

By David G. Stratman

From his book "We Can Change the World"

It was December 25, 1914, only 5 months into World War I. German, British, and French soldiers, already sick and tired of the senseless killing, disobeyed their superiors and fraternized with "the enemy" along two-thirds of the Western Front (a crime punishable by death in times of war). German troops held Christmas trees up out of the trenches with signs, "Merry Christmas."

"You no shoot, we no shoot." Thousands of troops streamed across a no-man's land strewn with rotting corpses. They sang Christmas carols, exchanged photographs of loved ones back home, shared rations, played football, even roasted some pigs. Soldiers embraced men they had been trying to kill a few short hours before. They agreed to warn each other if the top brass forced them to fire their weapons, and to aim high.

A shudder ran through the high command on either side. Here was disaster in the making: soldiers declaring their brotherhood with each other and refusing to fight. Generals on both sides declared this spontaneous peacemaking to be treasonous and subject to court martial. By March 1915 the fraternization movement had been eradicated and the killing machine put back in full operation. By the time of the armistice in 1918, fifteen million would be slaughtered.

Not many people have heard the story of the Christmas Truce. On Christmas Day, 1988, a story in the Boston Globe mentioned that a local FM radio host played "Christmas in the Trenches," a ballad about the Christmas Truce, several times and was startled by the effect. The song became the most requested recording during the holidays in Boston on several FM stations. "Even more startling than the number of requests I get is the reaction to the ballad afterward by callers who hadn't heard it before," said the radio host. "They telephone me deeply moved, sometimes in tears, asking, 'What the hell did I just hear?'"

I think I know why the callers were in tears. The Christmas Truce story goes against most of what we have been taught about people. It gives us a glimpse of the world as we wish it could be and says, "This really happened once." It reminds us of those thoughts we keep hidden away, out of range of the TV and newspaper stories that tell us how trivial and mean human life is. It is like hearing that our deepest wishes really are true: the world really could be different.

**SAINT MARY'S
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For latest news, announcements and notifications, please like us on FaceBook; our FaceBook page is:
St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church—Northern Cambria, PA
www.stmarysnc.com YouTube Channel: Catholic Explorer

**12/22/2019
Sunday before Christmas**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Loca- tion</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Service / Intention</u>	
12/21	N. Cam.	Sat.	3:00 PM 3:30 PM 4:00 PM	Confessions Holy Rosary In Memory of Mary Hanwell	Jeannie & Kevin Boring
12/22	N. Cam. Revloc N. Cam.	Sun.	11:00AM 11:00AM 5:00PM	For the People Private Intentions In Memory of George Depetro	Veronica & Matt McMullen
12/23	N. Cam.	Mon.			
12/24	N. Cam. N. Cam.	Tues.	4:00PM 10:00PM	Children's Christmas Liturgy Solemn Vigil Christmas Liturgy	Kinka & Sunshine Paronish Andrew Sidwar
12/25	N. Cam. Revloc	Wed.	9:00AM 11:00AM	Christmas Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ	
12/26	N. Cam.	Thurs	10:00AM	Synaxis of the Mother of God	Chuff Family
12/27	N. Cam.	Fri.	10:00AM	Feast of St. Stephen	Chuff Family
12/28	N. Cam.	Sat.	3:00 PM 3:30 PM 4:00 PM	Confessions Holy Rosary In Memory of Mary Hanwell	Jeannie & Kevin Boring
12/29	N. Cam. Revloc N. Cam.	Sun.	9:00AM 11:00AM 5:00PM	For the Health of Danny Volcen Private Intentions For the People	Danny & RaeAnn Govaccini

Announcements

Income Report 12/15/2019

Sunday: \$1043.00 Loose: \$173.00 Holy Day: \$40.00 Diocesan: \$35.00 Energy: \$5.00 Dues: \$5.00
Total: \$1301.00
Candles: \$49.00 Building: \$58.00 Cemetery: \$5.00

Christmas Raffle

Congratulations to Ann Fleming on winning our raffle. Thank you all who worked so hard to sell tickets and made this fundraiser a success. May God bless you with good health and many happy years.

Christmas Schedule 2019

December 24th 4:00PM - Children's Christmas Liturgy
10:00PM - Solemn Christmas Vigil Liturgy
December 25th 9:00AM - Christmas Divine Liturgy in Northern Cambria
11:00AM - Christmas Divine Liturgy in Revloc

House Blessings

Fr. Andriy will bless homes starting December 30th, 2019. If you want Father to come at a specific time and day, please let him know. During the visit please have a cross, lit candle and holy water available. If you have any items to be blessed such as icons, rosaries, medals or other religious items, have them ready next to the cross.

Clothing Drive

Thank you to all who donated clothing/household items/toys this Christmas season. May God bless your generosity.

2020 Envelopes and Calendars

2020 Church envelopes are in the front pews. Be sure to pick yours up. If your name was missed by mistake, please let us know.

2020 Calendars are available at the entrances of the church, be sure to take one.

Sunday before Christmas

Let the heavens be glad, let the earth rejoice, for the Lord has done a mighty deed with His arm. He trampled death by death. He became the first-born of the dead; He saved us from the abyss of Hades and granted great mercy to the world.

Great are the achievements of faith! In the fountain of flames, the three holy youths rejoiced as by the water of rest, and the prophet Daniel was revealed shepherding lions like sheep. Through their intercession, O Christ God, save our souls.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
Now and forever and ever. Amen.*

Armed by the Being that defies description, You defied the manmade idol, O thrice bless'd youth. In the midst of the unbearable flames you stood and cried out to God; In Your mercy, O gracious One, hasten and come to our aid, for you can do whatever You will.

Prokeimen:

Blessed are You, Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Your Name forever.

For You are righteous in everything that You have done to us.

Blessed are You, Lord God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Your Name forever.

Alleluia

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have told us the work You did in their days.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

You saved us from our oppressors and put to shame those who hate us.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Communion Verse:

Praise the Lord from the heaven; praise Him in the highest.
Rejoice in the Lord, O you just; praise befits the righteous.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.