

The Immaculate Heart



*O God, you
make us
glad by the
yearly
festival of
the birth of
your only
Son Jesus
Christ*

Inside this issue

Legend of the Poinsettia	2
ARCIC IN 2010	2
Christmas Prayer	2
The True Christmas Season	3
Ask a Question	3
From Our Tradition	3
SOM in the News	4
Prayers & Intercessions	4
Ward Information	4

The Story of Silent Night, Holy Night

In the winter of 1818 at St. Nicholas' Church at Obendorf, a village near Salzburg, Austria, Joseph Mohr, the assistant to the priest, faced a dilemma. It was just days before Christmas, and the church organ which was so important to providing music for the Christmas services was broken.

In 1816 Mohr had written a simple poem that the villagers could understand expressing the wonder of the birth of Jesus. He asked his friend Franz Gruber who was the organist at St. Nicholas to write music to accompany his poem so that they could sing it together using a guitar to accompany their singing.

They first performed their newly composed Christmas carol at the Christmas Eve midnight service on December 24, 1818. It did not instantly receive the worldwide recognition it has come to know, however.

It was not until years later in 1825 when Carl Mauracher was rebuilding the organ at St. Nicholas that a handwritten copy of the words and music was found in the organ loft.. Mauracher was from an area in the

mountains of Tyrol which had many traveling folk choirs who performed throughout Europe. He carried the carol back home, and it became a popular song with the choirs as they traveled and spread its popularity wherever they went.

A manuscript for "Silent Night" in Mohr's hand was discovered in 1995 which is dated 1816. In the manuscript Mohr credits the melody used in the carol to Franz Gruber. Whatever the details of the circumstances, Joseph Mohr's and Franz Gruber's contribution of Christmas music for their village's Christmas Eve midnight mass gave us all the beautiful "Silent Night, Holy Night."





The Legend of the Poinsettia

SOME TIME AGO, I heard a lovely Christmas story about Maria, a young girl who lived on a poor family farm in a small village in Mexico. It was a custom in the village to glorify the Christmas season with special events to celebrate the birth of the Christ Child, Jesus. Everyone took part in the preparations by festively decorating the village church and the piazza in front of it. Even the children helped by making gifts to give to the Baby Jesus on Christmas Eve.

Maria wanted to make a very special gift. She had helped her mother before with the loom, so she tried, on her own, to weave a colorful blanket. But Maria was too inexperienced and the yarns became an entangled mess. Maria was heartbroken. She wanted so much to be able to march in procession with the other village children, but she had no gift to give to the Christ Child. Finally it was Christmas Eve! The villagers gathered in the piazza. Some whispered that they thought they could hear angels singing tonight. Everyone was ready. Holding lit candles, all the villagers began to process down the aisle amid joyous music and singing. All except for Maria, who hid in the shadows, watching with tears in her eyes as the procession to the church started. "I don't have a gift for the Baby Jesus," she sniffled softly. "I tried and tried to make something beautiful, but instead I ruined it." Suddenly, Maria heard a voice. She looked up and saw only a bright star in the sky; it seemed to hover and shine over the village church. Was it this star that spoke to her? "Maria," she heard the voice again, "The baby Jesus will love whatever you give because it comes from your heart. Love is what makes any gift special." With that, Maria stepped out from the shadows. Nearby she noticed some tall green weeds. She rushed over and quickly filled her arms with the weeds, covering them with her manto. Then she ran swiftly to the church. By the time she arrived, the candles were ablaze and the children were singing as they walked down the aisle carrying their gifts to the Christ Child. Padre Francesco placed the figure of the baby Jesus in the manger, with the children's gifts all around it. Suddenly, Maria was scared when she saw all those people dressed in such beautiful clothes, and she was dressed so poorly. She tried to slip behind one of the big pillars, but she was too slow. Padre Francesco saw her. "Maria, Maria," he called out. "Hurry girl, come, bring up your gift!" Maria was terrified. She wondered, "Do I run away? Do I go forward?" The Padre saw her apprehension and coaxed her more gently, "Maria, come up here and see the Baby Jesus. There is space left for one more gift." Before she could think, Maria found herself walking down the main aisle of the church. "What is Maria carrying under her manto?" the villagers whispered. "Where's her gift?" Padre Francesco stepped down from the altar and walked with Maria to the Christmas crèche. Maria bowed her head and said a prayer then opened her manto and let the weeds tumble out. Voices gasped, "Look! Look at those glorious flowers!" Startled, Maria opened her eyes. She was stunned. For each weed was now topped with a flaming, bright, red star. And outside, too, every weed now bore a bright red star. Maria's love had created a miracle.

Third PHASE OF CATHOLIC-ANGLICAN DIALOGUE TO BEGIN IN 2010

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The formal theological dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion will continue and will focus on the relationship between the local church and the universal church, the Vatican announced.

This third phase of work by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission "will deal with fundamental questions regarding the church as communion local and universal, and how in communion the local and universal church comes to discern right ethical teaching," said a Vatican announcement published Nov. 28.

The announcement was made one week after Pope Benedict XVI and Anglican Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury, spiritual leader of the Anglican Communion, met at the Vatican.

The question of the relationship of the local church to the universal church has been the subject of debate both within the Catholic Church and especially in the Anglican Communion, primarily as it relates to the authority of local bishops and the authority of local churches to make decisions on matters of church practice and on moral issues.

Msgr. Mark Langham, an official at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, told Vatican Radio Nov. 26 that ARCIC III would begin with the broad question of the relationship between the local and universal church. Only then, he said, would it begin to discuss specific issues that individual Anglican provinces have dealt with separately such as the ordination of women, blessing same-sex unions and ordaining openly gay clergy.

He said the Vatican and the Anglican Communion hope the first meeting of the new commission would take place before the end of 2010, but both sides still have to appoint theologians to the commission, establish working groups and set a meeting schedule.

ARCIC was established after Pope Paul VI and Anglican Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury met in 1966. The first round of talks, known as ARCIC I, met from 1970-82 and reached agreements on baptism, Eucharist and ministry and developed common understanding on some issues related to authority in the church. ARCIC II met from 1983-2005 and reached agreements on papal authority, salvation and the church, the church as communion and a variety of beliefs about Mary and Marian piety.





The True Christmas Season

This, not Advent, is the true Christmas Season. As most people in secular countries are putting away "Christmas-y" things, and as shopping malls stop blaring "Here Comes Santa Claus," We are just getting started. The cleaning and baking during penitential Advent pays off now, and the feasting and caroling begin!

The entire Christmas Cycle is a crescendo of Christ's manifesting Himself as God and King -- to the shepherds, to the Magi, at His Baptism, to Simeon and the prophetess, Anna (Luke 2). The days from the Feast of the nativity to the Epiphany are known as "The Twelve Days of Christmas," with Christmas itself being the first day, and Twelfthnight -- 5 January -- being the last of the twelve days. Christmastide liturgically ends on 13 January, the Octave of the Epiphany and the Baptism of Christ (at which time the season of Time After Epiphany begins). But Christmas doesn't end spiritually -- i.e., the celebration of the events of Christ's life as a child don't end, and the great Christmas Cycle doesn't end -- until Candlemas on 2 February and the beginning of the Season of Septuagesima.

In this way, just as from Ash Wednesday on, we commemorate Christ in the desert for forty days, and just as after Easter we celebrate for forty days until

the Ascension, after Christmas we celebrate the Child Jesus for forty days -- all through the season of Time After Epiphany -- until Candlemas. The schema of those Christ Child celebrations looks like this:

- **Christmas** Christ is born
- **Feast of the Holy Innocents** Herod slaughters the baby boys in order to kill the Christ Child
- **The Circumcision (the Octave of Christmas)** Jesus follows the Law
- **Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus (Circumcision)** After He is circumcised, He is named and becomes a part of the Holy Family
- **Twelfth Night** The Twelve Days of Christmas as a Feast come to an end
- **Feast of the Epiphany** Jesus reveals His divinity to the three Magi, and during His Baptism, and at the wedding at Cana
- **Baptism of Our Lord/Octave of the Epiphany** Christmas liturgically ends with the Octave of the Epiphany.
- **Feast of the Holy Family** Jesus condescends to be subject to His parents.

Feast of the Purification (Candlemas) 40 days after giving birth, Mary goes to the **Temple to be purified and to "redeem" Jesus per the Old Testament Law of the firstborn. Christmas truly ends as a Season with Candlemas and the beginning of Septuagesima.**

Ask a Question

What is the difference of meaning of the terms Transubstantiation, Real Presence and Consubstantiation? All provinces of the Church (Anglican, Eastern, Roman) accept the fact of the Real Presence, because they accept the sacramental principle. In Holy communion, the inward part is the Body and Blood of Christ, which are indeed given, taken and received by the faithful. Holy Eucharist is the continual re-presentation of the Sacrifice of the Cross. The Roman Catholic Church has defined how the Real Presence happens (actually the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ) as Transubstantiation. Consubstantiation seems to be a Lutheran definition of the Real Presence in Holy communion. It differs from transubstantiation in one important way. The Real Presence is "side by side" with the witness, expressed by the bread and Wine. The Real Presence is not intimately connected with the elements, is not the representation of the Sacrifice of the Cross and after Holy Communion the Real Sacramental Presence is taken away, even if a portion of the Consecrated Gifts remain upon the Altar. *Excerpts from: The Church's Answers; J.G. McCausland, S.S.J.E., M.A. Canada, 1952*

From Our Tradition

From the Old English 'Cristes Mæsse' ~ meaning the 'mass of Christ' ~ the story of Christmas begins with the birth of a babe in Bethlehem.

It is believed that Christ was born on the 25th, although the exact month is unknown. December was likely chosen so the Church could compete with rival pagan rituals held at that time of year and because of its closeness with the winter solstice in the Northern hemisphere, a traditional time of celebration among many ancient cultures





SOM in the News.

Glad to report that Fr. Richard Higginbotham has returned to Chicago and is able to begin driving again. Hopefully we will see him in the near future.

Arlene Siegel is leaving her walker in the car more often now as she is able to get along without it at most times. Happy to see her up and about.

Our Lady of Grace Church, (Proto-

shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham) Sheboygan, WI. is currently in the first stages of their discernment process for a new rector. Please keep them in your daily prayers.

Those wishing to receive future information on the Immaculate Heart of Mary, SOM should notify the secretary and provide their email address or indicate they wish to continue to receive

future mailings. For those who choose not to continue to receive information they may go to the ward's web site to keep updated.

(www.societyofmary-ne-il.org)

There will be no ward meeting in January. The next ward meeting will be held on Saturday, Feb. 6.

Have a Blessed Christmas and New Year!

Prayers and Intercessions for the Month

Guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit for the Church.

Guidance for the United States and its elected and appointed officials.

Help for those facing challenging economic times.

Guidance, direction and support: Kurt Behrel, Fr. Richard Higginbotham and Fr. Rex Perry.

That peace in this world may soon come to those areas of natural disasters, conflict and war.

Safety for our men and women serving in the military forces around

the world and our police, firefighter and first responders here at home.

That we all strengthen our personal relationship with Christ during this holiday season.

Health and recovery of Marilyn Bakalaraki, Jack Beyer, Ethel Cairns, Fr. Richard Higginbotham, Ron Lemke, John Mittlesteadt, Fr. Rex Perry, Leonard Rumpsa, Arlene Siegel, Dawn Margaret & Fr. Joel Webb.

Faithfully departed SOM members: Lois Anderson, Marian Axelrod, Bruce Flood, Bertha Escabi, Glen-Ann Jicha, Kathryn McElroy, June Nickerson,

Edna Keller, Fr. Wayne Olmstead, Ken Peck, Mildred Shadick, Stanley F. Watson and Ruth Wredan.

✠ May the souls the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



God our Father, we rejoice in the birth of our Savior. May we share his life completely by living as he has taught. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen.

Ward Information—Who, What, Where & When

MEETINGS	MEETING LOCATION	ACTING SECRETARY—TREASURER
First Saturday of the Month 9:00 A.M. Rosary Mass Coffee/Study Hour Angelus	Holy Cross Chapel 500 Park Ave. Unit 102 Lake Villa, IL. 60046 Ph: 847-543-7371	Linda Brissey P.O. Box 6088 Lindenhurst, IL. 60046 Email: chaseco@AOL.com
CHAPLAIN	Web Page	ACTING NEWSLETTER EDITOR
The Rev. Richard A. Crist Email: racrist@racrist.com	www.societyofmary-ne-il.org	Jim Strang