

Dear Parishioner,

I hope that you are having a merry Christmas season and your family is doing well! We have come through the beautiful Masses of Christmas and are preparing for Holy Day Masses on Friday, January 1, 2021 at 8:30 am, noon and 7:00 pm for the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. This Holy Day is a great way to ring in the New Year in thanks and prayer to God who chose to bring our fully divine, fully human Savior into the world through the Blessed Mother. Thanks to the staff and limited number of families, couples and individuals who decorated the church so beautifully for Christmas. I have received many compliments from people who particularly appreciate the large wreaths on the sanctuary arch and the nativity near the sanctuary. We relocated the creche this year to preserve as much seating as possible behind the baptismal font. Facing the front of the church, the manger is on the right, near the Blessed Mother statue, while the Magi are on the left, completing their journey. At Epiphany this Sunday, they will arrive at the creche to pay homage to baby Jesus.

Christmas Masses were comfortably full, with overflow in the narthex and outside, and the Parish Center needed only at 3:00 on Christmas Eve. Thanks to those who persevered through less than perfect audio at the outside overflow and a few glitches here and there with the livestreams. I'm praying we will be back to a normal Christmas next year with full attendance possible. This year's Christmas attendance at our nine Masses was 3,272, 43% of last year's total of 7,663. Our Christmas collection was \$90,526.50, including \$34,407 for Capital Improvement and New Mission Development (CI & NMD), compared to last year's \$120,794 which included \$19,144 for CI & NMD. That's pretty amazing given the challenges of the pandemic and everything else that has hit us in 2020! Thanks for your generosity in supporting your parish, the Catholic Faith Appeal and other charities like St. Vincent de Paul that help our brothers and sisters in need these days. You answered the call wonderfully to concentrate Christmas giving to improve facilities here at St. Agnes and save for a new parish to address the needs of our growing population in years to come.

If you're looking for something fun to do early in 2021, consider attending Paul Todd & Friends Great American Songbook outdoor concert featuring movie and show tunes, on Tuesday, January 12th. Billy Dean & Dawn will perform with others on the outdoor stage beginning at 6:00

pm. Tickets are \$30 and available at the office and after weekend Masses. The Knights of Columbus have Parking Lot Bingo planned for Saturday, January 9th at 6:30 pm at the Parish Center lot/field for \$18, including water, soda and snacks.

To boost your understanding of Sacred Scripture in the New Year, sign up for an ongoing Bible Study every Friday morning from 9:30-11:00 in our Parish Hall, exploring the scripture readings for the following Sunday by contacting Barbara Rygiel at rygiel@stagnesnaples.org. Connect for an “Email Bible Study” on St. Paul’s Letters from Prison beginning Friday, January 15th by contacting Mike Langan at mlangan203@aol.com. If you or someone you know has been Baptized and received First Communion but somehow were never confirmed, consider a four-session class beginning February 1st that will lead to Confirmation with Bishop Dewane at Epiphany Cathedral on Pentecost in May. To register for that, contact Ivy O’Malley in our Faith Formation office or email her at ivy@stagnesnaples.org. May our Lord bless and keep you and your families safe and well in the coming New Year!

Fr. Bob Kantor

Pastor



7775 Vanderbilt Beach Road
Naples, FL 34120
239-592-1949 ext. 117