

Wednesday, September 8th Nativity of Mary

by Pastor Tim for St. Laika's

With many Christians, Saint Laika's remembers the birthday of Mary, the Mother of Our Lord, on this day. Today's feast comes nine months to the day after the festival of Mary's conception on the eighth of December. Nothing of Mary's birth is recorded in the Bible, but an apocryphal gospel, written somewhere after 150AD,

called the "Protoevangelion of James," recounts that Mary was born to Joachim and Anna, two holy Jews who grieved their lack of children and who approached God after prayer and fasting to ask for his blessing. Nine months later, Mary was born. The celebration of the eighth of September as Mary's Birthday started in Jerusalem in the fifth century and spread both East and West, to the Syrians, the Copts, the Orthodox and eventually, by the seventh century, to Rome and the west.

Scripture. In the ninth chapter of "Romans," verses four and five, we read:

"They are Israelites and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."

Prayer. Merciful God, give your people help and strength from heaven, as we celebrate the birthday of the Mother of your son. Inspired by her own life of humble service and obedience, help us, your people, to follow Christ in all things and always to do your will; through the same Jesus Christ, our saviour and lord. Amen.



Woman Delivers Compliment Jars Anonymously to Dozens of Friends During Pandemic

by Good News Network

We all know 2020 was a rough year and many people turned to thinking about what they could do to improve the situation for themselves or for others. One of those people was Kimberly Wybenga. She wanted to brighten the outlook for friends and family and wondered 'who doesn't love a compliment?' She bought 10 small jars and wrote out compliments for 10 friends that she thought could use a dose of happiness. Just writing out the compliments brought her joy and she bought 20 more jars to spread the love even further. She didn't stop there, either. She bought an additional 20 jars bringing the total number of kindness gift jars to 50—and did it all anonymously. Altogether, she hand-wrote 1,750 compliments! One recipient commented, "Sometimes the universe knows exactly what you need. This touched me to the core. The thoughtfulness that went into this is amazing." Another said, "I hope whoever did give this to me realizes just how much I needed this gift. I've opened it and read one when I needed it, but tonight I dumped it all out and read every single nice thing this person said about me."

"I know everyone is dealing with some kind of struggle and I just thought it would be nice to support them any way I could," Wybenga told GNN, "even if I didn't know what they were going through." The 38 year-old tried to deliver her boxes of hope anonymously, signing "a friend" at the bottom of each card. She mailed some packages and hand-delivered others that lived closer to her home in Colorado. The ones that she hand-delivered, she even tried to disguise herself so if people had cameras, they wouldn't know it was her. Dressed in a black jacket, her long blue hair pulled up into a beanie, and a mask, she placed the boxes on doorsteps. She even parked around corners or down streets so people wouldn't see her car. All the effort to remain anonymous didn't work much of the time because Wybenga's handwriting was recognized by multiple people. Others looked up her zip code on the package or did some sleuthing and discovered it was her. "Seeing other people happy brought me so much joy," she said. "The world is a better place with all my friends and family." She decided to now share the story publicly, in the hope that it would inspire someone else to spread kindness.



Watch her lovely YouTube video [here](#).

Prayer for the Anniversary of 9/11

O God, our hope and refuge,
in our distress we come quickly to you.
Shock and horror of that tragic day have subsided,
replaced now with an emptiness,
a longing for an innocence lost.

We come remembering those who lost their lives
in New York, Washington D.C., and Pennsylvania.

We are mindful of the sacrifice of public servants
who demonstrated the greatest love of all
by laying down their lives for friends.
We commit their souls to your eternal care
and celebrate their gifts to a fallen humanity.

We come remembering
and we come in hope,
not in ourselves, but in you.

As foundations we once thought secure have been shaken,
we are reminded of the illusion of security.
In commemorating this tragedy,
we give you thanks for your presence
in our time of need
and we seek to worship you in Spirit and in truth,
our guide and our guardian.

Amen.

- Rev. Jeremy Pridgeon



Amherst plans 9/11 Ceremony of Remembrance

September 08, 2021, *The Amherst Bee*

The Town of Amherst will conduct its 20th Anniversary “9/11 Ceremony of Remembrance” at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 11, at the Amherst Memorial Hill Grove. The Grove is located along the Ellicott Creek Trailway, between West Klein Road and Maple Road. A living memorial to the victims of the 9/11 attacks, the grove consists of an American flag, a monument, and 120 trees surrounding a memorial bench. Two pathways that traverse the grove form a memorial ribbon. A stone wall offers seating that faces the monument and the trees, and thereby permits visitors an opportunity to stop and reflect upon the lives of those who perished.

According to Leonard Castrianno, a member of the 9/11 Commemoration Committee who lost his son, Leonard, in the attack on the World Trade Center North Tower, “Memorial Hill Grove was the first memorial dedicated to the 9/11 victims, and held its groundbreaking on Oct. 20, 2001.” Describing the importance of the 9/11 Ceremony of Remembrance, Town Councilmember Deborah Bruch Bucki, chairperson of the 9/11 Commemoration Committee, commented that “Americans must remember the civilians, firefighters, police officers and dedicated flight crews who died on that terrible day. The ceremony will specifically honor 27 individuals who either lived in or had a familial or professional connection to Amherst and Western New York.” This program will include the presentation of colors by the Town of Amherst Police Department Honor Guard, as well as reading the names of the local victims, accompanied by the tolling of the bell by the Getzville Fire Company. The Williamsville East High School Chorale and Bagpipers Danne Farrell and Marley Becker will also participate. Don Postles, WIVB-TV anchor, will serve as Master of Ceremonies. Former Amherst Supervisor Susan Grelick will also speak at the event. Also scheduled to attend is Congressman Brian Higgins. “The devastation that occurred and pain caused on September 11, 2001, remain etched in our minds and hearts,” Higgins said. “Lives were lost and forever changed that day.

Two decades later, the Amherst Memorial Hill Grove and annual 9/11 ceremony extend a lasting opportunity to mourn the people we lost, celebrate the incredible heroism on display on that day and in the aftermath, and fulfill a lasting commitment to “never forget.” Supervisor Brian Kulpa stated, “September 11, 2001, is a day many of us will never forget the horrific attacks to our beloved country. It was a tragic time, but also a moment where our country united and stood together. This Patriot Day 2021, I encourage everyone to remember those first responders and volunteers that unselfishly put the needs of others before themselves. Join me as we commemorate the people, the heroes, and the lives affected by September 11th.” He thanked Bucki and the Amherst 9/11 Commemoration Committee for arranging this important event on the town’s behalf. For those who are in need, the Town of Amherst will provide limited transportation to the grove from the Ellicott Creek Trailway parking lot, located on North Forest Road. Some seating is available at the site, but participants are encouraged to bring lawn chairs if they wish. The ceremony is open to the public, will last no more than one hour, and will be held rain or shine. COVID-19 precautions will be followed, including maintaining social distance. Attendees are requested to wear masks, which will be available at the ceremony. For more information, contact Bucki via email at dbucki@amherst.ny.us or by calling 716-631-7013.



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—Amherst Supervisor, Brian Kulpa