King,  
Of joy and life that He would bring.  
The meaning of Christmas is not just fun,  
But Your gift Father—Your precious Son.  
Through Him we see Your tender care,  
This gift of Jesus nothing can compare.  
Father help me this Christmas to see  
All that you have done for me.  
May all the symbols remind me of You,  
And all that Jesus came to do.  
Amen.

### Pray for the Sick & Homebound

Loretta Bode  
Mary Cothorn  
Mardelle Duffy  
Donovan Gaines  
Dick Walter  
Mary Masco  
Jeff McGuire  
Judy Schall  
Linda Ellington  
Greg Delost

If you wish to add the name of a loved one who is sick, please contact the parish office at 217-784-4671 or pastor@ololg.org.



### CATHOLIC CHARITIES RENTAL ASSISTANCE

The holidays can be difficult, we are here to help! Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet currently has a rental assistance available for qualified low-income individuals and families. To apply for emergency financial assistance for housing, please call 815-933-7791. For more information about Catholic Charities, please visit catholiccharities.joliet.com



### CALL TO LECTOR/USHER/ALTAR SERVE

Anyone that would like to participate more at Church can do so by volunteering to lector, usher or be an altar server. If interested please contact Tannie Smith at tanniehutchcraft599@hotmail.com. We are putting together the 2017 schedule so this would be the perfect time to volunteer!

# Dear Padre

DECEMBER 18, 2016

**Why is St. Joseph called “the Worker?”  
Shouldn’t he be honored primarily as the  
father of Jesus?**

Devotion to St. Joseph has developed along an interesting path. It was not until the eighth century that Joseph, underneath the title “Spouse of Mary,” was even publicly acknowledged—except perhaps as an afterthought or silent participant in the Christmas story. The Church has always acknowledged that Joseph’s relationship with Jesus was unique, but there was, and continues to be, reluctance to call him the father of Jesus. We understand the father of Jesus is not Joseph but rather God the Father.

A consensus about Joseph’s role in the plan of salvation seems to be in place by the early fourteenth century. In 1870, Pope Pius IX declared Joseph the patron of the universal Church. By the early twentieth century, worldwide devotion had found a home at St. Joseph’s Oratory in Montreal.

The title of “the Worker” was used most often by Pope Pius XI in his references to Joseph as the patron of the Church’s battle against atheistic communism. Pope Pius XII established the May 1 feast in 1955 to emphasize the Catholic teaching concerning the dignity of labor.

Saint Joseph could be summarized best as a man who did the best he could when God’s will became clear. This image and model seems the best and most helpful for deepening our understanding of and devotion to him.

*From Dear Padre: Questions People Ask,  
Liguori, 2003  
sundaybulletin@liguori.org*

## Monday

December 26  
*St. Stephen,  
the First Martyr*  
Acts 6:8-10;  
7:54-59  
Mt 10:17-22

## Tuesday

December 27  
*St. John, Apostle  
and Evangelist*  
1 Jn 1:1-4  
Jn 20:1a, 2-8

## Wednesday

December 28  
*The Holy Innocents,  
Martyrs*  
1 Jn 1:5-2:2  
Mt 2:13-18

## Thursday

December 29  
*Fifth Day in the  
Octave of Christmas*  
1 Jn 2:3-11  
Lk 2:22-35

## Friday

December 30  
*The Holy Family of  
Jesus, Mary and  
Joseph*  
Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or  
Col 3:12-21 or  
3:12-17  
Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

## Saturday

December 31  
*Seventh Day in the  
Octave of Christmas*  
1 Jn 2:18-21  
Jn 1:1-18

## Sunday

January 1  
*Solemnity of Mary,  
Holy Mother of God*  
Nm 6:22-27  
Gal 4:4-7  
Lk 2:16-21

# Good News!

December 25, 2016

Christmas (A)

Is 52:7-10, Heb 1:1-6, Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

This isn’t a typical Christmas image, but stick with me! There is a renewed interest in genealogy as many seek to understand who and where they came from. These days, websites and genetic services make it easier than ever to track down our ancestry and examine our roots.

In tribal African art, one’s ancestors have always been revered. In this piece from the Vatican Museums’ missionary collection, we find the figure of a tribal leader, sculpted to resemble the trunk of an olive tree. The tree’s veins are smaller individuals, each one united to another, representing the generations that have come before him and formed his bloodline. They are his “tree of life” that reaches back into the soil of history.

Judeo-Christian culture also values ancestors and highlights the roots of Jesus’ heritage. The Messiah was to come from the line of David, which reaches back to Abraham, our father in faith. Behind each name there is a story, a family, God’s action mingled with the person’s hopes and failures. Each life flows and unites into one strong tree. And God watches over each and every one, preparing for the person of his Son. Today we celebrate the culmination of this plan. Jesus Christ, our Savior, is born today!

This protracted lineage invites us to look back and up: back on the events that have filled the tapestry of our personal and family history and up to see that God has brought us to know him and to accept his salvation. His providence works in and through it all.

## For Reflection

Are you letting God work in you and your family so he can continue these blessings?

*Fr. Mark Haydu, LC*