Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.

— Luke 2:19
Celebrating over a Century of Faith and Education
St. Barbara Parish is a Roman Catholic community celebrating a century of faith in the Bridgeport area. Our faith community welcomes all people, helping them grow spiritually through liturgy, prayer, and education, and socially through activities for all ages. Our school takes great pride in fostering these values in our children. We give witness to our faith by sharing with each other our God-given gifts and talents. We nourish and sustain our faith as a family by celebrating the sacraments and the presence of the risen Lord among us in the Eucharist.
FROM THE DESK OF THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR:

Dear Parishioners of St. Barbara,

Today is the first day of the New Year. Maybe we can ask ourselves why, on the first of January, does the Church celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God? On this day, the Church wants to focus on the fact that we are a big family – a family of people who believe in the same God, the same God the Son, the same God the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Mother of God. It is beautiful that Mary is the Mother of Jesus Christ but, also, she became the mother of every one of us.

Life brings us different stories about mothers and their children. There are very many good, loving mothers but, unfortunately, sometimes the mothers betray their own children. Mary is the mother who never will leave us alone. It doesn’t matter what happens in our lives. We belong to a family where Jesus is our friend and our brother. The brother who loved us so much that He gave His life to save us. And He will be with us always, no matter what happens.

And, finally, the Holy Spirit teaches us how to call God “Abba”, Father. Actually, “Abba” means daddy. Can you imagine that every one of us can call God “daddy”? It doesn’t matter what happened in our families; we have to remember all year and every year that we have a very strong family in heaven. As a matter of fact, we have a mother, a father and a brother who are with us all the time.

And one more thing. Usually during New Year’s or New Year’s Eve, we wish each other different things: we wish good health, we wish good work, a good boss, a lot of money. The most beautiful wishes are those we hear in today’s first reading from the Book of Numbers. God Himself tells what to wish for. God says to bless the Israelites with these words, “The Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord let His face shine upon you and be gracious to you! The Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace.” When you carefully read these words again and again, you will realize that you don’t need anything more.

These are my wishes to you for this year. May the Lord bless you, keep you, shine upon you, be gracious, kind and give you peace.

Fr. Andrzej

A Mass of Healing will be said this Tuesday, January 3rd, at 6:00 p.m. in Church. This Mass is for the intention of all who need health blessings. Be sure to join us for this special Mass which takes place the first Tuesday of every month.

If there is anyone whom you would like to especially remember at this Mass, please submit their name to the rectory at (312) 842-7979.

First Friday Masses
January 6th

* 8:30 a.m. Mass (in Church)
* 6:00 p.m. Mass (in Church)
* 6:45 p.m. Exposition & Benediction

ST. BARBARA SENIORS

Are you 55+? Do you enjoy socializing with your neighbors? Interested in playing Bingo? If so, come to the next St. Barbara Senior Citizens Meeting to be held this Tuesday, January 3, at 11:30 a.m. Try it — you might like it!

DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET

Even though the official Year of Mercy ended on November 20th and Pope Francis has closed the Holy Door at the Basilica in the Vatican, the Divine Mercy Chaplet will still be said before all 6:00 pm Tuesday evening Masses, after the 11:30 am Sunday Mass, and after all First Friday Masses during the Holy Hour. If you attend 11:30 am Mass and decide not to stay for the chaplet, please exit church quietly. Thank you.

Please consider remembering St. Barbara Parish in your will.
2017 Carnival News

As you pick up your Parish 2017 Calendars, please notice the Carnival dates on the bottom. Hard to believe that in 6 months our Parish Carnival will be here. Watch the bulletin for our first meeting to be held in January, 2017.

We wish everyone a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Wendy Kaput & Denise Holland, Chairpersons

Thursday December 22nd

Designer Purse Winners at Christmas Bingo

Rosa $500 Coverall
Darlene and Sonny Pugz Raffle - $2,202 Split

Epiphany Packets

The Feast of the Epiphany will be celebrated next Sunday, January 8th. Special Epiphany Kits to bless the doorways of your homes are available in back of the church. Each kit contains gold, frankincense and myrrh plus a small piece of chalk to mark the doorway. The suggested donation is $2.00 for each kit.

STAR GAZERS 20+C+M+B+17

Around a thousand years ago a stonemason in Autun, France, was working on decorations for the city’s new cathedral. One of his carvings shows a charming scene. The three kings, all wearing crowns and sharing one cozy bed, are being awakened by an angel pointing to a star. The angel’s finger is gently touching the hand of one of the kings on top of the patterned coverlet. This king’s eyes have popped open in surprise, while the other two slumber on. The stonemason artistically combined two biblical stories into one. The star reminds us of the one that led the kings to Bethlehem, while the visiting angel refers to the warning they received in a dream not to return to Herod after visiting the Christ Child. For centuries tradition has held that the names of the kings were Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, but nobody really knows for sure. Other traditions call them wise men from the East who studied the stars. They were the first non-Jews to recognize and worship the Son of God and give him kingly gifts. In the Middle Ages, houses were blessed on Epiphany, reflecting how the magi found Christ “on entering the house.” Try reviving this ancient tradition today. It can work for any family or household group. One person incenses the house while another sprinkles holy water, and a third writes in chalk over every outside doorway “ 20 + C + M + B + 17” (or whatever the year may be), which stands for “The three Holy Kings, Caspar, Melchior, Balthasar, in the year of Our Lord 2017.” The letters C, M, and B also stand for Christus mansionem benedicat, “May Christ bless this home.” Blessing the doorways symbolizes the family’s commitment to welcome everyone as Christ into their home throughout the year.

Mercy Home - Sunday Mass
WGN- TV Channel 9 - Chicago
Sunday Mass: 9:30 AM
FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we begin a new year, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you several important events that the St. Barbara family has experienced this past year with our parish, school and community.

* We celebrated the Year of Mercy and instituted the recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet. We will continue to say this Chaplet after the 11:30 am Mass for the next year.

* Bishop Blase Cupich became a Cardinal. Our parish continues to pray for him.

* After more than 40 years Mrs. Hurckes retired. After a transformation year, we were very pleased to announce that our school has a new Principal, Mrs. Nicole Nolazco, and a new Vice-Principal, Mrs. Juliann Jurisic. With joyful hearts, Fr. Andrzej and I are happy to support our new Principal and the school because Catholic education is very important.

* This year, at the advice of our Parish Council, Finance Council and the Facilities Committee, we made a decision to replace our roof. From the bottom of my heart, I would like to say thank you for your help and support of this project.

* During this past month, we have been repainting the church where water damage had occurred from our leaking roof.

* Last week, our sacristy and the stairwell leading to the bell tower have been patched and painted.

* Of course, this year thanks to the dedication of loyal parishioners who spearheaded these campaigns, we celebrated our 2nd annual parish carnival and our 3rd annual car show with great success.

Fr. Andrzej and I would like to say thank you to everyone who does so much for our parish and to those who have invited us to your homes for confessions and communions or have requested sick call or last rites visits.

Let us all look forward to the future for success – for our country, our parish and our school. Please pray for Father Andrzej and myself and we offer our prayers for you and your family. Happy New Year!

Fr. Arthur
We wish to update our Sick List. Some of the names have been on the list for several years. If you wish to keep a family member or friend on the Prayer List, please let us know by the end of the year or the name will be removed. Also, if you wish to add someone’s name please contact the rectory (312-842-7979). Thank you.

Due to the early publication of the bulletin, the collection totals for December 24th and 25th will be available in next week’s bulletin.

December 19, 2016 Report

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount Pledged</th>
<th>Amount Paid</th>
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Because payments have exceeded our goal, all additional funds are returned to our parish for our use. Thank you for your support of St. Donor Count: 113

Liturgical Ministers

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7TH
5:00 p.m.
Altar Servers: I. Echevarria, X. Lopez, A. Gorz, A. Torres
Eucharistic Ministers: TBA
Lectors: C. Hailer, D. Hailer
Greeter: TBA

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8TH
6:00 a.m.
Altar Server: G. Vanderford
Eucharistic Ministers: S. Guest, J. Balasa
Lector: J. Bertucci
Greeter: B. Webb
9:30 a.m.
Altar Servers: E. Castaneda, L. Castaneda, M. Gonzalez, A. Gonzalez
Eucharistic Ministers: TBA
Lectors: Family Mass - Grade 7
Greeter: TBA
11:30 a.m.
Altar Servers: M. Rodriguez, A. Rodriguez, K. Zotamba, G. Parcon
Eucharistic Ministers: TBA
Lectors: K. Ricci, L. Szczepanski
Greeter: TBA
Baptisms: Parents must be registered practicing parishioners and attend a baptismal preparation session before a baptism will be scheduled. Call the rectory office for further information.

Communion Calls: Please contact the Rectory when someone who is homebound or in the hospital wishes a visit to receive Holy Communion or the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. The Anointing of the Sick is for anyone seriously sick and not only for those near death.

Ministry of Care: Eucharistic Ministers are available to visit, pray with, and bring Holy Communion to those who are sick and unable to attend Mass. Notify the Parish Office when this service is needed.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a program for anyone inquiring and seeking information about entering the Catholic faith.

Weddings: Weddings need to be scheduled at least six months in advance. Couples are reminded to secure the Church date before the reception hall.

Moving/New Cell #: Please contact the rectory with address change or telephone change.

Please pray for those homebound, hospitalized and in need of continued prayers...