

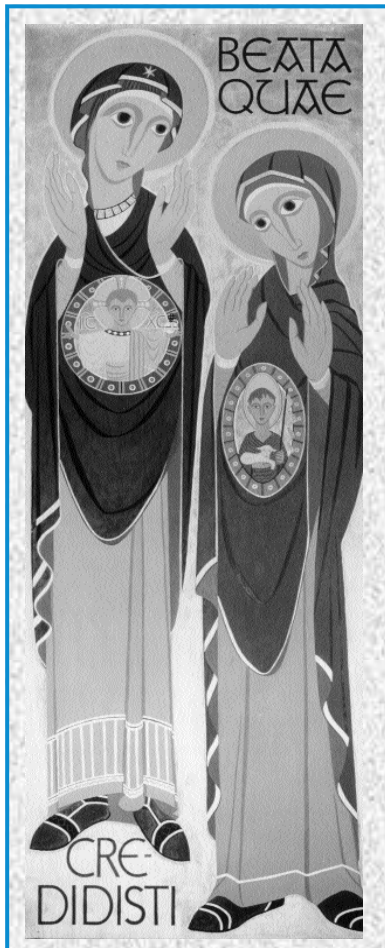
**VISITATION CHURCH**

**12/28/08**

**518042**

**CONTACT:**

**Chantel at 612-822-3139 or cell phone at 612-388-3255**



## Schedule

- Saturday Vigil** 5:00 pm  
**Sunday Mass** 10:00 am  
**Daily Mass** Tue-Sat 8:00 am  
**Holy Days of Obligation**  
 8:00 am, 7:00 pm  
**Reconciliation**  
 Saturdays 4:00 pm,  
 or by appointment.  
**Nursery**  
 10:00 am Sundays, infant-4  
**Eucharistic Adoration**  
 Every Thursday 8:30 am-  
 7:00 pm.  
**Rosary Devotion**  
 Before First Saturday Mass  
 and daily Mass at 7:30 am.

# THE CHURCH OF THE VISITATION

## *Catholic Church*

4530 LYNDALE AVENUE S. MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55419

[www.visitationcatholicchurch.com](http://www.visitationcatholicchurch.com)

Church Office 612-822-3139 Fax 612-824-3515

## 62ND ANNIVERSARY 1946-2008

### **Pastor**

*Father Thomas F.A. O'Brien* [frthomasobrien@aol.com](mailto:frthomasobrien@aol.com) 612-822-3139

### **Administrative Assistant/Bulletin Editor**

*Chantel Cervantes* [visichurch@aol.com](mailto:visichurch@aol.com) 612-822-3139

Bulletin notices due by noon on Mondays.

### **Facilities Coordinator**

*Anita Rosener* [visianita@aol.com](mailto:visianita@aol.com) 612-822-3139

### **Custodian**

*Tom Abresch* 612-822-3139

### **Director of Music**

*Barb Schrenk* [schrenkb@gmail.com](mailto:schrenkb@gmail.com) 612-203-9323

### **Master of Ceremonies**

*Timothy G. Wolfgram*

### **Trustees**

*Kristine Callaghan* 612-825-8431

*Tom Schuster* 612-866-8561

### **Parish Pastoral Council**

*Connie Klaers, Chair* [cklaers@msn.com](mailto:cklaers@msn.com) 612-823-6213

### **Finance Council**

*Philip Gleason, Chair* [pgleasoncpa@msn.com](mailto:pgleasoncpa@msn.com) 612-823-0080

### **Baptisms**

Saturdays or Sundays at Mass. Please call the parish office to make arrangements.

### **Marriages**

Six months preparation time needed. You must be a member of the parish for at least six months. Please call the parish office

### **Parish Membership**

Please call the church office to register in the parish.

### **After Hours Emergency Only**

*Father Thomas F.A. O'Brien* 612-532-4707

*As Kingfishers Catch Fire, Dragonflies Draw Flame...*

Dear Friends,

It was wonderful last weekend to watch so many of our devoted parishioners working to decorate our church for Christmas. Such energy...such a commitment to making Visitation warm, welcoming, and festive in the celebration of Christmas...such an expression of men and women, boys and girls, all engaged in doing, to quote Mother Teresa, "something beautiful for God."

I focused especially on our crèche. It's beautiful—the shepherd with the lamb on his shoulders is particularly moving to me. It occurred to me that you might be interested in learning a bit more of the history of the crèche, as the late Franciscan friar Leonard Foley relates it:

Christmas was 15 days away. Francis was staying at a hermitage at Fonte Columbo. He had just come from Rome—the last time, for he would die in three years—where the pope had approved his Rule. The brief future would be filled with pain, even the pain of the wounds of Christ.

How to celebrate Christmas? He remembered his visit to the Holy Land, to Bethlehem.

Why not? A kind of replica of the manger there. There was a cave, in Greccio...

He had a good friend, Giovanni (John) Vellita, whom he had met on one of his preaching tours. John was a military man, lord of Greccio, just two miles away. John had fallen under the spell of Francis, had renounced all worldly honors and was trying to live a life imitating that of Francis as well as he could.

Francis, with the assurance of friendship, sent word: "If you want to celebrate the Feast of the Lord at Greccio, hurry and diligently prepare what I tell you. For I wish to recall to memory the little child who was born in Bethlehem. I want to set before our bodily eyes the hardships of his infant needs, how he lay in the manger, how with an ox and ass standing by he lay upon the hay."

John began immediately. People prepared torches and candles to light up the night. The manger was prepared in the cave, and the ox and ass brought in. When Francis came to the friars' hermitage, he was delighted.

The great evening arrived. People began to come in procession, carrying their torches and candles. The woods rang with their song. They were rediscovering the joy of childhood.

Today, in Greccio, one can still see the stone—perhaps three feet high and two feet wide—on which the hay was placed. It has a brownish gray top and bottom, with a band of gray in the center. The top has a rough, shallow, V-shaped indentation. Here the carved image of the baby was laid. There were no figures of Joseph and Mary, just the two animals.

As the villagers and friars crowded around, a priest began the Mass. Francis gave the sermon. His biographer, Thomas of Celano, Francis' contemporary, writes: "The saint of God stood before the manger, uttering sighs, overcome with love and filled with a wonderful happiness....He sang the Gospel in a sonorous voice, a clear and sonorous voice, inviting all to the highest rewards. Then he preached to the people standing about and spoke charming words concerning the birth of the poor King, and the little town of Bethlehem....When he spoke the name 'Child of Bethlehem' or 'Jesus,' his tongue licked his lips, relishing and savoring with pleased palate the sweetness of the words."

The accounts do not say whether the child was a living baby or a carved figure. It was probably the latter, for it is recorded that at least one of the observers "saw the infant come alive."

It was Francis, then, who thrilled the Catholic world with his simple and fervent celebration. After his death in 1226, the custom of having the crib at Christmas spread widely through Europe.

According to the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, "The home crib became popular in Catholic Europe after 1600, owing, it is said, to the efforts of the Capuchins. Except for the crib (the 'putz') of the pietist Moravians, manger-building was not originally adopted by Protestants. Pre-Reformation England had had its own crib custom, that of baking the Christmas mince pie in an oblong manger shape to cradle an image of the Child. The British Puritans, therefore, in outlawing Christmas, declared particular war on mince pie as 'idolatrie in crust.'"

Francis would smile at our nice varnished cribs, though he would bless any home that has one. Probably he would prefer those set up outdoors with live animals. And if he were to stand by one and preach today, he might say something like this:

"Look deeper than this pleasant scene. See your God become your food for eternity in a feeding place for animals. See the simple bands wound around the helpless baby, not the embroidered dress. See a man and woman wearing the clothes of the poor. See and smell the animals. Feel the cold and dirt of the cave, lighted only by a little fire. And adore your God, who took a human heart that could know the greatest love and the sharpest pain, arms that could embrace the sinners, the neurotics, the lepers, and hands that could touch cheeks running with tears, and be pierced with nails. Adore your poor and humble God."

With fond wishes for the happiest of Christmases,

Father Thomas F.A. O'Brien, Pastor

**PARISH NEWS**

**Thank you** to everyone who helped with decorating the church for Christmas after last Sunday's Mass. Your work was much appreciated for all to enjoy during this glorious season.

**The Parish Pastoral Council** will meet Tuesday, January 6, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. Please call the church office at 612-822-3139 if you are unable to attend.

**Epiphany Brunch: Saturday, January 10, 2009-** Journey in for Visitation's Annual Epiphany Brunch, Saturday, January 10, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. Come join in good fellowship, good food, and beautiful music by The Partners in Praise Girls Choir, under the direction of Julia Fahey. Reservations are required. Please call Kristine Callaghan at 612.825.8431 with your reservations ~ deadline is January 7. See you there!

**What could be better** on a cold January night than to spend a little time with friends, have a warm beverage and hear about life in hot and arid Kenya. On Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm please join Mike Haasl from the diocese Office of Mission and our own Art Otto as they talk about their recent trip to Kenya. Mike and Art were part of an eleven person delegation from our Archdiocese that visited parishes in the Kitui Diocese as part of the Global Solidarity Partnership.

**ALTAR SERVERS FOR NEXT WEEK:**

- Saturday, December 27** 5:00 p.m. Jack Bassett  
 Nick Bassett  
**Sunday, December 28** 10:00 a.m. John Manthei  
 Jarad Dobesh  
**Wednesday, December 31** 5:00 p.m. Jarad Dobesh  
**Thursday, January 1** 10:00 a.m. Jack, Nick &  
 Charlie Bassett



**Christmas Flower Memorials and Honoraria-**

The Kaiser Family, William & Pearl Kelzenberg, The Hautman and Totzke Families, Beha Family, Udem Family, Wendling Family, Florence Perrault, Kay & Joe Schmidtlein, Gradoville & Schmidtlein Families, Joseph, Katheryn, & Renee Heenan, David Lunneborg, Memorial for a Special Intention, Paul Radtke, Ed & Helen Mitchell, Barbara LaVergne, Vicki DeSanto.

December 29-November 2, 2008



Monday	No Mass Today	
Tuesday	8:00 a.m.	Diane Duke
Wednesday	8:00 a.m.	Luciel Koplos†
	5:00 p.m.	Diane Duke
Thursday	10:00 a.m.	Luciel Koplos†
Friday	8:00 a.m.	Deacon William Falvey†
Saturday	8:00 a.m.	Bill Beha
	5:00 p.m.	Mary Ann Michaels†
Sunday	10:00 a.m.	People of Visitation

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK** in our

parish: Margaret Sullivan, Kathryn Mattefy, Lyn Paradise, Patrick McDonald, Edith Gibney, Roger Coryell, Pattee Kilday, Ruth Kelly, Marion Tombers, Bonnie Klein, Donald Eblen, Amy (Reynolds) Gaston, Joseph Brashear.



**TODAY'S READINGS**

**First Reading** – Those who honor their parents will be greatly blessed and will atone for sins (Sirach 3:2-7,12-14) or Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3.

**Psalms** – Blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways (Psalm 128) or Psalm 105.

**Second Reading** – Live a life of heartfelt love; be thankful; do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus (Colossians 3:12-21 [12-17]) or Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19.

**Gospel** – The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom (Luke 2:22-40 [22, 39-40]).

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK**

- Monday: 1 Jn 2:3-11; Lk 2:22-35  
 Tuesday: 1 Jn 2:12-17; Lk 2:36-40  
 Wednesday: 1 Jn 2:18-21; Jn 1:1-18  
 Thursday: Nm 6:22-27; Ps 67; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21  
 Friday: 1 Jn 2:22-28; Jn 1:19-28  
 Saturday: 1 Jn 2:29 – 3:6; Jn 1:29-34  
 Sunday: Is 60:1-6; Ps 72; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12



**The sanctuary flowers** this week are given by Nathalie & Tim Welch to the glory of God and in celebration of their 58th wedding anniversary.

**Last week's collection: \$2,393.50**