

Everyone is welcome here. We are the culture of life.  
*Your life is important to us!*

## From the Director

Advent and Christmas seasons truly empower us to realize the importance of our faith in the One Who made possible our eternal redemption. In the beginning of the Advent readings from the Liturgy of the Hours, we read accounts about the meaning and marvel of the Incarnation.

Jeremiah (650 B.C.) reminds us: "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up a righteous shoot to David; as king he shall reign and govern wisely, he shall do what is just and right in the land. The nations will revere your name, O Lord." (23:5).

Saint Gregory Nazianzus describes the Incarnation: "He takes to himself all that is human, except sin. He was conceived by the Virgin Mary, who had been first prepared in soul and body by the Spirit; his coming to birth had to be treated with honor, virginity had to receive new honor. He comes forth as God, in the human nature he has taken, one being, made of two contrary elements, flesh and spirit. Spirit gave divinity, flesh received it."

The prophet Ezekiel tells us about the Incarnation also. "I myself will pasture my sheep; I myself will give them rest, says the Lord God. The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal, shepherding them rightly." (Ezekiel 34:16).

We also realize that for God a promise was not enough for him. God came Himself to fulfill the promises, which means He put Himself in our debt. This was made known to us through His Death and Resurrection. We notice this fulfillment of God's promises of our salvation in the three comings of Christ.

St. Bernard shares these divine mysteries with us. The Incarnation reveals the first coming of Christ. Jesus came to dwell visibly among us. "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14). In the final coming, "all flesh will see the salvation of our God," (Luke 3:6) and "They will look on him whom they have pierced."

*continued on page 3*

### **Sunday Masses**

**Christmas**, Dec 25

**New Years Day**, Jan 1

**Mary, Mother of God**

**Epiphany**, Jan 8

11:00 a.m. in the Visitor Center

### **Mini Retreat: "The Gift of the Shrine" by Volunteers and Staff**

Saturday, December 17, 2011

10:00 am in the Visitor Center

### **Mini Retreat:**

#### **"Gospel Courage - Making Choices in Difficult Times"**

Saturday, January 14, 2012

10:00 a.m. in the Visitor Center

### **Mini Retreat: "St Joan of Arc" presented by Theresa Schweigert**

Saturday, February 18, 2012

10:00 a.m. in the Visitor Center

### **Mini Retreat Topics to be announced for 3rd Saturdays in March and April**

# at the Shrine

## Shrine Staff

- **Main Number** (518) 853-3033
- **Fr. George H. Belgarde, S.J.**,  
Director x222
- **Larry Steiger**,  
Superintendent of Operations x221
- **Beth Lynch**  
Museums/Event Coordinator,  
Media Rep/Pilgrim Editor x225
- **Melissa Hansen**,  
Treasurer x226
- **Joanne Wiesner**,  
Gift Shop & Visitor Center x236
- **Joanne Freeman**,  
Information Systems x227
- **Fr. Robert McGuire, S.J.** x233
- **Fr. Leo Daly, S.J.** x229

## Gift Shop

Our sincere gratitude to all who supported our Gift Shop ministry in 2011, and a special thanks to those who remembered us during the Christmas season. We know that every gift tells a story, even more so the gifts of religious significance that convey the truth and beauty of the Catholic faith.

The Gift Shop staff makes every effort to provide convenient store hours, and to take online, telephone and special orders. There will be a brief hiatus after Epiphany. Tentative reopen date is March 1st.

God bless you!



## Sunday Masses

11 a.m. in the Visitor Center  
Advent through Epiphany  
Nov 27 - Jan 8

Including:

- Christmas Day and  
New Years Day  
Solemnity of Mary,  
Mother of God
- Epiphany

## Confessions

30 minutes before Masses



Stations of the Cross in Winter

## Thank You and Merry Christmas!

At the close of the year, the staff of the Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs looks back with grateful recognition of the many volunteers and supporters who contributed to the functioning and well being of the Shrine in 2011.

You understand well that volunteerism is, as described by Giovanni Dal Toso, secretary of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, "a phenomenon born from Christianity as an expression of charity, of the faith that animates us."

And you demonstrate beautifully this statement of Pope Benedict XVI. "For Christians, volunteer work is not merely an expression of good will. It is based on a personal experience of Christ."

With the necessary changes and downsizing the Shrine is experiencing, we will need your help in 2012 more than ever. And because you are "animated" by the graces of Our Lord and the love of Our Lady of Martyrs and the Holy Souls of Auriesville, we look forward to a holy and happy New Year!

**May the Lord bless you and keep you.**

**May He make His face to shine upon you  
and be gracious to you.**

**May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you  
and give you peace.**

- Hebrew Priestly Blessing  
from the Book of Numbers 6:24-26

## **From the Director**

*continued from page 1*

We experience now the intermediate, the hidden coming. We live by faith in his Word. So we can realize that in the first coming our Lord came in our flesh and our weakness. In the middle coming Christ comes in spirit and in power. In the final coming Christ will be seen in glory and majesty.

In the middle coming, Christ is our rest and consolation, our peace and our hope. We can be consoled, then, by knowing that when we allow God's word to enter into our whole way of life, into our very being, we will enjoy the presence of the Son and the Father through the guidance of their Holy Spirit. Thus, after speaking "at various times and in different ways through the prophets, God has finally spoken to us in these days through the Son." (VC II, Divine Revelation).

Christmas means for us that we have been reconciled to God through the Incarnation of His Son Jesus. As St. Leo the Great explains, "The divine nature and the nature of a servant were to be united in one person so that the Creator of time might be born in time, and he through whom all things were made might be brought forth in their midst."

"I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe! Plans to give you a future full of hope. When you look for me, you will find me, yes, when you seek me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13).

When we pray in the name of Jesus the Christ Child, we live this hope promised by the Prince of Peace! May the Prince of Peace be in our hearts and on our minds at all times.

A very merry and holy Christmas and a happy and spiritually prosperous New Year be enjoyed by all. God bless you!

Fr. George H. Belgarde, S.J.  
Shrine Director



The Coliseum in Winter



## **New Years Day – Mary, Mother of God**

One January 1st the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Our salvation came through the flesh of her body and the humility of her "Yes." St. Bernard of Clairvaux explained why we turn to her as our Mother.

"Mary is the royal way by which the King of Glory descended into the world . . . We need to go forth to meet our Savior on the same Road by which He came to us."

World Peace Day, also on January 1st, is another way to honor Mary as Pope Paul VI explained in *Marialis Cultus* (1974). "It is . . . a fitting occasion for renewed adoration of the newborn Prince of Peace, for listening once more to the glad tidings of the angels, and for imploring from God, through the Queen of Peace, the supreme gift of peace. For this reason . . . we have instituted the World Day of Peace, an observance that is . . . bringing forth fruits of peace in the hearts of many."

Mary, Mother of God, pray for us!  
Mary, Queen of Peace, pray for us!



## EPIPHANY January 8

In an Epiphany homily, New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan called attention to the last line of the Gospel.

*They went home  
by a different route.*

Having been warned in a dream of the evil designs of Herod to murder the Christ Child, the Wise Men avoided encountering Herod again. But the Archbishop explored a deeper meaning of that statement.

"Once you meet Jesus Christ, once you adore Him, once you find out about Him, once you place your faith in him, your life is charged forever, and all your plans are topsy turvy and all your designs are nothing but dust and you usually go through life by a different route."

Pray that our encounter with the Child Jesus in the sacraments and mysteries of the Christmas season will alter our hearts and lives forever.

## Christmas - Let the Paradoxes Begin

Webster defines a paradox as *a seemingly contradictory statement, or one contrary to common sense, and yet is perhaps true.*

Christianity is rife with them- "The first shall be last and the last shall be first." (Mt 19:30); "When I am weak, I am strong." (2Cor 12:10); "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."(Mt 23:12;). "For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." – Mt 16:24-25; and on and on.

It began with the greatest, most incredible paradox of all- the one we celebrate at Christmas. God became man! We can sense the awe in the Holy Father when Pope Benedict XVI delivered his Christmas homily in 2010.

" 'The Word became flesh'. . . how can this be? The Word and the flesh are mutually opposed realities [that is, a paradox]; how can the eternal and almighty Word become a frail and mortal man? There is only one answer: Love."

The Holy Father explains why. "Those who love desire to share with the beloved, they want to be one with the beloved, and Sacred Scripture shows us the great love story of God for his people which culminated in Jesus Christ."

A psalm prayer of the Divine Office attests, "When you took on flesh, Lord Jesus, you made a marriage of mankind with God."

God loves us so much He married us! Only through the eyes of love can this paradox become clear, as the Pope tells us.

"The light of this truth [of the Incarnation] is revealed to those who receive it in faith, for it is a mystery of love. Only those who are open to love are enveloped in the light of Christmas."

Jesus Christ - the Incarnation, the mystery of Christmas. Those with the love to accept it can appreciate Michael Card's profundity in his song, *God's Own Fool*: "The power of paradox opens your eyes and blinds those who say they can see."

Praying that the light of Christmas opens our eyes as we celebrate this wondrous paradox of our faith.



## Let Us Pray

If you pray little, you will soon pray less,  
and if you pray often, you will pray better.  
- Ignacio Larranga, OFM, Capucian

A new liturgical year began with the first Sunday of Advent, the perfect time to begin new spiritual disciplines. Advent is a time of quiet reflection and of waiting, both essential qualities in prayer. For how can we hear the Lord if we are not still, and how can we recognize his coming if we are not waiting for Him?

The above quote from Father Larranga is an encouragement to establish a regular prayer practice, and perhaps also a reminder that if we are not progressing spiritually, we are regressing.

The Catholic Church is rich in forms of prayers. Consider what discipline is right for you at this time – the Divine Office, Lectio Divina, daily Rosary, First Friday or First Saturday devotions, novenas, daily Mass, Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, or one of many others.

Busyness plagues us all year long but especially just prior to Christmas. So why choose this manic time to try to settle down? Consider this explanation from Abbot Joseph Boyle, OCSO, published in *Sundays at the Magic Monastery – Homilies from the Trappists of St. Benedict's Monastery*.

"We need to get in touch with the inner hunger and deep desire of the heart, so that when Christ comes – who answers that deep desire of the heart – we are down in that place that can receive him and open to the flow of grace."

Jesus was always "caring for the needy." Still, he made time for quiet prayer even if it meant going off by himself to spend an entire night in prayer, "renewing from within."

Father Boyle concludes, "Advent has something of the quality of those nights when Jesus prayed."

This is not an easy task in the chaos of "the holiday season" before and after Christmas. But then, we are understanding more and more just how countercultural we are called to be as Catholics. Rather than being carried away in the cultural current, plunge deep into Christ's peace. And Happy New Year!



## Mini Retreat - January 14

The Shrine welcomes Father Peter Murray, SJ, former Shrine Director, as presenter of the January 14th Mini Retreat.

His topic, "Gospel Courage-Making Choices in Difficult Times," will include moral theology and its practical applications. Father Murray will lead a prayer service as an introduction to the day.

The retreat will be held in the Visitor Center 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Bring a cold pot luck item to share. Good will donations are always appreciated. Father Murray will celebrate Mass at 1:30.

Father Murray served as Shrine Director for over seven of the nearly ten years he spent here. Since last spring, he has been stationed at the Jesuit parish of St. Michael the Archangel in Buffalo, NY.

Note that the date is the second Saturday of January and not our usual third Saturday.

Contact Beth Lynch at the Shrine x225.

## Mini Retreat - February 18

"The Spirituality of St. Joan of Arc" is the topic for the Saturday, February 18th Mini Retreat in the Visitor Center 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Presenter Theresa Schweigert has made an exhaustive study of Catholic saints and will convey why St. Joan is particularly inspiring.

Contact Beth Lynch at the Shrine x225.

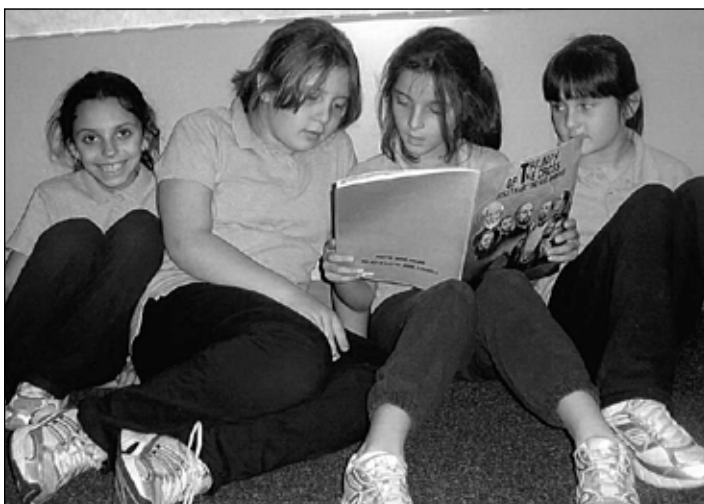
# Outreach



Beth Lynch, the Shrine's museums manager and media rep, was featured on WVTM radio in Amsterdam with talk show host, Bob Cudmore. Beth also gave a presentation on St. Isaac Jogues to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in Latham, NY.



The Shrine was featured in November on WRGB-TV of Albany/Schenectady with the story of the huge evergreen cross, visible from the New York State Thruway. The cross symbolizes the planting of the faith in North America by the Auriesville Martyrs.



Students of St. Mary's Parish in Ballston Spa, NY experienced a fun way to learn about the Auriesville Martyrs with a traveling exhibit from the Saints of Auriesville Museum. Color posters and concise text provided an abbreviated but informative version of this inspiring story that unfolded within the students' own diocese. If interested in using the exhibit, contact the Shrine.

# Volunteers & Pilgrims



Shrine volunteer Joseph Gugliuzzo took advantage of unusually balmy fall weather to make repairs on masonry on Route 5S. These walls and mounds support vintage statues of the holy souls of Auriesville and are in urgent need of reinforcement. If you can help, contact the Shrine.



Father Daniel Mode, Coast Guard Staff Chaplain and commentator on EWTN, made a pilgrimage to the Shrine this fall. He enjoyed the inspirational story of the Martyrs and Blessed Kateri at the Saints of Auriesville Museum. There, Father Mode (R) had a lively discussion with resident Shrine priest, Father Robert McGuire, SJ.

*Father Michael Sears of California, international speaker and author on the Charismatic Gifts of the Holy Spirit, also made a pilgrimage to Auriesville en route to a conference in the Catskills. "Father Mike" celebrated Mass with a few friends and was able to take time to learn of the courage and sacrifice of the martyrs.*

The Shrine Council has been revitalized and will meet frequently in the coming year. New ideas on the Shrine's mission and direction were discussed with focus on acknowledging and mobilizing the multiple talents of Shrine volunteers and staff.



TOP (L to R): Tim Diamond, Father Stanislaus Swierzowski (guest), Tony Noce and Laura Threlkeld.



BOTTOM (L to R): Michael Schweigert, Tom Threlkeld, Father George Belgarde, SJ, Shrine Director, Rich Kosiba and Paul Whitney. (Betty Ann Rapello with back to camera). Not pictured: Larry Steiger, Beth Lynch, Joanne Wiesner, Father Robert McGuire, Mark Trudeau.

## Projects & Staff



The Kateri Chapel Renovation Project is progressing. As stated, paving is needed from the Three Crosses to the Chapel where people can more safely walk and where handicapped parking spaces can be designated. The path has been cut from behind the Welcome Center and onward to the Chapel. There is much to be done, especially because Tropical Storm Irene created damage to an already compromised north façade of the chapel. Your generous donations are keeping this project going!



Resident priest, Father Robert McGuire, SJ is at Fordham in NYC for the winter. You can write to him at:

Murray-Weigel Hall  
515 E. Fordham Rd.  
Bronx, NY 10458

Hurry back, Father Bob!

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