

St. Vincent De Paul Church

109 East Price Street ♦ Philadelphia, PA 19144-2145 ♦ 215-438-2925
www.facebook.com/StVincentDePaulCatholicCommunity ♦ www.saint-vincent-church.org

Mission Statement

St. Vincent de Paul is a faith community striving to live Jesus' gospel message of love, peace and justice for all peoples. In the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, our inclusive community welcomes, affirms and serves both the poorest of the poor and those who are alienated and most vulnerable among us. Our individual faith journeys join together in the celebration of the Eucharist. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will continue to nurture the gifts of all our members. Our parish family will draw strength and unity from diversity. We will foster an atmosphere of warmth, hospitality and prayerfulness. We pray that our commitment to these efforts will further the mission of being one with our God and one with each other.

The DePaul Catholic School, An Independent Mission School

44 W. Logan Street ♦ Philadelphia, PA 19144 ♦ 215-842-1266 ♦ www.thedepaulcatholicschool.org

Parish Staff

♦ **Sylvester Peterka, C.M.**

Pastor, Ext. #218

♦ **Joseph Cummins, C.M.**

Parochial Vicar, Ext #220

♦ **Valerie Lee-Jeter**

♦ **Darin Williams**

Ministers of Music

♦ **JoAnn O'Connor**

♦ Bookkeeper

business@saint-vincent-church.org

♦ **Evelyn Rogers**

Parish Social Ministry,

215-438-1514

♦ **Kevin Gomez &**

Suzanne Garnett

Directors of Religious
Education

♦ **Delia Landers &**

Katie Crump

Directors of Youth &
Young Adult Ministry



Partners in Ministry

♦ **PAR-Recycle Works
Prison Ministry**

Timothy Lyons, C.M. &
Laura Ford

267-335-5455

Par-recycleworks.org

♦ **Inn Dwelling**

Sr. Rosemarie Jefferson
Administrator
Alfred J. Smith, C.M.
Director

215-438-2195

inn dwelling.org

♦ **Face to Face**

Mary Kay Meeks-Hank
Exec. Director

215-849-0179

267-566-8402

facetofacegermantown.org

♦ **My Place Germantown**

Jeffrey Williamson
Executive Director
js@myplacegermantown.org

215-763-6387

Eucharistic Celebration ♦ Saturday 4pm, Sunday 9 & 11am
Sacrament of Reconciliation ♦ Please call for an appointment.

January 7, 2017

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

SUN	01/07	Miraculous Medal	9:00 am
			11:00 am
MON	01/08	NO MASS	
TUE	01/09	Miraculous Medal	7:00 am
WED	01/10	Miraculous Medal	7:00 am
THU	01/11	Miraculous Medal	7:00 am
FRI	01/12	Miraculous Medal	7:00 am
SAT	01/13	Miraculous Medal	4:00pm

**THIS WEEK'S
CALENDAR**

SUN	Feast of the Epiphany
SAT	Sacrament of Penance 3-3:30 pm

FOR THIS WE PRAY

Parishioners

Muriel Ancrum, Patricia Banmiller, Bernadette Barry, Katherine Elliott, Anoa Curtis, Myles McDonald, William Drinker, Judith Di Battista, Donna Jean Cocchia, Leo Johnson, Patricia Judge, Pat Burton, Thomas Baumann, Dick Taylor, Ginny Witte, Edna Poole, Nan Wade, Betsy Moore, Vince Morgan, Gerry Widmann, Kay Harty, Mary Lynn Kraft, Darryl Carroll, Natalie Gianetti, Arlene Myers, Betty Barnett, Annie Serious, Mary Ellen Graham, Mary Ann Delaplane, Joey Gavin, Barbara Adams.

Friends of St. Vincent's

Maryann Hunsicker, Steven David Aslow, Mary Fazzini DeCanelo, Laura Alfonse, Nancy Tooker, C'Arone & Wynter Marie Hamilton, Tim McCabe, Harrison Harper, Claude Harper, Jaedon Anthony Horton, Arturo Magana Herrera, Lisa Kineke, John Brennan, Ashley Kiker, The Carey Family, Monique & Joseph Phillips, Dan Wuenschel, Ashley Margetech, Johnny Hilferty, Diane McCabe, Judy Spearmint, Millie Kribel, Kathleen Lawson, Dorothy Heimlich, Connie Bronson, Joseph Simmons, Amy Natkins, Terri Jackson, Samuel Gonzalez, Mary Elizabeth Unterfofner, Ana Esquilin Santos, Ann Rainsford & Family, Rayan Bouso, Richard Lipton, Palmina Rucker, Martha King Cox, Anna Satchell, Steve Damville, Jessica Jara, Joe Hagan, Ned Dugery, Vincent Owens, Barbara Rothenbach, Diane Harris, Siobhan Barrett, Mary Corini, Alys Smith, Joanne Gerney, Diane Dugan, Mary Hunter Gibbs, Louis Malizia, Alice Penderghast, John Schmitt, Sister Margaret McDevitt, John Michalski, Caitlyn Graham.

Our Sister Parish of Las Anonas de Santa Cruz, El Salvador. Those who fight in wars, those who are victims of war, and those who seek peace and justice.

PASTORAL CARE

We will bring the Eucharist to those unable to attend Mass regularly because of sickness or infirmity. Please call the Rectory, at 215-438-2925.

Last Week's Collection	2,382.16
Electronic	<u>3,250.00.</u>
Total	5,632.16
Tithe	281.60

Today's Readings

First Reading: Sirach 3:2-6
Psalm: Psalm 128
Second Reading: Colossians 3:12-21
Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

Readings for Next Week

First Reading: I Samuel 3:3b-10, 19
Psalm: Psalm 40
Second Reading: I Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20
Gospel: John 1:35-42

Monday: Is 42:1-4, 6-7 Ps 29:1-4, 3, 9-10; Mk 1:7-11
Tuesday: 1 Sm 1:9-20; 1 Sm 2:1, 4-8abcd; Mk 1:21-28
Wednesday: 1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20; Ps 40:2, 5, 7-10; Mk 1:29-39
Thursday: 1 Sm 4:1-11; Ps 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25; Mk 1:40-45
Friday: 1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a; Ps 89:16-19; Mk 2:1-12
Saturday: 1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1a; Ps 21:2-7; Mk 2:13-17

BAPTISM OF OUR CHILDREN

Call Fr. Sy Peterka, Pastor, at 215-438-2925, ext. 218, for available dates and additional information.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

The RCIA is the process through which adults become members of the Catholic Church. If you are interested in exploring whether the Catholic Church is where you want to begin or continue your Christian faith journey, please contact the Rectory at 215-438-2925.

THOSE IN NEED OF THE SACRAMENTS

Please contact Fr. Sy Peterka, at 215-438-2925 ext.218.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

If you are interested in becoming involved in one or more of our Parish ministries, call the Church office, at 215-438-2925.

PARISH OUTREACH

Non-perishable food donations may be made Monday, Tuesday and Friday between 9am and Noon. To make an appointment for any other time, please call Evelyn Rogers at 215-438-1514.

RESERVATIONS FOR MEETINGS/EVENTS

Please call the Church office, 215-438-2925.

RACIAL HEALING STATEMENT

To foster a community in which people of all races and cultures are treated as equals and fully participate in the life of the church. We hope to achieve this by... Deepening Cross-Racial/Cross-Cultural relationships; Developing each person's gifts for Leadership & Ministry, (Including each group's Art & Culture) and by... Supporting actions for justice.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - January 7-13, 2018

CHRISTMAS COLLECTIONS!

We are most happy to report your generous contributions of \$10,535.63 for all Christmas masses and \$3,412.40 for PAR Recycle prison ministry. Thank you!

LECTOR NOTES

All lectors: Please sign up on the Jan/Feb/ March sign-up sheets the next time you are in church!

All parishioners: Just as Mary carried Jesus in her womb all the way to his birth in Bethlehem, we carry God's Word in us as we read, reflect, and pray with it. Whether you are a lector or not, why not make time to read and pray with the daily or Sunday readings during the joyful Christmas season? You can find them at <http://www.usccb.org/bible/> (USCCB is the site of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops). Click on the date you're seeking. And share with a friend!

INTERCESSORY PRAYER CIRCLE

After each Mass, those wishing to pray for something specific or to pray for those with special needs can come and pray or become a part of the prayer circle. This should last about 5 to 10 minutes. It will be led by our Lay Leaders of Prayer.

BIBLE STUDY

Bible study resumes this week. Join us, on Wednesday, at 7 pm, as we study the prophet Isaiah.

SENIOR MINISTRY

Call Jerry Smith 215-508-0427 for more information.

RCIA

If anyone wishes to learn more about the Catholic faith or become Catholic, please see either Diane Zieg or Father Sy.

HOSPITALITY

Please join us for hospitality provided by the community after the 9am Mass in the Hospitality center. To volunteer, sign up on the bulletin board by the side entrance. Questions? Call Jack DiFeo 215 287-5682.

DIRECT DEPOSIT

As winter approaches with its unpredictable weather, please consider DIRECT DEPOSIT. A sign up form is on the inside of your bulletin. Fill it out and place in the drop box on the office door or mail it to the church. For more information, contact our bookkeeper, JoAnn, at 215-438-2925, ext. 229.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

We will begin work on a second bathroom, hopefully very soon, once we get all the permits. It will probably be ready right after New Year. If you made a pledge, thank you! If you need information on where you are in regards to your Capital Campaign pledge, please call JoAnn.

FATHER JOE

Father Joe is in rehab at St. Joseph's Manor (part of Holy Redeemer Hospital). Please feel free to call, write or visit. His address is Holy Redeemer-St. Joseph's Manor, 1616 Huntingdon Pike, Room 2501, Meadowbrook, PA 19046. His phone number is (215) 914-4501.

GIVING TREE

Our Ministries, Inn Dwelling, Face to Face, My Place Germantown, Parish Social Ministry, Par Recycle Works, & DePaul Catholic School, thank you for your amazing generosity during this Advent/Christmas season.

CONFIRMATION FORMATION

Calling all young folk in need of Confirmation. There will be sign up in the month of January. We will start our Confirmation journey in February.

POWER UPDATES

Martin Luther King Day of Action, Resistance, and Empowerment: A PEOPLE'S CALL TO ACTION rally and teach-in on **Monday, January 15** at Dobbins High School, 2150 Lehigh Avenue. Rally is from 1-2pm; teach-ins 2:30-4pm. Go to powerinterfaith.org for details.

Potluck & Discussion Series: Whether you've been to 10 POWER meetings or none, you're welcome to join us for dinner and discussion on **Monday evening Jan 22, 2018**. In honor of the work Martin Luther King Jr did to promote decent, life-sustaining jobs, our theme will be POWER's ground-breaking "Black Work Matters" report.

NEW SANCTUARY MOVEMENT: MIGRATION WEEK

In celebration of the beginning of National Catholic Migration Week, we of the New Sanctuary Movement St. Vincent de Paul committee offer this message:

Diversity characterizes St. Vincent de Paul Parish. We remember that diversity now on Migration Sunday. We are stronger for the values, traditions and strengths we have received from ancestors whose journey to their destination took place sometimes in the midst of intense suffering and trial. On this Migration Sunday we choose to highlight our diversity and the cultural richness we have which make us a more vibrant community of faith. Our message today is the message of the Magi. The People of God is composed of many nations and peoples strengthened by our diversity.

PEACE & JUSTICE MINISTRY

We continue to lift up messages from Pope Francis' Laudato Si. This week the focus is on REDEFINING PROGRESS according to Pope Francis: There is a tendency to believe that every increase in power means an increase in progress itself; an advance in security, usefulness, welfare and vigor as if reality, goodness and truth automatically flow from technological and economic power as such. The fact is that our immense technological development has not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience...but human beings are not autonomous. Our freedom fades when it is handed over to the blind forces of the subconscious, of immediate needs, of self-interest, and of violence. In this sense, we stand naked and exposed in the face of our ever increasing power, lacking the wherewithal to control it...Put simply, it is a matter of redefining progress. A technological and economic development which does not leave in its wake a better world and an integrally higher quality of life cannot be considered progress. Laudato Si, 105, 194.

SIMPLE WAY TO HELP A WORTHY CAUSE

Joy Wuenschel is collecting flip tops from soda and other cans to benefit the Ronald McDonald house at Children's and other hospitals. See Joy with your donations or leave them at the rectory for Joy. **Note:** Cars parked on sidewalks on Lena St. are being ticketed.

Saint Vincent de Paul Parish
Registration Form

Thanks for being here! If you would like to become an ACTIVE member of St. Vincent De Paul Parish (full-time or part-time), we invite you to **complete the Parish Registration form below.**

Date _____ Envelope number _____

Name _____

last

first

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of Birth _____ Home Phone _____

Cell _____

Email _____

Full name and relationship of all resident family members

_____ DOB _____ Relationship _____

_____ DOB _____ Relationship _____

_____ DOB _____ Relationship _____

_____ DOB _____ Relationship _____

Have you received the Sacraments?

() Baptism () Confirmation () First Communion

Are you interested in

() Liturgical Ministry () Service Ministry

(Can you sing, lector, teach....)

**Please place completed form in the Offeratory basket
or send to the Parish Office and we will contact you.**

.....

**Bulletin Deadline: Mondays by noon. Email to
secretary@saint-vincent-church.org**

St. Vincent de Paul Church
Electronic Donation Authorization ES6255

Thank you for considering donations to St. Vincent de Paul electronically via your bank account. Please complete this form so that we can set things up for you. If you have questions, contact JoAnn at business@saint-vincent-church.org.

Date _____ Envelope Number _____

Electronic Type: New _____ Change _____

Name _____ last _____ first _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone # _____

Cell # _____

Email _____

Date of 1st Donation _____

Amount of Donation _____

Frequency:

Monthly on the **1st** _____

Monthly on the **15th** _____

Weekly (**every Monday**) _____

Weekly (**every other Monday**) _____

Bank Routing Number _____

Account Number _____

Please debit my checking account per **attached voided check**. (If you wish to debit your savings account, please contact your bank for routing and account number.) **I authorize the above organization to process debit entries to my bank account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization.**
Authorized signature and Date:

St. Vincent de Paul Church
Petitions for Epiphany
January 6-7, 2017

- Empower us, Lord, to witness love to the world by humbly sharing our giftedness and privilege with others as the only true worship of you, our Savior and Lord.
- Give us the grace, Lord, to increase our openness and hospitality as a parish and not be satisfied with the status quo. Shake us, Lord, by the power of your Spirit.
- Teach us, Lord, to let our love communicate even when our words fail us because we don't speak the language.
- Endow our government with wisdom and mercy for all who seek the freedom to live full lives in our richly blessed country. Open up the hearts and minds of public servants to the needs and yearnings of recent immigrants and long-time residents alike.
- We pray for the world—for peace based on respect despite differences. May we truly worship our Lord and Savior by employing non violent ways to resolve international, local and family problems.

Petitions for January 1, 2018
Feast of the Mother of God

- Bless all who see in Mother Mary a model of faith and committed love. May we aspire to lives of such virtue with the aid of her intercession.
- Lord, as we begin a new year—a new day—give us the strength to bring about renewal by our committed actions of love.
- Instill in us, Lord, the grace to be ministers of grace to others.
- Dispel in us any trace of class consciousness, Lord. We are all poor shepherds before you.
- Inspire us with a daily vision of your humanity and divinity. May we be instruments of salvation for the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR JANUARY 6TH AND 7TH, 2018

Father Joe is in rehab at our infirmary, at St. Vincent's Seminary. Please feel free to call, write or visit. His address is 500 East Cheltenham Avenue, room number 111. The infirmary is next to the Shrine parking lot.

A Vincentian from Ethiopia, who is studying at St. John's University, Father Iyasu, will be with us for two weeks. Please welcome him.

DR. KING HOLIDAY: The Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Interfaith Prayer Service is on Monday, January 15th, at St. John Chrysostom Church, in Wallingford. The event will start at 6pm. We will have a bus for the evening and will leave St. Vincent's at 5pm. Sign-up sheets are in the back of the church, if you are interested in attending.

BLACK HISTORY FEAST: On Sunday, February 11th, we will have ONE MASS and the feast will follow. If you would like to donate, sign-up sheets are in the back of the church.

CONFIRMATION: There are Confirmation sign-up sheets for youth (7th and 8th grades and above) in the back. We will have a meeting in early February.

BUSINESS OWNERS: Please consider advertising in our bulletin. For more information, call the rectory office.

Martin Luther King Day of Action, Resistance, and Empowerment

Advancing. Confronting. Connecting.

A PEOPLE'S CALL TO ACTION



RALLY AND TEACH-INS

WHERE: DOBBINS HIGH SCHOOL (2150
LEHIGH AVE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19132)

WHEN: JAN. 15TH, 2018 | RALLY 1:00 PM -
2:30 PM, TEACH-INS 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM

VISIT POWERINTERFAITH.ORG FOR MORE INFO

MLK D.A.R.E. Coalition

POWER



facebook.com/reclaimmlk



twitter.com/reclaimmlk

TO JOIN ST VINCENT'S CARPOOL (leaves St. V @ 12:15pm)
CONTACT MARY LAVER: 610-324-9388 mlaver14@comcast.net

MERCIFUL AND LOVING FATHER,

We beseech you,
open our hearts so that we may provide hospitality
and refuge to migrants who are lonely, afraid, and far
from their homes.

Give us the courage to welcome every stranger
as Christ in our midst, to invite them into our communities
as a demonstration of Christ's love for us.

We pray that when we encounter the other, we see in her
the face of your Son, when we meet a stranger,
that we take his hand in welcome.

Help us to live in solidarity with one another, to seek justice
for those who are persecuted and comfort for those
who are suffering.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen

In Preparation for Catholic Migration Week, "Many Journeys, One Family"
January 7-13, 2018
Saint Vincent de Paul's Parish
Germantown, Philadelphia

"The Migrant: a Promise of Life for the Future"

This is the way Pope Francis referred to migrants last October 26th. Speaking to young people, he reminded them that the invitation to welcome the stranger was not made by the Pope, "but by someone much more important than myself." In this reflection, we remember how "the One much more important than Francis" commands us to deal with migrants in the Judeo-Christian scriptures. We engage with revelation not as an abstract idea, but as God's involvement in human history.

The Old Testament recognizes the actual displacement of the Jewish people and their extreme vulnerability as guests in a foreign land. In fact, the Book of Exodus anticipates the history of salvation, in which God leads the Hebrews out of Egypt: *I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage (Deut 5:6)*. The liberating God will remind the people often that they must show compassion to migrants, frequently adding that they were once in the same predicament. The word *ger*, loosely translated as foreign resident, occurs 92 times in the Old Testament. Many times migrants are mentioned along with widows and orphans, like in one of King David's songs: *"The Lord watches over the sojourners; he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin" (Ps 146:9)*.

If hospitality and kindness were the norm for treating the foreigner in the name of justice, in the New Testament hospitality means openness to salvation, to radical grace. First, Jesus is identified as a refugee in Egypt (*Matt 2:13-23*), and later, as an adult, he is a homeless, wandering person: *Foxes have their holes, the birds their roosts; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head (Matt 8:20)*. This is quite a change. Now "the stranger" is no other than "the One much more important than Francis," the Son of God. To embrace him as "a stranger" brings about huge rewards, "a promise of life." The parable of the Good Samaritan is a good example. When a doctor of the law asks: "What should I do to inherit eternal life?" and "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus tells the story in which the Samaritan, a despised foreigner, is the only one who cares for the man who was beaten up and robbed, transcending all ethnic barriers in the name of simple human compassion. He will be rewarded with eternal life!

In the Sermon of the Mount, Jesus promised nothing less than his kingdom and his Father's blessing to those who have acted compassionately towards the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick, the imprisoned, and the migrant, all of whom are himself: *I was a stranger and you took me in (Matt 25:35)*. The parable creates a class of people, marginal or poor, identified with the Lord. In the beautiful story of the road to Emmaus, after the death of Jesus on the cross, two of the disciples are downcast. After they insist on giving hospitality to the anonymous traveler (*"...they urged him strongly, 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.'"*), Jesus reveals himself in the breaking of the bread (*Luke 24:32*). What could be a greater gift than the assurance of Christ's resurrection and his continued commitment to his friends?

The apostle Paul also promises a gift, parallel to the reward given by Jesus to the sorrowful disciples of Emmaus: *Remember to show hospitality. There are some who, by doing so, have entertained angels without knowing it (Heb 13:2)*. Paul doesn't say more, but the implicit promise is supported by a long tradition. Angels in the Bible always announce a portent and are messengers of God. They are transforming signs, "a promise of life."

This brings us back to the title of this reflection. Pope Francis sees migrants as a promise of life. Clearly he bases his conclusion on the word of God, both as God the Father and as Jesus Christ. He is aware of the fact that no nation can welcome all the displaced people in the world, but he hopes for a community of nations that together can look for solutions so that all refugees will have a home, and undocumented people will have a place where they are not persecuted and where they can become full members of the community. Pope Francis and the U.S. bishops understand that nations need to be secure and control migration. They know that in this country many citizens suffer from unemployment, poverty, and many other ills, but they do not believe that a victory for poor citizens has to be a loss for immigrants or vice-versa. They are sure the country needs a comprehensively revised immigration law and competent enforcers and administrators of that law. And they know how many poor people and people of color are losing ground every day. The present administration is unrelentingly hostile to civil rights and its executive actions on immigration have never had any sense of fairness or decency, not even an enlightened self-interest.

In 1986 the Catholic Bishops of the United States wrote: "Jesus, who came as Emmanuel (God with us: *Matt 1:23*) and who promises to be with his people to the end of the age (*Matt 28:20*) is hidden in those most in need; to reject them is to reject God made manifest in History."

We believe that God is doing a new thing (*Isa 43:18-19*), and that immigrant men, women, and children of good will, together with the people of good will in the United States, are God's instruments in bringing about a new time. With their persistent hope, the work of their hands, their languages and cultures, their faith and strength, migrants are indeed a promise of life.

New Sanctuary Movement Committee



*Celebrating
the
Christmas Season
at Home*



DECEMBER 25, 2017 – JANUARY 7, 2018

BLESSINGS AND PRAYERS FOR THE Christmas SEASON

CHRISTMAS DAILY PRAYER

Jesus Christ, Word of God,
always be on my lips.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Jesus Christ, Prince of peace,
always guide my actions,
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Jesus Christ, Light from light,
always illuminate my way,
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

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TABLE PRAYER FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

O come, let us adore him!
O come, let us adore him!

May the meal shared at this table
provide the strength to follow your way
as we celebrate your glorious birth,
O Christ.

O come, let us adore him!

May the blessing of food
be nourishment to proclaim glad tidings
as we hear the voice of the herald angels.

O come, let us adore him!

May these Christmas days of grace
let your love shine forth in the world
as we behold your humble birth.

O come, let us adore him!

Let us adore him, Christ the Lord!
May every meal and every life be blessed
during this joyful Christmas season. Amen.

In accordance with c. 827, permission to publish is granted on September 7, 2017, by Very Reverend Ronald A. Hicks, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Permission to publish is an official declaration of ecclesiastical authority that the material is free from doctrinal and moral error. No legal responsibility is assumed by the grant of this permission.

EPIPHANY HOUSE BLESSING

Items needed: chalk and a small bottle of holy water. Gather with family members, friends, and perhaps some neighbors at the front door.

Leader: In the (+) name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Let us pray: *Christus mansionem benedicat.* May Christ bless this house, Amen.

With chalk we sign this doorway, along with four crosses of the seasons and the numerals of the new year.

[20 + C + M + B + 18]

Leader (or other Reader):

A reading from the Letter to the Galatians.

So then, while there is time, let us do good for all people, especially those who are of the household of faith.

The Word of the Lord

Each room is sprinkled with holy water.

Living room:

Bring us to live with you one day in heaven.

Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

Kitchen:

You prepare for us a heavenly banquet.

Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

Dining room:

Feed us at your celestial feast.

Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

Bedrooms:

In you alone we rest peacefully.

Bles

Bathroom:

Cleanse us from all uncleanness.

Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

All return to the front door to pray together.

Our Father . . .

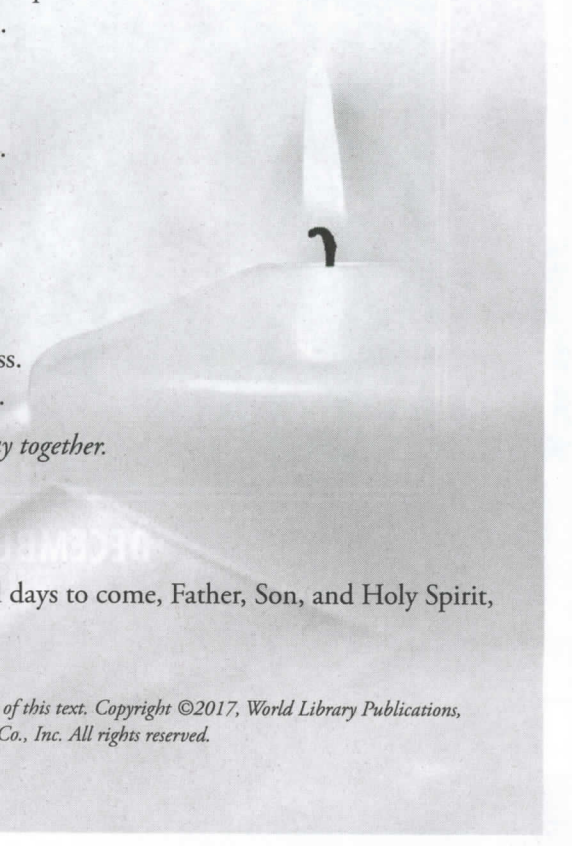
All are sprinkled with holy water.

Bless this household through all days to come, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
forever and ever. Amen.

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CELEBRATING SAINT STEPHEN

Tradition tells us that Saint Stephen's task in the early Church was organizing aid for the poor. Beginning sometime in the nineteenth century, British-influenced countries have observed Boxing Day on December 26th, Saint Stephen's feast. Families that were better off would offer Christmas boxes full of money, clothing, or food to servants, errand boys, and the poor.

This tradition offers us a chance to shift the focus of the day after Christmas. Instead of braving the malls, why not make this a day to take stock of possessions—to examine what things could be used to bless those who are less fortunate?

Here are some ideas:

Closets: Do you or your children have so many clothes that you have to box up out-of-season items? Did you receive new clothing or accessories for Christmas? Can they replace older items that are still in good enough shape to pass on to family members, friends, homeless or children's shelters, or even donation boxes like USAgain? If not, find a PlanetAid box, which recycles fabric and uses the proceeds to help the developing world.

Storage: Some people rent units to keep things they don't have room for in their homes. Is it time to give some of that away? Do you still have boxes of outgrown baby or kids' clothes that can bless a children's shelter or even the school nurse's office at a school in a low-income neighborhood?



Kitchen:

Do you have any non-perishables that could go to a food bank? Do you have a “junk drawer” full of kitchen gadgets you haven’t used? Coffee mugs? Seasonal towels that are always forgotten? Pass them on.

Toys:

Do you have broken toys or partial sets that can be recycled? Are there simply too many toys in your home? Use this as an opportunity to teach your kids about sacrifice and charity. Have them choose a given number to donate.

Mental clutter:

Examine your ongoing commitments. Have you taken on so much that your mind is constantly buzzing? Is it time to leave some tasks to others?

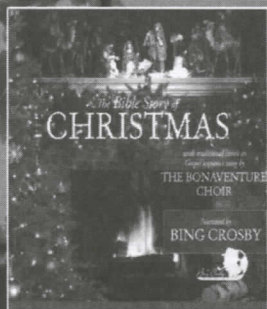
The feast of Saint Stephen, the first martyr, is a chance to re-orient ourselves after the busyness of the commercial Christmas season. By clearing out the clutter in our own lives, we can make more room for Christ.



LET US PRAY...

O Lord our God, in the name of our Daughters and Sisters of Nigeria we come to you on bended knee in prayer. In the heat of this day, suffering and hardship has visited young ones and we beg you, almighty Father, Son and Holy Spirit to bring forth release and mercy on those who have been captured, sold and raped. Reverse O Lord, the spirit of the captors. Restore O Lord, the hope of these young innocent girls and bring Recovery to them and their families. Relieve the injured and Redeem O Lord, this situation and drench it with Your love and mercy. We remember O Lord, how You set the captives free in Egypt and how You carved a way to freedom by splitting the waters of the Red Sea. We remember, O Lord how Your mighty hand brought David out of the lion's den and we ask You, O Lord to do the same for our dear young Sisters and Daughters. We come to You this day, knowing the fullness of Your amazing grace which makes a way out of no way. We thank You O Lord for what You can do and will do in Jesus' name- Amen





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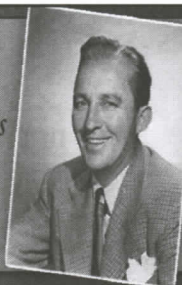


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