



MERCY ALIVE

DECEMBER 8, 2024
II SUNDAY OF ADVENT
VOL. 47 NO. 49



O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard
in the joy of your heart.

- ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

THIS WEEK

SATURDAY DECEMBER 7

7:25 amFirst Saturday Devotional
8:00 amDaily Mass
4:00 pm.....Daily Mass

SUNDAY DECEMBER 8

7:00 am.....Mass
9:00 am.....Mass
10:30 am.....Mass
10:30 am ...OCIA- *St. Ann*
12:00 pm.....Mass
6:00 pm.....Mass

MONDAY DECEMBER 9

8:00 amImmaculate Conception Mass
9:30 amSchool Liturgy
12:00 pmImmaculate Conception Mass
12:00 pm.....Catholic in Recovery -*St. Gabriel*
6:00 pmImmaculate Conception Mass
6:30 pmKC Officer Mtg- *SVDP Room*
7:00 pmSVDP Meeting- *St. Jerome*
7:00 pmBaptism Seminar- *St. Gabriel*

TUESDAY DECEMBER 10

8:30 amRosary Makers-*Coffee Shop*
10:30 am.....Called By Faith- *PAC*
12:00 pmDaily Mass
3:00 pmMiddle School Bible Study- *JPII House*
6:00 pm.....Daily Mass & Novena
7:00 pmHoly Face of Jesus Advent Mission
7:00 pmCharismatic Prayer-*St. Gabriel*

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 11

8:00 amDaily Mass
11:00 amCourageous Women- *St. Jerome*
12:00 pmDaily Mass
6:00 pmThe Light is ON for You!
6:30 pm.....Catholic in Recovery- *St. Gabriel*

THURSDAY DECEMBER 12

6:00 amTMIY
8:00 amDaily Mass
9:30 amMoms and Tots
12:00 pmDaily Mass
6:30 pmHigh School Bible Study- *JPII House*

FRIDAY DECEMBER 13

8:00 amDaily Mass
12:00 pmSaint Lucy Bread and Blessing Mass

On the Cover

Father Cleo with students at school mass before Thanksgiving break (from left to right) Mikey Clay, Madison Mann, Peyton Couvillion, Hailey Johnson, Brannan Webb, Charlie Lee, Patrick and James Clay.

Family Reflection for the ADVENT SEASON

- Pray together
- Manage media time
- Eat supper together
- Put your marriage first (mom & dad need time together)
- Give children chores and responsibilities (so they see the family working together)

Prayer LINE

For Prayer Line requests, contact:
Ms. Genie Ogden: (225) 293-2367 or
Ms. Carroll Benedetto at wlb14@aol.com

Adopt a Family for Christmas

Please call the church office or scan the QR to adopt a family for Christmas.



Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception is usually celebrated on December 8th. This year, December 8th is the 2nd Sunday of Advent. When this happens, the feast is moved to the following Monday, which is December 9th. It remains a Holy Day of Obligation. There will be no vigil Mass on Sunday.

Holy Day of Obligation

Monday, December 9th

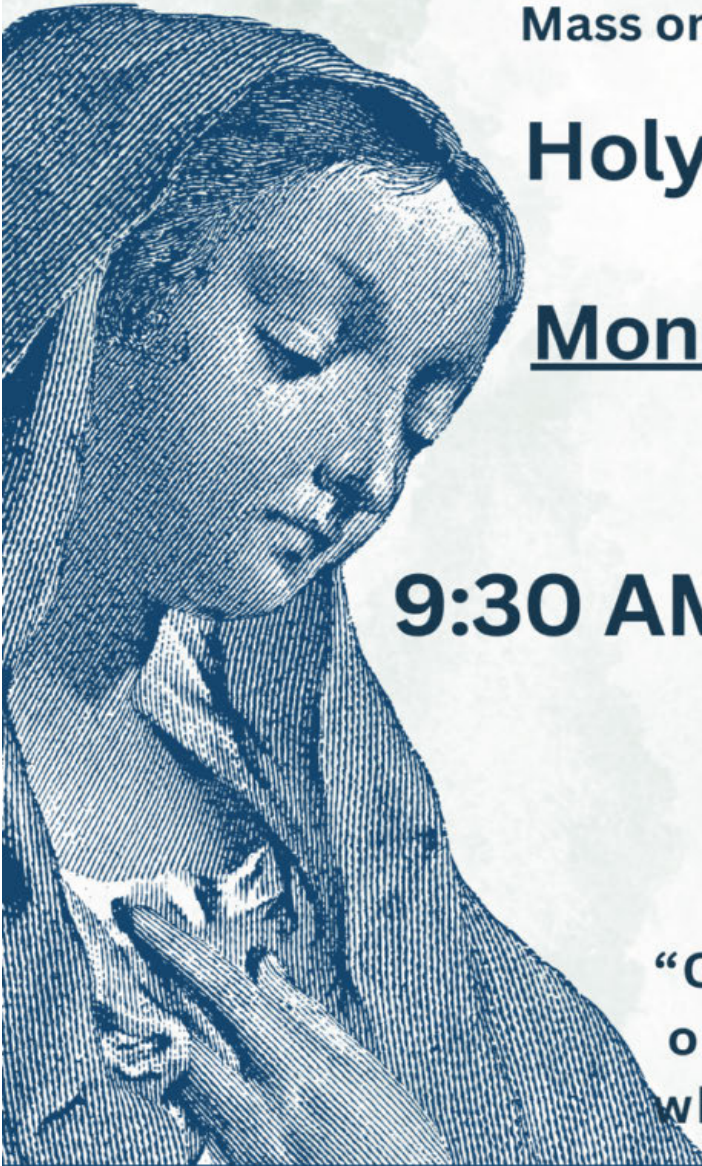
8:00 AM

9:30 AM - School Liturgy

12 Noon

6:00 PM

“O Mary Conceived without original sin, pray for those who have recourse to thee”





Prepare Ye!

THE HOLY FACE OF JESUS DEVOTION

About the Holy Face

On January 6, 1849, the Relic of St. Veronica's Veil, was exposed for public veneration in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. For a three hour period, a vision of the Face of Jesus appeared distinctly in front of the Veil. Artists' drawings of the vision were copied and in turn touched to Veronica's Veil itself, the Relic of the True Cross and the Spear that pierced Jesus' side.

The veneration of this image of His Holy Face is now practiced around the world. Devotion to the Holy Face of Jesus focuses on a strong resolve to uphold the first three commandments; Belief in God, The Name of the Lord, and the sanctity of the Sabbath.

**TUESDAY,
DECEMBER 10
7PM**

With Guest Speaker
Fr. Miles Walsh



For more info contact:
kirk.duplantis@olomchurch.com

PARISH LIFE

THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU! SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION



“Prepare the way for the Lord,” cried John the Baptist from the desert to the people of his time. As Catholics, we are given the opportunity to heed St. John’s call by readying ourselves for the Lord’s coming during this Advent Season through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**When was the last time you received the Sacrament of Reconciliation?
Have you been putting off going to Confession?**

Prayer of Thanksgiving after Confession:

Lord, help me genuinely accept that You have taken all my past - all sin I have committed or accusation against me.

Since You do not condemn me, help me renew my thinking & not condemn myself. Rather, I want to live in the Joy, Peace, & Freedom You have purchased for me by Your death and resurrection in Jesus’ name.

Amen

Additional opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation at Our Lady of Mercy:

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

DECEMBER 12TH

BY: FRED GWIN

A humble peasant farmer named Juan Diego, born under Aztec rule, was walking down a mountain trail in 1531 near Guadalupe, Mexico when he came upon a beautiful woman adorned in a blue tunic. The tunic, covered with stars, resembled what an Aztec princess would wear. He realizes the woman is the Virgin Mary as he is a recent convert to Catholicism. He is truly startled but Our Lady calms him with her voice which sounded like birds singing. She tells him who she is and instructs him to take a message to the Bishop. Mary wanted a temple built so that petitioners would have a place to present their petitions to Jesus and to help heal the suffering there.



Juan goes to the Bishop and presents the request but is dismissed. Juan returns to the mountain and Our Lady appears again. Juan is instructed to return a second time which he did. The Bishop, thinking Juan may not be mentally sound, asks for a "sign". He tells the Bishop he will return the next day but he does not. His uncle is dying and Juan goes to him instead. When Juan is certain of his uncle's pending death, he leaves to find a priest. On the way, Our Lady comes to him. Juan is upset and Our Lady comforts him. Juan tells her that the Bishop wants a "sign". Juan is told to go to the mountain top to pick some roses. However, he tells Our Lady that no flowers would be there in the winter. He is sent anyway. Mary tells him to pick them, put them in his tilma and not to open it until he sees the Bishop. Our Lady also appears to Juan's uncle and he survives. She tells the uncle that she is to be called "Santa Maria, de Guadalupe."

When Juan sees the Bishop, he opens the tilma and the roses fall out revealing the sacred image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It is somehow painted on the tilma. In the image, the Blessed Lady appears as she did to Juan. The Church was built and the woven tilma remains as it was but is now protected in a glass enclosure. The tilma should have disintegrated within ten years but remains.

The tilma is enshrined in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The tilma maintains a constant temperature of 98.6 degrees no matter the temperature in the Church. The tilma has been examined by many scientists and cannot be explained. The image is "part of" the fabric. The eyes of Mary have been examined and within the eyes, under magnification, one can see the faces of those present when the tilma was first opened for the Bishop. In 1921, a radical cleric exploded a large cache of dynamite under the openly displayed tilma. It remained unscathed.

In the image, Mary is held up by an angel meaning she is pleasing to God, as she stands on a crescent moon meaning birth and life. The white clouds represent heaven with the golden rays of sun coming forth. See Revelation 12:1-2.

Pray to Our Lady on her feast day for her intercession.

PARISH LIFE

FEAST OF ST. LUCY

In honor of the Feast of St. Lucy, Patron Saint of diseases of the eye, Our Lady of Mercy Parish will celebrate a special Mass on **FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13** at **12:00pm**.

All eye care professionals and anyone experiencing illness or diseases of the eye are encouraged to attend to receive a special blessing. Traditional Italian St. Lucy bread will also be distributed.

Santa Lucia, Prega per Noi!
St. Lucy, Pray for Us!



Catholic in Recovery

Monday at 12 noon - Men Only

Wednesday at 6:30 pm - Men and Women

St. Gabriel Room at the
Parish Activity Center.

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struggles.

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A REFLECTION ON "THANKSGIVING"

By: Fr. Antony Akhilesh

This "Thanksgiving" was a great opportunity to raise our hearts and hands to God in gratitude and praise for the unfathomable blessings we received over the year. We have celebrated this Thanksgiving with lots of turkey and ham, which was a most memorable first experience for me. My heart is full of gratitude for the many gifts I have received through my journey of faith. First of all, the grace of God has been abundantly evident in bringing me to Our Lady of Mercy Parish, a community so vibrant with faith, love, and dedication to God. It is here that I have found a spiritual home, and my heart filled with gratitude for the journey that led me to this sacred place. Reflecting on this transition, I am reminded of the psalmist's proclamation: *"The Lord is my shepherd; I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His name's sake"* (Psalm 23:1-3). OLOM Parish is a community of faithful who exemplify the beauty of holy living and sacrifice. Here parishioners are a constant source of inspiration, demonstrating unwavering faith and kindness in all that they do. You remind me daily of what it means to live in service to God and to one another.

My life here at Mercy would have been impossible without the intervention of Rev. Fr. Cleo Milano. I must express my profound gratitude to Fr. Cleo for his unwavering love, support, and guidance to me personally. His leadership has been a true blessing in my life, as he continually encourages and teaches me to grow in my faith and in my service to the Lord and His people. Through his mentorship, I have found strength and direction.

I am also sincerely grateful to Bishop Michael G. Duca for welcoming me into the Diocese with such warmth and gentleness. His acceptance and trust in me have given me the privilege to serve the people of God within this beautiful Diocese, and I am truly humbled by his acceptance, guidance and care.

Gratitude is the attitude of a humble heart which is the most acceptable gift to the Lord. As I reflect on all the blessings in my life, I am compelled to extend my continuous thankfulness to the Lord for the opportunity He has given me to serve alongside such wonderful people and to grow in faith within this incredible community. Through God's providence, I have come to know the warmth and hospitality of this parish family. Our Lady of Mercy is more than a parish-- it is a sanctuary of faith, where the Eucharist is celebrated with profound reverence, and where every soul is invited to grow in holiness. Through all these experiences, I am reminded that it is God's grace that has brought me to this moment. As St. Paul so humbly stated: *"I can do all this through Him who gives me strength"* (Phil.4:13).

In gratitude for this journey, I join with the psalmist in proclaiming: *"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever"* (Psalm 107: 1) May God continue to bless all of us as we walk together on this journey of faith, love, and service. I wish you all a wonderful season of Advent, which will gather all of us together once again to experience the Glory of God in the Manger.



FOOD FOR THE HOLIDAYS

HELP THOSE IN NEED IN OUR COMMUNITY!

Food for the Holidays
"For I was Hungry and you gave me to eat."
-Matthew 25:35

During the month of November, each of us is encouraged to be bread for others. Empty baskets will be arranged around the Tabernacle in the Sanctuary. Please bring non-perishable food items to be given to the needy of our area for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Suggested items for the food baskets:

Canned Beans (red and white)
Tuna Fish
Peanut Butter
Corn
Peas
Yams
Potted Meat
(Spam, Vienna Sausage, Ham)
Rice
Individually Wrapped Snacks

Pasta and Pasta Sauce
Canned Fruit
Macaroni and Cheese
Granola
Canned Vegetables
Instant Mashed Potatoes
Cereal
Applesauce
Fruit Cups

IN REMEMBRANCE

Mass Intentions

DECEMBER 14, SATURDAY

8:00 am Carolyn Adams Songy / Elvie Esteba, Carmen Esteba, Pedro Esteba, Caridad Perez, Abundancio Perez, Jeanie Vindri, Norma Perez, Bernardo Bejoc, Uwe Topfer and Alfred Gaynor
4:00 pm Francis Xavier Le / Gary & Kevin Keyser / Jacqueline Harris / Anna Casso / Peggy Werner / Nancy Valluzzo / Bill Auten / Howard Kidder, Jr. / Mary Patriarco / John Carmena / Paul Burton / Shannon Cormier and Family / Diana Miller / Fay Walker / Billy Ray Tam / Olga Lee Gebert Milano / Larry Dugas / Patsy Harrell / Paul Melancon / Mary Anna Edwards / Mary McCowan / Mr. and Mrs. Myles Morrison / Dr. and Mrs. Dan Lehon / Mr. and Mrs. James Adams / Mr. and Mrs. Alex Reddeck / Adams and Morrison Family / SPECIAL INTENTION: All Priests, Deacons, Seminarians and Religious Vocations

DECEMBER 15, SUNDAY

7:00 am..... Kyle Cassano / Ellie Sances / Anna Darensbourg / SPECIAL INTENTIONS: Craig Schiro
9:00 am..... Dr. Donald Gauthier / Nell Cedotal Fernandez / Adam Barksdale / SPECIAL INTENTIONS: Kristine Rester
10:30 am... Gary Alford / Brenda Fremin, The Fremin Family, Charles and Rosa Drago / Bernice Healy / Anna Casso / Michael S. DiVincenti III / Jimmy Thibodeaux
12:00 pm... Johnson Kadair / Russell Normand / Eddie and Sena Mansur, Freida Mansur Sutton, & Paula Mansur Roblin / Father Mario Termini and Maxine Termini
6:00 pm Mike Lloyd Rinehart / SPECIAL INTENTIONS: The Mumfrey Family

DECEMBER 16, MONDAY

8:00 am Sandy Roppolo / James Smith
12:00 pm... Ethel Sexton / Joseph Patrick Terrell

DECEMBER 17, TUESDAY

12:00 pm... Tammy LeJeune Thibodeaux / SPECIAL INTENTION Andre Billeaud
6:00 pm James Smith / Francis Xavier Le / Aimee Planchard and Peggy Rylee / Pamela Ann Montagnino / SPECIAL INTENTION: Rosie Williams and Family

DECEMBER 18, WEDNESDAY

8:00 am Rena and Horace Stutes / SPECIAL INTENTIONS: Ashley Williams
12:00 pm... Ron Truxillo & SPECIAL INTENTION: Brenda Truxillo

DECEMBER 19, THURSDAY

8:00 am Dewey Boyles / Olivia Frank Lamonica
12:00 pm... Sonny and Wade Barbay / Luke Mumfrey

DECEMBER 20, FRIDAY

8:00 am SPECIAL INTENTION: Madeline Smith
12:00 pm... George Mervin Simon, Rosa Simon & Danny Simon / Selden and Grace Tibbetts / Thomas Quang T. Nguyen / Vito Impastato / Jerry & Billie Fakouri / Daniel & Nelta Jarreau / Gene DeJean / Eugene Hedges / Sharon Budgewater / Ronnie Domma / SPECIAL INTENTIONS: Priests, Seminarians, & Deacons / Father Cleo / Lato & Risponse Families / Thanksgiving for answered prayers

Sanctuary Light Memorials

The sanctuary light in the church burns this week in memory of

Alice Lowery

The sanctuary light in the Adoration Chapel burns this week in memory of

Eugene Hedges

In Sympathy to the Family of:

- **Joyce Hebert**
- **Faith Barfield**
- **JoAnn Looper**
- **Bill Lanier**
- **Jack Shortess**
- **Mike Wilson**
- **Mary Toler**
- **Lawrence Marino**



SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

DAILY PRAYER THIS WEEK

Despite all of the distractions at this time of year, we really can focus on Advent during these weeks. We seem to get very busy, and at times have to go to a number of social events or wrestle with budgets and shopping, but the heart of this season is all about expectant hope. So, we begin our Advent journey by giving ourselves some time - just a few minutes each day - to reflect on how much God promises us.

Each morning this week, while we are first coming to consciousness, we can name a desire, name an emptiness or feeling of anxiety or worry that we can feel. It is into the raw places in our lives such as these, that our Lord came to be with us. So, this week, we can begin to invite our Lord to be Incarnate in our lives, in the places we need him the most.

Our goal this week is to let ourselves feel like those to whom the promises of our God are made. We want to get in touch with ourselves, especially those parts of ourselves that are in need of a Savior. We do this by keeping our focus on the places that feel like a desert, the places that feel like we've been through a war, the places that feel like a lifeless stump. When we have a hard time seeing, we ask for the grace to be able to believe the promise that we shall see. When we seem deaf, we place our trust in the One who assures us that we will hear. And when we feel beaten down and awfully lowly, we turn to the One who promises that we will "find joy in the Lord." And, who among us doesn't have days on which we are aware of various kinds of wounds? On the day of promise, "the Lord binds up the wounds of his people."

As we let these deep realities of our daily, busy lives come into focus and interact with the readings, something wonderful happens. We become more and more aware of our need for God. Very naturally and quite spontaneously, a prayer comes forth from deep within us, which we can say in the smallest moments of our busiest days. "Come, Lord." "Come and save me." "Come and be with me in all of these messy, empty, dry and disordered places in my life." "Come, Lord. I feel my longing for you grow. I feel my hope grow. And, as I place my hope in your promises, Advent begins to come alive in me."

All of this preparation can happen in the simplest way, before the first Christmas decoration goes up. And, for each moment of each day that we encounter a place that we desire, that we long for our Lord's coming, we can express our thanksgiving. Each night we might pray:

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear?

The LORD is my life's refuge; of whom should I be afraid?" (Ps. 27)

Taken from the "Weekly Guide for Daily Prayer" on the Creighton University's Online Ministries website: <http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html> Used with permission.

Called to Worship

MASS SCHEDULE & TIMES

WEEKDAYS

MASS TIMES:

M, W, Th, & F: 8:00 am & 12:00 pm

Tues: 12:00 pm & 6:00 pm

RECONCILIATION:

M - F: 45 minutes prior to Mass

SATURDAY

MASS TIME: 8:00 am

RECONCILIATION: 3:00 - 3:45 pm

VIGIL: 4:00 pm

SUNDAY

MASS TIMES: 7:00 am, 9:00 am, 10:30 am,
12:00 pm & 6:00 pm

NURSERY: 9:00 am & 10:30 am (PAC)

PRE-SCHOOL

BIBLE CLASS: 9:00 am & 10:30 am (PAC)

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY RADIO

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Listen daily at noon and
10:30 am on Sunday for
Mercy's Mass live broadcast

Weekend of December 14th & December 15th

4:00 pm*	7:00 am*	9:00 am	10:30 am	12:00 pm	6:00 pm
Fr. Antony	Fr. Anthony	Fr. Milano	Fr. Milano	Fr. Antony	Fr. Antony
Extraordinary Ministers					
A Turner J Schiro C Mattza L McCann C Abshire K Adams	A Wilson J Pastorek P Samrow T Penouilh	B Caire L Caire L Babin P Prosser Deacon Grant B Clay	A Nodier M Nodier D McCrary K Poiencot Deacon Cloutier Deacon Grant R Cooney	Deacon Duplantis C Roberts B Beale T DeJohn	C Steele R Torry C Schutte E Schaff
Lectors					
A August T Turner	J Gardemal S Darensbourg A Haywood	Children's Liturgy	T Grant J Romero	M Kimble K Kimble	B Avery E Pavlovich
Altar Servers					
J Millet (C) E Schiro H Schiro	G Samrow (C)	L Babin (C) M Clay P Kelly	K Poiencot (C) J Daggett M Mahon	B Beale (C) G Dillon G Giles	C Schutte (C) L Scholl S Scholl

The complete Ministry Schedule is published on our website at www.olomchurch.com.

Called to serve? Contact Deacon Grant to volunteer for liturgical ministry.

*These liturgies are celebrated without incense.

The Sunday 10:30 am Holy Mass can be found on WBRZ+; olomchurch.com; and youtube.com/olombr.

BAMBINELLI SUNDAY

Gaudete in Domino semper: iterum dico, gaudete! Modestia vestra nota sit ómnibus hominibus: Domine enim prope est. (Phil. 4:4-5)

Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say, rejoice! Indeed, the Lord is at hand. (Phil. 4:4-5)

The entirety of the Advent season is filled with a growing sense of rejoicing, yet of the four Sundays of Advent, the third Sunday, commonly known as Gaudete Sunday, most prominently captures the joy of the season. The name for Gaudete Sunday comes from the Latin word *gaudete* (rejoice), the first word of the Entrance Antiphon of this day's Mass. The rose-colored "joy" candle of the Advent wreath is lit, and Father sets aside his purple vestments to don rose-colored ones for the occasion.



Gaudete Sunday is also known as Bambinelli Sunday. Bambinelli is the plural form of the Italian word *bambinello*, which means little baby boy. Pope St. John Paul II began the tradition of Bambinelli Sunday early in his papacy by inviting all the children in Rome to bring the baby Jesus figurines from their family's Nativity scenes to St. Peter's Square on the Third Sunday of Advent. Following the noon Angelus, the Holy Father gave a special blessing to the *bambinelli* statues. The children then brought them home, where their parents gift wrapped them and put them gently under the Christmas tree. On Christmas morning, families unwrapped the infant Jesus figurine first and, with great joy, laid him gently in the manger of their waiting Nativity scenes. Both Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis continued the tradition, and over the last 40 years, the tradition has grown beyond the Vatican and is now a treasured Advent tradition in parishes worldwide.

The tradition of the Nativity scene, however, is far older than the papacy of Pope St. John Paul II. In fact, the very first Christmas crèche was created in 1223 by St. Francis of Assisi. Desiring to promote devotion to the birth of Christ, St. Francis prepared a manger, complete with hay, oxen, and a donkey, in a cave in the small Italian town of Greccio. On Christmas Day, Francis cradled a carved doll representing the infant Jesus in his arms, intending to lay him gently in the manger. Much to the crowd's surprise, however, the *bambinello* "seemed to be awakened from sleep when the blessed Father Francis embraced Him in both arms" and cried tears of joy. The miracle moved the people of Greccio, and now, nearly 800 years later, we find ourselves similarly moved by the tender scene recreated in our own churches and homes.

At the site of the original Nativity scene in Greccio on December 1, 2019, Pope Francis explained the importance of this devotion: "Standing before the Christmas crèche, we are reminded of the time when we were children, eagerly waiting to set it up. These memories make us all the more conscious of the precious gift received from those who passed on the faith to us. At the same time, they remind us of our duty to share this same experience with our children and our grandchildren. . . . [T]he Christmas creche speaks to us of the love of God, the God who became a child in order to make us know how close he is to every man, woman and child, regardless of their condition."

On Sunday, December 15, we invite you to bring the *bambinello*, the baby Jesus, from your family's Nativity scene to Mass for a special blessing. May we, like so many generations of the faithful before us, experience the true joy of salvation in our homes this season.

Accepting New Patients

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Christopher M. Funes, MD
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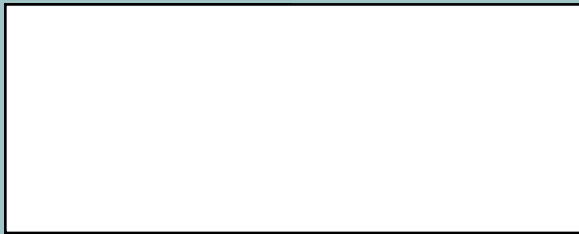
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