

FROM THE PASTOR'S PRINTER

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

This may seem like déjà vu all over again, and it is. This was in the Christmas Eve bulletin, but someone told me that in the excitement of Santa's arrival, people may not have read this column. Anyway, mark your calendars for Sunday, February 11, 2018, because St. John's is hosting a reception for the Treasures of Our New Church, an open house from 2-6 PM at the Knights of Columbus Hall, where we will display a number of the objects needed for our new church which can be donated in honor or memory of relative or friend, or donated in your own name. More details to follow.

"ASSALT," BUT NO BATTERY

Ah, winter, with its ice and snow and other things that make us wish our ancestors would have settled in Florida! Foreseeing these possibilities, it may arise that our steps and sidewalks in church may need de-icing. All the walkways from the main doors and the front school/church entrance of church to the street, including the street sidewalk in front of church require a special "salt" that is in orange buckets at the doors of church marked FOR FRONT WALKS ONLY. This designer stuff will keep the new walkways from eroding. It is expensive, so we use it only on the new walkways. You may wonder why I am posting this. It's because sometimes the elements of nature start during Mass, and kind volunteers clear the way (much like John the Baptist, but not in camel hair or with locust shells stuck in their teeth).

HOLY DAY, BUT NOT OBLIGATORY

Monday, January 1st, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, is not a day of obligation this year. You may wonder why, if a feast of obligation falls on a Saturday or a Monday, it is not obligatory? The reason is not that "once a week is good enough for God," but rather that in parts of our country the shortage of priests requires the priest to travel far distances for Mass, which is not doable in two days. While Monday is not a day of obligation, we will

celebrate Mass at 7:30 AM and noon. Why not begin the year off right by coming to Mass even when it is not required? I am sure Christ and His Mother would love to see you!

THE REST OF THE STORY

We revel in the beauty of the Christmas story – the Son of God coming in poverty and humility to save us, welcomed into this world by shepherds who receive the good news from choirs of angels. But the rest of this story is that a king seeks to destroy this baby, and the family must escape into exile in a strange land. The story of Jesus among us is not a story of the past; it is a story of "now" ever since he came to earth. He is present in the poor who seek the regularity of food, the terrorized who seek to be able to sleep securely, the devout who seek to worship freely. (Many of these may be our ancestors who sought these blessings in our own country.) While immigration issues are complex and need to be addressed in this country, we need to remember that God will judge our nation and each of us on our compassionate response to this challenge, and on how we treat those who stand in Christ's shoes (or sandals) do we see and respect His image in them? Not just individuals, but nations have consciences. In a democracy, we contribute to the conscience of our nation. It is not an option for us; it is a criterion of judgment, for when Christ comes at the end, he will determine if, when he was homeless, we gave him shelter. Immigration issues are indeed complex, but there are compassionate ways to deal with them. For further reading from a Catholic moral perspective, go to: www.catholiccincinnati.org and click on WHERE WE STAND in the upper right corner, and scroll to Immigration, and click to your soul's delight.

**BLESSINGS IN THE NEW
YEAR FOR YOU AND THE
WHOLE WORLD!**