

ST. SYMPHOROSA PARISH



A Family Celebrating Faith

6135 S. Austin Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60638
773-767-1523 (phone) | 773-767-6135 (fax)

Parish Staff

Rev. Idzi Stacherczak, Pastor
Rev. Ted Bojczuk, Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Norman Trela, Retired Priest
Ken Hilliard, Operations Director
John & Sue O'Keefe, Music Directors
Magdalan Barry, Parish Secretary
Nancy Markham, Office Coordinator
Barb Grzenia, Religious Education
Coordinator
Kathy Berry, Principal
Nancy Loduca, Assistant Principal

Parish Office Hours

Monday through Friday
9:00 am—12:00 pm
1:00 pm—7:00 pm

Saturday: 9:00 am—12:00 pm

Our School

Address: 6125 S. Austin Avenue
773-585-6888

Schedule of Masses

Sunday: 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 am
Saturday Evening Mass: 5:00 pm

Weekdays: 8:00 am
Monday through Saturday

Holy Days:
7:30am, 9:30 am and 7:00 pm

FIRST SUNDAY

OF Advent

Watch therefore: you do not know
when the lord of the house is coming,
whether in the evening, or at midnight,
or at cockcrow, or in the morning.

Mark 13:35



DECEMBER 3, 2017

New Parishioners: Welcome to our Parish! We are so happy to have you join us.

Sacrament of Penance: Monday through Saturday after 8:00 am Mass

Sacrament of the Sick and Communion Calls: Please contact our Parish Office to make arrangements.

Sacrament of Baptism: Second & Fourth Sunday at 1:00pm in Church. Parent Preparation Session: First Thursday of every other Month at 7:00pm. Please contact Maggie in our Parish Office for assistance.

Marriages: Arrangements must be made at least 6 months prior to the proposed date of your wedding. Please contact Maggie in our Parish Office for assistance.

“OPLATKI” A POLISH CHRISTMAS TRADITION

OPLATKI
CHRISTMAS WAFERS
A RICH CHRISTMAS TRADITION
WITH DEEP ROOTS



My Dear Parishioners and Friends,
The season which is upon us is filled with many wonderful traditions that we hold very dear to our hearts. In lieu of my weekend article, I would like to share with you a tradition that is very special to me and, I know, very dear to many of you as well.

May God Bless You as we begin our Advent journey.

Along with many foods and decorations which are a part of the Polish Christmas Tradition, the sharing of Oplatki (Christmas Wafers) during the Christmas Eve dinner speaks of faith and the family unit. The tradition of the Oplatki originated in Poland and later spread to other Slavic countries.

The Oplatki are thin, rectangular wafers baked from pure wheat and water. Their composition is similar to hosts used during the celebration of the Mass.

Religious scenes, including the Nativity, Virgin Mary, Baby Jesus and the Star of Bethlehem are embossed on the wafers during the baking process. Although most are white in color, a wafer is colored pink in remembrance of the animals which brought the Holy Family to Bethlehem and kept them warm as they all lodged in a stable.

The Oplatki are broken and shared by immediate and extended family

members in the context of the Wigilia (Vigil Dinner) on Christmas Eve. Christmas Eve is one of the most holy and meaningful days of the year in Poland. It is a day of waiting for and celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Special foods are prepared for this once a year event and the dinner is meatless as a penitential reminder of the great feast of Christmas which will soon be upon them.

For the Polish people, this is no ordinary family dinner. Rather, it is more of a mood, a feeling, a frame of mind that gives one a sense of belonging and a deeper meaning. It gives the conviction that all is right with the world for at least this one night. For Polish families, this Vigil Dinner brings together all that they hold dear: God, tradition, and family.

This dinner traditionally begins with the appearance of the first star in the eastern sky which recalls the star of Bethlehem. The family gathers around the table dressed in their holiday best. A candle is lit to herald the coming of Christ, the Light of the World. After grace is said, the eldest member of the family, or the head of the household, takes the Oplatek wafer, breaks it and shares it with the next in line. The ritual is accompanied by wishes of health, happiness, and God's blessings to each other along with kisses and many embraces.

Needless to say, this is a tender and touching moment of love and for-

giveness when grudges are forgotten. It is a fleeting magical moment which has a spiritual dimension all of its own. Many are often moved to tears as they think back of Christmas Eves past. Oplatki are sent by mail, in Christmas greeting cards, to family members not present as a reminder that even though they are separated by miles, they are still intimately joined as members of one loving family.

The meal begins at a table covered by a fine white table cloth to commemorate the birth of Christ, under which is placed some straw as a reminder of the straw in the humble manger in which the Baby Jesus was placed. An extra place is set at the table for an unexpected guest, the belief stemming from an old Polish adage "A guest in the home is God in the home."

As the meal ends, the family sings Kolędy (Christmas Carols) and prepares for the journey to church for Pasterka, Midnight Mass, which begins the great celebration of Christmas.

Throughout the season of Christmas which, in Polish tradition ends with the Feast of the Presentation on February 2nd, the breaking and sharing of Oplatki continues at other festive gatherings with family and friends.

~Fr. Idzi



Today's responsorial psalm is:
Remember Your Mercies, O Lord



FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Our Lady of Guadalupe, a title given to the Blessed Virgin Mary, is well known to those of Mexican heritage. On October 12, 1945, Pope Pius XII, decreed "Our Lady of Guadalupe" to be the "Patroness of all the Americas".

Our parish will celebrate the Feast of our Lady of Guadalupe on Tuesday, December 12th at 7:00pm. As part of this Mass, everyone is invited to bring a rose to place before the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Please join us for this very special celebration as we gather as a family to honor our Mother.



Help Needed—Outdoor Church Decorations

This year, in addition to our beautiful decorations in Church, we will also be decorating outside as well.

We are seeking volunteers to lend a helping hand and join fellow parishioners with this project. If you are able to help, we will gather after the 8am mass on Saturday, December 9th in the Gathering Space of the Church and begin decorating!

Please contact the parish office with any questions. Thank you, in advance, for your help!

God Bless You for your continued support to our beautiful parish!

~Fr. Idzi



Marist High School presents a parent empowerment workshop:

"The Path to Responsibility: How to Foster Leadership Skills, Accountability, and Role Modeling in Your Teen"

Tuesday, December 12, 2017
6:30pm

Free and open to the public
4200 W. 115th Street in Chicago



Christmas Giving Tree

Each year, ornaments decorate our parish Giving Tree with requests for Christmas gifts for the poor. Parish families are invited to take one or more ornaments from the tree which is located in the Gathering Space of our church. Families are then asked to shop for the items indicated on the ornament and return the items to church on the weekend of December 9/10 so that they may be distributed to the poor in time for Christmas.

Please securely attach the ornament to the outside of the package or the gift. Gift cards can go in an envelope with the ornament taped to it. Members of the Transformation Team will be selling gift cards in the gathering space of the church this weekend.

A number of agencies whose mission is to reach out to the poor and forgotten are looking forward to our help in making Christmas a special time for children and adults who are truly in need. The groups who will benefit from this year's program include:

Our Parish Giving Tree is up and filled with many ornaments that will benefit the following organizations:

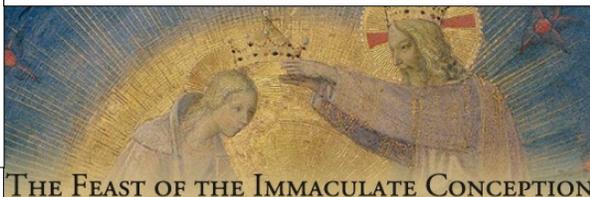
- BLUE:** Our Parish St. Vincent de Paul Society
- WHITE:** Casa Catalina
- GREEN:** PADS
- YELLOW:** Veterans at Hines Hospital
- PINK:** Veterans at Manteno

Catholic School Teaching compels us to reach out to our sisters and brothers in need. Please consider participating in the St. Symphorosa Advent Giving Tree Project and share the joy and hope of Christmas as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

PLEASE NOTE!

If you submitted a photograph of a loved one for the November Remembrance Board in our church, please note that your photograph may be picked up in our Parish Office anytime during normal business hours.

Thank you!



THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2017

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, one of six holy days of obligation for Catholics in the United States. The Blessed Mother is the patroness of our country under this title, which refers to her birth without original sin. Masses on this Holy Day are 7:30am, 9:30am and 7:00pm.

St. Symphorosa presents



Santa's Open House

Sunday, December 10, 2017
12:30pm-2:30pm

Meet and take photos with Santa, enjoy holiday treats, arts and crafts, plus much more!
Tour our school, meet our teachers, our principal, and learn more about St. Sym!

St. Symphorosa School
6125 S. Austin Avenue Chicago, IL 60638 773-585-8888

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 30TH
6:00PM—10:00PM

Christmas is the most celebrated holiday in the world. Individuals on every continent celebrate it and more than one hundred countries officially recognize Christmas. A country's Christmas celebration may vary according to that country's traditions. That being said, many traditions and symbols of Christmas are common to many countries.

No matter which country's traditions are in practice, the spirit of the season remains the same. The expression of joy and hope is constant, as is the desire to share and give others from one's own plenty.

On Saturday December 30th, we will gather as a faith community to celebrate our Christmas traditions. You are invited to bring a special dish that is unique to your tradition to share with your fellow parishioners and friends. In addition to sharing delicious foods, we will gather to sing carols and look more closely at a variety of Christmas traditions and symbols. Hope you can join us!

OPLATKI CHRISTMAS WAFERS

Oplatki is \$3.00 per package which includes three white and one pink wafer.

This year, in addition to being sold in our parish office, Oplatki will also be sold after all of the masses in the Gathering Space beginning in the First Week of Advent.



Please see our December 3rd bulletin for Fr. Idzi's special article on the History & Tradition of Oplatki.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



New Catholic School
Scholarship Opportunity
for 2018/19 School Year

Through the "Invest in Kids Act," the state of Illinois has created a new way to fund scholarships for children from low-income households who want to attend private schools. This program provides an opportunity for more students to receive a quality Catholic education. The tax credit scholarships offered through this program could cover up to 100 percent of tuition and fees for eligible, low-income students. Not all families will be eligible for the new scholarships, but we want to make sure all families are aware of the program.

Program details are still being finalized, but you can find information on the scholarships, the application process and the "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) on the Archdiocese of Chicago's website, archchicago.org/tcs. If you have any questions about tax credit scholarships, please contact the Archdiocese at InvestInKids@archchicago.org or 312.534.5321.



Advent In Our Deanery

As we begin our Advent journey, our parish, along with other parishes in our Deanery, will offer opportunities for prayer and fellowship. Please find a list of the parishes in our deanery, along with addresses and details of these programs and events. For more information and a full list of services, please visit the parish website or contact their parish office directly.

St. Symphorosa Parish—6135 S. Austin Ave.
Chicago, IL 60638
(773) 767-1523
www.stsymphorosa.org

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Friday, December 8, 2017
Mass Schedule: 7:30am 9:30am and 7:00pm

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Tuesday, December 12, 2017 - 7:00pm

Advent Reconciliation Service

Monday, December 18, 2017 - 7:00pm

Christmas Eve December 24, 2017

Mass Schedule: 4:00pm (Family Mass) and 10:00pm (Carols begin at 9:30pm)

Christmas Day December 25, 2017

Mass Schedule: 7:30am, 9:30am and 11:30am

New Year's Day January 1, 2018

Mass Schedule: 9:30am and 11:30am

St. Daniel Parish—5300 S. Natoma
Chicago, IL 60638
(773) 586-1223
www.stdan.net

Advent Mission (Polish)

Monday, December 11th 12:00pm—6:00pm
Tuesday, December 12th 12:00pm—5:00pm
Wednesday, December 13th 12:00pm—6:00pm

Live Nativity

Sunday, December 17, 2017 8:00am—2:00pm

Parish Penance Service

Monday, December 18, 2017 - 7:00pm (English & Polish)

St. Stephen Feast Day

Tuesday, December 26, 2017 11:00am and 7:00pm (Polish)

St. Rene Goupil—6949 W. 63rd Place
Chicago, IL 60638
(773) 229-8523
www.strenechicago.com

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Tuesday, December 12, 2017 - 7:00pm

Christmas Eve December 24, 2017

Mass Schedule: 4:00pm Children's Mass (begins with the reenactment of the Christmas Story by our Religious Education Students at 3:30PM) and Midnight Mass preceded by the singing of Christmas Carols beginning at 11:30PM

Christmas Day December 25, 2017

Mass Schedule: 7:30am, 9:30am and 11:30am

New Year's Eve December 31, 2017

Mass Schedule: 4:00pm

New Year's Day January 1, 2018

Mass Schedule: 8:30am and 10:30am

Our Lady of the Snows Parish

4810 S. Leamington, Chicago, IL 60638
(773) 582-2266
www.ourladyofthesnowsparish.org

Our Lady of Guadalupe Novena

December 3—December 11, 2017 7:00pm

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Mass Schedule: December 7, 2017 - 7:00pm (Anticipated Mass) December 8, 2017 8:15am with School Families (English); 7:00pm Tri-lingual (English, Spanish & Polish)

Advent Movie for Youth December 10, 2017

3:00pm—5:00pm

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Tuesday, December 12, 2017
5:00am—Mañanitas; 8:15am (English Mass) and 7:00pm Novena concluding Mass (Spanish)

Movie—Full of Grace December 15, 2017

6:30pm—9:00pm (Discussion following)

School Posadas December 22, 2017 10:00am

Advent Reconciliation Service

December 19, 2017 7:00pm (English & Spanish) 8:00pm (Polish)

Christmas Eve December 24, 2017

Mass Schedule: 5:00pm Family Mass, 10:00pm Polish Mass (Koledy starts at 9:30pm) and Midnight Mass

Christmas Day December 25, 2017

Mass Schedule: 7:30am (Mass of Early Morning), 9:00am (Polish), 10:30am (English) and 12:30pm (Spanish)



**Offerings for the weekends of
November 19 & 26, 2017:**

Weekly Budget (Est.) 9,000.00

November 19, 2016

Contributions: \$ 5,824.04

of Envelopes: 286

November 26, 2017

Contributions: \$ 7,291.17

**2nd Collection for the Campaign
for Human Development**

\$1,068.70 - 86 envelopes

**Thanksgiving Day Collection to
benefit our Parish St. Vincent de
Paul Program**

\$1,362.00

E-Giving

148 transactions from 10/23/2017 to
11/12/2017 was \$2,992.00.

SPLIT THE POT

November 19, 2017

Received: \$ 457.00

Envelopes Entered: 89

Winning Envelope # 2347

November 26, 2017

Received: \$ 483.00

Envelopes Entered: 93

Winning Envelope # 1400

**Reminder: A minimum of \$5.00 is
required to participate.**

**Thank you for your continued sup-
port of our Parish! God Bless You!**

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



Office of the Archbishop
835 North Rush Street
Chicago, IL 60611-2030
312.534.8230 archchicago.org

December, 2017

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

On the Second Sunday of Advent, parishes throughout the Archdiocese will participate in the annual collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious, benefiting more than 32,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests throughout the United States.

Our senior religious are a treasure. Their dedication and hard work laid the foundation for Catholic schools, hospitals, and numerous social service organizations. Many continue in volunteer ministry today. Their ongoing prayer and witness enrich our faith in countless ways. Personally, I am grateful for the service of religious, past and present. Perhaps you also recall a sister or brother who made a positive difference in your life.

Most elder religious worked for years for small stipends, leaving a substantial gap in retirement savings. Rising health-care costs and decreased income compound the challenge to meet such day-to-day needs as medications and nursing assistance. The Retirement Fund for Religious offers financial support that helps religious communities provide loving care for older members while ensuring younger members can continue the good work of their elders.

In the past, the people of the Archdiocese of Chicago have led the nation in their generous response to this appeal. Though I understand you are asked to support many worthy causes, I invite you to contribute what you can at masses the weekend of December 9-10. Most importantly, please pray for God's continued blessing on all our women and men religious. Rest assured they are praying for you.

Wishing you every blessing during this Holy Season of Advent. With kind regards I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Card. Blase J. Cupich".

Cardinal Blase J. Cupich
Archbishop of Chicago



We Remember and Celebrate

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, December 4, 2017—St. John Damascene

8:00 am †John M. Neumann, Jr.—Wife & Son
 †Robert Neumann—Roslyn & Jim
 †Philly Levato—Marciniak Family
 †Veronica Young—Marciniak Family

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

8:00am †Edward, Stanley & Joanne Swiatkowski—Darlene & Jim
 †Madonna Ivers—Nancy Markham

Wednesday, December 6, 2017—St. Nicholas

8:00am †Mary Ciukaj—Family
 †Nick Bouzios—Janina

Thursday, December 7, 2017—St. Ambrose; Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

8:00 am †Ted & Helen Hermanowicz—Nancy & George Groszek
 For the Health of Lena Kalinowska—Arlene Scaletta

Friday, December 8, 2017—Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

7:30 am For All Parishioners (31)
 9:30am †Laverne Slowinski—Slowinski & Gasior Families
 7:00pm For All Parishioners (32)

Saturday, December 9, 2017—St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin

8:00 am †For All Parishioners (32)
 5:00pm Mike Doherty (Birthday) - Family
 †Rita Mae Sullivan—Sullivan Family
 †Margaret Bartusiak—Marie & Family
 †Angelo Geraci—Hernandez Family
 Frances Casio—Hernandez Family
 †Pat Doyle—Eleanor Pastorek

Sunday, December 10, 2017—Second Sunday of Advent

7:30 am †Charles Smagor—Soltis Family
 †Janet Molnar—Family
 In gratitude for blessings received—Wolniak Family
 9:30 am †Ted Hermanowicz—Groszek Family
 †Richard Montwill—Kutt Family
 †Margaret Davitt—Ray, Mary Lou Kolasinski & Family
 11:30am †Richard Montwill—Loving Family
 Joe & Celeste Carone—Pat & Cathy Carone



Rae Ann Arends, Donna R. Azzaline, Toni Bartz, Virginia Blazeniak, Dorothy Bogumil, Fr. Ted Bojczuk, Maynard Buckley, Michelle Calamino, Pat Carmody, Hannah Carroll, Michael Clifford, Chris Doherty, Carol Ann Corcoran, Donal Corcoran, Manuel Coronado, Patricia Crotty, Chuck DeLauriea, Art DePesa, Kaye Fenlon, Kay Franco, Gary Forbort, John Gaca, Ken Gattas, Bernard A. Gercius, Nincy Giron, Carol Golab, Gary Gorlen, Karen Gricus, Kathy Guzman, Erica Heilmann, Heather Hradek, Joe Infantino, Denise & Richard Jandura, Carol Kennelly, Jean Kibler, Adalbert Kouba, Patricia Kubik, Mark Kukulski, Claudia Kwilosz, James Lapsansky, Donna Lauritzen, Virginia Macias, Lu Mackey, Anna Marie Matkey, John Martini, Lori McCarthy, Gen Nagle, Helen Naughton, Marge Novak, Joe Paciga, David Paul, Katherine Pecoraro, Baby Alexander Joseph Pentz, Carolyn M. Pysac, Lu Rackey, Sister Mary Rita, Ann Robertson, John A. Rosenthal, Larry Rosenstiehl, Fr. John Rudnik, Carmen Ruiz, Ben Sajdak, William Schrimpl, Marilyn Sobczak, Special Intention, John Stachon, Michael Straube, Terry Styka & Family, James Suchy, Chalida Svastisalee, Loretta A. Thomas, Jim & Mary Thorpe, Joan Witcher, Chester Wodarczyk, Steve Wojcik, Pamela Wojdyla, Larry & Marianne Wysocki, and Michelle



For the freedom that we all enjoy....Our thanks go to the men and women serving in all branches of the military. We salute you! May God continue to bless you and keep you safe from harm. Amen.

Sgt. Jaime A. Acosta, USMC
 Sgt. Ted Bartelmey
 CS-1 Joel Battung
 1st Sgt. Chas. Berglund, USMC
 Sgt. Naveen Bobba, USMC

Sgt. Arthur A. Boruch, National Guard
 Hospitalman Blythe A. Cisneros, USN
 Airman Carlos Cisneros, USAF
 Sgt. Frank Cisneros, USMC
 Corpsman Nicholas J. Cundari-USN
 Captain Kevin Dobbyn, US Army
 Sgt. John Flores, IL National Guard
 SRA Andrew Gaca, USAF
 SMSGT Joseph Gaca, USAF
 Sgt. Michael Hough, US Army
 Anthony Johaniewicz, US Navy
 Lance Corp. Tim Lisenko, USMC
 Trevor Lutz, US Army
 Corporal Zachary Maderak, USMC
 Pvt. 1st Class Daniel Morales, US Army
 SPC Alex Ramos
 Staff Sgt. Abel Sandoval, USMC
 Sgt. 1st Class Kristina Stuhlmacher



Congratulations to our newly baptized and welcome to the St. Symphorosa Family and the Body of Christ!

Emma Rose Velazquez
 Child of Sergio Velazquez & Violet Urbanski

Welcome!

Please extend a warm welcome to

Ronald Marciniak & Della Young

the newest members of our St. Symphorosa Parish Faith Community.
 May God Bless You!

Let us pray.....

Eternal Rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



Dorothy Sniezewski
James J. Hoop, Jr.