

TAGASTE NEWSLETTER
PROVINCE OF ST. NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINE
OAR
DECEMBER, 2021

Christmas greetings to all our brothers in the Province of St. Nicholas, the Order, the Augustinian Recollect Sisters, our Secular Augustinian Recollects, Guild members, and the Hispanic Committee, as well as our parishioners at Sacred Heart Church!

Advent evening of recollection: The Tagaste/Sacred Heart community began the Advent season on December 2, 2021, with a service of readings and carols including the lighting and adornment of the traditional Jesse Tree. Fifteen readings interspersed with Advent hymns told the story of the coming of the Messiah as recorded in the Old and New Testaments, and featured the lighting of a candle together with the placement of a symbol representing each Biblical story. The Sacred Heart choir was on hand to lead the singing for the evening event. Afterward, the parish Ladies' Guild hosted a reception in the school gymnasium with coffee, tea, and pastries for those who attended.



This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about (l to r): Fr. Eric Crelencia, Bill Fisher, Fr. John Gruben, Jean Bolton, Fr. Michael Rafferty, Scott Bisig, Kathy Witt, and Barbara Murphy.

Christmas parade: The village of Suffern held its annual Christmas parade on Saturday, December 4, featuring a number of floats and town vehicles decked out in lights moving up Lafayette Avenue (Main Street) from Orange to Washington Avenue. The streets had been closed

to regular traffic for the occasion. Sacred Heart participated with two floats, one a Nativity and the other carried Fr. Michael and a number of parishioners. The overall effect was to create an impressive display of lights and music with a large and appreciative crowd in attendance. The parish won a prize for The Best Community Spirit.



Bethlehem on wheels: Illuminated figures of the Nativity fill one of the two floats of Sacred Heart Church in the Christmas parade moving through the streets of Suffern on December 4.



I love a parade: Friends of Sacred Heart parish together with (rear) Chris Schnabel and Fr. Michael fill the second float.



***Sons of Italy Christmas party:** Fr. John (c) with members of Vincent Linguanti Lodge at Nyack Seaport for annual Christmas Party on December 5. The SOI are long-time supporters of Tagaste and Sacred Heart Parish.*



***Christmas gift (l to r):** Al Galan, Dennis O'Connell, and George Persico present Christmas gift for Tagaste Monastery to Fr. John at the annual SOI Christmas party.*

Day of the Order, 2021. This year's remembrance of the foundation of the Order of Augustinian Recollects coincided with the conclusion of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Province of St. Nicholas of Tolentine. Friars of the Eastern Region of the Vicariate marked the occasion with a concelebrated Mass at St. Augustine Church in Union City. Fr. José María Martínez was the main celebrant and Fr. John Gruben gave the homily. After the Mass the friars returned to St. Nicholas Monastery for a bountiful dinner featuring a variety of *aperitivos*, followed by *sopa de lentejas*, *alcachofas*, *cordoniz*, and *turrón*.



Day of the Order: Recollect friars are joined by parishioners from St. Augustine Church in Union City, New Jersey, to celebrate “Foundation Day”, on December 6.



Celebrating Anniversary (l to r): Frs. Eric Crelencia, Dionisio Gutiérrez, Charles Huse, Michael Rafferty, John Docherty, José María Martínez, Paco Legarra, Miguel Echeverria, John Gruben, Anthony Palos, and Fidel Hernández.

Guadalupe Novena. The Hispanic community hosted the Guadalupe Novena beginning on December 3 and concluding with the feast on December 12. Each evening there were special readings telling the story of the apparitions of Mary to St. Juan Diego (1531) along with recitation of the rosary. On December 10 Sacred Heart Church welcomed the arrival of images of Our Lady and Juan Diego that had been carried in stages from Mexico City to Suffern. There was a procession from Orange Avenue to Sacred Heart along Main Street with the images, and the people following with a large lighted torch that had also been brought from Mexico. With the arrival of the images, Mass was celebrated by Fr. Eric accompanied by a Marachi group. After the Mass a *Convivencia* was held in the gym with *pasteles* and *chocolate*.



Images of Juan Diego (l) and Our Lady arrive in Suffern on December 10. Marlene Lopez and family members helped coordinate the event and prepare food for the assembly following the Mass.



Frs. Michael (l) and John help carry the torch from the Suffern theater to Sacred Heart Church where Fr. Eric was main celebrant at the Mass.



***Despedida.** Frs. John, Michael, and Eric offer a blessing to the pilgrim group on December 11 as they prepare to leave Sacred Heart for their next destination—Passaic, New Jersey—to share the Guadalupe images.*

The Feast of Guadalupe (December 12) was marked with the traditional singing of *Las Mañanitas* from 5 to 6 a.m. in the school gymnasium by the Hispanic choir of Tagaste/Sacred Heart. Fr. Marlon Beof, Vicar Provincial, presided at the Mass (3rd Sunday of Advent), assisted by Frs. John, Michael, and Eric.



***“Que linda está la mañana”** (l to r): Frs. Eric, Michael, Marlon, and John are joined by the Sisters of Life for the early morning Mass honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe. Some of the Sisters reside in the parish while others live in the Motherhouse on nearby Montebello Road in Suffern.*



***“O Come, All Ye Faithful”** Frs. Michael and John join with members of the Sacred Heart choir and parishioners to sing carols in front of the church on the evening of December 11. Fr. Eric was occupied with Confessions and so was unable to add his voice to the group!*

“Treasures of the Church” Sacred Heart hosted Fr. Carlos Martins, CC, and his collection of some 150 relics of the saints including Sts. Augustine, Monica, and Rita of Cascia, as well as other modern and medieval saints such as Padre Pio, Maria Goretti, Mother Seaton, Kateri Tekakwitha, Faustina Kowalska, Theresa of Avila, and Francis of Assisi. Fr. Carlos began with a talk in the church after which all moved to the gym where the relics were displayed. Some 300 people were present for the talk and even more arrived for the viewing of the relics.



***Relics on display:** Parishioners and guests view many relics that were on display in the Sacred Heart gymnasium on the evening of December 16.*



Together, of course! Relics of St. Monica and St. Augustine on display at Sacred Heart on December 16.



Holy Land carvings: Frs. John and Michael join Laith, a Christian Palestinian, who brought a great variety of religious articles carved from olive wood and fashioned by artists primarily from Bethlehem for sale at Sacred Heart. This sale has taken place for a number of years, and the parishioners have been very supportive of fellow Christians from the Holy Land who have endured the political and religious turmoil that has been plaguing the Middle East for many years now as well as the recent absence of Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land due to Covid restrictions.



Guadalupe display at Sacred Heart Church, 2021

Please pray for: The continued recovery for Theresa Giampaglia, SAR president.

For all parish news, upcoming events, and Mass schedules, see
www.sacredheartparish.org

For the latest news on Venerable Bishop Alphonse Gallegos, OAR, see
www.bishopgallegos.org

Fr. John Gruben, OAR, prior
Theresa Giampaglia, SAR president
Connie Montanye, Guild president

