

**Mass Intentions This Week****Saturday, December 22, 2018****4:00 PM †Frank & Angie Dinovo—Their Children  
Sunday, December 23, 2018****10:00 AM Saint Patrick Parishioners' (pro populo)  
Monday, December 24, 2018****4:00 PM †James Stolly-Family****11:00 PM †Devin Marchal-Doris Phlipot  
Tuesday, December 25, 2018 *CHRISTMAS*****10:00 AM †Devin Marchal & Family Rose Wurst  
Saturday, December 29, 2018****4:00 PM †Dan Wells-Dottie & Dick Poeppelmeier  
Sunday, December 30, 2018****10:00 AM Saint Patrick Parishioners' (pro populo)  
Monday, January 1, 2019****10:00 AM †William Boyle-Reid Prinkey & Amanda  
*SOLEMNITY OF MARY, HOLY MOTHER OF GOD*  
*HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION: Dec 31, 2018, 7:00 pm SMOW*  
*Jan 1, 2019, 10:00 am St Patrick******Additional Masses at St Mary of Woods:* Saturday, 6:00 pm and Sunday, 8:00 am; Wed. 8:00 am, Thurs, 6:15 pm, second and fourth Thursday of the month, Fri., 8:00 am, beginning Sunday, 27 May 10:00 am Mass****Weekend Mass Attendance: not available****Parish Offering Weekend: (not available because of early submission of the bulletin) OUR GIFTS TO GOD—Many contribute generously. We all need to share the burden of parish support. May God bless your sacrifice for Him!****Dear Parishioners:**

This Christmas is a perfect time to reflect on how truly rich we are. We have a God who not only created us and provides for our needs daily, but actually entered human history to save us from sin and death. Our Lord reveals to us a friendship that is worth more than anything this world can offer. When we open the doors of our hearts to Jesus Christ, we find a friendship that satisfies the deepest longing of our hearts.



Amidst all the busyness of the Christmas season, I encourage you to spend a significant amount of time in Eucharistic Adoration. Come to Him who came to us 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem, and who waits for us daily in the tabernacle. Adore Him, as the angels did at Bethlehem! As Saint John Paul II encouraged us, open wide the doors to Christ!

**Merry Christmas to you and your families!****Father Shawn Landenwitch****Fourth Week**

Pour forth Thy power, O Lord, and come: Assist us by that mighty power, so that by Thy grace and merciful kindness we may swiftly receive the salvation that our sins impede: Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

**The Twelve Days of Christmas**

You're all familiar with the Christmas song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" I think. To most it's a delightful nonsense rhyme set to music. But it had a quite serious purpose when it was written.

It is a good deal more than just a repetitious melody with pretty phrases and a list of strange gifts.

Catholics in England during the period 1558 to 1829, when Parliament finally emancipated Catholics in England, were prohibited from ANY practice of their faith by law - private OR public. It was a crime to BE a Catholic.

"The Twelve Days of Christmas" was written in England as one of the "catechism songs" to help young Catholics learn the tenets of their faith - a memory aid, when to be caught with anything in \*writing\* indicating adherence to the Catholic faith could not only get you imprisoned, it could get you hanged, or shortened by a head - or hanged, drawn and quartered, a rather peculiar and ghastly punishment I'm not aware was ever practiced anywhere else.

Hanging, drawing and quartering involved hanging a person by the neck until they had almost, but not quite, suffocated to death; then the party was taken down from the gallows, and disembowelled while still alive; and while the entrails were still lying on the street, where the executioners stomped all over them, the victim was tied to four large farm horses, and literally torn into five parts - one to each limb and the remaining torso.

The songs gifts are hidden meanings to the teachings of the faith.

The "**true love**" mentioned in the song doesn't refer to an earthly suitor, it refers to God Himself. The "me" who receives the presents refers to every baptized person.

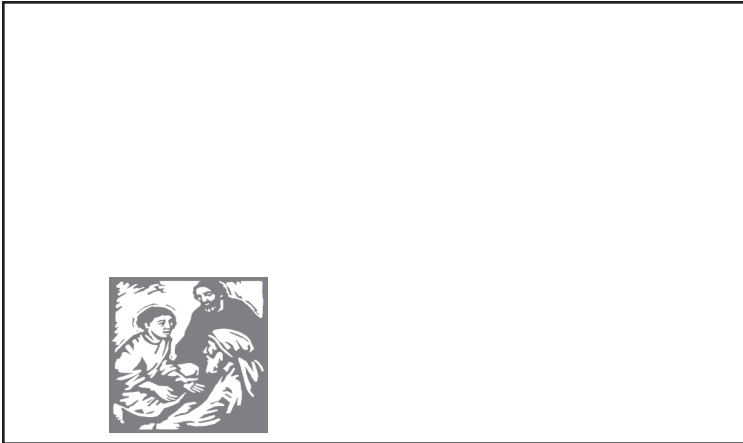
The **partridge in a pear tree** is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In the song, Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge which feigns injury to decoy predators from her helpless nestlings, much in memory of the expression of Christ's sadness over the fate of Jerusalem: "*Jerusalem! Jerusalem! How often would I have sheltered thee under my wings, as a hen does her chicks, but thou wouldst not have it so...*"

**The other symbols mean the following:**

- 2 Turtle Doves** = The Old and New Testaments
- 3 French Hens** = Faith, Hope and Charity, the Theological Virtues
- 4 Calling Birds** = the Four Gospels and/or the Four Evangelists
- 5 Golden Rings** = The first Five Books of the Old Testament, the "Pentateuch", which gives the history of man's fall from grace.
- 6 Geese A-laying** = the six days of creation
- 7 Swans A-swimming** = the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments
- 8 Maids A-milking** = the eight beatitudes
- 9 Ladies Dancing** = the nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- 10 Lords A-leaping** = the ten commandments
- 11 Pipers Piping** = the eleven faithful apostles
- 12 Drummers Drumming** = the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed

--Fr. Hal Stockert, Fishne

**MASS INTENTIONS:** Please, fill out the form below and drop in the collection basket or mail to the office. There is a \$5 stipend for each Mass requested. **PLEASE, PRINT!**  
**Intention:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Offered by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date requested:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Mass requested:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**We will make every attempt to get them on the date you Request, however, funerals, prior requests and other events may prevent this.**



**COMING UP—SAVE THE DATE**

**Dec 30, K of C Breakfast (after 10 am mass)**

**Jan 7, Monday, 7-9 PM (RCIA RM) Bible Study Begins**

**Pastoral Care of the Sick: Distributors to the sick and home-bound ...your parish is in need of help to perform this minister. Please call the office 592-1656 to make arrangements to perform this ministry.**

**Parish Prayer Line: Tammy Bauer, 937.441.0645**

**The bulletins and calendars can be read on line**

**St Patrick Church: [www.catholicbellefontaine.org](http://www.catholicbellefontaine.org)**

**St Mary of the Woods: [www.saintmaryofthewoods.com](http://www.saintmaryofthewoods.com)**

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY (592.9455)

Hours: 10:00 am-12:00pm, Tues & Thurs; 5:00-7:00 pm, Wed .

***Schedule of Christmas Masses***

**December 24**

**4:00 pm Mass St Patrick Church**

**6:00 pm Mass at Saint Mary of Woods**

**11:00 pm Mass St Patrick Church**

**December 25**

**8:00 am Mass at Saint Mary of Woods**

**10:00 am Mass at St Patrick Church**



**ANGEL OF GOD, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide, Amen**

**CHRISTMAS...**For most, Christmas is over by December 26 and life has resumed its normal activities. The Church, on the other hand, observes an Octave of Christmas until January 1 (after the Jewish practice of an 8 day celebration) and an extended Christmastime until January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany. (It is now celebrated on the Sunday between January 2 and January 8.) The popular Christmas song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas," is rooted in the festive celebration of Christmastime and a celebration of the Catholic faith, from a time in England and Ireland when Catholics had to disguise their Catholic beliefs.

During Christmastime, there are feasts of three martyrs: St. Stephen on December 26, who represents those who went to their death willingly; St. John the Evangelist on December 27 who represents those who were willing to die but were not put to death, and the Holy Innocents on December 28, representing those who were put to death without their choice, recalling the events surrounding the Birth of Christ. On the Sunday between Christmas and January 1, the Church celebrates the Holy Family. This feast is especially important today as many families today face struggles and challenges in living their Faith.

Epiphany is normally celebrated on January 6, although it can be celebrated on the Sunday between January 2 and 8, as is done in the United States and many other countries. It may also combine the celebration of all three epiphanies ("showing forths") of Christ – His epiphany to the Magi at His birth, His epiphany to St. John at His baptism in the Jordan and His epiphany to the disciples and the opening of His public ministry by the miracle of Cana.

However, its primary significance is the closing of the Christmas season with the celebration of the visit of the Magi to the manger (Matthew 2:1-12). The Messiah is thus shown to have come to all people, not just the Jews. The three kings represent the three major races:

Melchior, an old white man with a long white beard, bearing the gift of gold for Christ's royalty;

Caspar, young and of darker hue, carrying incenses for Christ's divinity; and

Balthasar, a black man, offering myrrh for Christ's suffering and death.

The names of the wise men are not given in the Bible, but were supplied by later story tellers to enrich the meaning and celebration of the Epiphany.

**Blessing of Homes**

A tradition associated with Epiphany is the blessing of homes with holy water and incense. Using blessed chalk, a parent or priest can mark the inside of the main door of the house with the initials of the Magi and a code of the current year connected with crosses: 20+C+M+B+20. Another explanation of the initials (C-M-B) are the fist letters of the blessing: Christus mansionem benedicat (Latin, "May Christ bless the house")

**January 2019, Lay Ministry-see insert**

**—ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME AND PRAY THE ROSARY BEFORE MASSES: SUNDAYS AT 9:00 AM, SATURDAYS AT 3:30 PM, AND TUESDAYS AT 7:30 AM!!!**