



**Diocese of Norwich**  
 Office of the Bishop  
 201 Broadway  
 Norwich, Connecticut 06360  
 (860) 887-9294

MOST REVEREND.  
 MICHAEL R. COTE, D.D.

### Christmas Message 2008

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Merry Christmas! May the spirit of this holy season fill your hearts with joy and your homes with peace!

Christmas celebrates the great truth that sent by the Father, "...the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us."  
 (John 1:14)

In the birth of Our Lord, God reveals His love for us. Jesus is the Word, the message of God's love. His coming into our world not only announces God's love for us but His birth shows us that God has come from Heaven to unite us to Himself. Jesus' birth allows for no doubt that God is a loving Father who gathers us together as members of His family. The message is clear. God wants to share his life.

Are we listening to His message? Or will we let another Christmas pass and be unchanged or unmoved by the power of God's love and the nearness of His presence in our lives?

Today, many are burdened with the uncertainty caused by a faltering economy. Some may find it difficult to focus on Christmas while others may not be able to celebrate it as they may have been accustomed. Still others will be separated from loved ones who are serving in Iraq or Afghanistan. It is all the more important that, in these challenging times, we recall the real meaning of Christmas, savor its message, and live its spirit. Christmas has a message for everyone, a message of hope, of peace, and of love. In celebrating Christmas we are united with loved ones, regardless of distance or circumstances, and we are strengthened by the nearness of our God and Father Who shares His Son with us.

On that first Christmas, we hear the comforting message of Jesus' birth given to shepherds by the Angel. "Do not be afraid; for behold I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David, a Savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord." (Luke 2:10-11) The birth of God's Son is for all people, for us as well.

"...God has spoken to us through His Son.... He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature..." (Hebrews 1:2-3) In Jesus, God is near. And yet, at the same time, He is the Word made flesh; Jesus is one with us. Through His birth, God takes human form, becomes one of us, and reveals the fullness of His love. Our life's challenges are not new to Him. From joy to sorrow, from courage to fear, from hope to despair, from love to rejection, Jesus has experienced the whole range of our emotions and challenges.

In the simplicity of that holy night in Bethlehem, life's deepest meaning is discovered. Our life is not complete without love, God's love. It is not complete without Christ, the revelation of God's love. "No one has ever seen God; it is only the Son, Who is nearest to the Father's heart, Who has made Him known." (John 1:18)

Could there be a clearer message of God's love? "A light will shine on us this day: the Lord is born for us." (Responsorial Refrain—Christmas Mass at Dawn) In His love, we come alive and the light of faith shines in our words and actions. (Cf. Opening Prayer, Christmas Mass at Dawn)

Those who heard the shepherds' account of that holy night in Bethlehem were astonished and the shepherds went back to their flocks glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen. (Cf. Luke 2:18 & 20) Let the spirit of that first Christmas fill our hearts with joy and peace this day and every day. Moved by God's love, we come alive in our worship and praise of the Father as we participate in Mass on Christmas. In witness to His Son, Jesus Christ, we live the spirit of Christmas by reaching out in love to others, especially those in need of love and caring, and sharing with them the message and meaning of Christmas, Jesus Christ Who is Lord. The radiance of this holy night in Bethlehem lives on in us. Each time we share God's love with others, we live the spirit of Christmas and we light up a world with power that comes from God Whose Son made His dwelling among us.

Merry Christmas to you and to all your loved ones!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop of Norwich

### readings for the week

Sunday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Rom 16:25-27/  
 Lk 1:26-38  
 Monday: 1 Sm 1:24-28/Lk 1:46-56  
 Tuesday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Lk 1:57-66  
 Wednesday: Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/  
 Lk 1:67-79  
 Thursday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/  
 Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25  
 Midnight: Is 9:1-6/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14  
 Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20  
 Day: Is 52:7-10/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14  
 Friday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Mt 10:17-22  
 Saturday: 1 Jn 1:1-4/Jn 20:1a, 2-8  
 Next Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3/  
 Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or Heb 11:8, 11-12,  
 17-19/Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40

**thank you**

*A big thank you to **Joe & Mary Ann Henry** who so generously donated the six Christmas Trees which are standing in our Church.*

**thank you**

*A big thank you to **Colette Thorne** who so generously donated her Yamaha piano to Sacred Heart.*

Dear Sacred Heart Family,

It is obvious to me that this is a parish where the people show love, care and concern for one another. This is consistent with being a family, the Body of Christ. There are times, for a number of reasons, where we may not see a parishioner at Mass for weeks or months at a time, the yoking of our parish with Saint Maurice and the new Mass schedule has made this more evident. We may lose touch with them. They lose touch with us. They may feel forgotten.

As parishioners we are all responsible for our brothers and sisters. If you haven't seen someone at Mass for a while, I invite you to call them or pay them a visit

- To show them our love
- To see if they are well
- To tell them they are missed
- To show them we care
- To tell them we need them
- To see if we can help

Some people already do this. But if we are going to hold this parish together and make it grow, we all need to do it. However, if you are not comfortable making a call or visit, let me know and I will make the connection.

We are less than a month from Advent, the beginning of a new church year. A good time to tell people that we care. A good time to gather our family back home for Christmas at Sacred Heart.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Larry Deraleau

**attention: faith formation classes**

The Wednesday Faith Formation classes will not meet on December 24 and December 31 because of the Christmas and New Year breaks. The Wednesday Faith Formation classes will resume on Wednesday, January 7 at the regularly scheduled time.

The Sunday Faith Formation classes will not meet on December 28 and January 4 because of the Christmas and New Year breaks. The Sunday Faith Formation classes will resume on Sunday, January 11 at the regularly scheduled times.

**youth group – cornerstone**

Some members of the Youth Group will be going to Cornerstone to help prepare and serve lunch on Saturday, December 27<sup>th</sup>. We will meet in the front parking lot of the church. Questions? Please contact Rella.

**youth group**

Youth Group will not meet on December 28<sup>th</sup> and January 4<sup>th</sup> because of the Christmas and New Year breaks. We will meet again on January 11<sup>th</sup>.

***Coming on December 28 –  
The 3 ½ Stories of Christmas!***

On **Sunday, December 28 at 4:00pm** the Christmas angel himself (performed by actor, Frank Runyeon) will tell us **The 3 ½ Stories of Christmas.**

Children and adults will be delighted as all the parts of the Christmas story are tied together for the first time: from the light of Creation to the manger in Bethlehem, from the origin of Santa Claus, to the secret of the Christmas angel himself!

Admission is a free will offering. Refreshments will be served after the performance.

***Needed for 3 ½ Stories of Christmas!***

For our presentation of 3 ½ Stories of Christmas, we will need the following:

- 2 or 3 “clamp lamps”**
- with 100 watt spotlight bulbs**

Please contact Rella if you are able to lend us a clamp lamp for the day. You may reach her at the office (875-4563) or by e-mail (rella@sacredheartchurch.net).

## pastoral council minutes - october 22, 2008

**PRESENT:** R. Bernabucci, J. Crane, L. Deraleau, S. Dosouto, Fr. Stan, Fr. Tony, E. Golnik, C. Gagnon, B. Gonsalves, J. Higgins, M. Kurban, D. Maxa, M. Powell, S. Rice, M. Simcoe, M. Staggenborg, D. Valli

**ABSENT:** C. Duhamel, P. Michaud

The meeting was opened with scripture reading, reflection, sharing and prayer.

**1. MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2008:** Accepted with a correction. Matt Powell was absent. Minutes of meetings will be sent to all members as soon as possible and corrections should be sent back to Donna within 2 or 3 days. She will then forward the corrections to Ernie so the minutes will be published in the bulletin after corrections have been made.

**2. FR. STAN'S COMMENTS:** Fr. Stan attempted to correct some misconceptions concerning the Pastoral Council and the Finance Council. Each parish is mandated by Canon Law to have a Finance Council to advise the Pastor. Expenses under \$10,000 are approved by the Pastor. Expenses over \$10,000 must be approved by the Bishop. Trustees also have to sign requests for expenses over \$10,000. The parish is a corporation with Bishop Cote as its president and the Vicar General (Msgr. Bride) as its vice-president. Fr. Stan is the secretary and treasurer and the two trustees (Maureen Staggenborg and John Crane) are also officers of the corporation.

The Pastoral Council is mandated by Bishop Cote. Its role is advisory in helping the Pastor to meet the pastoral and spiritual needs of the parish. The Pastoral Council may make suggestions to the Finance Council through Michael Kurban who is the liaison to the Finance Council.

**3. FAITH FORMATION:** Rella reported that classes have started and she has all the needed catechists. There are approximately 114 children and teens enrolled in faith formation classes. The Sunday group is larger than the Wednesday afternoon group. Four young people (middle school age) from Saint Maurice are participating in our program. Rella is working at compliance with Safe Environments.

RCIA has several adults coming into the process with varied needs. One needs all the Sacraments of Initiation, one needs Confirmation and Eucharist. In addition, two adults have requested information about Confirmation...

**4. DEACON LARRY'S PLAN:** Larry shared copies of a letter which will be published in the bulletin encouraging parishioners to reach out to people that they notice are absent from Sunday liturgies. Thank you, Larry.

**5. MASS ATTENDANCE:** Ernie shared two visuals showing mass attendance during the last 14 months. Mass attendance has been fairly steady since the change in the mass schedule. Weekly donations are also staying steady. Fluctuations are similar to previous weeks for attendance and collection income. It is a concern of the Bishops in the U.S. that mass attendance is down to 20% nationwide.

**6. PARISH BUDGET:** Information concerning the parish budget was shared by Fr. Stan. The State of CT is \$15,000 in arrears on their payments for using the parking lot as a commuter lot. The two insurance companies are fighting over who is responsible for damage to the lot, the parish or the state. It has been one full year since we have been paid by the state. Fr. Tony shared some legal advice as to how to proceed from here. This \$15,000 in unpaid rent leaves a hole in our operating budget.

An increased revenue drive was held two years ago. A repeat appeal has not been carried out this year. Mr. O'Brien, the diocesan fund raiser, suggests we launch a capital campaign to raise ½ million dollars in three years. This would allow us to pay money we owe the diocese, fix the parking lot and complete other projects that need to be taken care of at this time. We are behind on our payments to the diocese for the Cathedral tax and insurances. This is not a problem only at Sacred Heart. Thirty eight parishes in the diocese are having the same problem and by the end of this fiscal year it is projected that it will be more than 40 parishes. There are 76 parishes in the diocese.

Fuel is a major issue here at Sacred Heart as it is everywhere. We receive about \$2700 less per year in the fuel fund than we need. The money then needs to come from the general fund.

Fr. Stan mentioned the possibility of asking each envelope user to increase their weekly offering by \$2/ week for the second half of the fiscal year. He also suggested that a \$5 donation by everyone who is not already using the fuel envelope, to the fuel fund on a regular basis would be a great help. Some envelopes are being put into the collection basket at St. Maurice and are returned to Sacred Heart. They are added into our collection total the following week. We average 126 envelopes per week.

Mike Kurban, the Finance Council liaison to the Parish Council, was invited to add his comments. Mike noted that the Finance Council will meet on November 5, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. Pastoral Council members are invited to attend with suggestions for raising money.

### 7. 40 Days for Life Report

Fr. Tony reported on the status of the 40 Days for Life Event being held at Planned Parenthood in Norwich.

### 8. Advent Mini-Retreat

Deacon Larry announced that there will be an Advent Mini-Retreat on December 9 from 9am to 2pm. Lunch will be served and a free will offering will be accepted. Sr. Virginia Sheehan will lead the day.

**9. NEXT AGENDA:** Two items will be carried over to next month: 50<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary finance report and Jim Higgins's plan and youth group report.

**10. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:** WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19 AT 7PM IN THE LIBRARY.

The meeting closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted: Donna Valli

DECEMBER 21, 2008

## the work of the church

<b>SATURDAY</b> 5:45pm	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (FS) <b>Mass: Szczapa Family</b> , requested by Helen Jakielo
<b>SUNDAY</b> 10:45am	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (FS) <b>Mass: Maryann Tessier</b> , requested by the Sacred Heart Parish Family - and - <b>Walter Schneider</b> , requested by Joe & Elaine Brown
<b>MONDAY</b> 9:00am	<b>Mass: Stella Golnik</b> , requested by Mary Kuhn
<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>NO SERVICES</b>
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> 4:00pm	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE (FS)</b> <b>Mass: Deceased Members of the Labbadia &amp; Davia Families</b> , requested by Maria Davia
7:00pm	<b>Mass: Deceased Members of the Lutton &amp; Donahue Families</b>
<b>THURSDAY</b> 12:00mn	<b>CHRISTMAS (FS)</b> <b>Midnight Mass: For the People of the Parish</b>
10:00am	<b>Mass: Fr. Ralph Kelly</b> , requested by the Sacred Heart Parish Family
<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>NO SERVICES</b>
<b>SATURDAY</b> 5:45pm	THE HOLY FAMILY (FS) <b>Mass: Thomas Mansfield</b> , requested by the Sacred Heart Parish Family
<b>SUNDAY</b> 10:45am	THE HOLY FAMILY (FS) <b>Mass: Nancy Cianci</b> , requested by the Sacred Heart Pastoral Council - and - <b>Murial &amp; Drew Iadarola</b> , requested by Pat Iadarola - and - <b>Walter &amp; Regina Kaszycki</b> , requested by Helen Jakielo

## meetings

<b>SATURDAY</b> 7:30pm	<b>Narcotics Anonymous*</b> , South Rooms
<b>SUNDAY</b> 9:15-10:30am	<b>Fellowship before and after Mass</b>
11:45am	<b>Faith Formation Grades 1-5</b>
6:30-7:45pm	<b>Pancake Breakfast</b>
7:45-9pm	<b>Faith Formation Grades 6-Conf Prep</b>
<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>Youth Group</b>
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> 8:00pm	Offices Closed <b>Alcoholics Anonymous*</b> , South Community Rooms
<b>THURSDAY</b> 8:00pm	Offices Closed <b>Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book*</b> , South Rooms
<b>FRIDAY</b>	Offices Closed
<b>SATURDAY</b> 7:30pm	<b>Narcotics Anonymous*</b> , South Rooms
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>Fellowship before and after Mass</b>

WEBSITE ADDRESS FOR ST. MAURICE  
[WWW.STMAURICEKOFCC.ORG](http://WWW.STMAURICEKOFCC.ORG)

**MASS INTENTIONS****SUNDAY / DEC. 20 / 21, 2008**

4:00 p.m Vigil Mass: Paul, Sr., and Doris Gidius request of Richard, Doris & Terri Gidius; and for Matteo Quagliano & Nicola Maratta, request of Josephine Maratta.

8:45 a.m.: Mary & Steve Caruso, request of Shirley and Charles Brown.

**NEXT SUNDAY** Dec. 27 / 28, 2008

4:00 p.m. Vigil Mass: Eva & John Wachowski and for deceased members of the Gately & Fletcher families.

8:45 a.m: Levi Fournier & Isabell Voisine

**GOD'S PLAN FOR GIVING" – TITHING**

Last week's collection was \$

Last year's collection was \$

Projected amount needed \$4,204.00

(for projected obligation, expenses, repairs and tithing the tithe).

*"Do not be afraid, Mary."* It can be a scary to do as God asks – to give Him the first fruits of our time, talent and treasure. But the comforting words the angel spoke to Mary can comfort us, too, when we dedicate ourselves to being good Christian stewards – **"DO NOT BE AFRAID."**

**TOYS FOR KIDS**

For families attending Masses on Christmas Eve and Day, please encourage your child/children to bring a **New unwrapped** toy to place under our parish Christmas tree in the sanctuary. These toys will be transported to a parish in Hartford, where the Hispanic community will celebrate Three Kings Day on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Any questions call Jim Boylan at 8672-9077

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS NOTES**

**December 28: Coffee Social following Sunday 8:45 Mass**

**A Blessed and Joyful  
 Christmas to each and every  
 Member of the  
 St. Maurice Family**

**THIS WEEK**

**SUNDAY** – Dec. 20 / 21 / The Third Sunday of Advent/  
 Fr. Tony, celebrant / Usher Group III / Children's  
 Choir rehearsal after Mass / Christmas food  
 distribution after 8:45 Mass.

**MONDAY** 12/22, Mass at 9:00 a.m. for Michael Salerno..

**TUESDAY**, 12/23, Mass at 9:00 A.M. for Karl Schuh,  
 Choir rehearsal 7:15 P.M.

**WEDNESDAY** 12/24, There will be no Adoration.

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**WEDNESDAY 12/24, Masses at 4:00; 6:00 P.M. for  
 Frank Hilbie ; 10:00 P.M. for all parishioners.**

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

**THURSDAY 12/25, Mass at 10:00 A. M. for Marion  
 and Bill Miller**

**FRIDAY** 12/26, There will be no Mass.

**SATURDAY** 12/20, Confessions 3P.M. – 3:45 P.M.;

**Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> and Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>****Wednesday, CHRISTMAS EVE****4:00 VIGIL MASS**

**ALTAR SERVERS:** Kyle Toce, Ryan &  
 Benjamin Van Dine, Kimberly Newton

**LECTOR:** Evelyn O'Connor

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:** Donna  
 Bradford, Peggy Peruccio, John Anderson

**6:00 P.M. VIGIL MASS**

**ALTAR SERVERS:** Maria Cinea, Emily  
 Carpenter, David & Chrissy Bendzinski

**LECTORS:** Richard Carpenter

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:** Sharon &  
 Cliff Scorso, Patti Cinea

**10:00 P.M. VIGIL MASS**

**ALTAR SERVERS:** Stephanie Leiner, Brendan  
 & Katelyn Donahue, Kirsten Cianci

**LECTOR:** Michael Leiner

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:** Lou Cloutier  
 Kathleen Smythe, Jennifer Carvalho

**Thursday, Christmas Day**

**ALTAR SERVERS:** Angelica Czercowy, Henry &  
 Ray Marrion

**LECTOR:** Lynn Mancino

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:** Georgette Pelletier  
 Linda Wiley, Carol Ciolino

**VIGIL MASS & SUNDAY MASS DEC. 28<sup>TH</sup>**

**Altar Servers 4:00 VIGIL:** Maria Cinea /  
 8:45 /Henry & Ray Marrion

**Lector 4:00 VIGIL:** Lisa Anderson

8:45 Carol Ciolino

**Eucharistic Ministers: 4:00 VIGIL:** Patti Cinea,  
 Jean Gately, Ted Lloyd / 8:45: James Boylan, Sharon  
 & Cliff Scorso