

FOURTH Week of Advent

PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS

The legend of Santa Claus can be traced back hundreds of years to a monk named St. Nicholas. It is believed that Nicholas was born sometime around 280 A.D. in Patara, near Myra in modern-day Turkey. As a young man living in 4th century Turkey, Saint Nicholas inherited a great deal of money and he secretly gave gifts of food, clothes and money to the poor in his village. When a family could not afford for their daughters to marry, Nicholas provided money in secret, dropping it down the chimney or through an open window. Every December, he continued to reward good boys and girls with small gifts. Later, he became the Bishop of Myra. Today, we remember him because of his generosity as Santa Claus on Christmas and St. Nicholas' Day (December 6th). Santa Claus represents the boundless love of God and the spirit of goodness and generosity that surrounds us, especially as we prepare to celebrate the coming of Jesus' birth.



As we enter into the Christmas season we believe this is the perfect opportunity to stop and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. A recent tradition for our family is to attend the "Presence for Christmas" that our parish has hosted for the last several years. This is a faith filled evening of adoration with music and opportunity for confession. We plan to continue this tradition for years to come as a way prepare and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ!

The Leach Family from St. Joan of Arc, Toledo



Eat together

In Holland, there are special cookies named specifically after the legendary gift-giver Santa Claus: St. Nikolaas Koekjes. These crisp cookies contain nuts and seasonal spices. In the tradition of Santa Claus/St. Nikolaas.

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 cup soft butter (or vegetable shortening)
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/4 - 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped

Directions

In a bowl, stir together the flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves. In another bowl or mixer, cream the butter (or shortening) with the sugar. Stir in the sour cream until smooth. Gradually add the flour mixture. Blend to make a dough. Add the nuts. Transfer the dough onto wax paper. Shape into a log with a diameter of 2 inches. Wrap and refrigerate the dough for at least 8 hours or overnight. Slice the log about 1/4 inch thick. Place 2 inches apart on a lightly greased baking sheet lined with foil or parchment paper. Bake in a preheated oven at 375 degrees F for 10-15 minutes or until golden brown.



Plan together

Is your local parish holding food drive this holiday season? Are there other ways to give back to your community or parish?



Craft together

Create your own salt dough ornaments to hang on your Christmas tree or to give as gifts. You only need 3 ingredients: flour, salt, and water. You can find a great recipe online. You can even add essential oil or cinnamon to the dough for a seasonal scent!

Christmas

Most children associate birthdays with cake. Help remind your children that you're celebrating Jesus' birthday by making a birthday cake for him
The Clark family from St. Peter, Huron

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

Christmas is one of the most important days of the Church year, second only to Easter itself. The liturgical season of Christmas begins with the vigil Masses on Christmas Eve and concludes on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. During this season, we celebrate the birth of Christ into our world and into our hearts.

You likely already celebrate many Christmas traditions rooted in Catholicism. The Christmas tree and the Nativity scene are popular symbols of the season and a tradition in many Christian homes.

It is also traditional to exchange Christmas gifts with family and friends as a way to honor God the Father's gift of his only son to the world. Having received the gift of Christ, we naturally want to pass that gift along to our loved ones. This Christmas, be intentional about keeping the focus on Christ.



Watch together

FORMED.org has excellent options for Christmas movies, including *O Holy Night*, *The King is Born: What Christmas Is About* (young kids) and *Mary of Nazareth* (adults).



Pray together

The blessing of the Christmas manger can take place on Christmas Eve. Consider making this a tradition after you return from Mass.

All make the sign of the cross

Leader: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All Answer: Who made heaven and earth.

Read Luke 2:1-8 or Isaiah 7:10-15

Leader: God of every nation and people, from the very beginning of creation you have made manifest your love: when our need for a Savior was great you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. To our lives he brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love.

Lord, bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise our thoughts to him, who is God-with-us and Savior of all, and who lives and reigns forever and ever.

All: Amen.



Plan together

Be intentional about keeping the focus on Christ this Christmas. How can your family accomplish that goal?

Would you like to make the Historic Church of St. Patrick your forever home (with all due respects to *Property Brothers* who use that same caption)?



The Staff and Finance Council are considering the installation of an Irish-themed columbarium on the property but want to

make sure there's enough interest to make the substantial investment in building the niches here at St. Patrick's.

A columbarium is a free-standing structure housing a number of niches for the interment of cremated remains. The system we're considering consists of a cubic foot sized niche (adequate for up to five urns) and would also feature scenes from the Irish countryside. The cost of a niche would be competitive with other places around the city and region; in part to fund the required "Perpetual Care" endowment to make sure the units are adequately cared for over the long time between now and when the Second Coming is announced.

Would the Cliffs of Moher appeal? Or perhaps a hillside studded with Irish wool still 'on the hoof'?



Or simply a magnificent wall of Connemara marble?



Imagine our campus graced with such a unit. If interested, please fill in the information below and drop it in the collection any time before Christmas. If we move forward (we'd be looking for around 150 pre-completion reservations) the system would be ready by summer 2022.

----- trim here -----

Yes, I'm interested in having my cremains in a columbarium at the Historic Church of St. Patrick.

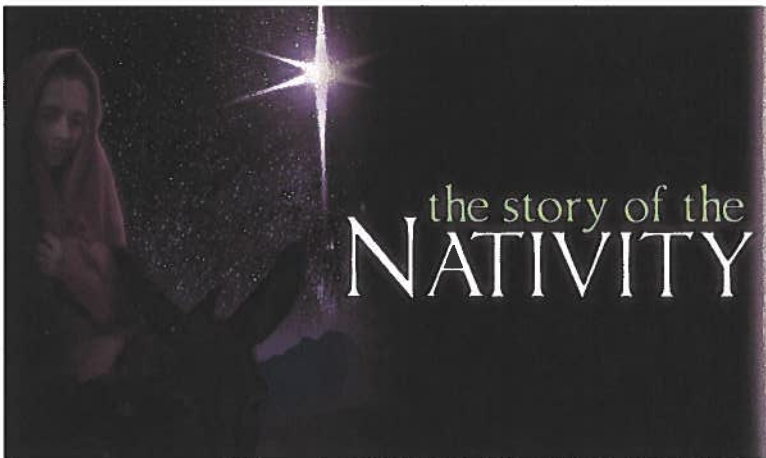
Name _____

December 19, 2021

WATCH

CHRISTMAS IN ROME: A CELEBRATION OF THE NATIVITY

Nowhere celebrates the birth of the Savior like Rome. This Christmas, marvel at the Holy City's festive celebration of the coming of the child Jesus in Bethlehem.



THE STORY OF THE NATIVITY: THE TRUTH OF CHRISTMAS

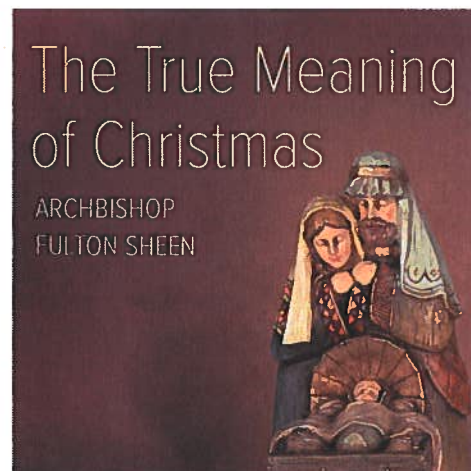
Christmas is so much more than a humdrum story we've heard since childhood. Join top scholars, speakers, and authors as they explain the gravity of Christ's miraculous birth.

LEARN

LISTEN

THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS BY FULTON SHEEN

This presentation combines recordings of Fulton Sheen's timeless reflections on the meaning of Christmas, mixed with Gregorian chant and seasonal music. It is sure to become a family favorite!



Our parish has a FORMED subscription.
To set up your free account visit formed.org/signup and select our parish.