OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH

23-25 Newtown Avenue, Astoria, NY 11102
718.278.1834 | mountcarmelastoria.org

Pastoral Staff

Pastor
Rev. Msgr. Cuong M. Pham

Parochial Vicars
Rev. Michael McHugh
Rev. Hung Sy Tran

Permanent Deacons
Deacon Ruben Mendez
Deacon Jacob Rodriguez

Parish Manager
Celeste Stewart
cstewart@diobrook.org

Religious Ed Coordinator
Nelly Gutierrez
ccdmountcarmel@gmail.com

Parish Secretary
Luis Sanchez
Lsanchez@diobrook.org

Music Director
Lucille Mascia

Youth Minister
Dayonel Mejia

Mass Times

Saturday	5:00 PM (Vigil Mass)
Sunday	Main Church: 8:00 AM (English) 9:30 AM (Bilingual) 11:00 AM (English) 12:30 PM (Spanish) 3:00 PM (Vietnamese) Chapel: 9:00 AM (Italian) 10:30 AM (Czech-Slovak)
Weekdays	8:00 AM and 12:00 Noon
Saturday	8:00 AM
First Fridays	7:30 PM (Spanish)
Holy Days	8:00 AM, 12 PM (English) and 7:30 PM (Bilingual)
Holidays	Only one Mass at 9:00 AM

Live-streamed Masses can be accessed at mountcarmelastoria.org

Confessions:
Saturday 3:30pm—4:30pm (Chapel)

Church Hours:
Weekday: 7:00am—7:00pm
Saturday: 7:00am—6:00pm
Sunday: 7:00am—4:00pm

Office Hours
Weekday:
9:00am—12:00 Noon
1:00pm—8:30pm
Saturday:
9:00am—5:00pm

Follow us on Social Media: @OLMCAstoria

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21 *(Saint Peter Canisius)*

5:00pm Santo Thomas, Maria de Jesus Vazquez, Pedro Amigon, Conchita Gonzalez Gonzalez, Gertrude Yang *(In Thanksgiving– Living),* Margaret Chen & Family *(Living)*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22 *(Fourth Sunday of Advent)*

8:00am Gen & James Roeder

9:00am Famiglia Augusto

9:30am Paul Crescimanni

11:00am Michael McCullagh

12:30pm Victor Leonides Aguilar Zacatenco, Ofelia Castro Diaz, Teresa Morales, Consuelo Otero, Virgilio Peguero, Francisco Jose Marcial en su tercer aniversario

3:00pm For the People of the Parish

MONDAY, DECEMBER 23 *(Saint John of Kanty)*

8:00am Leonardo & Giuseppina Grippi

12:00pm Salvatore Tagliafero

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

9:00am Aurelia Jimenez

5:00pm Francisco & Maria Palaguachi

7:00pm Rocio & Pedro Garcia, Maria Cortes, Norberto Gutierrez, Maria Antonio Gutierrez, Esteban Silva, En Honor al Niño Dios, Por la Salud de la Familia Rios Pelaez y por las Almas del Purgatorio

10:00pm Natale Forzano

11:30pm Vietnamese Christmas Mass

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25 *(The Nativity of the Lord)*

8:00am For the Roldan Calle Family

9:30am Doris Alfieri

11:00am Gerlando Graci

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26 *(Saint Stephen)*

9:00am Mosler Family

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27 *(Saint John)*

8:00am Sabbia & Raffaele Carullo and Family

12:00pm Lucy Conde

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28 *(The Holy Innocents)*

8:00am Vincenzo & Giuseppa Barretta and Family

5:00pm Jeny Adam D'Souza, Michael Benik, Rigoberto Lopez, Nicolas Kaliope, Angela Glynn & Family, Alain Rene

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29 *(The Holy Family)*

8:00am Sr. Annette & Elaine Roeder

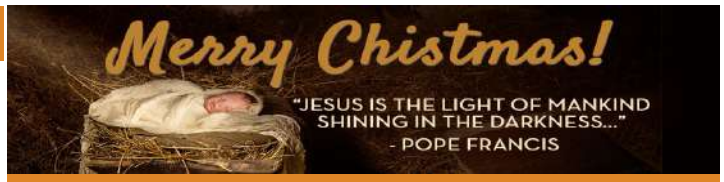
9:00am Anthony Spina

9:30am Sr. Mary Malloy C.S.J.

11:00am Mikelina & Mike Angelo Cachia

12:30pm Rogelio Lopez, Lucrecia Gusñay 7 años, Ofelia Castro Diaz, Maria Teresa Azitimbay, Jose Lliguichuzhca, Luis Guillermo Sinchi & Manuel Gusñay *(4 meses),* 25 Aniversario de Boda de Silvia & Abel Peñafort, Scarlet Tenesaca en celebración de su cumpleaños

3:00pm For the People of the Parish



UPCOMING SECOND COLLECTION

Second collections are taken after communion during Sunday Masses. Below are the upcoming second collections:

December 25, 2024– There will be a second collection offered for Catholic Charities.

INFANT BAPTISM/ BAUTISMOS

Please call the office to make an appointment to speak with Deacon Jacob to register your child for Baptism.

Preparation Meeting Tuesday—6:00pm—Institute	Baptism Ceremony 12:00pm—Upper Church
January 21, 2025	January 25, 2025
February 18, 2025	February 22, 2025
March 18, 2025	March 22, 2025
NO CLASS AVAILABLE	*NO ENGLISH BAPTISMS*
May 20, 2025	May 24, 2025
June 24, 2025	June 28, 2025
Reunion de Preparacion Martes—6:00pm—Instituto	**Ceremonia de Bautismo 12:00pm—Iglesia de Arriba**
14 de Enero 2025	18 de Enero 2025
4 de Febrero 2025	8 de Febrero 2025
4 de Marzo 2025	8 de Marzo 2025
8 de Abril 2025	12 de Abril 2025
NO CLASE DISPONIBLE MAYO	*NO BAUTISMOS EN MAYO*
10 de Junio 2025	14 de Junio 2025

DIGGING DEEPER INTO SUNDAY'S READINGS

First Reading: Micah prophesied a "ruler" would come through the line of David ("Bethlehem-Ephrathah") and bring peace to the divided kingdom of Judah and Israel. How might you be able to promote peace this week among your family or co-workers?

Second Reading: The author of Hebrews reminds us that Christ makes us holy so that above all else, we do God's will. As the season of Advent draws to a close, what could be one practical way to do God's will this week?

Gospel: Elizbeth calls Mary "blessed" because she believed and trusted in the Lord. Are there people in your life who model such trust and faith in God?

THIS WEEK AT OUR PARISH

Sunday, December 22

9:30am—11:00am	Grupo de Amistad #5	*Upper Room*
10:00am—11:00am	Grupo de Amistad #9	*Nazareth*
10:00am—12:00pm	Spanish OCIA	*Upper Room+ Fatima*
10:00am—12:30pm	Cursillo	*Guadalupe A/B*
10:00am—1:00pm	Czech Community	*Lourdes A/B*
2:00pm—3:00pm	Grupo de Amistad #14	*Fatima*
6:00pm—10:00pm	Posada	*Guadalupe A/B*

Monday, December 23

7:00am—5:00pm	TYWLS	*Gym*
6:00pm—9:00pm	CYO	*Gym*
6:00pm—10:00pm	Posada	*Guadalupe A/B*

Tuesday, December 24

9:00am—9:00pm	Posada	*Gym*
3:30pm—6:00pm	Porque Ser Catolico?	*Fatima*
7:00pm—9:00pm	Coro #1	*Nazareth*

Wednesday, December 25
NO MEETINGS

Thursday, December 26

9:00am—9:00pm	CYO	*Gym*

Friday, December 27

9:00am—9:00pm	CYO	*Gym*
6:00pm—10:00pm	Convivio de Cursillo	*Guadalupe A/B*
6:30pm—9:00pm	OLMC Youth Group	*Lourdes A/B*
6:30pm—9:00pm	Practica de Instrumentos	*Upper Room*
7:00pm—9:00pm	OCIA Class	*Fatima*

Saturday, December 28

9:00am—6:00pm	CYO	*Gym*
9:00am—12:30pm	AA Meeting	*Guadalupe A/B*
10:00am—1:00pm	Saturday Lessons in Faith	*Lourdes A/B*
10:00am—12:00pm	Spanish Children's Choir	*Fatima*
1:00pm—4:00pm	Convivio– Holy Spt. Inst.	*Guadalupe A/B*
5:00pm—7:00pm	Bilingual Choir Practice	*Nazareth*
5:00pm—7:00pm	Ministerio de Consolacion	*Fatima*
6:00pm—7:30pm	Porque Ser Catolico?	*Lourdes A/B*

CON-FRATERNITY OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Every fourth Sunday of the month, all members are invited to attend Mass at 9:00am in Italian preceded by the recitation of the Rosary.

If you are interested in becoming a member, please leave your name and number at the parish office.

2024 ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL

As of December 16, 2024, we have 178 donors who have pledged $73,570 towards our parish goal of $67,815. We have so far collected $72,155. Please remember to use our parish **code #4167**. To donate, visit **AnnualCatholicAppeal.org** or text **DONATE** to **917.336.1255.**

MASS ATTENDANCE RECORD

Weekend of December 14-15	Number of Attendees
5:00pm English Vigil	125
8:00am English	110
9:00am Italian	29
9:30am Bilingual	127
10:00am Czech	25
11:00am English	212
12:30pm Spanish	315
3:00pm Vietnamese	60

OFFICE CLOSINGS

The parish office will be closed on Wednesday and Thursday, December 25 & 26, 2024 for Christmas. The schedule of Masses are printed in this bulletin. The office will reopen on Friday, December 27, 2024 at 9:00am.

The office will close again for New Year's Day, Wednesday & Thursday, January 1 & 2. There will be two English Masses celebrated in the Upper Church at 8:00am & 11:00am on January 1st. There will be a Spanish Mass in Honor of Our Lady of Nube at 1:00pm that same day. The office will reopen on Friday, January 3, 2025.

WEEKLY OFFERINGS

The Altar Candles are being offered for ***Gaspare Barretta, Mario Carullo & Elio DiMonte,*** *by Anthony, Rosalia, Margherita, Charie & Kids*

The Altar Bread & Wine are being offered for ***Gaspare Barretta, Vincenzo & Giuseppina Barretta and Sabbia Carullo****, by Ida Barretta*

The Sanctuary Lamp is being offered in loving memory of ***Rose & George Hasselberg Sr. & William & George Hasselberg, Jr. and Gloria Radoslovich****, by the Hasselberg Family*

PURGATORIAL SOCIETY

We remember our deceased loved ones by having them prayed for at Mass on every first Friday of the month (the day traditionally dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus) as a meaningful way to express our love. Enrollment is $10 per name. Those enrolled the Purgatorial Society will be remembered for a whole year. Currently enrolled: **Maria Cruz, Sra. Torres, Juana Castañeda, Francisco Quintero, Austria Lopez.**

FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART

December 22, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The story of Christmas begins with a home: a humble stable in Bethlehem where love took on flesh and dwelt among us. In that sacred space, Mary and Joseph welcomed Jesus—not into grandeur, but into warmth, humility, and the embrace of family. This Christmas, I invite you to rediscover that same sense of belonging—a spiritual home where Christ is born anew in our hearts and lives.

For many, the phrase *"Come Home for Christmas"* stirs a longing deep within us—a yearning to return to where we are truly known, loved, and valued. Perhaps for you, this means stepping back into church after being away for a while. It may mean moving from the edges of parish life into a fuller, more vibrant connection. Whatever has kept you at a distance—whether it's the busyness of life, past hurts, doubts, or uncertainty—please know this: *You are welcome here.* This parish is your home, and wherever you find yourself on your journey, this invitation is for you: *Come home to your parish. Come home to your faith. Come home to Christ.*

Like any family, we are imperfect, but we strive to be a community where no one feels forgotten or excluded. Let this Christmas be a new beginning—a time to rediscover the love of Christ and the peace only He can give. As Pope Francis so beautifully reminds us, *"God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking His mercy"* (Holy Father's Homily, March 28, 2024). Allow this to be a season of renewal—a time to lay down your burdens, let go of barriers, and open your heart to God's infinite love and mercy. If you have been away, now is the moment to reconnect. You are missed, needed, and loved. This parish is not the same without you.

If you feel unsure of where you fit, please know this: *You belong.* The Church is not just a building or an obligation; it is your family—a place where your presence matters deeply. Step closer, and experience the richness of parish life—the sacraments, ministries, and fellowship that strengthen our faith and unite us as one. You are not a visitor here; you are part of this family.

To those who are already active, who serve, participate, and rejoice in faith—thank you. Your presence and generosity sustain our parish in countless ways. This Christmas, let us all renew our commitment to one another and cherish the gift of this vibrant parish family. Together, we create something beautiful—a manger of love where Christ can dwell and where others can find His warmth and light through us.

Imagine a parish where every person feels welcomed and embraced, where the lonely find belonging, and where faith becomes a living source of strength and joy. That is the home we are called to build together—a reflection of Bethlehem's stable, simple yet radiant with love. Christmas reminds us of the extraordinary truth that God made His home among us. In Jesus, He came to heal our brokenness, walk with us in our struggles, and show us the depth of His love. Now, He invites us to make a home for Him—not only in our hearts, but in the heart of this parish community.

As we gather for Christmas Masses, let us marvel at the beauty of our parish traditions—the glowing manger scenes, joyful carols, and the laughter of children reenacting the Nativity. Let us thank God for the diversity of cultures, talents, and faith that make our parish so unique and alive. Above all, let us rejoice in one another's presence, knowing we are stronger, richer, and more complete together.

So, come home this Christmas. Bring your joys, your struggles, your hopes, and your questions. Let us welcome Christ together as one family united in faith. Join me, Father Mike McHugh, Father Hung Tran, and our retired priests as we celebrate the miracle of Christmas. Let us fill this church not only with people but with love, warmth, and a renewed spirit of community.

May this Christmas be a season of homecoming for us all—a time to feel the embrace of God's love and the joy of belonging to this parish family.

Merry Christmas, everyone!

Msgr. Cuong M. Pham

DEL CORAZON DEL PASTOR

22 de diciembre, 2024

Queridos Hermanos y Hermanas en Cristo,

La Navidad tiene un significado muy especial para nuestras familias. Es un tiempo en el que nos reunimos para compartir, celebrar y recordar lo que realmente importa: el amor de Dios manifestado en Jesús, quien vino al mundo en un pesebre humilde en Belén. Ese primer hogar donde nació Cristo nos enseña algo profundo: Dios no busca grandezas, sino corazones sencillos y abiertos.

Esta Navidad, los invito a redescubrir esa calidez y ese sentido de hogar. Jesús quiere nacer de nuevo en nuestros corazones y en nuestras familias. Tal vez la vida, las preocupaciones o las dificultades los hayan mantenido alejados de la Iglesia. Quizás sienten que no tienen un lugar aquí. Hoy quiero decirles algo muy claro: ¡Esta parroquia es su hogar! No importa cuánto tiempo hayan estado lejos, ni cuál sea su situación; aquí siempre habrá un lugar para ustedes.

Este año, nuestra parroquia reflejó ese sentido de unidad y pertenencia de una manera muy especial. Bajo la dirección del Padre Hung Tran, voluntarios de las comunidades hispana y vietnamita, incluyendo muchos jóvenes, se unieron una vez más para crear el hermoso Nacimiento que está al aire libre. Este despliegue impresionante refleja visiblemente la belleza de nuestra familia parroquial unida y fuerte, una comunidad que nos llena de orgullo a todos.

Todos hemos sentido en algún momento ese deseo de regresar a lo que nos da paz y alegría, de volver a un lugar donde somos amados y aceptados tal como somos. Para muchos de nosotros, eso significa regresar a la Iglesia, a nuestra fe, a esa conexión con Dios que a veces dejamos a un lado. Si esto resuena en su corazón, los invito con mucho cariño: Vuelvan a casa esta Navidad.

La Iglesia es como nuestra familia. Sí, como toda familia, no somos perfectos, pero somos una comunidad que busca caminar junta, apoyarnos unos a otros y crecer en el amor de Dios. Nadie debe sentirse olvidado o excluido. Todos tenemos un lugar en esta mesa, y la Navidad es el momento perfecto para regresar y dejar que Cristo renueve nuestras vidas.

El Papa Francisco nos recuerda algo hermoso: *"Dios nunca se cansa de perdonarnos; somos nosotros los que nos cansamos de pedir Su perdón"* (Homilía de Su Santidad, 28 de marzo 2014). No dejen que el miedo, las dudas o las heridas del pasado los alejen más. Este es un tiempo para dejar las cargas a los pies de Cristo, abrir el corazón y recibir Su amor y Su misericordia. Ustedes son importantes para esta comunidad, y su ausencia se siente.

Si ya son parte activa de esta parroquia, les doy las gracias de corazón. Su fe, su servicio y su generosidad hacen de esta comunidad un lugar especial. Pero también los invito a que esta Navidad renovemos nuestro compromiso con Dios y con los demás. ¿Se imaginan cómo sería nuestra parroquia si todos sintieran que pertenecen aquí? Un lugar donde nadie se sienta solo, donde la fe sea nuestra fuerza y nuestra alegría. Ese es el hogar que podemos construir juntos.

Al celebrar las Misas de Navidad, disfrutemos de nuestras hermosas tradiciones: los pesebres, los villancicos, la alegría de los niños en las pastorelas. Agradezcamos por la diversidad de culturas y talentos que enriquecen nuestra parroquia. Este año, el esfuerzo compartido en la creación del Nacimiento al aire libre es un ejemplo perfecto de esa riqueza, de cómo trabajando juntos podemos manifestar la belleza de nuestra fe y de nuestra comunidad parroquial. Celebremos ese espíritu de unidad y dedicación que hace de esta parroquia un lugar tan especial.

Vengan a casa esta Navidad. Traigan sus alegrías, sus preocupaciones, sus preguntas y esperanzas. Jesús los espera con los brazos abiertos, y nosotros también. Este es su hogar, su familia en la fe.

De parte mía, del Padre Mike McHugh, el Padre Hung Tran, y nuestros sacerdotes jubilados, les deseamos una muy bendecida Navidad. Que este tiempo sea para ustedes y sus familias una verdadera experiencia del amor de Dios.

¡Feliz Navidad! Que la paz y el amor de Cristo reine en sus corazones y en sus hogares.

Mons. Cuong M. Pham

SAINT OF THE WEEK

St. Margaret Clitherow (1556- 1586), the pearl of York hid priests and allowed Mass to be celebrated in her home, a criminal offence at the time. She was pressed to death. Margaret was canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1970 as one of 40 martyrs of England and Wales.

PRAYER FOR ADVENT JOY

Dear Jesus, The news of your coming was met with boundless joy fill us anew with the wonder of your presence. You are Emmanuel, God with us. Amen.

PRAYING FOR THE SICK

Prayer is one of the most powerful tools we have. It's a way for us to communicate with God and obtain His divine intervention. It can help sick people get well again and also gives us the strength in our own weakness and suffering. If you wish your loved ones who is sick to be prayed for at our daily Mass, kindly contact our parish office to place their names in our Prayer List.

ROSARY SOCIETY NEWS

The next Rosary Society meeting will take place on **January 5, 2025** at the conclusion of the bilingual Mass in the Lourdes Room in the Parish Institute. $3.00 per person is the donation for refreshments. Yearly dues are $10.00 per person. All ladies over age 15 are invited to join. Bring a friend!

FIRST FRIDAY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Spiritual writers speak of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament as "the Mass held in contemplation." As a way of encouraging devotion to the Eucharist, we invite all parishioners to come and spend some time before the Real Presence of the Lord on **Friday, January 3, 2025**. Exposition and Adoration will take place right after the 8:00am Mass and will conclude with Solemn Benediction before the start of the 12 Noon Mass.

CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

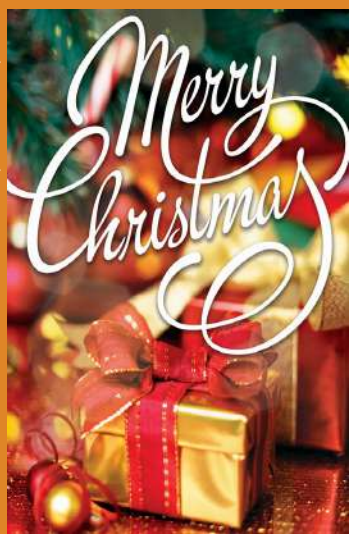
On Tuesday, December 24th, at 9:30pm, our parish choir will present a Christmas concert. Come early to the English Christmas Eve Mass at 10:00pm and enjoy this wonderful Mount Carmel holiday tradition. The concert will feature the English choir and the Mount Carmel String Trio. Uplifting music from the 12th to the 21st century, will be performed in several languages. All are invited. Admission is free.

WHY DO WE GIVE GIFTS AT CHRISTMAS?

Great events in and of themselves are not tangible. They occur in life but leave no mark behind, nothing that someone could come across and know that something significant occurred. So we mark the event with monuments, holidays, gold watches or plaques, making a meaningful event tangible and memorable.

Gifts at Christmas do the same thing. They mark the occasion of the birth of Jesus, communicating a bit of the joy of the day by allowing us to be both giver and receiver. Gift-giving sets aside the day as special and different. The special foods, customs, decorations, and gifts. all help focus our attention on the importance and meaning of the day and at the same time allow us to share personally in its joy and happiness.

In giving gifts, though, we can share in the meaning of Christmas in a significant way. We imitate God in sharing with others. We give a bit of ourselves to others in the gifts we give, just as God gives us the gift of his Son. No wonder we often say that the best gifts are those that come from the heart. Given in love, these presents are wrapped in the best covering of all.



OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH
23-25 NEWTOWN AVENUE, ASTORIA

CHRISTMAS WREATH MEMORIALS

REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED, AND/OR HONOR YOUR LOVED ONES BY MEMORIALIZING A CHRISTMAS WREATH THAT WILL ADORN OUR PARISH PROPERTY FOR $35.00 EACH. PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM CONTINUED ON THE REVERSE SIDE. YOU MAY RESERVE YOUR WREATHS NOW UNTIL DECEMBER 20, 2024. ONLY 100 WREATHS ARE AVAILABLE.

RECUERDE A LOS QUE HAN FALLECIDO Y/O HONRE A SUS SERES QUERIDOS CONMEMORANDO UNA CORONA DE NAVIDAD QUE ADORNARÁ NUESTRA PROPIEDAD PARROQUIAL POR $35.00 CADA UNA. POR FAVOR COMPLETE EL FORMULARIO CONTINUADO AL REVERSO DE LA PAGINA. PUEDE RESERVE SU CORONA HASTA EL 20 DE DICIEMBRE 2024. SOLO HAY 100 CORONAS DISPONIBLES.

YOUR NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

PLEASE MARK ONE:

[ ] IN HONOR OF [ ] IN MEMORY OF

NAME: _____

PLEASE MARK ONE:

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PLEASE MARK ONE:

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NAME: _____

WE ACCEPT CASH, OR CHECKS & MONEY ORDERS
MADE PAYABLE TO
OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH

Christmas Giving Boxes 2024

Our 17th annual "Giving Tree" Donation Boxes to help parishioners in need this Christmas season will begin on Saturday, November 30th, and conclude on Sunday, January 5th. One box will be located by the entrance on Newtown Avenue and the other will be by the door of the West Vestibule by the parking lot. You may donate: cash, checks (made out to Our Lady of Mount Carmel), or gift cards. Please bring any donations made during the week to the Rectory. Thank you for your generosity. A blessed Christmas season to all!

Cajas de Donaciones Navideñas 2024

Nuestro anual decimoséptima Cajas del "árbol de donaciones" para ayudar a los feligreses necesitados esta temporada navideña comenzarán el sabado, 30 de noviembre y se extenderán hasta el domingo, 5 de enero. Una caja estará ubicada junto a la entrada de Newtown Avenue y la otra junto a el vestibule oeste cerca a la puerta de estacionamiento. Se puede donar: efectivo, cheques (a nombre de Nuestra Señora del Monte Carmelo) o tarjetas de regalo. Cualquier donación durante la semana, por favor tráigala a la oficina en la rectoría. Gracias por su amabilidad y generosidad. Una bendita temporada navideña para todos!

OFICINA CERRADA

Las oficina parroquial estará cerrada el miércoles y jueves, 25 & 26 de diciembre, 2024 por la Navidad. El horario de misas están disponibles en este boletín. La oficina se volverá abrir el viernes, 27 de diciembre 2024 a las 9:00am.

La oficina volverá a cerrar el 1 & 2 de enero por el Nuevo Año. Habrá 2 Misas en ingles celebradas en la Iglesia de Arriba a las 8:00am y 11:00am y también habrá una Misa celebrada en Español en honor a la Virgen de la Nube el 1 de enero. Volveremos abrir el 3 de enero, 2025 a las 9:00am.

PARISH REGISTRATION

We encourage all who worship with us to consider registering to our parish. This will enable our parish to serve your needs better. Please return this form in the collection or drop it off at the parish office. Your participation will strengthen your sense of belonging in God's family.

Name(s):

_____

Address:_____ Apt_____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

PLEASE MARK ONE:

[ ] New Registration *[ ] Changed Address*

[ ] I prefer envelopes *[ ] I prefer E-giving*

ASKING THE QUESTION

If you have ever been visibly pregnant, chances are that someone, somewhere, whom you do not know, has reached out to touch your stomach.

I've had this happen to me, and sure, it's a little strange. Generally, I prefer people to ask before they touch me. But it's also very sweet, this great mystical excitement inspired by a pregnant belly. We know that belly is special. We know enclosed within it is hope and potential the very future of our world. Hidden, but real. How can we help but venerate it?

It's why the pregnant Madonna is my favorite devotional image. I even prefer it over the depictions of the Madonna and Child because I find in the sight of Mary's swollen belly more to meditate upon than I find in the unveiled face of the Christ Child. Salvation and redemption, enclosed in flesh, moving, and growing and breathing, but I cannot see it. It's real and it's true and it's *there*. And it is hidden.

There is much about God that we know with certainty. But there is so much that remains beyond our sight, beyond our comprehension. Questions of evil and sorrow. Pain and tragedy. Life and death. Why don't we have all the answers? We grow very impatient about this. We're like teenagers who want to be trusted with all the family secrets. We hate feeling left out of the loop.

But truth, like life, does not come to us showing its face. Perhaps this is because we could not bear its terrible beauty. Perhaps it's because we would not recognize it if it was laid bare for us to see.

But it's there, right in front of us. We can reach out and touch it. We may not see it. We may not understand it. But we can know it.

Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

HORARIO DE MISAS PARA NAVIDAD

Tuesday, December 24th – Christmas Eve (Vísperas de Navidad)

5:00 PM – English / inglés
7:00 PM – Spanish / español
10:00 PM – English / inglés
11:30 PM – Vietnamese / vietnamita

6:00 PM – Las Posadas Caroling / español
9:30 PM – Christmas Concert / multilingual

Wednesday, December 25th – Christmas Day (Día de Navidad)

8:00 AM – English / inglés
9:00 AM – Italian / italiano
9:30 AM – Bilingual / bilingüe
10:30 AM – Czech / checo
11:00 AM – English / inglés
No hay Misa a las 12:30 PM

New Year's Mass Schedule

Horario de Misas para Año Nuevo

Tuesday, December 31st – New Year's Eve (Vísperas de Año Nuevo)

5:00 PM – English / inglés

Wednesday, January 1st – New Year's Day (Día de Año Nuevo)

8:00 AM – English / inglés
11:00 AM – English / inglés
1:00 PM – Spanish / español
(Virgen de la Nube patrona de Ecuador)

"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" (2 Cor 9:15)

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
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