Don’t forget whose birthday it is
St. Barnabas the Apostle

Third Week of Advent

Monday, December 18
6:30 AM  Peggy Maltese
9:00 AM  Olga Giovanna Marsico
Salvatore Cusumano
William M. Zagarino
Living and Deceased Members of the Donnelly, Stauber and Lewis Families
Ronald and Carol Settele
Friends and Family of Lou, Rosemary and Rory Grandwilliams

Tuesday, December 19
6:30 AM  Elizabeth Marrinan
9:00 AM  James Clare

Wednesday, December 20
6:30 AM  Mary Agostinacchio
9:00 AM  Nancy Stabile
Saint Peter Canisius
Irene Strasser
Carl and Dolly Nobile

Friday, December 22
6:30 AM  Charlie and Ann Klika
9:00 AM  Deceased Members of the Grogan and Schmitt Families

Saturday, December 23
8:00 AM  Deceased Members of the Valentino Family
Fr. Charles  4:30 PM  Frank Leahy
Alice H. Brown
Gertrude Keane
Patricia Hoeffner
Michael Guardino
Antonio Aliberti
Emilio Vick Vaccaro

Sunday, December 24
Fr. Kevin  7:00 AM  Louis and Rory Grandwilliams
Stephen Clifford
Adeline and Peter Villella, Jr.
Luigi and Maria Balestriere
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Christmas Eve
Fr. Adrian  7:00 PM  Armando Forte
Edward Nallan - (Mass in HFC)
June Leahy Furda
Ann Marie Friedman
Anne and Vincent Buoncore
Fr. Charles  4:00 PM
Fr. Charles  10:00 PM
Fr. Adrian  12:00 AM
Fr. Kevin  6:00 PM
Come Join Us For a Joyful Start To Your Christmas Season

Lessons and Carols

Sunday, Dec. 17, 2017 7:00pm

Presented At
St. Barnabas R.C. Church
2320 Bedford Ave., Bellmore NY 11710

Featuring
The St. Barnabas Choir
William Dione, Music Director

Admission is Free

If you would like to bring a nonperishable food item for our pantry’s Christmas baskets, please leave it in the church lobby with our thanks!
What's Pastor Thinking

It’s said that lawyers never ask a question unless they already know the answer. In today’s gospel John the Baptist is attempting to answer the questions of the Levites, priests and Pharisees. ‘Are you the Christ? Are you Elijah? Are you the prophet?’ (Jn 1:21). None of those questions really allow him to say who he is. No one label can ever describe any of us. We are too complex; we fill too many roles; who any of us is cannot be captured in one sentence, let alone one word! And that is no less true of John the Baptist.

What is clear is that John the Baptist serves as an introduction to the story of Jesus. What is also clear is that we are now in the role of John the Baptist today. We are the ones who are to prepare the way of the Lord (Jn 1:23). We are the ones who can look around and see that Christ is among us even though others may not recognize Him in our midst (Jn 1:26). We are the ones to keep Christ alive in the world.

As we approach Christmas, that role is even more important to fulfill. It is made more difficult by a world that has buried the story of Christmas in the economic impact of shopping and shoppers. It is made more difficult in a society that tries to remember not only the Christian holiday of Christmas but the Muslim holiday of Ramadan and the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah and the pagan celebrations of the winter solstice.

At the same time, this is a time of year when people are looking for meaning in their lives as they rush from one party to another, and from one store to another - so they may be more open to hearing the story of Jesus. It’s a time of year when people begin to wonder why they spend the time and energy going from home to home and both why they need to and what they will do with the children who will soon be home from school - so they may be more willing to listen to our testimony.

I know it’s easy to become cynical at this time of the year. It’s easy to point out the ways people around us have missed the point of the story. It’s easy to point out that most people’s understanding of Christmas comes from Christmas gifts and Christmas cards rather than from attending Church.

Our role, like that of John the Baptist, is to look at how we might be able to tell the story to our world today - to our friends and neighbors, to our family and strangers. John came to point toward Jesus as the answer to their questions, the one who could offer them eternal life. When we realize that John the Baptist is merely a witness to Christ, it becomes clear that his role is our role.

We have a duty and an obligation to bear witness to the same Christ who lives among us.
Advent Wreath Candles
The Third Candle on the Advent Wreath is lit in loving of memory of Irene Carey.

Bread and Wine
Is presented in loving memory of Joseph Sgro from the Clifford family.

Sanctuary Lamp
Is lit in memory of Joan Schimoler from Eileen Williams and Family.

We Pray for Our Sick

Catholic Ministries Appeal
Goal: $106,400 Donors: 534
Pledged: $122,882 Received: $120,422

Our Finances
12/11/16: $16,001 12/10/17: $18,086
Parish Families Registered: 4,997
Envelopes Mailed: 1,218
Used 12/11/16: 635 12/10/17: 587

Special Collections
This Weekend  New Projects

The Week at a Glance
Sunday:
9:00 AM  L 5 & 6 attending
1:30 PM  Baptisms
7:00 PM  Lessons and Carols, Church
7:30 PM  Al-Anon, School
Monday:
7:30 PM  Charismatic Prayer Group, HFC
Tuesday:
9:00 AM  Grade 3 attending
1:00 PM  Friendly Seniors, HFC
7:30 PM  Bereavement Group, Rectory
Wednesday:
9:00 AM  Grade 2 attending
7:00 PM  CHOSEN L7, HFC
7:00 PM  Rosary Makers, Cafeteria
7:30 PM  Al-Anon, Rectory
7:30 PM  RCIA, Convent
8:00 PM  Choir, Church
Thursday:
9:00 AM  Grade 4 attending
7:00 PM  Bible Study, Rectory
7:00 PM  CHOSEN L7, HFC
Friday:
1:30 PM  Lectio Divina, Rectory
7:00 PM  Lectio Divina, Rectory
Saturday:
8:00 AM  Anointing, Church
11:30 AM  Baptisms, Church
12:30 PM  Confessions, Church
Keeping Christ In Advent
Christmas Candles
The altar candles at Christmas may be memorialized. The offering of $50 may be made at the rectory.

Christmas Wafers
In some traditions a blessed wafer is shared among family members at the beginning of the meal at Christmas to recall the real “Bread of Life” who came among us over 2,000 years ago. The blessed wafers are available at the rectory. Your free will offering will be donated to Parish Outreach.

Eucharistic Ministers
The sign up sheets for the Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year’s Day Masses are available in the sacristy.

Advent & Christmas Masses
This year the Fourth Sunday of Advent falls on December 24th. All Catholics are required to attend Mass, as usual, for the Fourth Sunday of Advent.

Masses are held for the Fourth Sunday of Advent on Saturday, December 23rd at 4:30 PM & 7:00 PM, and Sunday, December 24th at 7:00 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM and 12:00 noon. There will be no 10:15 AM Mass.

Our Christmas Eve schedule of Masses begins at 4:00 PM with Masses in the Upper Church and in the Holy Family Chapel. The other times of Mass for Christmas Eve are: 6:00 PM, 10:00 PM and Midnight.

On Monday, December 25th, Christmas Day, Masses are celebrated at 7:00 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM and 12:00 noon.

Christmas Eve 4:00 PM Mass
At the 4:00 PM Christmas Eve Mass in the Church children are invited to come dressed as angels and shepherds and are welcome to participate in the Entrance Procession. Children will remain seated with their families until the start of the Mass when an announcement will be made to have children line up in the back of the church. Please arrive early, as this Mass tends to fill up quickly.

Remember your loved ones at Christmas by having Poinsettias placed on the sanctuary in their honor. The offering is $15.

In Memory of ________________________________
Name _________________________________
Envelope Number _____ Amount $___________
Mary, Mother of God: New Year’s Day
Because this Solemnity falls on January 1st, a Monday, it is not a holy day of obligation this year. Nevertheless, Catholics should be encouraged to attend Mass. Mass will be celebrated on January 1st at 6:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM and 12 noon. This day concludes the Christmas octave.

Epiphany: Sunday January 7, 2018
Homes may be blessed and doors of homes “chalked” with the inscription 20+C+M+B+18 (“Christus mansionem bendicat”). The ritual will be published in our bulletin.

Baptism of the Lord: Monday January 8, 2018
The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on Monday, January 8, 2018. It is not a holy day of obligation, but simply marks the end of the Christmas season. Mass will be celebrated at 6:30 AM and 9:00 AM. Ordinary time begins the next day.

Cold & Flu at Mass
Whenever two or more people gather, some sharing of germs is inevitable. When Catholics gather in Jesus’ name to celebrate the Eucharist, our first concern is sharing our gratitude, our faith and our belief in Christ among us. However, with the cold and flu season underway, each of us has the responsibility of taking precautions to prevent the spread of these illnesses. We need to wash our hands frequently, take care where we cough and sneeze, and scrutinize our habits and procedures where the spread of infection seems most possible. Here are some things to keep in mind. In the event of a severe flu outbreak in our community, stricter guidelines may be issued. Perhaps at this time, a greater risk to us may be allowing fear to dominate our worship, rather than faith.

SHOULD YOU COME TO MASS? The Obligation to attend Mass on Sunday and other Holy Days of Obligation is the ordinary expectation for Roman Catholics (Canon 1247). However, extraordinary circumstances such as sickness or severe weather excuse the faithful from this obligation. If you suspect you have the flu or are suffering from a serious cold, please stay at home and do not risk spreading infection to others.

HOLDING HANDS DURING THE LORD’S PRAYER: Well-intentioned folks introduced this custom into parishes in the 1980s. Although holding hands is a beautiful expression of people united in prayer, the gesture is not envisioned in any Church documents governing liturgy. Thus, no one is required to hold hands. It is very fitting to pray the “Our Father” in the Orans position with your palms lifted upward, or with your hands placed together in prayer.

THE SIGN OF PEACE: Please don’t be offended if someone chooses not to shake hands with you during the Sign of Peace. An appropriate gesture for those who are concerned about spreading the flu virus might be to strive for eye contact rather than physical contact. You could clasp your hands together and bow gently to those around you, and with a smile say “Peace be with you,” or “Peace of Christ.”

RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION: Roman Catholics believe that both the Body and the Blood of Christ are contained in the Holy Eucharist under the form of the consecrated host. But the Church encourages reception of the cup at Mass as a fuller expression of the Last Supper and Christ’s Precious Blood poured out for us in sacrifice. If you are feeling sick, please receive Holy Communion in the hand, rather than on the tongue, and refrain from receiving the Precious Blood from the cup. It is not appropriate to dip your host into the cup, as this is irreverent and can contaminate the cup.
Social Ministry Advent Giving
As we journey together this Advent Season, Social Ministry invites you to participate in our weekly Advent Giving Program. By donating just ONE item each Sunday of Advent, it would help fill our pantry shelves and provide for our needy families. Many thanks and blessings during this holy season.

3rd Sunday of Advent (Dec 17th) - Paper towels, tissues, napkins
4th Sunday of Advent (Dec 24th) - Toothpaste, bar soap, shampoo/conditioner

St. Vincent de Paul
In today’s Gospel John the Baptist says “I am the voice of one crying in the desert; make straight the way of the Lord.” Let us ask for the grace to help others to know the love of the Lord. John the Baptist makes it very clear that we will live genuinely for Christ only if we are willing to die for Him. Daily dying consists of pouring out one’s energies in renouncing anything that is an obstacle to the following of Christ. John the Baptist calls us to prepare the way of the Lord by eliminating from our lives whatever impedes His coming. Christmas is a time of love and gift giving...please give to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that together we can help those in need.

Pre Cana Schedule - Winter 2018
Opening: 6:00 PM Sunday, January 28th Holy Family Chapel
FOCCUS Online: January 29th - February 2nd
FOCCUS Review: February 5th - February 9th
In Home Sessions: February 11th - March 16th
Closing: 5:00 PM Mass - Sunday, March 18th followed by refreshments.

Charismatic Prayer Group
Our meetings are held every Monday evening in the Holy Family Chapel from 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM. Coffee and cake are served after every meeting. Please join us. For more information, call Ellen O’Malley at 221-0574.

Prayer Shawl Ministry
The St. Barnabas Prayer Shawl Ministry knits and crochets shawls and lap blankets for parishioners who are in the hospital or nursing home, or suffering in some way, and might draw comfort from receiving the prayer shawl. If you know of anyone who would benefit from a shawl or blanket please contact the rectory at 785-0054 and we will gladly provide you with one.

St. Barnabas Rosary Makers
The St. Barnabas Rosary Makers are dedicated to promoting the mission of our Blessed Mother which is the message of the Rosary. Our goal is to teach and spread this sacred devotion, first by making rosaries, and then sending them to different countries throughout the world. We are looking to invite new
members to join our group. The next meeting date is December 20th at 7:00 PM in the school cafeteria. Please note, we will not be meeting every Wednesday as previously scheduled.

Catholic Divorced & Separated Prayer Service & Information
Designed to provide knowledge and support for individuals who have or are experiencing divorce or separation. December 15th, 2017, January 12th, and 26th, 2018 from 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm at St. Barnabas Parish (Holy Family Chapel) Bellmore

Baptism Preparation Facilitator
The Meaning and the grace of the sacrament of Baptism are clearly seen in the rites of its celebration.
Tuesday, January 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th, 2018 from 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM. St. Peter of Alcantara, Port Washington
Thursday, January 18th, 25th & February 1st, 2018 from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM at St. James Parish (Pastoral Center, Room 104) Setauket

School of Missionary Disciples Information Sessions
Seminary of the Immaculate Conception, 440 W Neck Rd, Huntington, NY 11743 on Sunday, February 4th at 2:00 PM
St. Rosalie Parish, 31 E Montauk Hwy, Hampton Bays, NY 11946, on Sunday, February 4th at 2:00 PM
Mercy Hospital, 1000 N Village Ave. Rockville Centre, NY 11570, on Tuesday, February 6th at 7:30 PM
Our Lady of Mt Carmel Parish, 495 N Ocean Ave, Patchogue, NY 11772, on Wednesday, February 7th at 7:30 PM

March for Life 2018
Save the Date! March for Life 2018 - January 19, 2018. This year’s theme is “Love Saves Lives.” Join us on our bus trip to Washington, DC as we join hundreds of thousands of Americans in a peace pilgrimage on behalf of the unborn. It’s an experience that you’ll never forget! Details to follow in the coming weeks. For more information please contact Vin Murray at 781-7846.

Birthright
Pregnant? Need Help? Birthright has a 24-hour hotline for anyone needing assistance and loving support during pregnancy. Call (800) 550-4900. The following locations have direct numbers: Wantagh 785-4070; Islip (631) 277-3888; Hampton Bays (631) 728-8900; Southold (631) 876-5138; and Rocky Point (631) 821-9727.

Talbot House
Are you or someone you know having family or interpersonal problems due to drinking alcohol or using drugs? Catholic Charities, Talbot House, a Chemical Dependence Crisis Center located in Bohemia provides withdrawal and stabilization services on a voluntary basis to males and females over the age of 18, who are seeking to stop and/or withdraw from alcohol and/or other drug use. The medical and clinical staff at Talbot House will assess the kind of care the person needs, to begin his/her journey in recovery. For more information, please call (631) 589-4144. Talbot House staff is available 24/7. Each call is confidential. Talbot House is a NO fee for service program.

Holy Trinity Driver’s Ed
Spring Driver Education beings February 1, 2018.
There are still openings available in classes before and after school and on Saturdays. The application and schedule are available at holytrinityhs.org. If you have questions, please call 433-2900 or email drivered@holytrinityhs.org.

Catholics for Freedom of Religion

Taking “Christ” out of “Christmas” on College Campuses - Under the guise of inclusivity, many colleges across the nation are promoting non-religious decorations, displays and celebrations when issuing their annual guidelines for Christmas. They contend that public religious displays are inappropriate for Christmas - a holiday so-named because it celebrates the birth of Christ. By banning Christmas displays and celebrations, these colleges are telling Christians their traditions are offensive. These colleges include the University of CA, Irvine; SUNY at Brockport; Missouri State Univ.; Eastern Connecticut State Univ.; and many, many others.

The Men of the Way of Light

If you are interested in joining a men’s prayer group, but this time is not good for you, please contact us and let us know, as we are interested in putting together other prayer “cells” on different days. For more information contact Fred Kreuder at 987-5350 or email stbampg@aol.com and visit our FaceBook page - “The Way of Light - The St. Barnabas the Apostle Men’s Prayer Group.”

Regular Sacrificial Giving

You can contribute to St. Barnabas with on-line banking and bill paying services. Call the rectory to request the service. Send a check to St. Barnabas with your weekly collection donation indicated. Include your Name, Address & Envelope Number.

Each week this amount will be credited to your account. This eliminates using weekly envelopes and guarantees that your donation will be received.

Estate Planning

When preparing your estate plan, please consider a bequest to The Parish of St. Barnabas, Bellmore. You can make a contribution to support ongoing operations of the Church or contribute to a particular project. Your legal counsel can help you refine the bequest language to suit your specific wishes for The Parish of St. Barnabas. Thank you.

To place a notice in our Bulletin email stbapostle@gmail.com.
To place an advertisement on our cover call The Church Bulletin at (631) 249-4994.
Saint Barnabas the Apostle

Reverse RAFFLE

Only 300 tickets to be Sold
Great odds>>> 1 in 300 chance to win the big prize!
Last ticket pulled is the BIG WINNER

GRAND PRIZE OF $5,000

TEN - $500 PRIZES
TWO - $1,000 PRIZES

Each ticket costs $100 and entitles you to admission for two to the Drawing/Cocktail Party
(must be 18 or older to purchase and/or attend)

All proceeds will support renovations to St. Barnabas Convent Building

Saturday, April 21, 2018 8:00pm
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School cafeteria Doors open at 7:30
Drawing starts at 8:00pm Beer, wine, soda and hors d’oeuvres
Winner need not be present to win

In the event that less than 300 tickets are sold, the prizes will be prorated accordingly
(the prize amounts will be decreased relative to the total dollars collected).

Tickets will be available for purchase at the rectory beginning the week of December 11, 2017.
Cash or checks made payable to “Saint Barnabas” will be accepted.

REVERSE RAFFLE TICKET REQUEST

Name: ___________________________ Telephone #: ________________ Number of tickets: ____
Address: ____________________________________________________________

Number of adults attending the party on Saturday, April 21st ______0 ______1 ______2
If you wish to arrange a baptism, please contact the rectory at 785-0054. Once your request is received you will be invited to meet one of the priests. This meeting offers parents an opportunity to review the baptism ceremony and set the date. The meeting is more conversational than instructional. Forms need to be completed giving information on the parents, child’s date and place of birth, as well as the names and religious affiliation of the sponsors. At least one sponsor must be a practicing Catholic.

Baptisms are held on Saturday at 11:30 AM, and Sunday at 1:30 PM, when the Church is available.

If you wish to hold a private baptism you must bring a visiting priest to perform the baptism service. Private baptisms may be held on Saturday at 1:30 PM and 3:00 PM and on Sunday at 3:00 PM, if these times are available.

First time parents are required to attend a Baptism Class. Classes are held in the Holy Family Chapel on Agape Sunday, the second Sunday of the month. Crying babies and noisy children are welcome. We begin with Mass at 10:15 AM, when your baby will be welcomed to St. Barnabas, followed by refreshments and the class.

The dates for class are January 14, February 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10, (10:30 Mass for July 8, August 12 and September 9).

May the Lord preserve the members of our Army, National Guard, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Merchant Marine, Coast Guard and Peace Corps from all harm.

**US ARMY:**

**NATIONAL GUARD:**

**US NAVY:**

**US MARINES:**

**US AIR FORCE:**
Capt. McLean G. Bethea, Rev. Major Timothy Hirten, Nicholas P. Wright,

**US MERCHANT MARINE:**
Lt. J.G. Eric Stumpel.

**US COAST GUARD:**

**US PEACE CORPS:**
Patrick Coons
Those who aspire to be Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should be people of mature and demonstrated faith. They must be 18 years of age, or a senior in high school to be commissioned in our diocese. They should be effective Christian witnesses and active in the sacramental life of the Church. They must have received the Sacraments of Initiation.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must be humble, (this is a great office,) hospitable, (we are honored guests, but also appointed servants). We must have gratitude, (receive the great gift of the Lord’s presence with grateful hearts and share that gift generously and joyfully with others!) We must be reverent!

As a minister at Mass, be it lector or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, you will be expected to dress accordingly. ‘Sunday best’ is the rule of thumb. How we dress conveys how we feel about our ministry.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are commissioned. Once you have completed the course of training, your names will be submitted to the Diocesan Office of Worship. You are then granted permission to distribute communion, in this parish.

For those who wish to continue in this ministry in St. Barnabas, we ask that you attend a meeting in January to renew your commitment. This meeting will be held in January …… (Fr. Kevin).

Many Ministers of the Eucharist take communion to the homebound, to the hospitalized, or to nursing home residents. Some of our EMHCs, at their request, are commissioned for this ministry only.

It is the Holy Spirit that calls us to this important ministry. Due to the nature of this ministry, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should receive ongoing support and formation. It is your obligation to learn as much as you can about the Eucharist.

Please read any and all current information you find on the Eucharist. The more you know, the more you will want to know. Thank you for your service to the Christian community in St. Barnabas.

Have you considered serving as an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist?

CONTACT FR. ADRIAN IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SERVING AS A EUCHARISTIC MINISTER OR lector

Liturgical Ministry Training

ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE OF WORSHIP 516-678-5800 x504

1. TRAINING FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION: required for all those who are beginning as Ministers. Session “A” is required of ALL Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Those who minister in hospitals, nursing homes and to homebound persons are required to attend Session “B” in addition to Session “A”. SESSION “A” MUST BE ATTENDED PRIOR TO SESSION “B”.

CONTACT FR. ADRIAN IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SERVING AS A EUCHARISTIC MINISTER OR lector

TIMES AND PLACES FOR MINISTRY TRAINING:

In Nassau: EM “A” Session and Lectors
April 16, 2018: 9 AM—1 PM
St. Agnes Parish Center, Rockville Centre

“B” session for Extraordinary Ministers
April 21, 2018: 9 AM—1 PM
St. Agnes Parish Center, Rockville Centre

In Suffolk: EM “A” Session and Lectors
May 12, 2018: 9 AM—1 PM
St. Rosalie, Hampton Bays

“B” Session for Extraordinary Ministers
May 19, 2018: 9 AM—1 PM
St. Rosalie, Hampton Bays

EVENING SESSIONS for Extraordinary Ministers and Lectors at St. Elizabeth, Melville
Session “A” - Wednesday, May 16, 2018; 7:00—10 PM
Session “B” - Wednesday, May 23, 2018; 7:00—10 PM
Rockville Centre Diocesan Pilgrimage to Ireland

Spiritual Director:
His Excellency, Bishop John Barres
And Auxiliary Bishop Robert Brennan

August 20 - 27, 2018
$3,999 from New York

Optional Post Tour: Knock and Galway
Additional $999 per person

www.pilgrimages.com/drvc

Dublin, Ireland
World Meeting of Families
21-26 August 2018
The symbolism of the tree

Today’s beautifully decorated Christmas trees are little like the first trees used by Christians to celebrate Christ’s birth all those centuries ago. Back in the 8th century, during his missionary in Germany, St. Boniface chopped down a sturdy oak tree, much to the amazement of the Druids who used it as a symbol of worship. Turning to a small fir tree, St. Boniface referred to it as the “tree of the Christ-child,” with its everlasting pine needles; a sign of eternal life. The triangular shape also helped to symbolize the Holy Trinity, and its green branches pointed upward to heaven. He instructed the Germans to “gather about it ... in your own homes; there it will shelter no deeds of blood, but loving gifts and rites of kindness.”

As Christmas trees became popular, there was concern about the pagan character of its origin, but the symbolic meaning behind the tree demonstrated its deep roots in the Christian faith. In fact, the symbolism of the tree is very rich in our tradition: our fore-bearers were directed by God not to eat the fruits of one of the trees of Eden; Christ paid the highest price of our redemption crucified on a tree trunk; the green branches and the lights that decorate the Christmas tree evoke Christ as the Eternal Light that comes to a world enveloped in darkness.

Despite the strong commercial nuances over the last century, diminishing its Christian significance for many, the Christmas tree remains a valid symbol of the coming of Christ into the world.

So why not use the tree to explain to your children the story of one of the greatest missionaries, St. Boniface, and how the humble fir came to represent such an important event?

The history of the Nativity scene

However, even with this contextual validation, the Christmas tree is by no means the main visual symbol of the birth of Jesus. This is when we need to turn to another saint, the beloved St. Francis of Assisi, who while traveling in Greccio, Italy back in 1223, created the first crib in history when trying to solve the problem of over-crowding in a church at Midnight Mass.

Finding a little niche in a rock, St. Francis set about making an altar. He gained permission from the pontiff to create a living crib, with the village inhabitants representing the Child Jesus in the
manger, Our Lady, St. Joseph, the Magi, the shepherds, and the angels. The animals were also real: the ox, the donkey, and the sheep. St. Bonaventure describes St. Francis at the scene: “The man of God [St. Francis] stood before the manger, full of devotion and piety, bathed in tears and radiant with joy.” News of the crib soon spread, turning into the beautiful Christmas custom it has become today, with carved cribs becoming popular in the churches around the 16th century, thanks to the evangelizing work of the Jesuit priests.

When building the creche, there are lots of meanings and traditions to stick to at various stages. Here are some for you to add to your own family tradition:

How to prepare the crib in meaningful stages

First, organize the general scene, placing the animals, the shepherds, the manger – but hold off adding the main characters of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the angels, the star, and the three kings.

Some families wait until the afternoon of December 24 to place the crib and the figurines of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph, but still refrain from adding Infant Jesus – sometimes difficult with impatient kids!

Disclosure: the manger remains empty until midnight, when, symbolizing the Birth of the Son of God, the image of the Child is finally placed there!

Along with baby Jesus, the angels are also placed, who evoke the song “Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will,” mentioned in the Scriptures.

Together with the angels, add the star that guided the three kings from the East to Bethlehem to worship the Savior, on top of the crib. The magi, popularly referred to as Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, represent all the peoples of the earth and often come with their trusty exotic rides: camels or even elephants.

There are those who begin to position the three kings in the crib only from the 25th onward: initially they are placed far from the manger, still traveling, and are approached a little more each day until they arrive on the feast of the Epiphany, on January 6.

A true domestic catechism

However, the crib is not a simple adornment: it is a beautiful visual form of expressing our faith and our prayer, during the waiting and celebration for the arrival of the Savior. This tradition involves a process, a growth, and an exciting time for the family in preparation of the most beautiful story of all time. It is a true domestic catechism, especially for children!

Religious Education

We still have a few students that need either a one-on-one learning environment or a small group environment that need someone to work with them. Please call the Office of Christian Formation at 785-0130 to volunteer or to receive more information. We are also in need of Adult Volunteers to be Substitutes, Hall Monitors and Attendance/Lobby Aides for our Religious Education program. Please call the office to get more information.

Upcoming Dates:

Sunday, December 17: Level 5 and 6 - 9:00 AM Mass

Tuesday, December 19: NO CLASSES

Thursday, December 21: NO CLASSES

NO CLASSES MONDAY, DECEMBER 25th THROUGH TUESDAY, JANUARY 2nd, 2018

CLASSES RESUME ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3rd, 2018!
2018 Multi-Parish Teen Retreat

March 16, 17, & 18

Huntington Seminary

Contact:
Kieran Maelia
St. Barnabas LifeTeen
(516) 785-0130
stbyouth17@gmail.com

Daily Rate: $50.00
2-Night Stay: $125
(Meals Included)

Meeting December 17 6:00 PM in the School
Why Be Catholic (Chapter 6)
Discover the Church of Jesus

The Church makes the salvation story our story, here and now. Through the Church, we encounter Christ in the Liturgy of the Word, Eucharist, in the other sacraments, and through other people.

The Church is called the “bride of Christ” and the “body of Christ” because Jesus loves us and wants to unite Himself to us. While developing and maintaining a personal relationship with Christ is fundamental to our faith journey, we are reminded that to follow Christ is also to be in communion with others.

It is not something we do alone—we have a personal relationship in context of our communal relationship.

Level 8, January 3 or 4
The 4 Confirmation Forms are due

Level 7, January 10 or 11

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas

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Conversation After Class

- Why do you think it is important to be Catholic? What makes the Catholic Faith unique?
- Which of the four marks of the Catholic Church seems most important to you, and why? (The four marks are one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.)
- If a friend invited you to skip Mass, why would that not be a good idea? What do you receive at Mass that you cannot get anywhere else?

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St. Barnabas Parents
Tuesday January 9th

‘Parenthood’

Speaker
Tony Bellizzi

Holy Family Chapel
7PM
Thank you to the 6th Grade for hosting our School Mass. The topic was the first week of Advent and the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Students were reminded to build the foundation of their Catholic Identity on a rock solid foundation.

(Left) Thank you Mrs. Woll for planning and executing this fun STEAM Project for our 6th Grade and Pre-K to collaborate on! Students were challenged to take simple materials and engineer a shelf/chair for their elf to sit on. It was a lot of fun! (Above) The 5th Grade decorated and donated gift bags filled with a hat, scarf, and gloves, to Hempstead House! Keep your light shining bright 5th Grade!

Christmas Card Raffle® Give the gift of chance! Only $10 to play the WHOLE month of January! Daily Prizes Range from $25-200 Winners are re-entered! Contact the school office: 516-785-5709 We can deliver the Christmas Cards directly to you!
Our Time is the perfect way for you and your child to become familiar with the classroom environment while singing songs, doing crafts, reading books, and celebrating God’s love together.

Class sessions are offered on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday from 10am to 11am from September thru June at Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Regional School.

For more information or to enroll contact:
Sabina Lamb (516) 781-9834

John said, “I baptize with water, but among you stands One you do not know.”

“He i___ the One who come___ after me, the ___trap___ of who____e ___andal___ I am not worthy to untie.”

John wa___ talking about Je___u___.

Parents & Child Program

Register and start attending now!
“Who are you?” people asked John.

He said, “I am a voice calling in the desert, ‘Make straight the way for the Lord!’”

Circle 6 differences in the 2nd picture.

Count the hidden objects. 4 or 5? 5 or 6?
There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him all might believe.

Solve the math problems and use the answers to write the words from the candles on the lines below.

2 + 3 = 5 - 4 = 9 - 5 = 8 - 6 = 1 + 2 = 9 - 2 = 6 + 3 = 5 + 5 = 7 - 3 = 1 + 1 =

as a to

“Who are you?” people asked John.

Circle 6 differences in the 2nd picture.

“I baptize with water,” John replied, “but among you stands One you do not know.”

Connect the dots. Write the words on the correct lines below.

A B C D E F G H I J K L 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

“He is the One who comes after me,

In the words of Isaiah the prophet, who did John say that he was?

Add or subtract letters to find out.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z