

## Reflections from Fr. Pfeifer:

Often, people tell me, "Father, I really struggle with prayer; I get frustrated because I am giving it my best." I would like for us to focus this weekend on how a great saint dealt with this struggle. His name is St. Bernard of Clairvaux.

St Bernard was once traveling with a poor, uneducated farmer, who noticed that the abbot kept his eyes cast downward. When the farmer asked why the saint wasn't looking at the beautiful countryside, Bernard explained that he wanted to avoid distractions while praying. In response, the farmer boasted, "I'm never distracted when I pray." The saint objected, "I don't believe it. Now let me make a deal with you. If you can say the Our Father without one distraction, I'll give you this mule I'm riding. But if you don't succeed, you must come with me and be a monk." The farmer agreed and began praying aloud confidently, "Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed by thy name..." Then, after pausing for moment, he asked St Bernard, "Does that include the saddle and the bridle, too?"

I think we can all relate to that. And if we find ourselves fighting distractions when we try to pray, imagine what our interior chamber looks like when we're not trying to pray!

And yet, unless we learn to keep our hearts open and clear, like the inside of a violin, we will never be able to grow up, spiritually speaking. We may have a good time being distracted by the glitter and noise of a consumer society, but we won't be growing in wisdom, and God's grace will never be able to produce the music that our lives were meant to produce.



**The First Friday promises** have been asked to be received by all the faithful, and all the faithful are invited to 8:00 AM parish Mass on the First Fridays of each month.

**About First Friday Promises:** These beautiful graces were promised by our Lord to St. Margaret Mary Alocque in 1675: "On Friday (the day our Lord suffered and died for us) during Holy Communion, He said these words to His unworthy slave, if I mistake not: I promise you in the excessive mercy of my Heart that its all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on nine first Fridays of consecutive months the grace of final repentance; they will not die under my displeasure or without receiving their sacraments, my divine Heart making itself their assured refuge at the last moment."

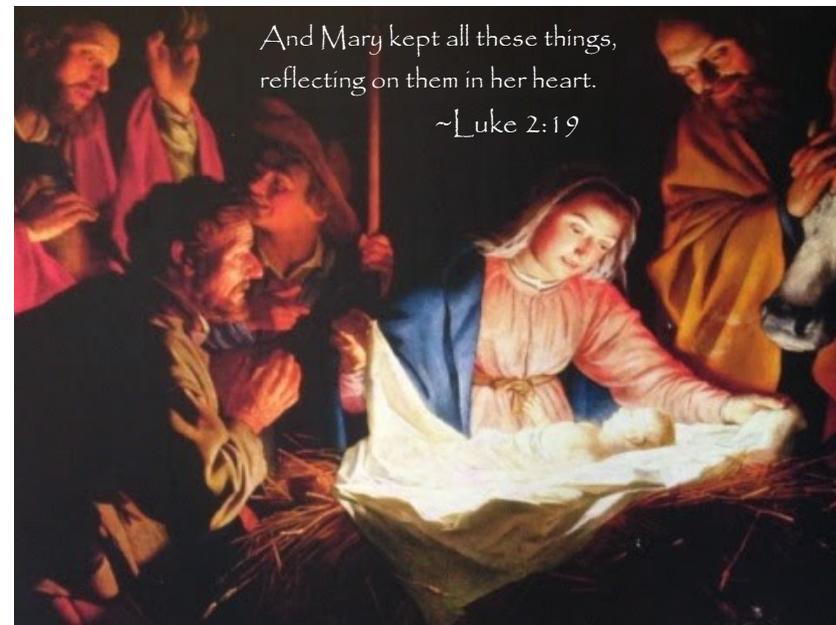
To gain this grace, we must:

1. Receive Holy Communion on nine consecutive first Fridays.
2. Have the intention of honoring the Sacred Heart of Jesus and of reaching final perseverance.
3. Offer each holy Communion as an act of atonement for offenses against the Blessed Sacrament.

Our Lord does not say that those who make the nine Fridays will be dispensed from any of their obligations or from exercising the vigilance necessary to lead a good life and overcome temptation; rather He implicitly promises abundant graces to those who make the nine Fridays and to help them to carry out these obligations and persevere to the end. Perseverance in receiving Holy Communion for nine consecutive First Fridays helps the faithful to acquire the habit of frequent Communion, which our Lord eagerly desires. The practice of the nine Fridays is very pleasing to our Lord. He promises great reward and desires that all Catholics should endeavor to make the nine Fridays.

## St. Philip Neri Catholic Church

*A Discipleship Parish*



Fr. Neil Pfeifer, Pastor  
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[stphilipnerinapoleon.org](http://stphilipnerinapoleon.org)  
754-2860

Fr. Pfeifer's Website: [mybrotherjesus.com](http://mybrotherjesus.com)

**Confessions:** 1/2 hr before every Mass, 1 hour before Saturday Mass, OR by appointment.

**Weddings:** Contact Fr. Pfeifer at least 8 months prior.

**Baptisms:** Contact Fr. Pfeifer before Godparents are chosen.



*"And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart." – Luke 2:19*

Mary is the perfect role model for living a stewardship lifestyle. She listened to God and said, "Yes," to His invitation to be the Holy Mother of His Son. She also trusted in God's providence on a daily basis. As

we start a new year, take time every day to listen to how God is calling you. Trust that He has a better plan for you than you could ever imagine.

**January 1, 2017**

The Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Mon., Jan 2 .....NO MASS
Tue., Jan 3 .....7 PM <i>Deceased &amp; Living Christian Mothers</i>
Wed., Jan 4 .....8 AM <i>John &amp; Delores Becker (Anni) by the Family</i>
Thurs., Jan 5 .....8 AM <i>+Darlene McClure by Ken &amp; Shari Leier</i>
Fri., Jan 6 .....8 AM <i>+John P. Horner by Julia Horner &amp; Family</i>
Sat., Jan 7 .....5 PM <i>+Joey Hilzendeger by Steve Engelhardt</i>
Sun., Jan 8 .....10 AM <i>For Our Parishioners</i>
Sunday Care Center 8:45 AM <i>+Sebastian Bernhardt by The Family</i> <i>Helper: Phyllis Johnson</i>



Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place from 6 AM Thursday until midnight Friday.

**Stewardship of Treasure**  
This Week: \$ 10,205.79

Parish Announcements

**No First Sunday Breakfast on January 1.**  
**Please watch mass scheduling as new people are now added from the recent time and talent survey.** If you have not filled one out, the office would like you to so we can update our database. The last **Oremus** prayer class will be Tues., Jan. 3 after 7 PM Mass.  
**Christian Mothers Christmas Party is cancelled** for Tue., Jan. 3. Sorry for any inconvenience!

**Right to Life Bingo** on Sunday, Jan. 8th at 7 PM.

**Fr. Pfeifer will be out of town Mon. & Tue.** as he celebrates Christmas with his family, but will be back for mass at 7 pm on Tue., Jan. 3. He will be in Chicago Mon. Jan., 9th-Fri. Jan., 13th for his last class with IPF at Mundelein Seminary. There will be no daily Mass that week as Fr. Katanga will also be gone. In case of emergency, please contact the parish office, and they will direct you.

**Care Center** - Fr. Pfeifer is looking for someone who is willing to come to the Care Center, help set up for Mass, and read on Sunday mornings at 8:45 AM. This would be on a scheduling basis of one time a month along with Phyllis Johnson and Lorraine Reis who are already helping with this. If you are interested, please call Fr. Pfeifer at the parish office.

**Care Center Visits** - Father Pfeifer will be visiting the residents at the Care Center on the first Friday of every month between 9 AM and noon. The next visit to the Care Center and Assisted Living will be Jan. 6, 2017. This is a chance for the residents to receive Holy Communion, go to Confession, or to be anointed with the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

**Many hands make less work.** We would appreciate help taking down the Christmas trees & decorations on **Mon., Jan. 9th at 1 PM.**

**Eucharistic Adoration** - Thank you new adorers! We are currently looking for another **adorer at 2 pm on Fridays.** Please contact Maria Regner at 754-2474 to sign up.

**From Fr. Pfeifer** - I offer my thanks for your kindness and generosity shown to me through this Christmas Season with cards, gifts, goodies, meats and cheeses. Thank you and may God bless you for remembering me in your hectic Christmas schedules.

**Thank you!** - We are thankful for all who make St. Philip Neri a vibrant parish. Your selfless actions of volunteering time, talent, and treasure, for the greater good of our parish community, enables St. Philip Neri to be a loving home for many. May God bless you and your family with health of mind, body, and spirit in this New Year!

Announcements, Cont.

**St. Philip Neri Parish Inquiry Class - Monday nights throughout the year from 7:40 to 8:40.** All are welcome!

Monday night classes will resume on **Jan. 16th** - Prayer (Types of prayer, why we pray, vocal, meditation, contemplation, Lectio Divina, The Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, the Rosary)

**Jan. 23rd** - Commandments 1-3 (Love of God)

**Jan. 30th** - Commandments 4-6 (love of neighbor, Church precepts)

Dr. David Anders, host of EWTN's Called to Communion, will be the speaker at the **Real Presence Radio annual fundraising banquet** which will be held at the Best Western Plus Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck on Mon., Feb. 20th, 2017. St. Philip Neri will be hosting **two** tables for the social, supper, and speaker, Dr. David Anders, at the banquet. If you would like to join us at our parish table please notify the parish office by February 14th.

This year we had a **beautiful adornment of ornaments and lights** on our Christmas trees, angels on our angel trees, and poinsettias to decorate our altar for the Christmas Season. We thank all who have graciously helped with these memorials for family, friends, and loved ones. If you have not already done so, please settle your accounts with Emily in the office for the angel tree ornaments. Next weekend, Jan. 8th, all poinsettias and angel ornaments can be taken home by the families who purchased them. There are anonymous memorials for poinsettias. One of them might have your family name on it, so please check next weekend, and take yours with you.

**New Year Prayer** - O Sacred and Adorable Trinity, hear our prayers on behalf of St. Philip Neri parish, our Holy Father Pope Francis, our Bishop John and all of our Bishops and Priests, and for all that are in authority over us. Bless us and our parish and our parishioners, as we implore you for the Year 2017. We ask you Gracious God, in this upcoming year, to watch over the whole Catholic Church; convert all unbelievers; soften the hearts of sinners so that they may return to Your friendship; give prosperity to our country and peace among all nations of the world; pour down your blessings upon our friends, relatives, and acquaintances, and upon our enemies if we have any; assist the poor and the sick; have pity on the souls of those who died this past year and have been taken from us; and be merciful to those who will die during this coming year, and will stand before your judgment seat. May all our actions be preceded by your inspirations, O God, and be carried on by your assistance, so that all our prayers and works, have begun in You, may likewise be ended through You. Amen

**KC Blood Drive on Wednesday, Jan. 4th** from 12:30 PM - 6:00 PM. To schedule an appointment, please contact Deacon Gary at 701-754-2579 or go to: [www.bloodhero.com](http://www.bloodhero.com), Sponsor code: napoleon.



Rosary 25 minutes before weekend Masses.

Saturday, January 7th
Paul Haegele

Sunday, January 8th
Jim Bitz Family

	Saturday, January 7
<u>Sacristan</u>	Phyllis Johnson
<u>Lectors</u>	Mary Schneider, Chuck Wald
<u>Ushers/Gift Bearers</u>	Joe & Charley Cichy; Logan & Alison Wald
<u>Servers</u>	Madison Feist, Payton Feist, Darissa Becker
<u>EMHC</u>	Paul Haegele, Rick Regner, Jenny Weigel

	Sunday, January 8
<u>Sacristan</u>	Mark Wangler
<u>Lectors</u>	Richard Gross, Tommy Gross
<u>Ushers/Gift Bearers</u>	Jaford & Rosemary Burgad; Gary Moch Family
<u>Servers</u>	Dalton Feist, Jada Schwartz, Blaise Bitz, Janae Weigel, William Kleppe
<u>EMHC</u>	Char Young, Amber Fettig, Jackie Grunfelder