



**2013 CHRISTMAS  
LITURGICAL APPOINTMENTS**

Christmas Eve  
(Tuesday, December 24), and  
Christmas Day (Wednesday, December 25)

**CHRISTMAS EVE – 3:30 p.m. Mass**

**Sacristan:** Joyce Combs

**Ministers of the Altar:** Humphries Boys & Brennan Priest

**Hospitality Ministers:** Volunteer & Volunteer

**Ministers of the Word:** Jerry Piezer – Vigil Reading (Gather #891)

**Ministers of Holy Communion:** Michael & Linda Bradford, Cathy Ernst Breckel, Joyce Combs (Choir)

**CHRISTMAS EVE – 11:00 p.m. Mass**

**Sacristan:** Jerry Leibold

**Ministers of the Altar:** Gabriel Tamborski & Volunteer

**Hospitality Ministers:** Volunteer & Volunteer

**Ministers of the Word:** Kelli Cole – Midnight Reading (Gather #892)

**Ministers of Holy Communion:** Jerry Leibold, Jenny Hart, Mike Moses & Mary Tamborski (Choir)

**CHRISTMAS DAY – 9:00 a.m. Mass**

**Sacristan:** Maggie Van Frank

**Ministers of the Altar:** Volunteer & Volunteer

**Hospitality Ministers:** Volunteer & Volunteer

**Ministers of the Word:** Mike Moses – Day Reading (Gather #894)

**Ministers of Holy Communion:** Joan Wright, Clem Moenster, Joyce Wendell

## INTERESTING CHRISTMAS FACTS

1. In Poland, spiders or spider webs are common Christmas trees decorations because (according to legend) a spider wove a blanket for Baby Jesus. In fact, Polish people consider spiders to be symbols of goodness and prosperity at Christmas. (I wonder if Shine liked spiders?)
2. Alabama was the first state in the United States to officially recognize Christmas in 1836.
3. Christmas wasn't declared an official holiday in the United States until June 26, 1870.
4. Bolivians celebrate *Misa del Gallo* or "Mass of the Rooster" on Christmas Eve. Some people bring roosters to the Midnight Mass, a gesture that symbolizes the belief that a rooster was the first animal to announce the birth of Jesus. (The Chris and Kim Smith Family is in charge for this year's Christmas Rooster.)
5. The earliest known Christmas tree decorations were apples.
6. Christmas is a contraction of "Christ's Mass," which is derived from the Old English *Cristes mæsse* (first recorded in 1038). The letter "X" in Greek is the first letter of Christ, and "Xmas" has been used as an abbreviation for Christmas since the mid-1500s.
7. The first person to decorate a Christmas tree was reportedly the Protestant reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546). According to legend, he was so moved by the beauty of the stars shining between the branches of a fir tree, he brought home an evergreen tree and decorated it with candles to share the image with his children.
8. It is estimated that the single "White Christmas," by Irving Berlin, is the best-selling single of all time, with over 100 million sales worldwide.
9. Christmas stockings allegedly evolved from three sisters who were too poor to afford a marriage dowry and were, therefore, doomed to a life of impurity. They were saved, however, when the wealthy Bishop Saint Nicholas of Smyrna (the precursor to Santa Claus) crept down their chimney and generously filled their stockings with gold coins.
10. According to the Guinness world records, the tallest Christmas tree ever cut was a 221-foot Douglas fir that was displayed in 1950 at the Northgate Shopping Center in Seattle, Washington.





## WELCOME TO MY HOUSE . RULES

\* I live here, you... don't.

\* If you don't want dog hair on your clothes, stay off the furniture.



\* My parents like me a lot better than most people.

\* To you, I'm just a dog. To my parents, I'm an adopted child who is short, furry, has 4 legs and barks.

oh! happy grey  
SOSANIMALS  
facebook.com/happygrey

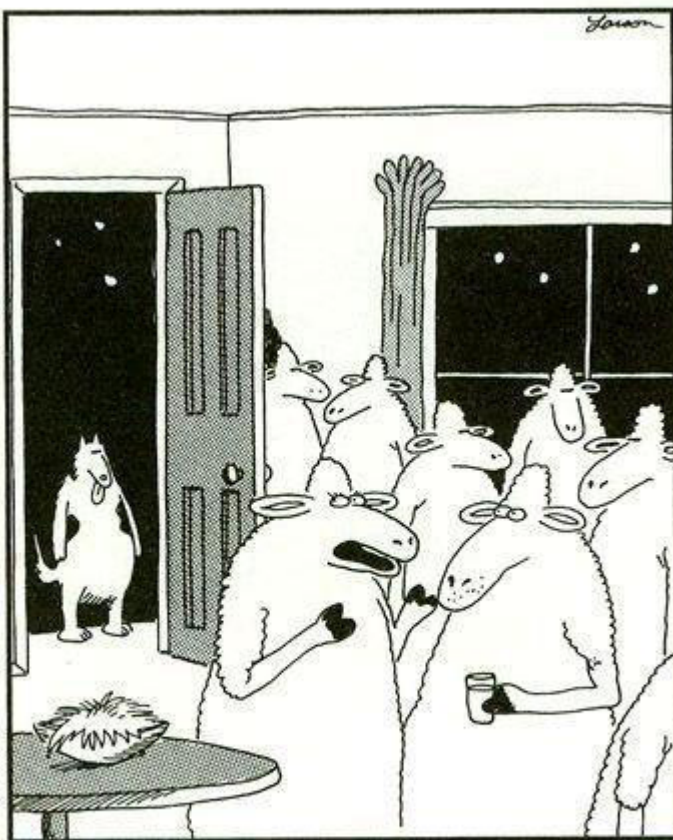
PODENCOS WILL STEAL YOUR HEART.

Saw them,  
Wanted  
them,



MADE THEM MINE!!!

IHASAHOTDOG.COM BY



"Henry! Our party's total chaos! No one knows when to eat, where to stand, what to ...  
Oh, thank God! Here comes a border collie!"

## CHRISTMAS JOKES

1. A lady lost her handbag in the bustle of Christmas shopping. It was found by an honest little boy and returned to her. Looking in her purse, she commented, "Hmmm.... That's funny. When I lost my bag there was a \$20.00 bill in it. Now there are twenty \$1.00 bills." The boy quickly replied, "That's right, lady. The last time I found a lady's purse, she didn't have any change for a reward."
2. There were two blonde-hair guys who went deep into the frozen woods searching for a Christmas tree. After hours of subzero temperatures, a few close calls with hungry wolves, one blonde turned to the other and said, "I'm chopping down the next tree I see. I don't care whether it's decorated or not!"
3. What did Adam say on the day before Christmas?  
"It's Christmas, Eve!"

## Eight Things To Say About A Christmas Clothing Gift You Don't Like

8. "Boy, if I had not recently shot up 4 sizes, that would've fit."
7. "This is perfect for wearing around the basement."
6. "Gosh. I hope this never catches fire! It is fire season though. There are lots of unexplained fires."
5. "If the dog buries it, I'll be furious!"
4. "I love it — but I fear the jealousy it will inspire."
3. "Sadly, tomorrow I enter the Federal Witness Protection Program."
2. "To think — I got this the year I vowed to give all my gifts to charity."

And the Number One Thing to say about a Christmas gift you don't like:

1. "I really don't deserve this."



## ***FR. MIKE'S SERMON FOR THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT***

"Father, be sure to visit Paul as often as you can. He is so sad. We have done everything to brighten his spirits but nothing seems to work. The toys, the clowns, the games...he could care less. His time is short." Those were the words of a concerned nurse at Children's Hospital for this 6-year-old boy with red freckles and curly red hair. He acquired HIV through a blood transfusion at a time when science was just discovering this disease and didn't know how to stop it.

I did visit Paul, often with prayer. I always wore a pair of suspenders with cartoon characters, such as Mickey Mouse or Marvin the Martian. Since it was around Christmas, I was sure to wear Santa Claus and reindeer. I got very little response, until one day I wore my Three Stooges suspenders. His eyes lit up and he said, "I really like them. They are so funny." I then proceeded to do my best imitation of the Curly, "woo, woo, woo" and gave Paul the Moe eye poke (without touching him). He laughed and laughed which drew the attention of the nurse. "Father, what did you do? This is the first time we ever heard him laugh." "He loves the Three Stooges. I'll bring in my VHS tapes and let him watch them." (DVD was not yet invented).

For the next three weeks, all he did was watch my Three Stooges tapes. I taped about 80 of the Stooges short films, so I kept him well supplied. Not only did his spirits brighten, but he no longer fought the nurse over his treatments.

The last Stooges film we watched together was the one where Shemp dies and he becomes an angel in Heaven. Paul asked me, "Father Mike, are the Stooges in Heaven?" I replied, "Yes they

are." His last words to me were, "I want to go see them." The next day he fell into a coma and saw Moe, Larry, Curly, and Shemp.

Who would ever have thought that God would use the Three Stooges to bring comfort to a little child? God can reveal His presence in ways we would never expect. John the Baptist wasn't sure if Jesus was the Messiah because He didn't act like the Messiah he expected. The Messiah was to be a great, powerful King who would destroy all foreign enemies and establish Jewish rule. The Messiah was to be born of royalty. The Messiah was to follow all the Jewish laws. But here comes Jesus born in a poor stable. He was associating with sinners. He was partying with outcasts. He was welcoming Gentiles. He was breaking all kinds of laws! He didn't fast like John and his disciples.

John and the Jews of his day expected the Messiah to be about power and law. But Jesus came as a humble bearer of Love. Jesus came to free hearts from the tyranny of sickness and sin. Religion and Faith should free a person from guilt and shame through mercy, not impose a heavy load on the soul through judgment and condemnation. Jesus said, "What I desire is Mercy not sacrifice." The Good News is that God values Mercy above all else. God will never sacrifice a soul on the altar of the law. This doesn't mean that our laws are bad. But it does mean God puts the person first, not the law. Recently, Pope Francis admonished the poor quality of priests' homilies, which in his telling are all too often moralistic, judgmental, unlearned, disorganized and verbose (too many words). Jesus never denied anyone access to His Grace. Neither will I. Happy Advent.