



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS®

The K of C's will meet the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Rectory All Knights, past Knights or men interested in becoming a Knight are encouraged to attend.

Next meeting will be January 18, 2024

7PM in the Parish Hall

Deceased Knights upcoming Masses

Art Chaves—Jan 11 ~ Bob Ciesel—Feb 8



Happy birthday to these Knights born in December! Reno Hammond, JR Upmeyer, Alan McCauley, JR Vela, Joe Shaffer, Chip Keithley, Mike Skidmore.

Religious Education

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful holiday vacation. Classes will resume on January 7th, 2024. Thank you to all who help with the Religious Education Program. Wising you a very blessed New Year.



To all of the people who helped out with donating to the heating fund for one of our parishioners. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. We are able to get the heating unit that is needed. Once again thanks to all.



Hi, my name is Grace Kennedy and I am 9 years old and have a baking business. Please contact me for cookies or cupcakes (gluten free available). Thank you (541) 403-4844



Pat Culley will be celebrating her 98th birthday on January 3rd, 2024. In her honor there will be an open house on Jan 1 from 1pm to 3pm at the Agape church on Highway 7. Everyone is invited! If you would like to send Pat a card her address is 2249 Virginia Ave. Baker City, OR 97814.



On Monday December 25th we will celebrate Christmas and the coming of the Christ Child. There are many stories about Christmas and the celebration of the birth of Christ.

Winter solstice was a time of celebration even before the birth of Christ. Early Europeans celebrated light and birth in the darkest of winter when winter was almost past and they could look forward to longer days and sunlight. It was

a perfect time for celebration as animals were slaughtered so they wouldn't have to be fed during winter when feed was scarce that was one of the few times, they had a supply of fresh meat.

The Germans celebrated the pagan god Oden, they believed he made nocturnal visits and determine who would prosper in the new year. The Romans celebrated Saturnalia holiday in honor of the pagan god Saturn, the god of agriculture, the celebration lasted for a full month and during that time enslaved people were given temporary freedom and treated as equals.

In 721 St. Boniface gave us the Christmas tree. There was a small village in Germany that in the winter would gather around a large oak tree dedicated to the pagan god Thor (known as the Thunder Oak). This annual event centered around a human sacrifice. St. Boniface knew of the "Thunder Oak and during his missionary travels he interrupted the sacrifice and told them the cross of Christ could break Thor's hammer. He then proceeded to chop down the oak. There was a small fir tree behind the large oak. St. Boniface then said: "This little tree, a young child of the forest, shall be your holy tree tonight. It is the word of peace..It is the sign of an endless life for it leaves are green. See how it points upward to heaven. Let this be called the tree of the Christ-child; gather about it not in the wild wood but in your own homes; there it will shelter no deeds of blood, but loving gifts and rites of kindness."

In 1233 St. Francis of Assisi brought us the first nativity scene when he celebrated Christmas mass in a cave due to the church being too small. To commemorate the birth of Christ he prepared a manger with hay and brought in an ox and ass. In the mid 1600's churches began to set up a nativity scene. There were stormy times when it was illegal to have a nativity scene, eventually cribs became an important part of the Christmas celebration.

In the early days of Christianity, Easter was the main holiday and the birth of Christ was not celebrated. The bible does not give us a date for the birth of Christ. Pope Julius I chose December 25 to celebrate the Nativity. It was hoped that celebrating the birth of Christ at the same time as winter solstice that the birth of Christ would be embraced and replace the pagan celebrations. On Christmas, believers would attend church and then have a carnival like celebration. In the early 1700's a religious reform took place and that changed the way Christmas was celebrated. In 1645 England cancelled Christmas due to Oliver Cromwell and his Puritan movement. Charles II brought back the popular holiday of Christmas.

When the pilgrims came to America in 1620 Christmas was not a holiday in early America and was actually outlawed in Boston from 1659 to 1681. If you were caught showing the "Holiday Spirit" you could be fined five shillings. However, Jamestown celebrated Christmas and it was enjoyed by all.

After the American Revolution, English customs fell out of favor, including Christmas. The early 19th century saw much conflict and turmoil, unemployment was high and there was much rioting and unrest.

Charles Dickens created the classic holiday story "A Christmas Carol". The story emphasis the importance of charity and good works. And brought the benefits of celebrating Christmas to members of Victorian society. Christmas provided a time they could lavish attention and gifts on children without seeming to spoil them.

In the 19th century Americans began to embrace Christmas. Americans re-invented Christmas, and changed it from a carnival holiday into a family centered day of peace and nostalgia. In 1828 New York established its first police force in response to a Christmas riot. On June 28, 1870 Christmas was declared a federal holiday.

Today Christmas has become commercialized and often times we forget that Christmas is about the Christ Child so remember to keep Christ in Christmas.