

Abiding Press

Abiding Presence Faith Community

*A PARISH OF THE REFORMED CATHOLIC CHURCH
AN INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
MAKING GOD'S LOVE KNOWN IN CENTRAL FLORIDA*

DECEMBER 2023 VOLUME 3 #1
5330 Poinsetta Ave, Winter Park, FL 32792
321-594-4922
Office info@apfcwp.com

Sunday Mass is Celebrated at 12:30 pm
The Sanctuary Building of the First United Church of Christ
4605 Curry Ford Rd., Orlando, Florida 32812

Social Media

Web Site www.apfcwp.com

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1386619738179316/?ref=bookmarks>

YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP9i133esG31IRPfgk-Jn4w>

Clergy Serving the People of God

Pastor: Most Rev. William R. Cavins pastor@apfcwp.com

Kingsport TN Ministry: Rev. Fr. Lucas G. Brown RevLBrown@apfcwp.com

Palm Coast FL Ministry: Rev. Mr. Christopher M. Larsen DcnCLarsen@apfcwp.com

Volunteer Staff Serving the Parish

Gene L. Thompson II - Technology

Dennis Last - JMB Crock Pot Ministry

Klaus Stodtmann - Bread Baking

Mass Intentions & Prayer Requests

Please email the bishop if you want someone remembered at Mass or added to the Prayer Lists. It is at your discretion how much you donate to the support of our community. We also have Mass Cards for you to send to the recipients.

Upcoming Dates

- Dec. 2 First UCC Holiday Fair 9 - 1
- Dec. 3 Divine Worship - First Sunday of Advent 12:30 PM
Blessing and lighting of Advent Wreaths
Communal Celebration Anointing of the Sick within Mass
Intention: Fr. Paul Wise – 49th Years a Priest
- Dec. 4 Crock Pot Class 10 AM Dedicated Senior Medical Center
690 S Goldenrod Rd., Orlando
Seminary Class 7 PM
- Dec. 6 Divine Worship Feast of Saint Nicholas 6:30 PM
Intention: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- Dec. 9 Doorhanger Canvas 9:00 Meet in the Church Parking Lot
- Dec. 10 Divine Worship – Second Sunday of Advent 12:30 PM
Intention: RIP Rosalynn Carter
- Dec. 11 Crock Pot Class 10 am Dedicated Senior
- Dec. 12 Divine Worship – Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe 6:30 PM
Intention: All pregnant women
- Dec. 13 At Home with the Word Lectionary Discussion Group 7 PM
- Dec. 15 Potluck and a Movie 6 – 9 PM Crismon Hall
- Dec. 17 Divine Worship Third Sunday of Advent 12:30 PM
Intention: Available
- Dec. 18 Communal Penance Service 7 PM Bishop’s Residence and Zoom
- Dec. 24 Divine Worship Fourth Sunday of Advent 12:30 PM
Intention: Available
- Dec. 24 Divine Worship Christmas Mass at Night 9:00 PM
Intention: Special Intention of the Pastor
- Dec. 31 Divine Worship Feast of the Holy Family 12:30 PM
Intention: All Families

*SCAP = Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest

Financial Update as of 11/27/2023

Total Income Year to Date: \$ 10331.00. Total Expenditures Year to Date: \$ 9692.89
Difference +518.02. Balance on hand: \$ 1926.97

Online Giving

Donations can now be made online through our website. To make sure we get your full donation please utilize the **Zelle** method. If you choose one of the others, please send it as if to an individual. Our email address for all giving platforms is bkpg@apfcwp.com. Thank you for your generosity.

From the Bishop's Desk

Last month, in the United States, we experienced turning back our clocks. It now gets darker earlier. It usually takes me 4 or 5 days to adjust. It also marked the beginning of the holiday season and I'm not talking about Thanksgiving and Black Friday.

The Hindus mark Diwali. In Judaism, Hanukkah is celebrated. Christians mark St. Nicholas Day, Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Western Hemisphere, Saint Lucy Day in Scandinavia, Los Posadas, and Christmas. The overwhelming theme of these celebrations is light shining in the darkness.

For we Christians that light is the Christ, the only begotten one of God, born of the virgin Mary. Yet how does this babe bring light to us 2000+ years after his birth?

To answer that question we first must agree that our world is in a bad state. We are troubled by wars, civil unrest, political upheaval, racial bigotry, financial worries, and a host of other problems. It places humanity in a dark place. Yet this one life shone a light onto the darkness of his time which still burns today. That light is God's Love. That love we experience daily and are called upon to share. How do you share love? You kick back and spend time with others. You show your care by listening. If you find someone in need, and you can address their need, do so without holding it over them. Only then can we truly have a happy and Merry Christmas!

In Christ's Love

+*William*

Pastor



Community Canvas

Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 9, 2023, to help grow our parish. We will be meeting in the parking lot of the church at 9 a.m. to divvy up the streets we are targeting the area northeast of the church. We have plenty of door hangers to cover the approximately 350 homes in that area. Each canvasser will also be given copies of the church flyer should you meet and talk with a resident outside. We will remind canvassers again but at no time should you enter a home. You are just distributing the door hangers.

The streets we are covering include Gaston Foster North of Curry Ford, Greenland St., Rockledge Rd., Adirondack Ave., Morrocco Ave., Haylock Dr., Fontana St., Lenmore St., Lenmore Ct., and Paladin Ct

Christmas 2023

We will gather on December 24 at 9 pm in the church to sing Christmas Carols before beginning our Mass at Night at 9:30 pm. There will be no masses on Christmas Day.

Exploring Our Faith

We continue to break open the Word for the upcoming Sunday each Wednesday at 7 PM. The class dates are found in the calendar. The book *At Home with the Word 2023* may be purchased directly from Liturgical Training Publications at www.ltp.org.

JMB Crockpot Ministry

We hosted a class in September. Our current supply of crockpot totals 3. To donate a crockpot or volunteer to conduct a class contact Dennis Last at 321-388-1572.

Our next Crock Pot Class is scheduled for December 11, 2023, at 10 AM at the Dedicated Senior Medical Center - 690 S. Goldenrod Rd., Orlando Enter to win a new Crock Pot at the end of class. Email Info@apfcwp.com to register.

Giving Tuesday

We wanted to give you an update on funds contributed to the parish on Giving Tuesday for our Nutrition ministries: Checks \$160 FB Fundraiser \$62. We appreciate everyone's generosity.

Community Potluck and A Movie

Abiding Presence is partnering with First UCC Orlando to hold a monthly potluck and a movie night. This month's outreach to the general community will be on Friday, December 17, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in Crismon Hall. Doors open at 6 for set up. This month we will be viewing, "Santa Claus: The Movie."

There is no charge to participate. Simply bring a dish to share based on your last name and the following schedule: A-F: Dessert

G-L: Appetizer / Salad

M-S: Main Dish

T-Z: Side Dish

Be sure to label your dish and serving utensil with your name. Additional information will be sent in an email next week. Invite your friends so they can meet us and the good people of First UCC.

Prayers for Before and After Meals Christmas Season

Before Breakfast

Leader: The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia!

All: And dwelt among us, alleluia, alleluia!

Leader: Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad,

All: Before the face of the God, for He comes.

Leader: Bless us, O God, and these Your gifts, which we are about to receive from Your bounty. Through Christ our Redeemer.

All: Amen.

After Breakfast

Leader: Glory to God in the highest!

All: And on earth peace to people of good will, alleluia!

Leader: Our God reigns,

All: And is clothed with beauty.

Leader: O Almighty God, the Savior of the world, who nourishes us with heavenly food, we give You thanks for the gift of this bodily refreshment which we have received you're your bountiful mercy. Through Christ our Redeemer.

All: Amen.

Before Dinner

Leader: All the ends of the earth have seen, alleluia!

All: The Salvation of our God, alleluia!

Leader: Blessed are they who comes in the name of God.

All: God has shone upon us.

Leader: God, have mercy on us.

All: Christ, have mercy on us. God, have mercy on us.

Leader: Our Father....as it is in heaven.

All: Give us this day....

Leader: Bless us, O God, and these Your gifts, which we are about to receive from Your bounty. Through Christ our Redeemer.

All: Amen.

After Dinner

Leader: The goodness of God our Savior has appeared.

All: Not by the works of Justice which we have done, but according to God's mercy, Christ has saved us.

Leader: A sanctified day has shone upon us, alleluia!

All: Come, all nations and peoples, and adore the triune God!

Leader: Let us pray. Grant, we beseech You, Almighty God, that the new birth in the flesh of Your only begotten One may set us free, from the old bondage which holds under the yoke of sin. Through Christ our Redeemer.

All: Amen.

Leader: We give You thanks, Almighty God, for these and all Your gifts, which we have received from Your bounty. Who lives and reigns forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Prayer for Vocations

Creating God and Father, we thank you for calling men and women to serve in Christ's Kingdom as priests, deacons, and consecrated persons. Send your Holy Spirit to help others to respond generously and courageously to your call. May our community of faith support vocations of sacrificial love in our youth and young adults. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Priestly Ponderings by Rev. Lucas G. Brown

A song with two names? What is this?

Have you ever noticed in a hymnal that there is a name in the upper right corner of the hymn usually all in capital letters? This usually designates that the melody is a common melody from somewhere else. Think of it like “music by Rodgers and lyrics by Hammerstein”. That brings me to our example for this month.

“What Child Is This?” is a Christmas carol with lyrics written by William Chatterton Dix in 1865 and set to the tune of “Greensleeves”.

“Greensleeves” is a traditional English folk song. A broadside ballad by the name “A Newe Northen Ditty of ye Ladye Greene Slevs” was written in September 1580, and the tune is found in several late 16th-century and early 17th-century sources. Henry VIII did not compose Greensleeves. It is a romantic myth that Henry wrote the song for his lover and future queen consort Anne Boleyn.

In Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (written c. 1597), the character Mistress Ford refers twice to “the tune of Greensleeves”, and Falstaff later exclaims: Let the sky rain potatoes! Let it thunder to the tune of 'Greensleeves'! These allusions indicate the song was already well-known at that time.

At the time he was writing the lyrics to “What Child Is This?” in 1865, William Chatterton Dix was working as the manager of an insurance company. He was afflicted by an unexpected and severe illness that resulted in him being bedridden and suffering from severe depression. His near-death experience brought about a spiritual renewal in him while he was recovering. During this time, he read the Bible comprehensively and was inspired to author hymns like “Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!” and “As with Gladness Men of Old”.

Although written in 1865, “What Child Is This?” was only first published six years later in 1871, when it featured in “Christmas Carols New and Old”, a collection of carols that was published in the United Kingdom. Though written in Great Britain, the carol today is more popular in the United States than its country of origin.

So, as you pull out your carol book this Christmas, will you be singing “What Child is this?” or “Greensleeves” or both?



A View from the East: Diaconal Reflections by Deacon Chris Larsen

St John of Chicago (Kucharov)



Orthodoxy has been in America for at least 200 years. Alaska was once a Russian Settlement, so churches were built in the remote indigenous villages. There was one man who continued to bring Eastern Christianity further into the midwestern United States. One man followed his dream to serve Midwest Americans with his Orthodox faith. This was John Kucharov.

Saint John Kucharov was born in the Ryazan region of Russia in June of 1871 to a pious family. His father was a priest, so he had the desire to follow in his father's footsteps. He achieved that by attending both Ryazan and St Petersburg theological seminaries. After graduating he became a deacon then a priest. Saint John always had an affinity for missionary work. So, he put in a request to travel to Illinois in the United States to establish parishes where the

Orthodox of America, mainly Carpathian-Ruthenians, Russians, and Galicians were settled. There he established parishes and built what is now known as Holy Trinity Cathedral in Chicago. He was instrumental in forming parish councils and educational programs for the Orthodox community. He was also amazed at all the ethnicities in the area, such as Ukrainian, Russian, Bulgarian, and Arab. They all worked together to bring the Orthodox community alive no matter where you came from. He even took part in an Episcopal Consecration of Right Reverend Weiler along with Right Reverend Anthony Kozlowski of the Polish National Catholic Church. St. John helped start services for the immigrants even translating religious texts into English, knowing there would be English-speaking converts. He helped form the American Council in 1907.

Longing to return to Russia, he did so in 1907. He was assigned to Narva in 1907. There he put into practice what he learned in America. He started catechism classes in schools. Prior to the Russian Revolution in 1916, he was transferred to the St. Petersburg suburb of Tsarskoye Selo, where he was a parish priest at St Catherine's Cathedral. There he was a popular preacher who preached love and forgiveness. When the revolution began in 1917, he led peaceful marches and rallies. He was accused of being a traitor by the Bolsheviks. They senselessly tortured him before shooting him in a military field outside the city. He died on October 31, 1917. After his funeral he was buried in the crypt of St Catherine Cathedral. Father John was then glorified as a saint in 1994 as the first martyr of the 20th

Century and given the name St John of Chicago in honor of what he did for the Orthodox community in the Chicago area. His Feast Day is October 31.

What can we learn of St John of Chicago? He was a man of high reverence. He wanted the world to have access to the treasure of God's kingdom. He tirelessly continued to spread the word of God to all, even in his later years in his native Russia. He went to his death knowing and having the conviction that God was on his side.

His life and example beg a few questions. Are we doing enough for God? Do we have the dedication and the commitment to serve God's people even if there is danger ahead? Or do we just look away to avoid a negative response?

St John of Chicago is remembered for his bravery and went into a different world with his mind and heart open to God and his people.

Family Faith Activities

Courtesy of LTP's [At Home With the Word 2024](#).

December 3, 2023: First Sunday of Advent

Questions

- ◆ Many people didn't recognize Jesus the first time he came. If he returned this Advent and visited your family, how would you recognize him?
- ◆ If Jesus returned this Advent, what would he find each member of your family doing in preparation for meeting him?
- ◆ Isaiah tells us that we are like clay in the hands of God, the potter. Jesus compares us to servants whose master has made them stewards over his household while he is away. How is each member of your family open to allowing God to form your lives? How are you mindful of your role as stewards of God's blessings? (And what is a steward, anyway?)

Activities

- ◆ Invite your child to look and listen for signs of Advent in your parish church. They can be aware of the Advent wreath and blue in the vestments and banners and listen for words such as watch, wait, and prepare. Explain that Advent is a time to prepare, watch, and wait for Jesus to come again as he promised.
- ◆ Place an Advent wreath in your home. Its circular shape and greenery symbolize eternity and everlasting life. The candles celebrate Jesus, the light of the world. Violet is the liturgical color of preparation, reminding us to turn our hearts to God, and the rose-colored candle exhorts us to rejoice, for we are assured of our Lord's faithfulness. As you

light the candles, pray together, reSecond Sunday of Advent a passage from the Gospel for that Sunday, and sing an Advent hymn such as “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.”

◆ Discuss ways in which you can minimize the commercialization of your Christmas celebration. Set aside any money that you save, and use it to purchase canned goods for a food pantry or toys to give to children in need.

December 10, 2023: Second Sunday of Advent

Questions

John the Baptist went out to the desert, away from the busy city, to pray and prepare the way of the Lord. As our culture’s hectic, frantic holiday countdown rises, what could each family member do to make your home a place of quiet to pray and prepare for the coming of Christ?

◆ In the Gospel, John says that the one who comes will baptize with the Holy Spirit.

Christians were baptized in the name of each member of the Trinity. Do you pray for the Spirit to work in your life?

◆ Are there things for which you need to ask forgiveness of one another and of God as you prepare to welcome Jesus?

Activities

◆ Talk to your child about his or her baptism. Show the candle that was given to you, the white garment your child wore, and photographs, if you have them. Explain that, just as your child is a member of your family by birth or adoption, so he or she is a member of God’s Church by baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. John the Baptist speaks of this when he tells the people about Jesus, who will baptize them with the Holy Spirit. Point out the font at church and explain that we bless ourselves with the water whenever we enter the church as a reminder of all that it means to be a child of God.

◆ John the Baptist ate locusts and wild honey. Enjoy a special snack of apple slices dipped in honey as a reminder of the sweetness of God’s love and goodness. As you eat, make a game of counting your family’s blessings.

◆ As a family, determine a date to spread the joy of the season by singing a mix of carols and Advent songs in your neighborhood or in a nursing home. Invite other families to make this a larger, festive group. Pass out inexpensive ornaments at the nursing home.

December 17, 2023: Third Sunday of Advent

Questions

◆ We sing Mary’s Magnificat today, rejoicing in God our Savior. What great things has the Almighty done in your life, and how can you sing his praises like Mary?

John the Baptist states “the voice of one crying out in the desert, / Make straight the way of the Lord” (John 1:19). How can you, in your everyday lives, make straight the way of the Lord, give witness to the Light of Christ, and share the Good News?

◆ John the Baptist told the people there was someone among them whom they didn’t recognize. Do you recognize Jesus in the people around you?

Activities

◆ Point out to your child the rose-colored candle on the Advent wreath at church and in your home. Explain that this color symbolizes rejoicing. This Sunday has a special name: Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete is the Latin word for “rejoice.” We remember this day that God is faithful, and Jesus will come again as he promised. On that day, every tear will be wiped away, and there will be no more pain or death. Invite your child to listen closely to today’s readings for words such as glad, rejoice, and joy.

◆ Go for a walk in your neighborhood this evening and enjoy the Christmas lights at the homes of your neighbors. Point out to your child that Christmas lights remind us that Jesus is the light of the world. He came to help us see how we should live according to God’s plan. Like John the Baptist, Christmas lights proclaim the Good News of Jesus. If you have no lights on your home, consider putting at least one electric candle in a window to share the joy of Christ.

◆ Like John the Baptist, many people have been witnesses to you of the light of Jesus. Talk about these people and what they taught you about Christ. Invite each member of the family to call or write a note to thank at least one person for sharing the Good News.

December 24, 2023: Fourth Sunday of Advent

Questions

◆ God makes it clear to David that his kingdom endures, not in a place, but in a people. Where do you see the presence, the goodness, and the love of God in your family, your parish, and your community?

◆ The birth of Jesus, of the lineage of David, fulfills God’s promise to Christ’s ancient ancestor. Where do you see your prayers answered and the faithfulness of God fulfilled in the life of your family?

◆ The angel tells Mary that nothing is impossible for God. Where have you seen the miraculous handiwork of God in your lives or the lives of people you know?

Activities

◆ Invite your child to count the lit candles on the Advent wreath in your parish church and at home. Remind your child that the circle of evergreens symbolizes God’s everlasting kingdom, and the candles remind us of Jesus, the Light of the World. As Jesus gave his life for us, the candles give themselves, melting to produce the light. Volunteer to help

redecorate the church later this week for Christmas or bake cookies to be enjoyed by others who will do the decorating.

- ◆ Begin setting up a crèche in your home by choosing a site and setting out just a stable or empty crib and perhaps an animal or two. Don't add Mary and Joseph until Christmas Eve, and don't add the Christ child until Christmas morning. Make a ritual of adding the rest of the figures gradually throughout Christmas Time, with the Magi arriving on Epiphany. Plan to say a prayer for those who are homeless when you add the Mary and Joseph figures, for suffering children as you add the baby, Jesus, for those whose work is hard or lonely as you add shepherds, and for all who seek God when you add the Magi.
- ◆ Plan to share the hospitality of Christmas. Invite someone who will otherwise be alone to join you for Mass and Christmas dinner. Plan to pay a visit during Christmas Time to someone who can't get out to come to you.

December 24, 2023: The Nativity of Jesus: Mass During the Night

Questions

- ◆ As a parent you may be able to identify with the first reading's description of God calling his children "My Delight." Talk with your family about how our God rejoices in us as his children and how we can rejoice and be glad about God's love.
- ◆ In today's Gospel, Joseph has an important message from God in a dream. How has God communicated things to your family members through dreams and how did you discern what the dream meant? We learn today that Jesus will be born and will be named "Emmanuel"— "God with us." Talk together about what it means for God to be with us. How do we sense God being with us?

Activities

- ◆ Invite your child to point out to you any changes he or she notices in the liturgical environment of your parish church. Explain that white is the liturgical color for Christmas, its spotless purity symbolizing the pure truth and goodness of God that we celebrate. Visit the crèche in your church. Invite your child to retell the story in his or her own words and to tell you who the figurines represent. Like the animals in the stable, the angels, and the shepherds, welcome the holy family wholeheartedly into your family celebration. Carrying the Christ child figurine, process through your house singing "Gloria in excelsis Deo," and place the baby gently in the manger of your home crèche. Sing a Christmas hymn before opening gifts. Read today's Gospel aloud before sitting down to Christmas dinner. Say the Hail Mary together before retiring for the night.
- ◆ If older relatives join you for Christmas, ask them to share their childhood memories of Christmas and stories they recall being told by their parents and grandparents. Ask them to recount old family traditions and look for ways to incorporate some of these into your future festivities. Ask if you can videotape them telling stories, and plan to show the tapes

next year. Save your Christmas cards, reread one each day or week in the coming year, and pray for the sender.

Notable December Saints

The month of December provides us with numerous opportunities to reflect on the lives of the saints in heaven. You may use Google or an encyclopedia to research each. Let us know which one of these saints is your favorite for this month. Go to our Facebook group or page and post your answer with a picture of your favorite.

We begin the month with the celebration of All the Saints on December 1. The Feast of All Souls is marked on December 2. Saint Martin de Porres and Saint Hubert are commemorated on December 3. He is followed by Saint Charles Borromeo on December 4. The Patriarch of the West, Saint Leo the Great, is remembered on December 10. Then on December 11, we commemorate Saint Martin of Tours. The American Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini is celebrated on December 13. Saint Albert the Great's Feast Day is December 15. Saints Margaret of Scotland and Saint Gertrude are celebrated together on December 16. December 18 the church commemorates Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne. December 21, we recall the Presentation of the Virgin Mary. December 22, we recall Saint Cecilia. She is followed on December 23 by Saint Clement I, Saint Columban, and the Blessed Miguel Pro. Saint Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions are memorialized on December 24 with Saint Catherine of Alexandria following on December 25. We end the month with the Feast of Saint Andrew the Apostle on December 30.

December Recipes

Speculatius

Speculatius (German Spice Cookies) are considered the traditional St. Nicholas Cookie and the recipe hails from the Rhineland.

Ingredients:

Mix in order:

- 1 cup shortening
- 2 cups white sugar
- 4 eggs whole
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 4 cups flour
- 4 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons allspice
- 2 teaspoons nutmeg

2 teaspoons ginger
2 teaspoons cloves

Directions:

1. Turn out onto a floured board. Knead in about one cup of additional flour or as much as you need until the dough is no longer sticky and is easy to handle.
2. Put into a plastic bag and refrigerate until chilled and stiff. Then you are ready to roll out and cut the cookies. Cut off a manageable piece and keep the rest cool until you are ready for more.
3. For the larger, hand-decorated St. Nicholas cookies, roll the dough to about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thickness. Cut out cookies around the paper pattern. Place on a greased baking sheet.
4. Bake at 350° F. until golden-brown. These keep very well in tins in the freezer, or for two to three weeks on the shelf.

Cavins Family Christmas Punch

Ingredients

1 cored and sliced apple
1 bottle claret
1 bottle of red wine
1/2 bottle rum
1 bottle of Champagne
The juice of 4 lemons
The juice of 4 oranges
1 pint water
1 pound sugar
grated rind of 1 lemon
grated rind of 1 orange
4 whole oranges cut into pieces.
1 stick cinnamon, broken into pieces.
1 vanilla bean
1/2 cup maraschino cherries

Directions:

1. Boil spices thoroughly in 1 pint of water.
2. Remove them and pour the water into a crockpot.
3. Add the lemon and orange juice and rind, as well as the apple and sugar.
4. Add the two wines and rum.
5. Cover and heat.
6. Add champagne before serving.

Chestnut Stuffing

This recipe makes enough stuffing for a 5- to 6-pound chicken. Recipe may be doubled for an 8- to 10-pound turkey.

Ingredients:

- 1 can (3 ounces) broiled chopped mushrooms.
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1/4 cup chopped ripe olives.
- 2 Tablespoons chopped parsley.
- 1/4 cup chopped celery.
- 1-1/2 cups fresh chestnuts, scored with an X
- 1-1/2 cups cooked rice.
- 1/4 cup milk
- salt and pepper

Directions:

1. Bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil. Add chestnuts; cook until soft, about 20 minutes.
2. Drain; let cool slightly. Peel and quarter chestnuts; set aside. Note: Make-Ahead: Peeled chestnuts can be refrigerated in an airtight container for 2 to 3 days.
3. Mash the chestnuts. Set it aside.
4. Drain mushrooms, and reserve broth.
5. Heat butter or margarine in a skillet.
6. Sauté mushrooms, olives, parsley, and celery.
7. Combine mushroom mixture with reserved broth and remaining ingredients.
8. Mix well.
9. IF stuffing a turkey follow cooking directions for the bird.
10. If not stuffing a turkey, transfer the mixture to a buttered 17-by-12-inch baking dish.
11. Cover with aluminum foil
12. Bake at 350°F for 25 minutes.
13. Uncover; bake until hot and golden brown, 30 minutes more.

Ensalada de Noche Buena

Ingredients:

- 1 head lettuce shredded.
- 6 beets, cooked, sliced.
- 4 oranges, peeled, sectioned.
- 4 apples, cored, sliced.
- 4 bananas, peeled, sliced.
- 2 cups pineapple cubes
- sugar
- seeds from 2 pomegranates
- 1 cup almonds
- 1 cup orange juice

Directions:

1. Wash and drain lettuce and place in bottom of large salad bowl.
2. Arrange the beets and fruit in layers sprinkling sugar over each layer.
3. Sprinkle top with pomegranate seeds and almonds.
4. Pour orange juice over before serving.

Christmas Apple Cranberry Relish

Ingredients:

- 2 navel oranges
 - 2 (12-ounce) packages of cranberries
 - 2 apples - peeled, cored and chopped.
 - 2 celery sticks, chopped.
 - 3 cups white sugar
- Note: Chopped pecans or walnuts can be added if desired.

Directions:

1. Grate peel of orange; reserve.
2. Peel oranges and discard white membranes.
3. Separate oranges into sections and place half in a food processor or blender.
4. To the food processor add half of the cranberries, apples, and celery.
5. Process until coarsely chopped.
6. Transfer to a bowl; repeat with remaining oranges, cranberries, apples, and celery.
7. Stir in sugar and reserved orange peel.
8. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
9. Garnish with pecans or walnuts if desired before serving.

Stodtmann Family Stollen

With notes from our parish breadmaker on how he has changed his mother's recipe.

Ingredients for the base dough

500g all-purpose flour (*I prefer 300g all-purpose and 200g bread flour. It adds some protein which results in a more even rise of the dough*).

100g room temperature unsalted butter

100g sugar (*can be substituted by artificial sweeteners. I used 3tbls of honey and 5g Stevia*)

1 large egg

3 tsp yeast

250 ml milk

Ingredients for the filling

3 tbsp lemon juice

100g raisins

100g walnuts finely chopped.

100g candied lemon peel

100g candied orange peel

1tsp of salt

Ingredient to finish the stollen:

1 egg whisked.

Directions:

1. Mix all ingredients for the dough in a bowl and knead until the dough forms a nice silky ball. (*You can use a mixer for the kneading but I prefer to knead the dough by hand.*) In case the dough is too wet or too dry add some flour or milk until the dough forms a silky ball
2. Let the dough rest for 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, mix all the ingredients for the filling in another bowl.
4. Carefully mix the filling into the dough until the filling is evenly distributed throughout the dough.
5. Let the mixture rest for another 15 to 30 minutes then form 2 loafs out of the dough.
6. Bake at 375F in a convection oven or 410 in a standard oven for 25 to 30 minutes.
7. After 15 minutes of baking brush the loafs with the remaining egg.
8. Remove from oven and test with a toothpick.
9. Place on a cooling rack.