



Newsletter

Polish Catholic Mission

December 2009, Memphis, TN
<http://www.polskamisjakatolicka.org>



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"Descendit de caelis Salvator mundi! Gaudeamus!" The Savior came down from heaven, rejoice!

Christmas is the time when we slow down, and our hearts are filled with joy and peace. This is the time we become better people, and we appreciate more the presence of our family and friends.

Please accept the best wishes of warm, colorful Christmas. May the Christmas Eve be the introduction to this magical season. May the holidays, and the New Year 2010 bring you good health, joy and happiness.

We wish you persistence in reaching for your goals and following your dreams. May your faces be brightened with smile, and the Christmas Star may lead you to the true mystery of our faith. May the Virgin Mary, the Virgin of patience and fulfillment, who has been protecting the secret of Christmas make us recognize in the Baby she is holding in her arms our Savior who brings hope and peace to everyone.



Father Kazimierz Abrahamczyk S.V.D.
Father Krzysztof Rusin
Father Jacek Kowal

Carols for the Midnight Mass:

- #82 – Wśród nocnej ciszy
- #47 – Dzisiaj w Betlejem
- #41 - Cicha noc
- #30 – Ach ubogi żłobie

The Second Collocation:

- #60 – Mizerna cicha
- #64 – Nie było miejsca dla Ciebie
- #74 - Pójdźmy wszyscy do stajenki

Carols for Christmas Day:

- #74 - Pójdźmy wszyscy do stajenki
- #38 - Bóg się rodzi
- #83 – W żłobie leży
- #35- Anioł Pasterzom mówił
- #75 – Przybieżeli do Betlejem
- #48 – Gdy się Chrystus Rodzi

Additional:

- #85 - Z Narodzenia Pana
- #57- Lulajże Jezuniu

Second collection is for the retired priests fund (Villa Vianney).

Midnight Mass: December 24, 9 pm

Our Polish Midnight Mass will take place on Thursday, Dec. 24 at 9 pm at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church on Poplar in Germantown. Everyone is welcome!



Christmas Mass: December 25, 12:30 pm

Our Christmas Mass in Polish will take place on Dec. 25, Friday at 12:30 pm at St. Ann's Church on Stage in Bartlett. The second collection will help the retired priests from the Diocese of Memphis. This time we will not get together after the mass.



Parish Celebration at St. John's Church – December 27 (Sunday).

We would like to invite everyone to participate in the Polish – American mass on Sunday, December 27, at 12:00 (noon) at St. John's Church on Lamar Avenue in Memphis. Right after the Mass Father Kazimierz invites everyone to participate in the parish celebration („odpust”), including tasting of the wine blessed during the mass. Please bring cakes, cookies and fruit to share with others.

Sharing of the Oplatek and Christmas carol singing – January 2, 2010 (Saturday)

We would like to invite everyone to come to the Polish Mass on Saturday, January 2, at 6:30 pm to St. John's church on Lamar Ave. Just a reminder: participation in an evening mass on Saturday means that it is not necessary to go to another mass on Sunday. Also, Christmas carols sang during the holidays are forms of prayer.

Right after the mass you are welcome to share the traditional oplatek and join us in singing Polish Christmas carols. We will also have an opportunity to wish each other happy holidays, and welcome the New Year 2010. We encourage you to bring some cake, cookies or fruit to share. We hope to see you there!

Traditional „Koleda” – visit of a priest and blessing of the homes

Those of you who would like to invite a priest to your home for the traditional „koleda” are asked to call the priests directly. The phone numbers of Fathers Kazimierz, Krzysztof and Jacek are listed above.



Holy Mass in January 2010

Our next monthly mass in Polish will take place on Saturday, January 16, at 6:30 pm at St. James' Church on Lamar Ave. Everyone is welcome to participate!

There is a little more to Christmas than.....

„Through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it”. (J 1:4-5). Christmas is a little more than the candlelight meals, beautiful nativity plays, or the wonderful atmosphere of Christmas Eve. Christmas is not only calm quietness and looking for peace, it is also the scandal and the shock. „The Word has become flesh” – for the ancient followers of the Gospel this was unthinkable, unimaginable. God in human body – how is it possible. If we think about it for a minute, even today this message has not lost its provocative character. The Word, born in a modest manger, has become flesh, with all the consequences of this transformation. It became flesh, so it became a human being in its fullest, a human being with all its needs, sensitivity, mortality. There is nothing divine in being a human, yet God, in its eternal wisdom, decided to become a Man. Why? He did this because of love: „For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life” (J 3:16). Because of love God came into the world, and accepted all the final consequences of this step. He wanted our life to be full of light, so he came to our darkness, to our fear, to the frightening violence and to hate that poisons our lives. God comes to the darkness. This is exactly what transforms it into light, God is the ray of light. The light that remains will show us the way in the darkness. When Jesus was born, not everything changed from bad to good immediately. But everything has been different since then. In every part of the Globe, anywhere, there is no person who is alone any more.

Regardless of where we are heading, or have to go, God who became Man is always one step ahead of us.



The last party this carnival season - „Polka Dance”

The last party this carnival season – Polka Dance – will take place on Sunday, February 14 at 5 pm in the Madonna Hall (St. Ann’s Church – Bartlett). The party is organized in cooperation of the Polish Catholic Mission and St. Ann’s Church. More details coming in the next newsletter. Please save the date!

Announcements and ads in the newsletter

We would like to remind you that we are accepting requests to publish an announcement or an ad in our newsletter. If you are interested, please contact Zofia Schmidt (372-5794). This offer should be particularly interesting for all business owners.

Come, our Lord, you are the King of Glory... /a poem by Father Jan Twardowski/

Dlaczego jest święto...

Dlaczego jest święto Bożego Narodzenia?

Dlaczego wpatrujemy się w gwiazdę na niebie?

Dlaczego śpiewamy kolędy?

Dlatego, żeby się uczyć miłości do Pana Jezusa.

Dlatego, żeby podawać sobie ręce.

Dlatego, żeby się uśmiechać do siebie.

Dlatego, żeby sobie przebaczać.

Fr. Jan Twardowski



Christmas traditions

Christmas is a special time for all of us. It is not only an occasion to remember an important religious event, but also to relax and get together with our friends and loved ones. Christmas is the time of peace, reflection, escape from our hectic everyday lives.

In most Christian countries, Christmas celebration begins with Christmas Eve supper on December 24. Christmas Eve is the time of waiting for the birth of Jesus. The period of time preceding Christmas is called Advent, and it lasts 4 weeks. On Christmas Eve families gather together to look out for the first star, the sign of the birth of Jesus. Before midnight many people go to church to celebrate the festive Midnight Mass, also called the Shepherds’ Mass, which commemorates the shepherds who gathered in Bethlehem praying and waiting for baby Jesus to be born.

December 25 is one of the most joyful holidays in the Christian tradition. The churches are beautifully decorated, the mass celebrants wear white garments, and the people sing christmas carols. In the past, there were three masses celebrated for Christmas: the midnight mass, the morning mass and the afternoon mass.



Today the masses are celebrated as on any other Sunday, except for the midnight mass.

At Christmas time, family members are particularly nice to each other, they share with each other love, affection and holiday wishes. Wishes can also be shared in writing, by sending Christmas cards, often accompanied with opłatek (white wafer shared with those we cannot see in person). Other traditions celebrated in Poland and around the world include the nativity scene, christmas tree, singing christmas carols and giving each other gifts.

In most countries Christmas is celebrated in a very festive way, with family and the loved ones. In the countries where Christmas Eve is of less importance, Christmas Day is the highlight of the holiday. Families gather around dinner table and share meals traditional for each region, for example in Great Britain the traditional Christmas meal consists of the roasted stuffed turkey, holiday pudding and a mince pie, in Germany – holiday sausage, in France – baked duck and sea food, and in Denmark – roasted duck. Regardless of where Christmas is celebrated, it always brings many positive emotions and unites people around the world.

Second day of Christmas – December 26 – is celebrated in some countries, including Poland, as the memorial of the first martyr – Saint Stephen. Saint Stephen was stoned to death because he did not want to deny the divinity of Jesus. On this day masses are celebrated as on any Sunday. In the communist Poland people would throw oats at the priest to commemorate the stoning of the martyr. There are also many folk proverbs associated with



this day, mostly related to weather.

