

DECEMBER 2011 UPCOMING EVENTS

December 8: Advent Penance Service & Immaculate Conception Mass

We encourage all Parishioners to prepare themselves spiritually for Christmas by celebrating the Sacrament of Penance. On the second Thursday of Advent, December 8th there will be several priests listening to confessions from 6:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. At 7:00 p.m. we will celebrate together a Holy Mass with General Absolution as an alternative to individual confession. On the same day the Catholic Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary as a holy day of obligation. Join us for the Eucharist on this beautiful Feast of Mary **at 7:00 p.m.**

December 11: Give Hope, Make a Sandwich

Social Justice Committee invites everyone to join us on Sunday, December 11th at 10:15 a.m. in the kitchen of the Polish Heritage Center in order to make sandwiches that will be served to our friends at Karen House. Food and supplies will be provided by the Social Justice Committee. Please bring your hands and good spirit.

December 11: Christmas Church decorating

On Sunday, December 11th at 12:15 p.m. Christmas decorations and the manger scene will be installed in our church. We need volunteers to join our team in this joyful chore! Please call Randy Mindak at 314.962.6355 to declare your willingness to be a part of this adventure.

December 16: Gateway Men's Chorus Concert

On Friday, December 16th at 7:30 p.m. we will have the pleasure of hosting in our church Christmas Concert of the Gateway Men's Chorus. This great chorus of 90 plus men will take us on a joyous celebration of holiday cheer. They will sing some of the staples from their holiday repertoire, as well as a pile of new choral goodies under the tree, including a beautiful arrangement of "I Can Hear the Bells". Admission is free but in lieu of a ticket we encourage everybody to bring a new, unwrapped toy that will be donated to "Project Ark" which supports children and youth infected, or at the risk of infection with HIV virus. Don't miss this chance for holiday cheer!

December 18: "Opłatek" Dinner

Our traditional "Opłatek" Dinner will be celebrated in the Polish Heritage Center following the 9:00 a.m. Mass (the only Mass that Sunday). We invite you all to join us as we cultivate this beautiful Polish custom when family members and friends break off a small piece of the *opłatek* wafer and give it to one another along with a blessing or a wish. For \$7.00 each person will be served a plate with pierogi, potato pancake, sauerkraut, and a choice of red beet or tomato soup, as traditional Wigilia dinner must be meatless. Fr. Marek's 37th birthday will be celebrated that Sunday as well, as it happens exactly on December 18th.

December 24 & 25: Christmas Eve and Day

On Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24th, we will start caroling in English and Polish at 9:30 p.m. and at **10:00 p.m. the "Midnight Mass"** will be offered. There will be no 4:00 p.m. Mass that Saturday. On Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25th, solemn Masses of the Nativity will be celebrated at 9:00 a.m and 11:00 a.m.. Come and experience the spirit of Christmas in our beautiful church!

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January 1: Way of Lights

We invite all lovers of Christmas lights for a tour of the “Way of Lights” at Our Lady of the Snows Shrine in Belleville, Illinois. Our trip will start on Sunday, January 1st at 4:00 p.m. at the church parking lot. We will have supper together at the Shrine’s restaurant. Please contact Janice Merzweiler at 314.550.5849 or Sue and Ken Beekman at 636-936-1785 to register.

January 7 & 8: Epiphany – blessing of the chalk

During all Masses on Epiphany (Wise Magi) weekend we will bless small pieces of chalk. According to the Polish custom we encourage all Parishioners to mark the doors of their homes with that blessed chalk, signing them with **C+M+B 2012** symbols. In doing so we ask God’s protection and blessing upon those who live, work or visit throughout the coming year. It is also a visible sign that we have invited God’s presence into our homes.

January 22: Wine Tasting Event

We will be hosting another wine tasting event on Sunday, January 22nd in the small room of the Polish Heritage Center at 12:15pm. This year's theme will be "My Favorite Wine". Please bring your favorite bottle(s) of wine and appetizer to share as well as a wine glass. Prizes will be awarded to the top three wines to be voted by participants. With questions, suggestions, or to register please contact Chris Zinselmeier at 636.493.0979.

Spring 2013: Parish trip to Austria, Czech republic and Poland

We are very excited to announce another spectacular Parish Trip in Spring of 2013! (end of April - beginning of May) This time we will visit three central-European countries: Austria, Czech Republic and Poland. In twelve days we will discover all the most important sites in Vienna, Prague and Krakow. Of course, we will also pray at the Shrine of Black Madonna in Czestochowa and visit amazing town of Zakopane in Polish Tatra mountains. Estimated cost of the trip is below \$3500.00 per person. All the preparations have begun and we are ready to officially start the sign up list. Please, contact the rectory (314.421.5948 or office@stanislauskostka.com) if you would like to join us on this magical trip!