MARCH 23, 2025



Mission Statement:
Sustained by the Eucharist, we reflect the joy of Christ's birth to all people through love, compassion and service.

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Rev. Nalaka Silva — Ext. 11 pastor@nativitymonroe.org

Deacon:

Robert Gatto — Ext. 18 deacon@nativitymonroe.org

Deacon:

John Shelton — Ext. 19 deacon2@nativitymonroe.org

Deacon:

John Bertrand deacon3@nativitymonroe.org

Parish Secretary:

Judith Gonzalez-Matias — Ext. 10 admin@nativitymonroe.org

Youth Minister:

youth@nativitymonroe.org

Music Ministry:

Catherine Naughton

music@nativitymonroe.org

Parish Accountant:

Christine Colletti Dranchak — Ext. 13 finance@nativitymonroe.org.

Office Assistant:

Laura McIntyre — Ext. 15 tech@nativitymonroe.org

Director of Religious Education:

Tara Vigario 609.371.2518 reoa@nativitymonroe.org

Building Manager:

Bill Tronolone — Ext. 10

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday: 4:00 PM (Vigil)

Sunday: 7:30 AM; 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM

Hospitality Sunday: 1st Sunday of the month after each Mass

(Meet and greet, Continental Breakfast, etc.)

Holydays: 7:00 PM (*Vigil*) & 9:00 AM Weekdays: Monday to Friday: 8:30 AM

Morning Prayer Wednesday and Thursday: 8:00 AM

RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 3:00 to 3:30 PM, or by appointment.

BAPTISM

The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated on the second Sunday of each month after the 11:00 AM Mass. Parents must attend the Baptismal Preparation class before the celebration. This class is offered on the third Wednesday of each month. Call the Parish Office for required pre-registration.

ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

Adults inquiring about the Catholic Church with a desire to become Catholic are invited to call the Parish Office for more information about the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults.

MATRIMONY

Couples contemplating this Sacrament must contact the Parish Office at least one year in advance. All couples planning marriage must attend Pre-Cana classes or Engaged Encounter.

PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK AND AGED

We are anxious to assist anyone who cannot celebrate Mass with us due to illness, handicap or age. If you wish to receive the Sacraments of Holy Eucharist, Reconciliation, or Anointing of the Sick, please call the Parish Office to make those arrangements.

HOLY ORDERS

If God is calling you to become a priest, deacon or religious, please call the Diocesan Office of Vocations at 732.562.1900, ext. 1700.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday *through* Thursday, 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM, and 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM The office will be closed on Fridays.

Third Sunday of Lent - March 23, 2025

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Monday March 24th

Lenten Weekday

8:30 a.m. Boyer and Haborak Families by Patti

Haborak

Tuesday March 25th

The Annunciation of the Lord

8:30 a.m. Rudolph Spinnler by Son, Gerard

Wednesday March 26th

Lenten Weekday

8:30 a.m. Jose A. Rodriguez Quinones by Nelly

Sorensen

Thursday March 27th

Lenten Weekday

8:30 a.m. Rita Dunleavy by Joann and Raymond

Devito

Friday March 28th

Lenten Weekday

8:30 a.m. Lucy Sonera by Carmen Medina

Saturday March 29th

Lenten Weekday

4:00 p.m. Filomena DeToro by Maria Alba

Sunday March 30th

Fourth Sunday of Lent

7:30 a.m. People of the Parish

9:00 a.m. Anthony Tacopino by Cherie Tacopino

11:00 a.m. Ann Mulvey by Janet Donnelly

The Collections for the Weekend of March 16 - \$ 13,307

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

Annual Tax Statements

If you would like to request a summary of your annual tax-deductible donations, please email **Laura McIntyre at tech@nativitymonroe.org** or call Laura at extension 15. When placing a request please be sure to include name, address, and envelope number. Requests will be mailed to the address on file within 10 days of request.

CANDLE OFFERING

BVM: Jennie & Angelo Gerratano by Susie and Manny

Gerratano

St. Anthony: Barbara DiCaprio by Joseph and Theresa

Atanasio



Third Sunday of Lent

Sunday: Ex 3:1-8a, 13-15; 1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12;

Lk 13:1-9

Monday: 2 Kgs 5:1-15b; Lk 4:24-30

Tuesday: Is 7:10-14, 8:10; Heb 10:4-10; Lk 1:26-38

Wednesday: Dt 4:1, 5-9; Mt 5:17-19 Thursday: Jer 7:23-28; Lk 11:14-23 Friday: Hos 14:2-10; Mk 12:28-34 Saturday: Hos 6:1-6; Lk 18:9-14

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTIONS

"He said to the gardener, 'For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none." - LUKE 13:7

We can all be like the barren fig tree at times. Do you cling to what you have, or do you generously share with others? How will you respond when God asks you what you have done with all the gifts He has given you? Remember, not only are we called to be generous; we are called to develop and nurture our gifts; and return them with increase. We are called to be generous with all of gifts; especially the one that means the most to you.

Spiritual Communion Prayer

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 time 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.

HIS WORD TODAY

BY REV. WILLIAM J. REILLY

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ONTHE SUNDAY READINGS

"He came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There an angel of the Lord appeared to him in fire flaming out of the bush. As he looked on, he was surprised to see that the bush, though on fire, was not consumed. So, Moses decided, 'I must go over to look at this remarkable sight and see why the bush is not burned.' When the Lord saw him coming over to look at it more closely, God called out to him from the bush, 'Moses, Moses.' He answered 'Here I am'... 'Come no nearer! Remove your sandals from your feet, for this is holy ground.'"

A new page in salvation history. Moses meets God, conversing with him in the burning bush. Wherever we are reading this, it is our Horeb. He wants us to come closer to continuing His work. As Moses was curious, so are we, as He calls us to live this Lent, by our prayer, sacrifices and good works.

He wants us to recognize His presence with us. He is asking us to come closer to Him so we can make His presence, His love and salvation known. Surely Moses didn't know what to expect but the Lord had a plan for him. He has one for us too. Why did Jesus come?



Lenten Obligation

- 1. The days of both **fast and abstinence** are **Ash Wednesday** (March 5) and **Good Friday** (April 18).
- 2. The other **Fridays of Lent** (Mar. 7, 14, 21,28, Apr. 4 an 11) are **days of abstinence**.
- 3. **Fasting** in the Roman Catholic tradition means to limit oneself to **one full meal** with **two smaller meals** which together do not equal the size of your full meal. The obligation of fasting applies only to Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59.
- 4. **Abstinence** in the Roman Catholic tradition means to **abstain from eating meat** (beef, chicken, pork, turkey, etc.). The obligation of abstinence applies to all Catholics who have reached the age of 14.

Remembering in Prayer

Kindly contact the office if you know of a parishioner who is sick, having surgery or in need of pastoral care. We would like to remember them in our prayers and care for their spiritual needs.

Parish Calendar			
Mar. 23 (Sun)	Initiation Ministry/ Catechumenate 8:30am to11:30am Cl#1 & 11		
	Sports & Arts Mass 11:00 am - 12:00 noon Church		
Mar. 24 (Mon)	Initiation Ministry/Inquiry 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm RR		
Mar. 25 (Tue)	Prayer Shawl- Hall 1:30pm Hall		
	The Journey of Life-Grief Education Series 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm RR		
Mar. 27 (Thu)	Choir Practice 7:30 pm Church		
Mar. 28 (Fri)	Stations of the Cross 3:00 pm & 7:00 pm Church		
Mar. 29 (Sat)	Day of Reflection 8:00 am - 4:00 pm Hall		
	Initiation Ministry/ Adult Confirmation 5:00pm - 6:30pm RR		
Mar. 30 (Sun)	Initiation Ministry/ Catechumenate 8:30am to11:30am Cl#1 & 11		
Mar. 31 (Mon)	Initiation Ministry/Inquiry 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm RR		
Apr. 1 (Tue)	The Journey of Life-Grief Education Series 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm RR		
Apr. 3 (Thu)	Choir Practice 7:30 pm Church		
	Adult Faith Formation/Bible Study- Hall 9am -11:30am & 7pm-9pm		
Apr. 4 (Fri)	Stations of the Cross 3:00 pm & 7:00 pm Church		
	FilAm Soup Supper 5:30 pm - 6:45 pm Hall		
	First Friday and Adoration		
	Stations of the Cross 3:00 pm & 7:00 pm Church		
	Purgatorial Mass 8:30 am Church		
Apr. 5 (Sat)	Initiation Ministry/ Adult Confirmation 5:00pm - 6:30pm RR		



Ministries

St. Vincent DePaul – If you are experiencing financial hardship due to a temporary loss of employment, illness, or disability, the St. Vincent de Paul Society is available to aid with your everyday needs such as food, utility assistance, or agency referrals. Please dial the parish number 609-371-0499, then press 4, and leave a message with your name and phone number. Someone will return your call. All calls are handled in strict confidence.

<u>Homebound Ministries</u> - Eucharist Ministers bring communion to the homes of those who are unable to attend Mass due to illness or other circumstances. Please call <u>Marge Nadolny</u> at 609-409-6164 or email <u>margen21@comcast.net</u>.

Helping Hands: We help parishioners with small household tasks such changing smoke detector batteries, lightbulbs, opening & closing vents, etc. If you need assistance, please call Esther Wolff at 732-521-6019 for more information.

Initiation Ministry



REJOICE! RITE FOR ENTRANCE (FORMERLY KNOWN AS RITE OF ACCEPTANCE)

Next Sunday, March 30, at the 9:00 Mass, we will celebrate the Rite for Entrance for two inquirers. They have been preparing for months to take this first step toward baptism and full initiation in the Catholic Church. Following the Rite, they will be catechumens in the Order of Catechumens, having rights and privileges in the Church.

At the Rite, they will be signed with the Cross of Christ and will express acceptance of the Gospel of Jesus. May we all renew our commitment to discipleship along with them.

You, the Parish family, are very important in this Rite, for it is the entire Church that accepts inquirers as people who intend to become members. Please keep our soon-to-be catechumens in your prayers during this last week of proximate preparation for the Rite for Entrance. Over the coming year, they will prepare for baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.

Bereavement Support Ministry

"Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

No one but you knows how great your grief is or how it affects your life. We must all travel our own journey. If you are grieving the death of a loved one, you are invited to join the Bereavement Support Ministry here at Nativity of Our Lord Church.

Our Spring sessions will begin on Wednesday May 7th 2025 and will be held once a week for 7 weeks, ending Tuesday June 17th 2025. Please note that all sessions will be held on Tuesdays EXCEPT the first session which is Wednesday May 7th. Our sessions are held at Nativity of Our Lord Church from 6PM until 7:30PM. There is no cost, all supplies will be provided. If you would like more information, or to register, please call Jane Gatto at (917)848-2300. Registration is required no later than April 30,2025.

Immaculate Conception School OPEN HOUSE

Date: March 30, 2025 10:00 am - 12:00 noon

All are welcome! Come meet the faculty and students! Light refreshments will be served.



Friday's Simple Soup Supper

Last chance to enjoy homemade & meatless soup for Lent prepared and hosted by the FilAm group of the Nativity Church.

On April 4, we will be serving delicious hot meatless soup from 5:30 -7 pm, preceding Stations of the Cross in Father Congdon Hall. Donations are accepted and will benefit the Camden Community Center. Please drop-off the RSVP form below at the designated drop box at the Narthex. For questions, please contact Franny Sicat: (917) 364-1369 or Fran-

ny sicat@comcast.net.

i	SIMPLE SOUP SUPPER	
Name:		_
Phone/ Email:		_
How many are	e going?	
I	C C	
I		

Lenten Penance Service Tuesday, April 8, 2025 1:00pm & 7:00pm

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Every Friday ~ 3:00pm and 7:00pm

Simple Soup at 5:30pm - 6:45pm (April 4)

Lenten Day of Reflection

Saturday, March 29, 2025 Led by: Fr. Anthony Ciorra, PhD 10:00am – 4:00pm Father Congdon Hall



Holy Week Schedule

HOLY THURSDAY – April 17

 $\label{eq:morning Prayer-9:00am} Mass of the Lord's Supper-7:00pm$

Live streamed

Adoration at the Repository until 10:00pm Night Prayer – 10:00pm

GOOD FRIDAY - April 18

Morning Prayer – 9:00am Liturgy of the Lord's Passion – 3:00pm Live streamed

Prayer at the Cross – 7:00pm

HOLY SATURDAY – April 19

Morning Prayer – 9:00am

Blessing of Easter Food – 12Noon

Great Vigil of Easter – 7:30pm

Live streamed

EASTER SUNDAY – April 20

Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord Sunrise Mass – **Time to be determined**. 9:00am - Mass; 11:00am – Mass **Live streamed**





2025 Bishop's Annual Appeal

PILGRIMS OF HOPE: Journeying Together in Faith, Hope and Charity

This weekend, parishes throughout the Diocese of Metuchen are celebrating Bishop's Annual Appeal In-Pew Weekend. Our goal is for every family to participate. Every gift, no matter the size, is important and greatly appreciated. Together, we are keeping Christ's presence alive in the world today. Thank you for actively participating in this mission by your financial support.

STATUS AS OF 3/12/2025

Goal: \$88,000.00

Total Pledged & Received: \$55,380.42 Amount Received: \$43,310.58 Over/(Under) Goal: (Based on Amt Rec'd):

(\$44,689.42)

Percent of Goal Pledged: 62.93%
Percent of Goal Received: 49.22%
Average Gift Amount: \$321.98
Number of Donors: 172



Fun Event for Nativity's Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers!

NJ Catholic Youth Rally at Great Adventure Sunday, May 18, 2025

The NJ Catholic Youth Rally is a day-long event that gathers teens from across the state of NJ for a day of fun, fellowship, Mass, and more held at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson, NJ. The day starts with a dynamic opening ceremony. Teens then get the day to enjoy the park and all the rides. The day concludes in the Batman Stunt Arena with a Mass. Open to all Jr. High, High School & Young Adult Ministry, Scouting Parish/School Athletic Programs, and families!

Cost TBD (depending on if you have a season pass)

If interested, please register using the QR Code. Questions can be sent to Christine Carneiro at CRLCESQ@gmail.com







Your donations make our babies SMILE!!! Baby Bottle Blessings

Nativity of Our Lord is hosting a "Baby Bottle Blessings" Campaign for Life Choices Resource Center, Metuchen.

For over 40 years, **Life Choices** has been serving women and families in our local communities by offering **FREE** services and support. We offer hope and friendship for all those facing crisis pregnancies and post abortion healing.

WE are "Walking with Moms in Need".

By supporting the "Baby Bottle Blessings" campaign, you are assisting our families and helping to spread the *Gospel of Life*.

We would be most grateful if you would take home a bottle or an envelope, and return it with your donation (cash, check or credit card information) by **April 13th**. Donations also can be mailed directly to: **Life Choices Resource Center**, 503 Main Street, Metuchen, NJ 08840 or can be made on-line at **www.Life ChoicesRC.com** or by using the QR code.



The Pope's Monthly Intentions for March



For families in crisis

Let us pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences.

AGAPE

ENTER THE HOLIEST OF WEEKS CELEBRATING THE PASSOVER OF OUR LORD SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 5:00 PM THE EVE OF PASSION SUNDAY

Enter into our Judeo/Christian tradition as we account the exodus of god's people with a short ceremony followed by a catered dinner from Tuscany. Menu will include entrees of beef, chicken, pasta, salad, rolls, dessert and wine. Adults \$25.00 children ages 5 to 12 \$5.00. Those interested in attending are asked to return the form below with a check and put it in the slot marked agape in the Narthex by April 5, 2025. Any questions please contact Donna Maguire 732-690-2019.

AGAPE

MAKE CHECKS OUT TO NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND IN THE MEMO BOX PLEASE WRITE **AGAPE**. ADULTS \$25.00 CHILDREN AGES 5 – 12 \$5:00

PHONE#_			
NAME;			
AMOUNT ENCLOSED:			
# OF ADULTS:	_ # OF CHILDREN:		
CHECK #:	CASH:		
TABLES OF 6-8 MAY BE RESERVED UNDER ONE			
NAME:			

Lenten Day of Reflection: March 29th

"Living Simply in a Complex World"

Have you been wondering how you are going to make Lent more meaningful this year?

Are you seeking to go deeper in your relationship with God during Lent?

Are you wondering how to cut through all the noise that surrounds you?

Come to a **Lenten Day of Reflection** on **Saturday**, **March 29** at Nativity of Our Lord Parish.

Father Anthony Ciorra - author, theologian and spiritual guide - will lead us in our Lenten Pilgrimage toward Easter. Come and be inspired to live simply in a complex world.

Registration form and details available in the Narthex alcove.



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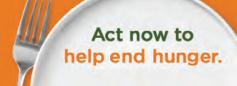
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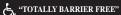
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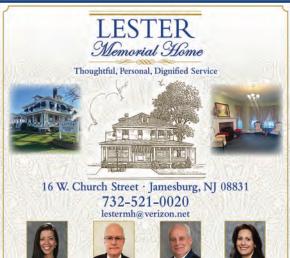








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