

# THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH

DECEMBER 27, 2020



*Simeon said,  
“Now, Master, you may let your servant  
go in peace, according to your word,  
for my eyes have seen your salvation.”*

*Luke 2:29-30*

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Joseph and Mary presented Jesus in the temple at eight days old, as was prescribed by Mosaic law. For many Catholic families, baptismal gowns were handed down through generations, and a baptism was a time of great celebration. Sadly, in our culture, baptisms continue to decline. There are many reasons for this: fewer practicing Catholics, more interfaith marriages, more secular weddings, fewer weddings by clergy, and problems or misunderstandings that turn people away. Many have left the church altogether because of the way they were treated. For some the parish is not a welcoming place. For others baptism has become just a ritual they go through for the sake of the grandparents.

## EXAMPLES IN OUR ELDERS

When someone does present a child for baptism, it can become too easy for others to pass judgment because the parents don't know the rubrics well, or

aren't dressed better, or "why is that single mother having her baby baptized during Mass?" Notice that the Gospel says nothing about the priests of the temple and how they received Jesus. Rather it talks about Simeon and Anna. They are worth a study in themselves. Simeon is a devout man who is there waiting for a particular sign, and it is fulfilled when he see the Christ Child. Anna is just in the temple praying, as is her custom. After the presentation of Jesus, she does what she does best—she goes back to praying in the temple. Perhaps these readings teach us how we as a faith community can see the sacredness in those families presenting their children for baptism, and welcome them as did Anna and Simeon. May we all learn from their wisdom!

Today's Readings: Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3; Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9; Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Lk 2:22-40 [22, 39-40]

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PASTOR: Rev. Michael T. "Mike" Snider  
PERMANENT DEACON:  
Rev. M...

**MASS TIMES:**  
Sat., 5:00PM & Sun., 9:00AM  
Tues. - Fri. 9:00AM

**CONFESSIONS:**  
Tues. & Wed., 9:00 - 10:00AM  
30 - 30  
5:00 PM

**Reconciliation:**  
Saturday & Sunday: 45  
minutes before Mass

**Marriage or Baptism:**  
Contact the parish office six  
(6) months prior to the  
anticipated date 903-769-3235

**Holy Spirit  
Catholic Church**

1612 S. FM 2869  
Holly Lake Ranch, TX 75765

**Church Phone: 903-769-3235**

**Fr. Mike Snider  
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**Welcome Visitors!**

*We hope that you have enjoyed celebrating Mass with us and felt welcomed in our church as your "home away from home." Whether you are new to the area or have lived here for years, you are invited to join our parish family. Please come again!*

## The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

### We remember in our prayers all the sick, especially the following:

Hope Smithson. Mike Cromley. Ron Szczepanski. Karla Haney. Molly Dunn. Richard Schuetz. Regina Davies. Tammy Johnson. Carolyn Simmons. Elayne Hayes. Dianne & Gary Laudt. Gayle McCloskey. Shay Mikalonis. Dwight Nunley. Wanda & George Duke. Fleming Family. Doris & Jo Hoffman. Jo Ann Crowell. Ann Richardson. Jacob Stephens. Frankie Durst. Mary Margaret Ellison. John Kominis. Ester Coronel. Ed & Diane Stanley. Elise Sugg. Joann Rayl. Judy Fazio. Marsha & Marty Blahitka. Carolyn Edwards. Joshua & Chase Larsson. Avery Boultinghouse. Wanda & Mike Stephens. Jim & Geri O'Neil. We list the names of our sick Parishioners. Friends and Relatives for one month.

### Please pray for the men and women active military service from our

parish community: New active recruit, Reid Patrick Hope, US Marine (Nephew of Mike & Wanda Stephens). 2LT Joseph Chandler, U.S. Army (Nephew of Mike & Margaret Jernigan) Seaman Logan Adkinson (great grandson of Fr. Mike). Jay Guajardo, Navy Rescue School (Great Nephew of Lex & Liza Forster). Senior Airman, Natalie York (Daughter of Steve & Julie York). Pvt First Class Randall Scheaffer US Army (Grandson of Carlos & Pat Gallardo). Lt. Col. William P Shea. (Nephew of Deacon Sam and Nancy Mullen). Colonel John Anthony Fontana. U.S. Army (Son of John & Mary Fontana). Ensign Gary Buchanan; 2ndLt. Blake Gaughan (Nephews of Jess & Eva Corrigan). Paul Moreno E4 AMT 3rd Class (Grandson of Kathy & Dale Boman). Staff Sergeant Daniel Hodan. U.S. Army (Grandson of Ron & Barbara Eamma). Warrant Officer Michael Hauck (Son of Jerry & Vicki Hauck & brother of Cathy Ellis) & Seaman Rainer Hauck (Grandson of Jerry & Vicki Hauck & nephew of Jeff & Cathy Ellis).

### TODAY'S READINGS

**First Reading:** Those who honor their parents will be greatly blessed and will atone for sins (Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14) or Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3.

**Psalm:** Blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways (Psalm 128) or Psalm 105.

**Second Reading:** Be thankful; do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus (Colossians 3:12-21 [12-17]) or Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19.

**Gospel:** The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom (Luke 2:22-40 [22, 39-40]).

### READINGS FOR THE WEEK

**Monday:** 1 Jn 1:5 — 2:2; Ps 124:2-5, 7b-8; Mt:13-18

**Tuesday:** 1 Jn 2:3-11; Ps 96:1-3, 5b-6; Lk 2:22-35

**Wednesday:** 1 Jn 2:12-17; Ps 96:7-10; Lk 2:36-40

**Thursday:** 1 Jn 2:18-21; Ps 96:1-2, 11-13; Jn 1:1-18

**Friday:** Nm 6:22-27; Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21

**Saturday:** 1 Jn 2:22-28; Ps 98:1-4; Jn 1:19-28

**Sunday:** Is 60:1-6; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12

### Mass—Intentions

**Sat. 12/26** Carlos Gallardo+ (Carmen & Family)

**Sun 12/27** Zac Gibson (Carolyn Bonicard)

**Tue 12/29** Donald Wehmeyer+ (M/M Murfin)

**Wed 12/30** Donald Wehmeyer+ (M/M Murfin)

**Thurs 12/31** Parishioners

**Fri. 1/01** Parishioners

**Sat. 1/02** Carlos Gallardo+ (Carmen & Family)

### PARISH SUPPORT

Average weekly amounts through Oct. 31, 2020:

Expenditures (excluding parking lot repairs) \$ 3,712

Regular and debt & maintenance collections \$ 2,858

**Attendance** 12/19 Sat. 24 & 12/20 Sun. 40

### December Pope's Intention:

For a life of prayer. That our personal relationship with Jesus Christ be nourished by the Word of God and a life of prayer.

### CHILDREN OF ETERNITY

You are children of eternity. Your immortal crown awaits you, to reward your duty and love. You may indeed sow here in tears, but you may be sure there to reap in joy.

—St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS CHRISTMAS FOOD DRIVE

We delivered food to 19 families this year that totaled to 1,100 lbs. This drive was above and beyond our weekly food distribution.

Thank you to our awesome parishioners that donated or gave monetary generous donations for the Christmas holiday boxes and for your continued support for this food drive and our weekly food baskets.

**MANY OF OUR BLESSINGS AND PRAYERS  
WERE ANSWERED FOR THIS PROJECT WITH  
DONATIONS, TIME AND VOLUNTEERS!!!**

**Dispensation:** The entire diocese of Tyler remains dispensed from the Sunday and holy day Mass obligation until further notice.

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**An Act of Spiritual Communion**

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

**2021 CALENDARS ARE AVAILABLE**  
**ONE PER FAMILY**

**Cenacle of Life:** Cenacle of Life devotion each **Wed. from 3:30—4:30pm.** Please join us in church as we pray two rosaries for an end to abortion, euthanasia and all sins against the sanctity of human life. **Questions call Vicki 817-637-9382**

**2021 Collection Envelopes** are available in the hallway between the church and parish hall. They are in alphabetical order. If you do not see your name please leave your name and phone number on the signup sheet by the envelopes. If you do not want to use the envelopes, and have your tithing sent from your bank, please notify me. Questions, please call Bridget Rich@ 903-769-3235, leave a detailed message.

*Wishing Fr. Mike a  
"Happy 12th Year Ordination Anniversary"  
on Dec. 27th*

While the hospitals have enough capacity at this moment, they do not have enough critical care staff to manage the overwhelming number of COVID-19 cases that are coming in.

Bishop Strickland is requesting that you offer your prayers for physicians, nurses, and health care workers during this time—for their protection and for the needs of our hospitals.

**Reminder:** Bishop Strickland has instructed **all persons to wear facial masks during liturgies in the Diocese of Tyler.**

**Temporary Weekend Mass held in parish hall: Sat., Dec. 26th at 5:00pm and Sun., Dec. 27th at 9:00am.**

**Protocols for weekend Masses:**

1. **Limitations on Attendance:** Limited seating maximum 81 seats are available. In order for the households to maintain at least 6-foot separation.
2. **Wear a mask that covers mouth & nose.**
3. **No socializing** in the parish hall. Avoid touching door handles, restrooms closed. **Enter & exist** double glass doors into the parish hall to the left of the overhang.
4. **Chairs** set-up 6-foot separation. Please **DO NOT MOVE CHAIRS.**

*New Year's Eve:*

*Mass of Anticipation*

*Thurs., Dec. 31st: 5:00pm*

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*New Year's Day:*

*Holy Day of Obligation*

*Fri., Jan. 1st: 9:00am Mass*

**All the Masses above will be**  
**held in our Parish Hall**

The Welcome Committee thanks everyone who in some way contributed to Holy Spirit's participation in this year's Golf Cart parade. We were again the only church represented and everyone noticed our 2 floats. The candy, which many of you contributed, was tossed to spectators and later passed out by Father Mike. He was popular with the children! Remaining candy was put in decorative bags and given to the K.C. to deliver along with the food to the families which this parish sponsored. It was enjoyable and Holy Spirit was well represented! Be sure to check out the pictures in the flyer at the end of this bulletin.

**CONFESSION Tues. Dec. 29th & Wed. Dec. 30th 9:30—10:30AM. DUE TO THE COLD WEATHER FR. MIKE WILL HOLD CONFESSIONS IN HIS OFFICE BY THE WATER FOUNTAINS. PLEASE CALL HIM AT 903-490-3883 TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT. WHEN YOU ARRIVE AND HIS OFFICE DOOR IS CLOSED PLEASE HAVE A SEAT IN CHURCH UNTIL HE IS READY FOR YOU. If you have an emergency and need Fr. Mike call him on his cell # 903-490-3883.**

**Weekday Mass Times held in church: Tues. — Fri. at 9:00am.**

**Protocols for weekday Masses:**

1. **Wearing a mask that covers mouth & nose.**
2. **No socializing** in the Narthex. Avoid touching door handles, restrooms closed. Enter & exit same set of double glass doors into the church through the overhang.
3. **In church alternating every other pew.** Households must maintain at least 6-foot separation.
4. **Limited seating maximum 31.** In order for the households to maintain at least 6 feet separation.

Article for the Big Sandy-Hawkins Journal. 23 December 2020 Edition  
(Submission date: 18 December 2020) Submitted by Randy Munoz

There's a rumor going around that some people still haven't bought a Christmas Tree! (I know! Isn't that shocking?!!) So, what if we look at a few excerpts from the Why Christmas website (<https://www.whychristmas.com/customs/trees.shtml>) and learn a little about Christmas Trees. The evergreen fir tree has traditionally been used to celebrate winter festivals (pagan and Christian) for thousands of years. Pagans used branches of it to decorate their homes during the winter solstice, as it made them think of the spring to come. The Romans used Fir Trees to decorate temples at the festival of Saturnalia. **Christians use it as a sign of everlasting life with God.**

[Fir trees used as Christmas trees ... probably began 1000 years ago in Northern Europe and seem to have been hung upside down from the ceiling on chandelier/lighting hooks.] Other early Christmas Trees, across many parts of northern Europe, were cherry or hawthorn plants (or a branch of the plant) put into pots and brought inside so they would hopefully flower at Christmas time. If (some) couldn't afford a real plant, people made pyramids of woods and decorated them with paper, apples and candles to look like a tree, sometimes they were carried around from house to house, rather than being displayed in a home. ... the wooden pyramid trees (possibly) were meant to be like **Paradise Trees**. {These were used in medieval German Mystery (or Miracle) Plays that were acted out in front of Churches on Christmas Eve. In early church calendars of saints, December 24th was Adam and Eve's day. The Paradise Tree represented the Garden of Eden. It was often paraded around the town before the play started, as a way of advertising the play. The plays told Bible stories to people who could not read.} The first documented use of a tree at Christmas and New Year celebrations is argued between the cities of Tallinn in Estonia and Riga in Latvia; both claiming they had the first trees: Tallinn in 1441 and Riga in 1510. Both trees were put up by the 'Brotherhood of Blackheads' which was an association of local unmarried merchants, ship owners, and foreigners in Livonia (... now Estonia and Latvia). Little is known about either tree; apart from that they were put in the town square, were danced around by the Brotherhood of Blackheads, and were then set on fire. ... In the town square of Riga, the capital of Latvia, there is a plaque ... engraved with "The First New Year's Tree in Riga in 1510", in eight languages. ... In 1584, the historian Balthasar Russow wrote about a tradition, in Riga, of a decorated fir tree in the market square where the young men "went with a flock of maidens and women, first sang and danced there and then set the tree aflame". ... a record of a small tree in Bremen, Germany from 1570, ... described as a tree decorated with apples, nuts, dates, pretzels and paper flowers... and was displayed in a guild-house (a meeting place for a society of businessmen in the city).

The first person to bring a Christmas Tree into a house, in the way we know it today, may have been the 16th century German preacher Martin Luther. ... one night before Christmas, he was walking through the forest and looked up to see the stars shining through the tree branches. It was so beautiful, that he went home and told his children that it reminded him of Jesus, who left the stars of heaven to come to earth at Christmas – some say this is the same tree as the Riga tree, but the Riga tree originally took place a few decades earlier. The custom of ... Christmas trees could well have travelled along the Baltic sea, from Latvia to Germany. In the 1400s and 1500s, the (two) countries ... were then part of two large neighboring empires. Another story says that St. Boniface of Crediton (a village in Devon, UK) left England and traveled to Germany to preach to the pagan German tribes and convert them to Christianity. He is said to have come across a group of pagans about to sacrifice a young boy while worshipping an oak tree. In anger, and to stop the sacrifice, St. Boniface is said to have cut down the oak tree and, to his amazement, a young fir tree sprang up from the roots of the oak tree. St. Boniface took this as a sign of the Christian faith and his followers decorated the tree with candles so that St. Boniface could preach to the pagans at night. ... another legend, from Germany, about ... the Christmas Tree ... goes: On a cold Christmas Eve, a forester and his family were in their cottage ... when there was a knock on the door. ... the forester opened the door (and) found a poor boy standing on the doorstep, lost and alone. The forester welcomed him into his house and the family fed and washed him and put him to bed in the youngest sons own bed ... The next morning, Christmas Morning, the family was woken up by a choir of angels, and the poor boy had turned into Jesus, the Christ Child. The Christ Child went into the front garden of the cottage, broke a branch off a Fir tree, and gave it to the family as a present to say 'thank you' for looking after him. ... since then, people remembered that night by bringing a Christmas Tree into their homes! The first Christmas Tree in the UK might well have been set-up by Queen Charlotte, the German wife of King George III. In 1800 she had a tree set-up at the Queen's Lodge in Windsor for a children's party for rich and noble families. Soon, having a tree (became) popular amongst some (wealthy) families. They became popular throughout the country from the mid-1840s, when reports of 'the Royal tree' were printed in newspapers. In 1848, a drawing of "The Queen's Christmas tree at Windsor Castle" was published in the Illustrated London News. It showed Queen Victoria, her German Husband Prince Albert and their young children around a tree ... set-up on a table. The drawing was republished in Godey's Lady's Book, Philadelphia, in December 1850 [but the Queen's crown and Prince Albert's moustache were removed to make it look 'American!']. The publication of the drawing helped Christmas Trees become popular in the UK and USA.

In Germany, the first Christmas Trees were decorated with edible things, such as gingerbread and gold covered apples. Then glass makers made special small ornaments similar to some of the decorations used today. In 1605 an unknown German wrote: "At Christmas they set up fir trees in the parlours of Strasbourg and hang thereon roses cut out of many-colored paper, apples, wafers, gold foil, sweets, etc." At first, a figure of the Baby Jesus was put on the top of the tree. Over time it changed to an angel/fairy that told the shepherds about Jesus, or a star like the Wise Men saw. In Victorian times, the tree would have been decorated with candles to represent stars. In many parts of Europe, candles are still used to decorate trees. **Christmas Tree Skirts** started as **Christmas Tree carpets**. They were made from heavy fabric, often decorated and with fancy frills around the edges; and were used either on the floor or tables and went under the trees and their stands – rather than around them. They were used to catch the needles from the trees and to protect the floor/tabletops from candlewax ... In Germany in the early/mid 1800s it was also fashionable to have a forest scene and or a nativity scene under trees (especially if the trees were placed on tables) and these scenes also stood on the tree carpets. At this point trees were either normally put in pots (if they still had roots on them) or they were attached to a larger piece of wood or other heavy support (if they'd been cut) and so the scenes help to hide these. In the 1860s proper metal tree holders, for cut trees, started being made. If [one] was rich, [one] could get them in very fancy shapes – some even had music boxes ... and plinked Christmas tunes! Less expensive tree holders also became available and were made out of cheaper metals (and they also didn't look too good), so the carpets became smaller and were also put around the tree holders – ... these became the Christmas tree skirts that we have today.

**Tinsel** was also created in Germany, where it was originally made from thin strips of beaten silver. But when plastic/man made tinsel was invented, it became very popular as it was much cheaper than real silver and also lighter to go on the tree! There are also folk stories about how tinsel was created by The **Christmas Spider!** These tales seem to have started in Eastern Germany, Poland or Ukraine but are also told in parts of Finland, Scandinavia ... and the USA. All the versions of the story involve a poor family who couldn't afford to decorate a Christmas Tree (in some versions the tree grew from a pinecone in their house, in others the family bought a tree into the house). When the children went to sleep on Christmas Eve, a spider covered the tree in cobwebs. Then on Christmas morning, the cobwebs magically turned into silver and gold strands which decorated the tree! Some versions of the story say that it was the light of the sun which changed the cobwebs ... , but other versions say it was St Nicholas / Father Christmas / das Christkind who made the magic happen. In parts of Germany, Poland, and Ukraine it's ... good luck to find a spider or a spider's web on one's Christmas Tree. Spider's web Christmas Tree decorations are also popular in Ukraine. They're called 'pavuchky' (which means 'little spider') and the decorations are normally made of paper and silver wire. (One) might even put an artificial spider's web on (one's) tree!

There are a few different claims as to who invented the first ... **electric Christmas Tree lights**. In 1880, the inventor Thomas Edison put some of his new electric light bulbs around his office. And in 1882 Edward Johnson, a colleague of Edison, hand-strung 80 red, white, and blue bulbs together and put them on his tree in his New York apartment (with 2 additional strings of 28 lights mounted from the ceiling). In 1890, the Edison company published a brochure offering lighting services for Christmas. In 1900 another Edison advert offered bulbs for rent, along with their lighting system, for use over Christmas! There are records in a diary from 1891 where settlers in Montana used electric lights on a tree. ... Most people couldn't easily use electric tree lights at this time, as electricity wasn't widely installed in homes. But [wealthy] people liked to show ... lights installed just for Christmas; this would have cost about \$300 per tree then (more than \$2000 today!). Electric tree lights first became widely known in the US in 1895 when President Grover Cleveland had the tree in the White House decorated with lights, as his young daughters liked them! The tradition of the National Christmas Tree on the White House lawn started in 1923 with President Calvin Coolidge. The first commercially available electric string of lights, which more people could afford, were advertised in 1903 when a string of 24 lights cost \$12 or you could rent lights for \$1.50. [While still expensive, it was cheaper than \$300.] Another claim to the first widespread sale of strings of lights comes from Ralph Morris, an American telephonist. In 1908, he used telephone wire to string together small bulbs from a telephone exchange and decorated a tabletop tree with them. Leavitt Morris, Ralph's son, wrote an article in 1952 for the Christian Science Monitor, about his father inventing Christmas Tree lights – he was un-aware of the Edison lights. In 1885 a hospital in Chicago burned down because of candles on a Christmas Tree. In 1908 insurance companies in the US tried to get a law made that would ban candles from being used on Christmas Trees because of the many fires they had caused. However, people still used candles to light Christmas Trees and there were more fires. In 1917, a fire from Christmas Tree candles in New York, gave a teenager, Albert Sadacca, an idea. His family came from Spain and made novelty, lighted wicker bird cages. Albert thought of using the lights in long strings and suggested painting the bulbs bright colors like red and green. In following years, he and his brothers formed the NOMA Electric Company, which became a famous name in Christmas lights. The most lights lit at the same time on a Christmas tree is 194,672 and was done by Kiwanis Malmedy/Haute in Fagnes Belgium, on 10 December 2010.

Many towns and villages have their own Christmas Trees. One of the most famous is the tree in Trafalgar Square in London, England, which is given to the UK by Norway every year as a 'thank you' present for the help the UK gave Norway in World War II. The White House has had a big tree on the front lawn since the 1920s. ... Artificial Christmas Trees started becoming popular in the early 20th century. In the Edwardian period (1901 to 1910), Christmas

Trees made from colored ostrich feathers were popular at 'fashionable' parties. Around 1900, there was even a short fashion for white trees. Over the years, artificial trees have been made from feathers, papier mâché, metal, glass, and many different types of plastic. The tallest artificial Christmas tree was about 171 ft high ... It was called the 'Peace Tree' and was designed by Grupo Sonae Distribuição Brasil and was displayed in Moinhos de Vento Park, Porto Alegre, Brazil from December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001 until January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2002. In many countries, different trees are used as Christmas trees. In New Zealand a tree called the 'Pohutakawa' that has red flowers, is sometimes used; and in India, Banana or Mango trees are sometimes decorated.



Second Annual HLR  
Christmas Golf Cart Parade  
December 19, 2020

