Dear Parishioners,

The celebration of Christmas, for most, is filled with memories, traditions and a host of sentimental feelings. But Christmas is much more than the popular celebrations of our contemporary society. It is the moment when we remember and give thanks for the gift of redemption and salvation, the fulfillment of the promise God made to all humanity to once again restore to His creation the presence of his grace and the possibility of eternal life in His kingdom. This is what makes Christmas far more than just a time of memories and nostalgia. It is a feast for today, every day in every year because the work of salvation will never be complete until the fullness of God's kingdom is established when the Lord comes again. As such Christmas is far more than a day or even a season, it is a lifetime celebration calling each of us to welcome the Lord into our world, our lives, so that the work of grace can continue until it touches the hearts of all peoples in all ages.

This Christmas season let us see beyond just the celebration of the moment to the promise of salvation, "peace on earth" and the coming of his kingdom here and in eternity – a celebration that never ends.

On behalf of the entire staff and myself, we wish you a very Blessed Christmas and the fulfillment of all the promises that the Saviour brings.

Merry Christmas

Fr. Mike

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Holy Family Sunday, December 26, 2010

There will no Saturday evening Masses on December 25.

Mass on Sunday will be at 7:30am, 9am, 10:30am and 12 noon

THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD

NEW YEAR'S EVE DECEMBER 31, 2010 - MASS at 4: 30

NEW YEAR'S DAY

JANUARY 1, 2011 – MASS at 9:00 am

(This feast is NOT a Holyday of Obligation this year)

Please note: On Sat. evening, Jan. 1, there will be only the 4:30pm Mass for your Sunday Obligation. There will be no 6pm Mass on Jan. 1

BAPTISM INFORMATION

The Baptism Preparation Program for **new or expecting parents** is held each month on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30pm. When possible we encourage parents to participate in this program before their baby's birth. Please call the Rectory to schedule this program as soon as you know that you are expecting. We encourage families to share this sacrament with the worshipping community by having their children baptized at the regular Saturday evening or Sunday Masses.

GODPARENTS and SPONSORS

Those asked to be godparents or Confirmation sponsors, whether it be here or at another Catholic Parish, are required to be Baptized, Confirmed, practicing Catholics who receive the sacraments regularly and are in good standing with the Church. Those seeking documentation to be godparents or sponsors would also be expected to be registered in the Church where they worship weekly. If you are presently not eligible to receive the sacraments yourself because of a Marriage or other situation, you would need to address this issue before you could be a godparent or sponsor. (see Divorced and Remarriage section below.)

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IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY SCHOOL

For nearly 60 years, Immaculate Heart of Mary School has been preparing young people with an education in Gospel values. The importance of a personal relationship with Christ continues as the pervasive element that underlies the curriculum at IHM School. We are committed to preparing our young people to meet the challenges of the 21st century. We offer a dedicated staff, and a support community of active, caring parents and guardians. An emphasis is placed on developing self-worth, personal responsibility, self-discipline and respect for life. Students are empowered to live the gospel message thus developing an understanding of membership in the communities of family, church and society.

For further information or registration applications, contact www.immaculateheartofmary.com/school or the school office at 410-668-8466.

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FAITH FORMATION YOUTH MINISTRY

The ministry of Faith Formation exists to encourage and support the faith development of all people of all ages throughout their lifetime. Our goal is to help each person develop a deeper and more meaningful relationship with God. Parents are the most important people in the faith development of children. The Ministry of Faith Formation offers many programs and opportunities to assist you including: Adult scripture study groups, prayer groups, speaker series; Sunday Morning Faith Formation classes for children age 4 through Grade 8; Middle School Youth Ministry and High School Youth Ministry is also available. First Eucharist and First reconciliation preparation programs for children in 2nd grade or older; and Confirmation preparation program for children in 8th grade or older. Catechumen instruction for children age 6 and older who need to be baptized and Adults seeking sacraments and reception into the Catholic Church will begin in January. Additional information on these and many more opportunities can be found in the bulletin, on our website or by contacting Amie Post at 410-661-3820.

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ATTENTION SPRING AND SUMMER BRIDES AND GROOMS

Now is the time to be planning your wedding for the summer of 2011 and beyond. In order to have time for adequate preparation for married life, the Church requires that you contact the priest or deacon that you wish to officiate at your wedding at least six months in advance. If you are planning a wedding for 2011 or early 2012, please contact Fr. Mike, Deacons Jack Martin, Ken Pivec, or the priest or deacon of your choice to make the appropriate preparations, not just for your wedding day but for your life together.

ARE YOU DIVORCED OR IN ANOTHER MARRIAGE AFTER A DIVORCE? ARE YOU MARRIED TO SOMEONE WHO WAS PREVIOUSLY DIVORCED?

The number of Catholics who answer "Yes" to these questions is continually increasing. Unfortunately many are not aware that the Church does provide possibilities for those in these situations to once again be able to receive Communion and the other sacraments and even to have their present union blessed. If you are divorced and remarried or even if you are in a first time marriage for both you and your spouse but that marriage did not take place in the Church, you are encouraged to contact Fr. Mike to receive information on getting your marriage blessed in the Catholic Church and returning to the regular reception of the sacraments.

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RITE OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL

The death of loved one is always a sad and often stressful time for family members. It is also a time when many people are faced with unfamiliar situations in making the final arrangements. Questions are frequently asked about the Church's position on cremation, on what is expected for a Catholic funeral and what role the family should take in these liturgical celebrations. Information is available at the rear of the Church or by contacting the rectory to help you understand the Church's funeral celebrations and to help you plan for yourself or for a loved one. Materials are available at the Parish Office for those who wish to choose specific music and readings for the funeral Mass of their loved one.

UPCOMING EVENTS: 2010

- Catholic Schools Week: January 30 to February 6, 2011
- Mardi Gras Dinner March 8, 2011, 6:15pm
- Ash Wednesday, March 9, 2011
- Seder Meal: Sunday, April10, 2011, 5pm
- Lenten Penance: all Saturdays at 3:45pm and all Wednesdays at 8:30am
  Wednesday, March 15 from 7pm to 8pm and
  Wednesday, April 12 from 2pm to 3pm & 7pm to 8pm
- Easter Sunday, April 24, 2011
- First Eucharist Weekends - April 30 & May 1and May 7 & 8 (all Masses except 7:30 am)
- Lenten Simple Suppers: March 11 and April 15- Meal at 5:30pm, Stations at 7pm
- IHM School Graduation - June 5, 2011 - 4 pm
- Summer Bible Camp – June 27 to 30, 2011

For more information about Parish and School or for any changes or additions to our schedule of events we invite you to consult our website at: www.immaculateheartofmary.com