



Dear Friends,

During the past week we observed two feast days of great consequence to the church in our nation. On December 9 we honored Saint Juan Diego and on December 12 we celebrated Mary under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe. In 1531 Our Lady appeared to Saint Juan Diego in present day Mexico City. Saint Juan was a Native American, perhaps a native chief. When he finally was allowed to see the bishop and speak of the apparitions, he opened his cloak to present some flowers. On the cloak was a picture of Our Lady which is venerated to this day. Juan Diego is a symbol of the great hardship experienced by all Native Americans through the European expansion in the Americas. The apparitions in Mexico City were meant to convey that God embraces all people and were a reminder to the Spanish conquerors to respect the natives. To this very day Our Lady of Guadalupe is recognized as a source of hope to all who suffer from injustice and poverty. Our celebration of these feasts, is also a reminder that Hispanics are becoming a major influence on the Church in this country.

Christmas Fair: Many, many thanks to all who participated in the fair. It was good to enjoy one another's company. We are in debt to all who helped to organize, operate and support this endeavor. Special acknowledgment goes to our youth who staffed tables, assisted in the children's rooms, and helped in many other ways.

Father Joe Ford; email: jfford67@maine.rr.com

Mass Intentions & Mass Schedule

December 12	4:00 PM	David Twomey, III, by Dick & Sue Flaherty
December 13	8:30 AM	Maxine & James Pouravelis, by Rita Yavinsky
	5:30 PM	The Parishioners
December 14	7:30 AM	Edna V. Juliano, by Marie & Randy Wimert
December 16	7:30 AM	Maeve Ryan, by Vanessa Colesworthy
December 17	7:30 AM	Communion Service

Next Weekend Masses

December 19	4:00 PM	David Twomey, III, by Dick & Sue Flaherty
December 20	8:30 AM	Leonard J. Regan, by Bob & Lucille Robinson
	5:30 PM	The Parishioners

Cluster Advent Penance Service with Confession/Reconciliation - Sunday, December 13th at 4:00 PM.

Christmas Masses at Holy Martyrs

December 24 4:00 PM & 6:00 PM
December 25 10:30 AM

Holy Day Masses at Holy Martyrs

December 31 4:00 PM
January 1, 2010 8:30 AM

Christmas Masses at St. Gregory's

December 24 4:00 PM and 10:00 PM
December 25 8:30 AM

Holy Day Masses at St. Gregory's

December 31 6:00 PM
January 1, 2010 10:30 AM

Last Weekend's Offering: Thank you for your contributions of \$5,833.00 last weekend. To meet our budget for the fiscal year, the weekly collection should average \$6,000.00 per week. \$785.00 was received on December 8th.

Religious face rising costs. Data submitted to the National Religious Retirement Office reveals that the average annual cost of care for women and men religious age 70 and over has more than doubled since 1989. Current statistics put this figure at \$35,077 per person annually, with skilled care reaching nearly \$55,000. Your donation to the Retirement Fund for Religious provides critical support to religious institutes in meeting the escalating costs of elder care. **Please pray for all religious and give generously to today's second collection.**

Christmas Collection: This collection provides needed income to the parish; it does NOT go to the diocese. Formerly, the collection was for the priest(s) serving the parish. When a new salary scale was implemented for priests several years ago, the collection was designated for the parish. Given the low offertory receipts this collection is extremely important to meet the annual budget.

Christmas Flowers: Envelopes for gifts to assist in meeting the costs of Christmas decorations are at the entrance of the church.

WEEKDAY SERVICES AND STORMY WEATHER – When school is canceled in Gray and New Gloucester on Tuesday or Friday, there will be **NO** Mass at St. Gregory's. When school is canceled in Falmouth on Thursday, there will be **NO** communion service at Holy Martyrs.

Liturgical Ministers for Christmas and New Years – Sign up sheets are in the narthex for the ministries of ushers, lectors, servers, and ministers of communion for Christmas Masses.

Lectors: Workbooks for proclaiming the Word are available for 2010 Cycle C. They are located on a shelf in the sacristy. Please take the copy that has a label with your name on it.

Music Director/Organist - Diane Beaton will be moving from Maine after the holidays. Consequently, we are seeking an organist/director of music ministry. If you are interested or can recommend someone, please advise the office at 781-4573 or by e-mail.

A Service of Lessons & Carols with Bishop Malone Friday, December 18th, 7:00 PM at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. The weeks leading up to Christmas can be so busy and can make our spiritual preparation for this great Solemnity difficult.

"Think Smart/Stay Safe" during Liturgy of the Word and Religious Education sessions: We will be conducting our annual Diocesan approved "Think Smart/Stay Safe" program for this year, during the regular scheduled sessions this Sunday and Monday, and on the 20th and 21st for the children registered for Religious Education at Holy Martyrs. If you would like to attend with your child, please feel free to do so. Also, if you would prefer that your children not participate, you should sign an opt-out form that can be obtained from the office. Thank you for all your efforts to create and maintain safe environments for our children, and break the cycle of abuse.



Christmas Dinner Baskets – Please bring in items like, canned yams, corn, green beans, carrots, peas, nuts and candies, etc. Please leave items in the Stewardship corner of the narthex. FMI: contact George Spino at gcspino@gmail.com or 749-9549 if you can help.

Friendship House Thank You - Sincere thanks from me and the men at Friendship House for the many contributions to our meal for them in early December --- parishioners provided four large main dishes, several side dishes/salads, fresh produce, baked goods and paper products. The men always comment on how much you give and urge me to thank you. I especially appreciate this effort at a time of year when there are so many obligations. Do remember that Christmas trees and wreaths are on sale daily from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. at FH at 390 Lincoln St., South Portland; call 767-7403 for directions. *Deborah Nicklas @ 781-4362*

Caring Tree - In the Narthex, you will find the teen youth ministry's caring tree. It is beautifully decorated with white lights, and ornaments which we invite you to take. The ornaments are tags that represent presents for those who depend on the generosity of others at Christmas time. Please take a tag, purchase the present(s) and then return them unwrapped, and in gift bags by **this Sunday, December 13th**. Please attach the tag to the gift bag so that they can be properly sorted and delivered. For more information, please contact Deb Meahl - 781-8251 or Carol Keroack – 878-8468.

Flu Protocols: The Sign of Peace should be offered without any physical contact (use a verbal greeting along with meaningful eye contact, a smile, or the bow of the head). The faithful should not hold hands during the Our Father. **Holy Communion** - All ministers of Holy Communion must sanitize their hands prior to and after the distribution of Holy Communion. Communion in the hand is encouraged (not mandated); the faithful retain the option of receiving Holy Communion either on the tongue or in the hand. All ministers of Holy Communion are advised to distribute the consecrated hosts with care, being cautious not to touch the tongue or the hand of the communicant. The distribution of the Precious Blood for the faithful is suspended, with the exception of those who must receive from the cup due to medical reasons (i.e., Celiac disease). The faith of the Church teaches that Christ, whole and entire, is received even under only one species.

Holy Martyrs Weekly Calendar

Donut Sunday December 13  <small>Third Sunday in Advent</small>	Mass at 8:30 AM & 5:30 PM "Think Smart, Stay Safe" 9:35-9:55 AM Religious Education Classes Continue 4:00 PM Cluster Advent Penance Service with Confession/Reconciliation Readings Begin at #885 9:Zep 3:14-18a; (Ps) Is 12:2-6; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18
Monday December 14	Mass at 7:30 AM 187: Nm 24:2-7,15-17a; Mt 21:23-27 Religious Education Classes Continue "Think Smart, Stay Safe" 4:15-4:35 PM
Tuesday December 15	Mass at 8:00 AM at St. Gregory's Contemplative Prayer Group 9:30-11:00 AM 6:30-8:30 PM Choir Rehearsal Connected Catholics 6:00 PM Finance Council 6:00 PM 188: Zep 3:1-2,9-13; Mt 21:28-32
Wednesday November 16	Mass at 7:30 AM Opus Dei Women-10:00-2:00, Men- 5:00-7:00 PM 189: Is 45:6b-8,18,21b-25; Lk 7:18-23
Thursday December 17	Communion Service at 7:30 AM 193: Gn 49:2,8-10; Mt 1:1-17
Friday December 18	Mass at St. Gregory's at 8:00 AM Holy Bowlers 6:00 PM 194: Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-25
Saturday December 19	Mass at 4:00 PM ICDA 2-9 PM 195: Jgs 13:2-7,24-25a; Lk 1:5-25
Sunday December 20  <small>Fourth Sunday in Advent</small>	Mass at 8:30 AM & 5:30 PM Readings Begin at # 888 Religious Education Classes Continue "Think Smart, Stay Safe" 9:35-9:55 AM 12: Mi 5:1-4; Ps 80; Heb 10:5-10; Lk 1:39-45

Taize prayer service on December 20th beginning at 7P.M. at Emmaus Lutheran Church, 265 Middle Road, Falmouth. All are invited to attend. At the last service on October 25th, there were people from a number of the ecumenical congregations. For more information you can go to www.emmausfalmouth.org.

Cluster Bulletin Update – The new cluster bulletin publication date will be Lent 2010.

Vocations – “All were questioning in their hearts.” Are you considering a vocation as a priest, deacon or in the consecrated life? Call Fr. Bob Vaillancourt @ 207-773-6471 / robert.vaillancourt@portlanddiocese.org or Sr. Rita Mae Bissonnette @ 207-773-6471 / ritamae.bissonnette@portlanddiocese.org.

Christmas Trees & Wreaths - The men at Friendship House are selling Christmas trees and wreaths daily from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. FH is located at 390 Lincoln Street, South Portland; call 767-7403 for directions.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter – Your marriage is important to you, your family and the church. The next weekend is March 19-21, 2010 at the Lewiston Ramada Inn. The registration fee is \$50.00 and a freewill donation will be accepted at the end of the weekend. FMI and to register, please contact Dave & Ellie at 207-933-4237 or go to www.womenewengland.org.

Camp Fatima for boys & Camp Bernadette for girls are now taking registrations for the 2010 summer season. The camps, located in the Lakes Region of NH, offer 2 week overnight sessions for children, ages 6-15. To request a brochure and DVD, contact Michael Drumm at 603-364-5851 or email mdrumm@diocamps.org, or visit us on the web at www.diocamps.org. Please don't wait as sessions fill quickly.

MASSES: *Saturday Mass:* *4:00 PM*
 Sunday Masses: *8:30 AM & 5:30 PM*
 Daily Mass: *Mon. & Wed. at 7:30 AM*
Communion Service: *Thurs. at 7:30 AM*
 Confession: *Sat. 3:15-3:45 & by appointment*
OFFICE HOURS: *8:30-3:00 PM, Monday – Friday*

PARISH OF THE HOLY MARTYRS OF NORTH AMERICA

266 Foreside Road, Falmouth, Maine 04105
www.holymartyrs.org

PARISH DIRECTORY:

Parish Office: 781-4573
 Religious Education: 781-2847
 Fax: 781-3961
 Email: office@holymartyrs.org

ADMINISTRATION:

Administrator: Rev. J. Joseph Ford
 Catechetical Leaders: Deacon Dennis Popadak
 Judy Dominick

PARISH STAFF:

Christian Initiation: Judy Dominick
 Youth Ministry: Scott Ross
 Music Ministry: Diane Beaton
 Parish Secretary: Debra J. Coppinger

BULLETIN DEADLINE:

Notices for the bulletin must be at the rectory office by 12:30 PM on Tuesdays.

NEW PARISHIONERS: Welcome! We invite you to join in our parish community. Please register by contacting the rectory office

DEPARTING PARISHIONERS: Please inform the rectory office when you move from the parish.

HOMEBOUND & HOSPITALIZED: Please contact the rectory office to arrange for a visit.

BAPTISMS: By appointment – please contact the rectory.

MARRIAGES: Couples should contact the rectory at least six months in advance.