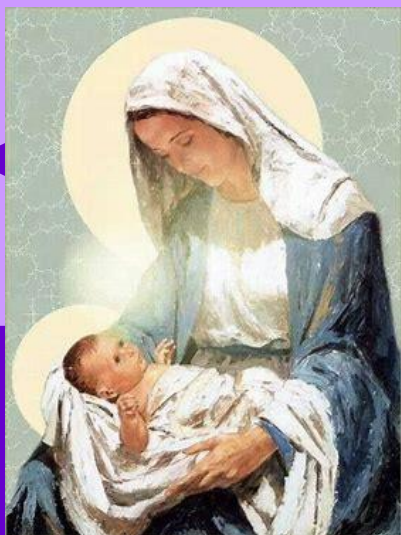


OLV Rel. Ed. Newsletter



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January Dates to Remember

- January 1: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God; Octave Day of the Nativity/Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord
- January 3: Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus (traditional: January 5)
- January 4: Feast of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
- January 6: Feast of the Epiphany
- January 9: OLV Religious Education Class 5, 6:00 p.m., parish hall
- January 13: Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord
- January 14: Feast of the Infant of Prague
- January 16: OLV Religious Education class snow date
- January 21: Feast of St. Agnes
- January 22: Day of Prayer for Protection of the Unborn
- January 23: Feast of the Espousal of Mary
- January 25: Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul
- January 29: Feast of St. Francis de Sales
- January 31: Feast of St. John Bosco

In January, we celebrate the Holy Name of Jesus. We honor the Name of Jesus, because Jesus is holy, and deserving of all praise. Speaking His Name aloud, which means “God saves,” is very powerful. It is its own prayer, a constant reminder of God’s greatness and love, as God the Father sent His only Son, Jesus, to give His life in reparation for human sin, thereby saving humankind. Christ redeemed us from sin, freeing us from its burden on the soul, and opening us to eternal life with Him. As we begin a new year, it is natural that we should reflect on the One Who makes us new, offering us new life in Him: our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. In honoring Jesus, we honor His Mother as well, since she gave birth to Him, bringing Him into the created world. This month, we honor special titles for Our Lady, including “Queen of Peace” and “Mother of God.” On the first day of January, we observe the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Traditionally, major feast days such as Christmas were not celebrated for just one day, but for eight days; they were given an “octave.” January 1 is the octave day of the Nativity, eight days after Christmas Day (the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord). We start the year off in a wonderful way, by venerating the blessed woman who is the Mother of God, and our heavenly Mother. Pointing to her Son, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, she offers us a fresh opportunity to grow in holiness, to spend another trip around the sun becoming closer to the Son of God, Jesus. Like us, the Mother of God is human, but she is entirely without sin. In her love, she wants to purify us, to help us to know the full freedom and joy that comes from following Christ, from loving and serving Him with all of our hearts. She helps lead us to greater peace by guiding us to be faithful to God’s will, to say “yes” to His special plan. As we look with hope to our new year, may we open our hearts to what God is calling us to do, and offer ourselves to Jesus and Mary, trusting that they will be with us as we live out another year in the holy Church, coming to a deeper understanding of the beauty of each day, all sacred because of God’s Presence in them.

Pax tecum,

Katie Sadakierski, Director of Religious Education
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Marian Chant of the Season:
Alma Redemptoris Mater

Chaplet Spotlight: **Chaplet of
the Twelve Stars**

Other recommended devotional
chaplets:

- **Chaplet of the Holy
Name**
- **Chaplet of the Infant
of Prague**



Prayer to Mary, Mother of God

Thy name, O Mother of God, contains all divine graces and benedictions. Thou didst contain Him Who is incomprehensible and didst nourish Him who gives nourishment to all. He Who fills the heavens and the earth, the sovereign Lord of all things, deigned to be thy debtor, for thou gavest Him flesh and blood. Rejoice, O Mother and Servant of God! Rejoice! We, indeed, are all debtors to God, but God Himself is thy debtor. Therefore, blessed Mother, thy charity and thine influence with Him surpass the charity and influence of all other saints. We celebrate thy glory; we know the greatness of thy goodness; we pray thee to remember us and our miseries. Amen.

Saint Spotlight: St. John Bosco

St. John Bosco (1815-1888) is best known for being a spiritual father, especially to schoolchildren whom he guided. Inviting young people into a deeper relationship with Christ, St. John Bosco wrote catechetical materials, instructed youth, and implemented entertainment programs for children that were akin to “magic” shows, but which revealed the wonders of God, recognizing His power and glory rather than promoting secular attractions. Many a saint has had spiritual gifts, such as the ability to read souls, to levitate, or to bilocate, but perhaps fewer can boast the talent of juggling. Besides being a champion juggler, St. John Bosco was an empathetic priest who cared greatly for the souls entrusted to him by God, dedicating all of his efforts to leading people to Heaven. Animated by joy and love for God, St. John Bosco inspiringly shows us how to use all of our talents for the glory of God. No doubt, St. John Bosco encountered suffering in his ministry, having worked with people who may not have been materially wealthy, but who, under his care, became spiritually rich, trusting in the Providence of God. In acknowledging St. John Bosco’s integral role in his community as a spiritual father, it is important that we recall his devotion to Our Lady. Praying the Angelus each day, St. John Bosco saluted Mary three times; remembering his Mother in sacred prayer was integrated into the rhythms of his daily life. Particularly, St. John Bosco honored Mary’s title as “Help of Christians.” Just as he entrusted himself to the care of Our Lady, St. John Bosco taught other souls to seek out our Blessed Mother to assist them in their journey to Heaven. Future saints, such as St. Dominic Savio, a protégé of St. John Bosco, would be raised up through Don Bosco’s faithful service to Christ, and through the intercession of Our Lady, into whose hands St. John Bosco placed his endeavors.