

# *Second Sunday of Advent*

*Peace*





### MASSES FOR THIS WEEK

#### Monday, December 11-St. Damasus I

7:00 am Communion Service ([Holy Family](#))

#### Tuesday, December 12-Our Lady of Guadalupe

5:00 pm Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Powell by John & Joyce Hickey ([Holy Family](#))  
 [followed with Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novena]

#### Wednesday, December 13-St. Lucy

7:00 am Communion Service ([Holy Family](#))  
 8:30 am Special Intention [Health & Healing for Jim Fleshman] by Jack & Margaret Peifer ([Holy Family](#))  
 6:45 pm CCD Christmas Program ([Holy Family](#))

#### Thursday, December 14-St. John of the Cross

7:00 am Communion Service ([Holy Family](#))  
 11:00 am Rev. Robert O'Connor by the Estate ([Vonderlieth](#))  
 12 Noon Recitation of the Rosary ([Holy Family](#))  
 2-5:30 pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament [with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament] ([Holy Family](#))  
 5:30 pm Divine Mercy Chaplet Meditation with Benediction following ([Holy Family](#))  
 7:00 pm Carroll Catholic School Christmas Program ([Holy Family](#))

#### Friday, December 15

7:00 am Communion Service ([Holy Family](#))  
 10:30 am Virginia Rohlf's by Family ([Timber Creek Village](#))

#### Saturday, December 16

4:00 pm Jerry Overby by Mike & Karen Overby ([Holy Family](#))  
 4:00 pm All Souls ([St. Patrick's](#))

#### Sunday, December 17-Third Sunday of Advent

8:00 am Jean Donath by Donna & Lee Burr ([Holy Family](#))  
 8:30 am Richard "Slip" Gleason by Tom & Nancy Davis ([St. Patrick's](#))  
 9:00 am Robert & Bernadine Steffen by Susan Kuhlmyer ([St. Mary's](#))  
 10:00 am Wes O'Donoghue by Family ([Holy Family](#))  
 10:30 am Bernard Trauner by Family ([St. Thomas Aquinas](#))

**NOTE:** Reconciliation at [Holy Family Church](#), Lincoln, is held each Tuesday from 4:30-4:55 pm and each Saturday from 2:45-3:30 pm.

Reconciliation at [St. Mary's Church](#), Atlanta, is held prior to the 9 am Sunday Mass.

Reconciliation at [St. Patrick's Church](#), Elkhart, is held each Saturday from 3:15-3:45 pm.

Reconciliation at [St. Thomas Aquinas Church](#), Mt. Pulaski, is held prior to the 10:30 am Sunday Mass.

Based on the availability of clergy, this schedule is subject to change. Please check the parish calendar on the website for any changes or additions.

## 2nd Sunday of Advent Cycle B

John the Baptist's call to repentance is echoed in the U.S. Bishops' pastoral letter on stewardship: "Christians must beg God for the grace of conversion: the grace to know who they are, to whom they belong, how they are to live—the grace to repent and change and grow, the grace to become good disciples and stewards."

### SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

#### Monday, December 11

Isaiah 35:10-14 / Psalm 85:9-14 / Luke 5:17-26

#### Tuesday, December 12

Zechariah 2:14-17 *or*  
 Revelation 11:19; 12:1-6, 10 /  
 Judith 13:18-19 / Luke 1:26-38 *or* Luke 1:39-47

#### Wednesday, December 13

Isaiah 40:25-31 /  
 Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10 /  
 Matthew 11:28-30

#### Thursday, December 14

Isaiah 41:13-20 /  
 Psalm 145:1, 9-13 /  
 Matthew 11:11-15

#### Friday, December 15

Isaiah 48:17-19 / Psalm 1:1-4, 6 / Matthew 11:16-19

#### Saturday, December 16

Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11 / Psalm  
 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 /  
 Matthew 17:9-13

#### Sunday, December 17

Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11 / Luke  
 1:46-50, 53-54 / 1  
 Thessalonians 5:16-24 /  
 John 1:6-8, 19-28



On Sunday, December 3, **Archer David Wulf**, son of David & Angela Wulf, was baptized at St.

St. Lucy, feast day December 13, is the patron saint of the blind and eye disorders.

Mary's Church. We welcome Archie into our Logan County Roman Catholic Community and congratulate him and his family.

## ST. MARY'S, ATLANTA

### ~Ministry Schedule for Sunday, December 17:

Reader-Paul Eckert; Servers-Andrew O'Donnell & Nicholas O'Donnell; Greeters & Gift Bearers-Paul & Vicki Eckert

~**Cleaning/Coffee & Donuts Committee** for December Pat & Ken Conlin, Sherian McGuire, Becky Schmidt, Katie & Laura Smock.

## ST. PATRICK'S, ELKHART

~**Next Coffee & Donuts** will be held on **Sunday, December 31**, after the 8:30 am Mass.

~**Cleaning Schedule:** December 17 Raymond Smith & Rob Smith / December 31 Karen Bender and Phil & Linda Koeberlein. Please clean the week before the Sunday you are assigned.

~**Parish Christmas Party** will be held **next Sunday, December 17**. The church will be decorated after the 8:30 am Mass and our "Christmas Brunch" will immediately follow. Each family is asked to bring a breakfast dish and/or breakfast pastry. Meat and drinks will be provided.

## ST. THOMAS AQUINAS,

MT. PULASKI

~**Next Coffee & Donuts** will take place on **Sunday, January 7** after the 10:30 am Mass.

~**Cleaning Schedule:** Come to St. Thomas Aquinas Church at 4 pm **this Tuesday, December 12**, (2nd Tuesday of each month) to assist with cleaning. Your time allows us to keep our Church and lower level clean, and this is a great way to make an important contribution to our parish facility.

## Come Pray the Rosary!

Come join the residents at 10:15 am **this Monday, December 11**, in the St. Clara's Manor Chapel to pray the Rosary. A gathering to pray the Rosary takes place on the second Monday of each month at St. Clara's Manor.

### DONATION/TAX CREDIT OPPORTUNITY

The State of Illinois passed the Invest in Kids Act, which includes a five-year program for tax credit scholarships for parochial and private schools. Your support of Carroll Catholic School through this program not only offers students a greater opportunity to receive a quality, Catholic education, but provides you with a 75% state tax credit for your donation. Information about the program and how you and Carroll School benefit can be found at [www.carrollcatholicschool.com](http://www.carrollcatholicschool.com).



Parishioners of Holy Family, if you are not already a part of this ministry, are asked to consider becoming a greeter and/or usher at the Masses. Call the Parish Office if you are interested.

## A Letter from our Bishop

Dear Friends in Christ,

I urge your prayerful support for the Retired Religious Fund Collection.

In his homily on the World Day of Consecrated Life, Pope Francis remarked, "Putting Jesus in the midst of his people means taking up and carrying the crosses of our brothers and sisters." Through prayer and ministry, our senior religious did just this. As they cared for the sick, aided the needy, and educated countless children, they sought to shoulder the crosses of those they served --- making tangible the love of Jesus. Today, we see the legacy of these selfless women and men carried forth in the ongoing ministries of their religious communities.

Yet many communities struggle with insufficient retirement savings. Rising health care costs and decreased income compound the challenge to furnish adequate eldercare. In 1988, the U.S. bishops initiated the annual appeal to help address the deficit in retirement funding. Proceeds offer financial assistance and services that help congregations care for aging members while continuing to focus on mission and ministry.

So I invite your generous response to the collection. May we all unite in love and thanksgiving for the elderly religious who "put Jesus in our midst."

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C.  
BISHOP OF PEORIA

NOTE: The Retirement for Religious Fund Collection will be taken up at all the Masses **this weekend (December 9/10)**. **All proceeds will be sent to the Springfield Dominican's, in gratitude for their support of our Logan County Catholic Community.**

### CHRISTMAS GIVING FOR OUR PRIESTS

If you wish to give a monetary Christmas donation to one or more of our priests, you must mark your donation specifically for them. If you give cash, please put your gift in a separate envelope marked with the individual priest's name on it or if you wish to give a check, make out the check for each individual priest. Any donation, unless marked specifically to go to one or more of the priests, will go into the regular collection.



### PARISH HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS



<b>Monday, December 25</b>	Office Closed
<b>Tuesday, December 26</b>	Office Closed
<b>Wednesday, December 27</b>	Open 9 am to 12 Noon
<b>Thursday, December 28</b>	Open 9 am to 12 Noon
<b>Friday, December 29</b>	Office Closed
<b>Monday, January 1</b>	Office Closed
<b>Tuesday, January 2</b>	Office Closed
<b>Wednesday, January 3</b>	Regular Hours 8 am-4 pm

The Parish Office is closed every Friday on a regular basis.



Is Christ calling you to serve Him in others as a sister, brother or priest? Call Father Tim Hepner at (309) 671-1550 or email [fr\\_hepner@dcop.org](mailto:fr_hepner@dcop.org).

**St. John Vianney, patron of priests, pray for our priests.**

**Season's Greetings  
from the Staff at  
The Center for Youth  
and Family  
Solutions.**



**Returning your Angel**

**Tree purchases:** After you have made your purchase(s) you can return the gift(s) to the church, bring it to our office (2100 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln) or call The Center for Youth and Family Solutions office (217) 732-3771 to arrange for someone to pick the gift up. **We are asking that all gifts be returned by THIS MONDAY, DECEMBER 11<sup>th</sup> so we will have enough time to distribute the gifts to all our families.** Please help give each child and family a Merry Christmas. Thank You!



**NEXT SUNDAY (December 17)  
IS FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY!**

Please bring non-perishable food items for the food pantry: For Holy Family there is a shopping cart located to the right in the main entrance, for St. Mary's a box is provided in the gathering area, St. Patrick's and St. Thomas Aquinas items may be left in the main entrance. Items that are always needed include: \*\*canned fruit, canned vegetables, spaghetti & egg noodles, spaghetti sauce, saltine crackers, cereal, Jell-O, tuna, soups, navy or pinto beans, pancake mix & syrup, macaroni & cheese and toilet paper. This last month 37 families were served with 152 bags of groceries with expenditures totaling \$1,731.00.

**Need a Christmas gift idea?** St. Thomas Aquinas Cookbooks are available for \$15 each and loaded with recipes collected from all of our Logan County Parishes. Cookbooks can be purchased at the Logan County Parish Office or by contacting Jennifer at 871-5302 or Jeanie at 792-5966.



**FAMILY LUNCHEON**



Parishioners, and families from all four parishes are invited to come to the Family Luncheon to be held **this Thursday, December 14**, in the Carroll Catholic School cafeteria with lunch beginning at 11:45 am. No fee required, but donations will be accepted.

**CHRISTMAS FOOD  
BASKETS TO BE  
DISTRIBUTED**

The Knights of Columbus members will provide **Christmas Food Baskets** again this year to those less fortunate. The food baskets will be **delivered Saturday, December 16th**. They are seeking donations to support the purchase of food that makes a complete dinner. Please make your check payable to Knights of Columbus - Christmas Baskets. The checks can be mailed to Knights of Columbus 1250, PO Box 231, Lincoln, IL 62656, or dropped in the Sunday collection (marked for the K of C Christmas Food Baskets). Thank you for your donations. You will bring Christmas joy to these families!



**PLAN AHEAD . . . . .  
SPECIAL BULLETIN DEADLINES**

- 1) The announcement deadline for the December 24<sup>th</sup> bulletin will be by **6 am on Monday, December 18.**
- 2) The announcement deadline for the combined December 31, 2017 & January 7, 2018 bulletin will be by **12 Noon on Thursday, December 21.**

CCS Culver's Day is held on the **third Wednesday of each month, with the next one taking place on December 20**, from 10:30 am-10 pm. Use the coupon below or mention Carroll School when making your purchase.



A Carroll Catholic School Culver's (2530 Woodlawn Road, Lincoln) Fundraiser will take place on the third Wednesday of each month from 10:30 am-10 pm. Ten percent of all sales go towards Carroll Catholic School. The classroom that raises the most monies, receives a classroom custard party from the team at Culver's of Lincoln. **BRING THIS COUPON!**

**FAMILY NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**GRADE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **AMOUNT RECEIVED:** \_\_\_\_\_

To help celebrate St. Nicholas Day (December 6), the "God is on the Move Crafters" gifted each Carroll Catholic School student. Crafters meet on Thursdays, from 1-3 pm at the Casa. All are welcome.



**BEST ADVENT EVER** is a free email

program from Dynamic Catholic. It is something we can all use during this time of year to help us slow down and focus on what matters most during this busy season. It helps us experience Advent in a way we have never experienced it before - leading us to experience Christmas in a new way.

1. You can experience the Best Advent Ever program by going to this link: [https://dynamiccatholic.com/best-advent-ever/#sign\\_up\\_section](https://dynamiccatholic.com/best-advent-ever/#sign_up_section) and signing up.
2. Starting off, you will receive daily emails with short inspirational videos, practical tips to incorporate into your everyday life, and personal stories from Dynamic Catholic team members.
3. Throughout Advent, participants will discover how to slow down and find joy in preparing for Christmas.

**Through the mercy of God, may he rest in peace.**

John T. Hayes

## Substitute Cook Needed

Carroll School has an occasional need for a substitute cook at lunch time in Mrs. Buse's absence. Those interested should possess a food handler's license and may contact Mrs. Buse or Mr. Welch at 732-7518. Thank you.

*The more people praying for an intention,  
the stronger the prayer becomes.*

## Prayer Chain

Request prayers by sending an email to lcc4- prayer-chain@googlegroups.com. If you would like to subscribe to the prayer chain, follow the "Join Prayer Chain" link located on [www.logancountycatholic.org](http://www.logancountycatholic.org). When your web browser opens click on "Subscribe to this group" option, then follow the instructions in the pop-up box. You should receive an email within 48 hours that indicates you have been accepted as a member of the prayer chain.

*Prayer  
Works*



Is Christ calling you to serve Him in others as a sister, brother or priest? Call Father Tim Hepner at (309) 671-1550 or email [fr\\_hepner@dcop.org](mailto:fr_hepner@dcop.org).

**St. John Vianney, patron of priests, pray for our priests.**

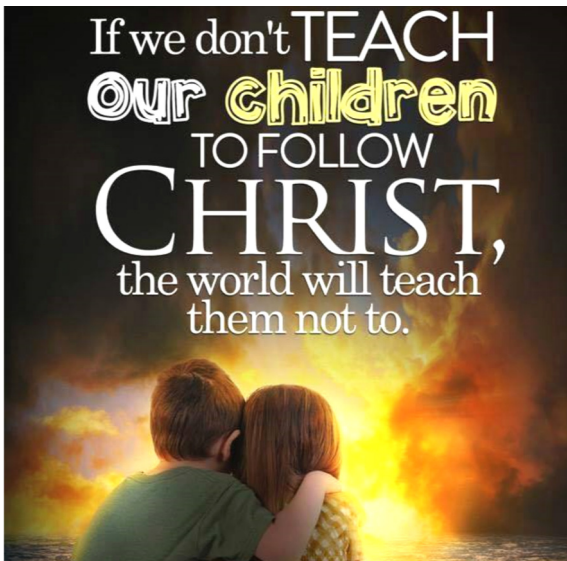
Remember the following  
in your prayers:

Anne Lowry, Anna Beckers, Les Jarnagin, Steve Coogan, Mike Lowry, Paul Lowry, Gay (Ruble) Conder, Matthew Lowry, Elijah Cox, Harriett Richardson, Guinevere Decker, Laura Saladino, Joan Lewis, Boone O'Donoghue, Ruth Young, David Olson, Rodney Alberts, Jill Alberts, Jan Loeffelholz, Linda Wright, Ben Velasco, Steve Schmidt, Ryan Butler, Donna Burr, Paula Rutherford, James Thean, Gavin Fox, Greg Patterson, Kevin McCrary, Joe Bell, Mark VanRheeden, Rita Johnson, Diana Brown, Louise Cardoni, Nicole Bottrell, Adelyn Jones, McKayla Nye, Judy Morrow, Gavin Shuler, Phillip Brown, Christina Clementz, Mike Kavanaugh, E. J. Miley, Howard Sheley, Bud & Rosie Huber, Gene Giehl, Linda H., Mark L. and all the members of the armed forces of our country. If you would like to add a name to the list, call the Parish Office at (217) 732-4019 or email [mklohrenz@logancountycatholic.org](mailto:mklohrenz@logancountycatholic.org)

**PLEASE  
PRAY  
FOR  
THE  
SICK**



If we don't **TEACH**  
**Our children**  
TO FOLLOW  
**CHRIST,**  
the world will teach  
them not to.



**The sanctuary candle on the altar at . . .**

***Holy Family Church is lit this week***

In Memory of Wes O'Donoghue  
requested by Family.

***St. Mary's Church is lit this week***

In Memory of Virginia Rohlfs  
requested by Family.

**The blue candle at the foot of the  
Blessed Virgin Mary statue at . . .**

***Holy Family Church is lit this week***

In Thanksgiving for my son's addiction  
recovery.



Help your teens access professional and dynamic Catholic short films from an award-winning film company. Simply tap the "videos" button in myParish App to

view shorts from the popular ODB film company. Now you can receive positive content for your teens right from their phones. Go to this web address for more info: <https://vimeo.com/230836388>

## December 2/3, 2017 Weekly Offering Versus Budget

Parish	Budget Requirement	Weekly Offering	Weekly Online Giving	Weekly Budget Surplus/ (Shortfall)
Holy Family	\$7,200.00	\$7,050.00	\$145.00	<b>(\$5.00)</b>
St. Mary's	\$1,200.00	\$1,271.00	\$40.00	<b>\$111.00</b>
St. Patrick's	\$1,395.00	\$1,908.50	\$0.00	<b>\$513.50</b>
St. Thomas Aquinas	\$1,045.00	\$1,259.00	\$0.00	<b>\$214.00</b>

*Totals do not include donations for: Easter, Memorials, Food Pantry, Diocesan Collections, Estates, Utilities, Missionary Collections, Building Funds, Capital Campaigns and Miscellaneous Donations.*

Parish Office, 316 South Logan Street, Lincoln, IL  
62656 - (217) 732-4019 ~  
[www.logancountyCatholic.org](http://www.logancountyCatholic.org)

**Rev. Jeffrey G. Laible, Pastor ~ Rev. Simon Taabu, In Residence ~ Rev. John Pham, Parochial Vicar**

**Sister Mary Lou Owens, Spiritual Life Coordinator**

**Kathy Buse, Religious Education Coordinator**

**Deacon Wendell Lowry, Business Manager**

**Pam Coogan, Bookkeeper**

**Alicia Baker & Mary Kay Lohrenz, Secretaries**

**Ruth Freesmeier, Director of Music**

**Carroll Catholic School (217) 732-7518 - David Welch,**

**Principal ~ Jennifer Craig, Secretary**

**Holy Cross & St. Mary Cemeteries (217) 737-5946 -**

**Tom Larson, Sexton**

# IN THANKSGIVING FOR THE BLESSINGS WE HAVE RECEIVED—"GIVING BACK" IDEAS DURING THIS SPECIAL TIME OF YEAR!

- \*Holy Family Food Pantry
- \*Love Repeated  
(Aid to the Rulenge-Ngara  
Diocese of Tanzania, East Africa)
- \*Carroll Catholic School
- \*Carroll Catholic PIE Chart Items
- \*Diocesan Annual Development Appeal
- \*Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA
- \*Holy Family Capital Campaign
- \*Holy Family Building Fund
- \*St. Mary's Cemetery
- \*Holy Cross Cemetery
- \*St. Mary's Building Fund
- \*St. Patrick's Building Fund
- \*St. Thomas Aquinas Building Fund
- \*Dominican Sisters of Springfield, IL
- \*Landstuhl Hospital Care Project  
(supports the wounded warriors at Landstuhl  
Medical Center and in the USA)
- \*Phone Cards for the Troops
- \*Angel Tree  
(placed in each of our four parish Churches)
- \*Rotary Foundation
- \*Coffee/PJ's for the Deployed Troops

Coffee/PJ's for the deployed troops can be dropped off at the parish office (316 South Logan Street, Lincoln) during regular business hours (Monday-Thursday 8 am-4 pm).

Listed above are just a few suggestions for Thanksgiving/Advent charity giving. There are many other good charitable organizations that will benefit from your donations. Whatever organization you choose to support, know that you are helping to make the world a better place. If you have any questions about any of the mentioned charities, please call the parish office (217) 732-4019.

**Donations** of cash or checks are accepted. Please make your check payable to Holy Family or St. Mary's or St. Patrick's or St. Thomas Aquinas or Carroll Catholic School and indicate, in the memo line, what charity you would like your donation(s) sent.

## 2017 Advent/Christmas Season Calendar

### Christmas Programs

#### Wednesday, December 13

6:45 pm Holy Family/St. Mary's CCD Christmas Program in Holy Family Church (with students in class by 6:30 pm)

#### Thursday, December 14

7:00 pm Carroll Catholic School Christmas Program in Holy Family Church

### Advent Reconciliation

#### Tuesday, December 19

7:00 pm Advent Reconciliation Service for all four parishes @ Holy Family Church

Regular Reconciliation times are:

Holy Family Church - Tuesdays 4:30-5 pm

Prior to Saturday evening

Mass or by appointment

St. Mary's Church - Prior to 9 am Sunday Mass or by appointment

St. Patrick's Church - Prior to 4 pm Saturday Mass or by appointment

St. Thomas Aquinas Church - Prior to 10:30 am Sunday Mass or by

### Schedule to Fulfill Regular Weekend Mass Obligation

#### Saturday, December 23

4:00 pm Mass @ St. Patrick's

4:00 pm Mass @ Holy Family

5:00 pm Mass @ St. Mary's

5:30 pm Mass @ St. Thomas Aquinas

#### Sunday, December 24

8:00 am Mass @ Holy Family

### Vigil Masses for Christmas- Holy Day of Obligation

#### Sunday, December 24

4:00 pm Mass @ Holy Family

4:00 pm Mass @ St. Patrick's

6:00 pm Mass @ St. Mary's

7:30 pm Mass @ St. Thomas Aquinas

9:00 pm Mass @ Holy Family

### Christmas-Holy Day of Obligation

#### Monday, December 25

9:00 am Mass @ Holy Family

**The Feast Day of the Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God is NOT a Holy Day of Obligation this year.**

**Based on the availability of clergy, this schedule is subject to change. Please check the parish calendar on the website [www.logancountycatholic.org](http://www.logancountycatholic.org) for any changes or additions.**

ADA (Annual Diocesan Appeal Update as of October 31, 2017)

Church Goal	Goal	Pledged	Received	Pledges Needed to Reach
St. Patrick	\$15,896	\$21,944.31	\$20,897.86	\$0.00
Holy Family	\$58,382	\$50,604.00	\$49,146.00	\$7,778.00
St. Mary	\$11,229	\$ 9,645.00	\$8,205.00	\$1,584.00
St. Thomas Aquinas	\$13,532	\$11,901.20	\$9,941.20	\$1,630.80

*The story of Silent Night* begins in the beautiful city of Salzburg, Austria. In the splendor of that

baroque city ruled by the Prince Archbishop, a simple weaver named Anna lived. Anna, alone in this world, was of very modest means with little hope of raising her lifestyle or even marrying. One day she fell in love with a soldier, stationed in Salzburg. In a fling, she and the soldier conceived a child, who was born on December 11, 1792. However, he took no responsibility for his child, and left Anna and the baby to fend for themselves. Nevertheless, Anna gave the soldier's surname to her baby, whom she named Joseph Mohr. Being an unwed mother, Anna knew the scorn and rejection of society. She finally asked the city hangman to be the godparent to her baby Joseph.

Anna provided as best she could for Joseph and realized that a good education would give him the hope of a good future. The local parish priest recognized his brightness and his singing ability. He arranged for Joseph to attend the famous abbey school of Kremsmünster. There, young Joseph excelled in his studies. He later realized he had a vocation to the priesthood and entered the seminary at the age of 16. Finally, when he was ready for ordination at the age of 22, Joseph needed a special dispensation since he had no father.

Joseph Mohr was assigned as the assistant pastor at St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, about 10 miles northwest of Salzburg on the River Salzach. (The church of St. Nicholas was destroyed by flooding in 1899, but a memorial chapel stands there today.) The parish was of very modest means, and the pastor was strict and frugal to say the least.

Here Father Mohr became friends with Franz Gruber. Gruber was the son of a weaver, who had little appreciation for music. Franz was expected to follow in the trade of his father. Despite his father's disapproval, Franz began playing the guitar and the organ. The parish priest allowed Franz even to practice in Church. His talents too were recognized, and he was sent to school for formal music training. He eventually settled in the town of Oberndorf, working as a music teacher and raising his family of 12 children. Mohr and Gruber shared their love of music, and both played the guitar.

On December 23, 1818, with Christmas fast approaching, Mohr went to visit a mother and her new born child. On the way back to the Rectory, he paused by the river and meditated on the first Christmas. He wrote a poem capturing the essence of that great faith event, and called it *Silent Night, Holy Night*. In his composition, he captured the ineffable mystery of the incarnation and birth of our Lord: The holy infant Jesus, who is Christ the Savior, Son of God, and Love's pure light, was born of Mary and filled the world with the redeeming grace from Heaven.

Upon his return to the parish, he was confronted with the news that the organ was broken. Voracious mice had eaten through the bellows, disabling the wind system necessary for the pipes to produce music. Being so close to Christmas and without sufficient funds to consider repairing the organ, the people feared that Midnight Mass would be silent. Father Mohr rushed to the home of his friend, Franz Gruber, and shared his plight. He handed Gruber the poem, and asked him to write a melody for it to be played on the guitar. Franz Gruber completed the task in time. At Midnight Mass, 1818, the world heard for the first time the simple yet profound song we know as *Silent Night*.

The song was well received, and quickly spread throughout Austria, oftentimes being called simply *A Tyrolean Carol*. Frederick Wilhelm IV, King of Prussia, heard *Silent Night* at the Berlin Imperial Church and ordered it to be sung throughout the kingdom at Christmas pageants and services. Ironically, the music gained fame without any attribution to its composers. Some thought Michael Haydn, the brother of the famous composer Franz Joseph Haydn, wrote the piece. Frederick Wilhelm, thereby, ordered a search.

One day, the king's agents arrived at St. Peter's monastery in Salzburg, inquiring about the composers of *Silent Night*. Felix, the son of Franz Gruber, who was a student there, approached them and told them the story behind *Silent Night* and directed them to his father, who was now the choir master of another parish. From that time on, both Mohr and Gruber were credited with *Silent Night*.

Father Joseph Mohr died at the age of 56 of tuberculosis on December 4, 1848. Gruber died at the age of 76.

Our English translation is attributed to Jane Campbell in 1863, and was carried to America in 1871, appearing in Charles Hutchins *Sunday School Hymnal*.

Each year as we prepare to celebrate Christmas, may we truly take to heart the words of *Silent Night* and may its message be carried in our own thoughts, words, and deeds.

*Taken from Father Saunders' Catholic Straight Answers at [Catholicstraightanswers.com](http://Catholicstraightanswers.com)*

*From 1558 until 1829 Roman Catholics, in England, were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics.*



- \* The partridge in a pear tree was Jesus Christ.
- \* Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments.
- \* Three French hens stood for faith, hope and love.
- \* The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark Luke & John.
- \* The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament.
- \* The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.
- \* Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit: Prophesy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership and Mercy.
- \* The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.
- \* Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self Control.
- \* The ten lords a-leaping were the ten commandments.
- \* The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.
- \* The twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.