

## Ramblings - Fr. Brankin

Fourth Sunday of Advent

At least twice in the last week I was treated to a sound clip—a segment of an old show—A Charlie Brown Christmas.

You know, Peanuts by Charles Schultz—the little cartoon kids who always seem to have adult problems that are invariably solved by using the wisdom and honesty of children.

Well apparently this animated television production has become a real classic and is repeated universally. Now normally I would be very doubtful about cartoons—that teach lessons in religion or wisdom. My taste in cartoons was honed by wise-guy rabbits and daffy ducks.

But anyway—this Peanuts Christmas is good; and it revolves around all the characters, the children, searching for the real meaning of Christmas. As it turns out Charlie Brown—who is supposed to be us in all our earnest ignorance is totally exasperated because he just cannot find any tradition or activity that would tell him what Christmas is all about—which is what he is yearning for.

Then marvelously, Linus, the one with the blanket and the thumb in his mouth—apparently the youngest of the characters, but also the wisest—tells him “Sure, Charlie Brown, I can tell you what Christmas is all about ” and you know what he does? He walks to center stage and begins to recite the Gospel from Luke.

In a marvelously innocent child’s voice—complete with a lateral lisp—he declares:

*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*

*And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.*

*And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

*And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.*

*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. (sic)*

And then he says: “That’s what Christmas is all about Charlie Brown.”

That is an amazing little segment in a wonderful cartoon—and it is valuable on a couple of different levels. First of all you have this very American fictional cartoon character—iconic so to speak—right up there with Mickey Mouse and Bugs Bunny on national television—quoting reverently and lovingly and seriously—the Bible—the second chapter of Luke to be exact.

Secondly, this character is saying that Christmas is all about nothing more—and nothing less--than the actual birth of Jesus—who is the Saviour.

I don’t know if they broadcast it anymore, but for the characters on a television show to declare that the true meaning of Christmas is the birth of Jesus—why that in itself is a wonder to behold.

Because of course we live in the land of Happy Holidays and are a little apprehensive about mentioning the name of Jesus in public—you never know who will be offended and we are half—worried that someone will report us if we actually say, “Merry Christmas!”

I can easily imagine a millennial watching this show, and when it gets to the part about “what Christmas is all about” part, they gasp “Can they say that on TV?”

Well, yes they can—and it's not so bad to say so. In fact it is pretty good. And I thought about it. It is an important thing to actually ask what Christmas is all about, and moderns have probably been asking it since Dickens—what does Christmas really mean? Is it about peace on earth and good will towards men? And if so—why?

Why would the producers and writers of this show boil the answer down to the simple Christmas history of the shepherds and Angels and a little baby wrapped in swaddling clothes? How does this Baby, Christ the Lord, become for us a Saviour! From what does He save us?

Ok I will be blunt. We are saved from hell. We are saved from an unending death. We are saved from a black hole of emptiness and misery and regret that is the legacy of Adam and Eve—and our inheritance as their children—we are saved from the haunting thoughts of lives wasted and choices poorly made. In a word—we are saved from sin.

We are saved from the prospect of having to believe in all the false gods out there—saved from worshipping pleasure and power and wealth. We are saved from worshipping celebrities or politicians. We are saved from worshipping ourselves.

We are saved from Satan who wants to hold us captive and damned—just so he can get back at the God who kicked him out of heaven.

Jesus—who is God—saves us from the hell of No-God. Saves us from the life of desperation that is the life of all those who do not know Jesus.

I am serious. God saves us from hell which God allows to be the hell of our own making.

We talked a couple weeks ago about hell and heaven being actual real places—but hell begins right here.

Hell is when you have no faith—no religion—when you pray no prayers and go to no church. Hell is when you have no idea who Jesus Christ is—let alone God.

Hell is when you think you are self sufficient. You don't need no God! Don't need no Ten Commandments! You don't need other people!

That's when you find yourself lying on your bed at three in the morning, your head pounding with a headache that you got from last night's umpteenth pointless drinking session. You lay there—and this is what desperation means—and you ask yourself "Is this all I have to show for my life? For my thirty years? My fifty years? My seventy years? No family no friends—alone in a dark room—waiting for the sun to come up maybe one more time. And nothing to show for all my efforts but a headache—nothing before—nothing to come—an accidental birth for no reason—it just happened—and followed by a pointless life. And why is it pointless? Because by definition if there is nothing before or after, then your life points to nothing—except to the hole in the ground we all get at the end of the joke we call life.

That's the beginning of hell and that is what Jesus saves us from. There is more—much more—and beautifully more! That is why we need a Saviour—we need someone powerful enough to hold on to us, and pull us up out of that hole that we have been digging for ourselves.

So that's what these purple and rose colored candles are talking about—that's Advent—our lives before Jesus comes to save us. Our lives before we know about God and heaven.

And so we can look all over the world and all through our lives and all through history and all through the newspapers and internet and social media for what Christmas is all about—and lo and behold we learn that Christmas is about Christmas—it is about Jesus—our Saviour, and Glory be to God—He will be born

## **Congratulations Anne!!!!**

Anne Ahern, a parishioner of St. Odilo Church, was honored this week to receive a Senatorial nomination to the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. She requests your continued prayers for her successful entry into the Academy. Good luck and may God bless you always Anne!

## Sharing Tree for Blessed Sacrament

### **THANK YOU THANK YOU AND THANK YOU AGAIN!!!!**

Thank you to all of our St. Odilo Parishioners and friends who gave generously to our Sharing Parish, Blessed Sacrament / Saint Agatha.

THANK YOU!! We received a wonderful assortment of gifts. The gift bags, boxes, and extras reflect the generous and loving Christmas Spirit of Saint Odilo. The extra gifts we received help replace some of the gift tags that did not make it back to us.

All in all we had a great collection of gifts, toys and clothes to hand over to Sister Patricia. Our donation to Blessed Sacrament / Saint Agatha should make us Proud of our Parish! Also, the generous monetary gifts we received will let Sister give support were needed.

The thoughtfulness and love we extend to our Sharing Parish shows the true St. Odilo Holiday spirit.

All of you deserve a special thank you; this event would not be possible without the generosity and kindness of each and every one of you.

Thank you, May God Bless You and may you all have a very Merry and Healthy Christmas and New Year!!!



Jenny Uyeda

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the gifts you gave our needy people. They are most grateful for your thoughtfulness and generosity. May the Lord bless you abundantly for your kindness.

Gratefully,

Rev. Larry Dowling,  
Pastor

Sister Patricia Kerz, BVM

**Group Contact Information**  
Armory of Christ-708-681-6879  
Guadalupanos-708-484-2161  
Legion of Mary -708-623-9280  
Knights of Columbus-708-204-3761  
Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima -708-484-1204  
Little Flowers-469-487-9506  
or limpauline6@gmail.com  
ESL-708-287-7347 Spred-708-287-7347  
Ushers-708-788-8136

## Epiphany House Blessing

*Materials: a piece of chalk and a small container of holy water.*

*Gather with family members, friends, or neighbors at the front door.*

Leader: In the (+) name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Custom gives these names to the magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar.

*With chalk, their initials sign this doorway, along with four crosses, and the numerals of the new year:*

[20 + C + M + B + 18]

Leader (or other Reader):

A reading from the Second Letter of Peter.

We look forward to the new heavens and the new earth God has promised, a dwelling place of righteousness.

The Word of the Lord

ALL: Thanks be to God!

*Each room is sprinkled with holy water.*

*Living room:*

Where two or three are gathered, you are there.

Bless this room, O Lord. ALL: Amen!

*Kitchen:*

You give us our daily bread.

Bless this room, O Lord. ALL: Amen!

*Dining room:*

Prepare us for the feast of heaven.

Bless this room, O Lord. ALL: Amen!

*Bedrooms:*

Stay with us Lord, when night is here.

Bless this room, O Lord. ALL: Amen!

*Bathroom:*

Keep us pure in your sight.

Bless this room, O Lord. ALL: Amen!

*All return to the front door to pray together.*

Leader: Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father ...

*The leader sprinkles all present with holy water and concludes:*

Bless this household through all days to come, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, forever and ever.

ALL: Amen!

The Feast of the Epiphany is next Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>.



## January 1<sup>st</sup> - Feast Day - St. Odilo of Cluny, OSB, Abbot (RM)

Born in Auvergne, France, c. 962; died at Souvigny, c. 1049. Saint Odilo was a scion of the very aristocratic French family of Mercoeur. He joined the monastery of Cluny when he was still very young. About 991, the abbot, Saint Mayeul, named him coadjutor. Upon the Mayeul's death in 994, Odilo became Cluny's fifth abbot.

During his 54 years in office he brought the other Cluniac houses into closer and closer dependence upon the mother house, and increased the number of foundations from 37 to 65. Among his general activities was the support he gave to Abbot Richard of Saint-Vanne for the acceptance in France of the institution called the Truce of God (Treuga Dei), whereby military hostilities were regularly suspended at certain times (Fridays through Mondays, Advent, and Lent). This measure had economic as well as religious and social significance and also guaranteed sanctuary to those seeking refuge in a church. Odilo also effectively promoted the Pactum Dei, whereby ecclesiastical persons and property were protected against attack in war.

In 998 (or 1031 by some accounts) he ordered that in all Cluniac houses November 2, the day after the Feast of All Saints, should be observed in memory of and prayer for all the dead; this observance, All Souls' Day, afterwards spread to the whole Western Church.

Though he was a friend of princes and popes, he was exceedingly gentle and kind and known throughout Christendom for his liberality to the needy. Odilo's concern for the people was also shown by the lavish help he gave during several famines, especially in 1006, when he sold Church treasures to feed the poor, and again from 1028-1033.

Saint Odilo's physical appearance was unimpressive, belying the strength of his character. He practiced great personal austerities (he wore a hair-shirt and studded iron chains) on himself, but liberality and kindness toward others. He experienced ecstasies. It is obvious that he was beloved by his contemporaries; Fulbert of Chartres surnamed Odilo "the Archangel of Monks."

Odilo united in his character gentleness with firmness, organizational skills with the ability to reconcile enemies. His favorite saying is that he would rather be damned for being too merciful than for being too severe. He promoted the spirit of true monasticism and tried to remove its abuses. During his rule, he sought to promote the close unity of Cluny and the Holy See.

It is appropriate that he should die during the Octave of Christmas because his favorite topic for sermons was the mystery of the Incarnation. The place of the Blessed Virgin was also worked out by Odilo, to whose writings the Mariology of Saint Bernard owes much.

His duties involved him in much traveling about, though he was ill during the last five years of his life. It was on a journey of inspection that he died, at the priory of Souvigny; he was about 86 (Attwater, Benedictines, Delaney, Encyclopedia, Farmer).

In art Saint Odilo is portrayed as a Benedictine Abbot with a skull and crossbones at his feet. Because he instituted the Feast of All Souls, at times he may be shown (1) saying Mass with purgatory open at his side; or (2) with angels releasing souls from purgatorial fire (Roeder). He is invoked on behalf of souls in purgatory and against jaundice (Roeder).

## SICK RELATIVES & FRIENDS

Please remember the sick - Regina Szatkowski, Josephine Sprovieri, Ernest Karamas, Charlie Turek, Alice Kowalski, Henry Kereluk, Sr. Johanna Trisoliere, Ramon Marentes, William Stepanek, Karen Lewis, Joseph Kirchoff, our Veterans, Barbara Defina, Ralph Cannataro, Mike Kadrowicz, Eddie Shishkoff, Baby Carmody, Milly Kosinar, Danny Gale, Patricia Stalzer, Rahman Ayi, Roger Kowalski, Vincent Wallis, Pat Grady, Irene Smith, Lewis Johnson, Peg Kocar, Terry Raso, Georgina Alejos, Joanne Carlson, Diane Kuntz, Maria Banda, Frank Rossi, Senorina Castillo, Brian Hess, Maria Sanchez, Zianny E. Leyva, Alice Zimmerman, Louise Kuzin, Mary Dedowicz, George Fuoco, Betty Sereno, Joseph Coleman, Philip Brankin, Peter Rybak, Timmy O'Connell, Paula Tammen, Merlita Stovall, Carlos Zorrilla, Jeanette Sprovieri, Darnell Stovall, Monique Nelson, Linda Lancaster, Theresa Risco, Antionette Delterra, Al Torrita, Diana Ferrel, James Reilly.

## REST IN PEACE

Please remember all those God has called to Himself from our parish family Philip Brankin, Brother of Fr. Brankin, John Mozis, Mario F. Seopillato, Evelyn Kvasnicka.

## OUR WEEKLY OFFERING

December 24, 2017	\$9,962.00
Last Year	\$7,008.43

Thank you!  
Fr. Brankin

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### TUESDAY...

6:30PM-Legion of Mary (PR)  
6:30PM-Arts & Crafts (SR)  
7PM-Knights of Columbus (PH)

### WEDNESDAY...

6PM-ESL (PH)

### FRIDAY...

6PM-Pequiño Rebaño (CB)  
7PM-Faith Formation (PR)



## MASSES FOR THE WEEK

### MONDAY, JANUARY 1-THE OCTAVE DAY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD; SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 2-SAINTS BASIL THE GREAT AND GREGORY NAZIANZEN, BISHOPS AND DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH

7AM - 8AM - 9:30AM - 11AM - 12:30PM - The People  
6:30AM-Gertrude Jungblut & Helen Lafin (Family)  
8:10AM-Rev. Thomas Pelton (Friends)  
-Don & Bernadette Crowe (Arlene)  
-Donata Paliserro (Wodarczyk Family)  
-Lucy Sanchez (Esleta Family)  
-Poor Souls & Intentions of J.H.

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3-THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS

6:30AM-Special Intention  
8:10AM-Intention of Mario Gaudio

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 4-SAINT ELIZABETH ANN SETON, RELIGIOUS

6:30AM-Blessings for Francesca Jansen (Couri Family)  
8:10AM-Angel Punzo (Sarah Cote)  
-John & Pat Ciprian (Arlene)

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 5-SAINT JOHN NEUMANN, BISHOP

6:30AM-Horgan & Otmanoski Family (Cousin)  
8:10AM-Francesco Gaudio (Carmelina Barbuscio)

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 6-SAINT ANDRE BESSETTE, RELIGIOUS

8AM-Lina D'Agostino (Family)  
4PM-Augustine & Raymond Stalmasek (Son, Dan)

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 7-THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

7AM-Aurelia Bucio (Bucio Family)  
8AM-Helen Swietek (Family)  
9:30AM-Birthday Blessings for Cecilia Dadabo (Remy Burda)  
11AM-35<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary of Martin & Donna Oborski (Family)  
12:30PM-Alberto Perez (Daughter)

Pray for  
Peace



## SCHEDULE FOR NEXT WEEK

January 6 & 7	Eucharistic Minister	Lector	Altar Servers
4PM		A. Sambolin	L. Arechar, R. Arechar Andre Brown
7AM (Esp.)	A Cruz M. Marin, R. Marin		A. Duerte, E. Ramos, J. Arreguin
8AM			A. Mendoza, A. Cruz
9:30AM			A. Cisneros, P. Cisneros, W. Estrella, L. Estrella
11AM			V. Hernandez, C. Hernandez
12:30PM (Esp.)	E. Coronado, A. Mendez E. Marquez, V. Chavez	A. Lopez H. Sanchez	J. Diaz, J. Diaz

## Sunday Mass Schedule

Saturday-December 30-4pm-(Eng.)

Sunday-December 31/Víspera de Año Nuevo

7am-(Esp.) 8am-(Eng.) 9:30-(Latin), 11am-(Eng.) 12:30pm-(Esp.)

The Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God

Sunday, December 31-4pm-(Eng.)

New Year's Day - January 1/Día de Año Nuevo

7am-(Español) 8am-(English) 9:30-(Latin) 11am-(English) 12:30pm-(Español)

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph December 31, 2017

# " The Shrine "

## St. Odilo Parish

### National Shrine of the Poor Souls

*St. Odilo Church is the only parish in the United States dedicated to the Souls in Purgatory.  
It was founded and sanctioned as the Shrine of the Poor Souls  
by His Eminence, George Cardinal Mundelein, in 1928,  
with a special indulgence of 200 days granted upon each visit to the shrine.*

**Rectory:** 2244 East Avenue, Berwyn, IL 60402 (708) 484-2161  
**School:** 2301 S. Clarence, Berwyn, IL 60402 (708) 484-0755  
**Convent:** 2319 S. Clarence, Berwyn, IL 60402 (708) 680-0909  
**CCD Office:** 2301 S. Clarence, Berwyn, IL 60402 (708) 484-5321  
**Web Address:** [www.saintodilo.org](http://www.saintodilo.org) Fax: (708) 788-0565

**Pastor:**

Rev. Anthony Brankin

**Associate Pastor:**

Rev. Alejandro Marca Mansilla

**Priests:**

Rev. Msgr. Richard Saudis

Rev. Robert Coleman

**Deacon:**

Rev. Mr. Alfonso Salgado

**School Principal:**

Mr. William Donegan

**School Secretary:**

Mrs. Laura M. Cervantes

**CCD Coordinator:**

Mrs. Idalia Gonzalez

**Music Director:**

Mr. Paul Rau

**Business Manager:**

Mrs. Beth Ritzenthaler

**Secretary:**

Mrs. Gail Kunce

**Marketing/Advancement:**

Mrs. Ruby Martinez

**Mass Schedule:**

Monday thru Friday: 6:30 and 8AM

Saturday: 8:00AM, 4PM

Sunday: 7AM (Sp.), 8:00 (Eng.), 9:30 (Latin) & 11AM (Eng.) & 12:30PM (Sp.)

Holy Days: 6:30PM (Eng.) the previous evening; 6:30, 8:10AM, 12:00 Noon and 6:30PM (Sp.)

**Church is open:** Weekdays from 6AM - 6PM

**Confessions:** Saturday 11AM - 12Noon & by appointment.

**Rectory Office hours:** Monday thru Friday: 9AM -9PM

Saturday 9AM-7PM Sunday 9AM-7PM

**Adoration:** Thursday until 6AM - 6PM

**All Sacraments and ceremonies are available in Italian, Latin, Spanish & of course English.**

**Baptisms:** Every Saturday at 10:30AM & Sunday at 1:30PM. Parents are required to register for baptism with a priest. Parents should be registered parishioners. Please call to make an appointment.

**Marriages:** Arrangements should be made at least six months in advance with a parish priest. Please call the rectory to make an appointment.

**Visits to the Sick:** Please inform the rectory for hospital or homebound visits.

**Quinceaneras:** Cotillion Masses are available for our girls who have been confirmed-please call.