

# SS. Isidore and Maria Parish

GLASTONBURY, CONNECTICUT



The true meaning of Christmas is not found in the twinkling lights, the beautifully adorned trees, or the exchanged gifts. It reveals itself when we discover God along the way of our lives, especially when we feel displaced, desperate, and alone. Fleeing from their home, Joseph and Mary cautiously made their way through the uncertain, complex, and dark paths to a longed-for place of safety and welcome. Not sure where to lay their heads, they created makeshift preparations for the birth of their child, the Son of God. God, who always was, is, and will be, without beginning or end, is the one constant in life who sees us through difficult and scary times. Jesus is the light, which enlightens everyone, and comes into the world to show us the truth. It is joyful good news that calms our fears and allows us to go forth into the nighttime of our lives courageously. This is the meaning of Christmas. We are never lost or alone. God is with us, loving and leading us where we need to be. ~ Rev. Mark Suslenko



### Jan. 3: Solemn Celebration of Evening Prayer with Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

Take a break from the hustle and busyness of the holidays to continue the celebration of Christmas on Tues., Jan. 3 at 6:30 p.m. at the Solemn Celebration of Evening Prayer with Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. It's an opportunity to become familiar with this beautiful tradition of our faith, and we hope you and your family will join us. Learn more about this special liturgy here: [www.isidoreandmaria.org/jan3](http://www.isidoreandmaria.org/jan3)



**Faith Formation make donations to local non-profit organizations** - THANK YOU to all of our Faith Formation families who donated items in support of St Joseph's Residence - Little Sisters of the Poor, House of Bread, ImmaCare, and My Sister's Place. Your generosity will certainly bring joy to the residents and clients served by these agencies.

## Collections and Parish Finance

We are grateful for your generous support of our Sacrificial Giving Program.



Report for the week of 12/18/2022:

Weekly collection: \$ 6,999.00  
Online Giving: \$ 3,135.50  
Total: \$ 10,134.50

Annual Parish Collection: \$ 107,513.00

Annual Chancery Assessment for 2022: \$ 94,171.00

For a more detailed report please visit our website under the **ABOUT** tab. The monthly accountability reports can be found in the Financial Accountability folder.

Check donations should be payable to: **Saints Isidore and Maria**. For online giving, go to our website and click on the **DONATE** tab. *Thank you.*



## 2022 Parish Collection Continues

The 2022 Parish Annual Collection remains open for your donation.

A letter from Father Mark about this collection has been sent to homes of all parishioners. Make your donation by scanning this QR code or by

sending your check to SS. Isidore and Maria Parish, 2577 Main St., Glastonbury, CT 06033. Please make checks payable to SS. Isidore and Maria Parish. Thank you for your kind consideration.



## Grade 3 First Communion Class Provides Christmas Ornaments for Altar Tree

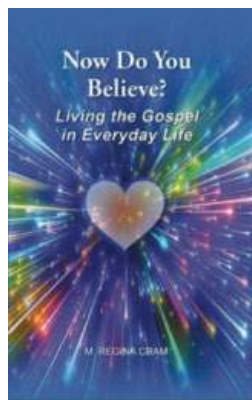
Thank you to the third grade First Communion class for the beautiful handmade ornaments they created! They now adorn the Christmas tree on the South Wing side of the altar, adding beauty to our celebration of the birth of Jesus!



## Jan. 5: Blood Drive at St. Paul Church

SS. Isidore and Maria Parish is holding an American Red Cross blood drive in the South Wing of St. Paul Church on Thurs., Jan. 5, 2023 from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. If you are 17 or older, weigh 110 pounds or more and haven't donated blood in the 56 days prior to Jan 5, you may be eligible to donate. Learn more about the eligibility requirements and/or sign up at: <https://www.redcrossblood.org/>

## SAVE THE DATE: Jan. 22 Book Discussion



Join us on Sun., Jan. 22 at 2 p.m. at St. Augustine Church as we host a book discussion centering on "Now Do You Believe? Living the Gospel in Everyday Life," featuring the book's author and parishioner, M. Regina Cram.

Fellow parishioner Margaret LaCroix will facilitate the discussion. Refreshments will be served. Copies of the

book may be purchased on Amazon, or borrowed from the main office of the church. Those attending are asked to RSVP at [contact@isidoreandmaria.org](mailto:contact@isidoreandmaria.org) or be calling the parish office at 880-633-9419. Snow date is Jan. 29.

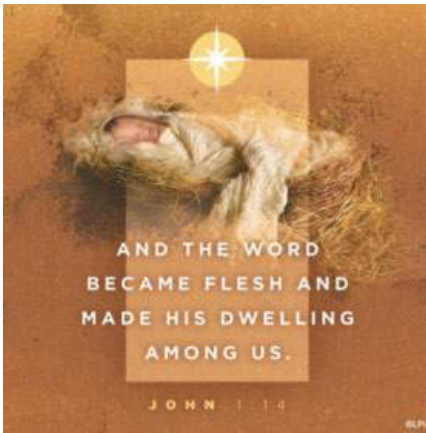
## SAVE THE DATES: Hospitality Weekends Begin in Jan. 2023

Please save the dates of **Jan. 7 and Jan. 8** to join us for our first all-parish "Hospitality Weekend." It consists of a "**Wine and Cheese Social**" following the 4 p.m. Mass on Sat., Jan. 7 and the new "**11:15 a.m. Hospitality Social**," on Sun., Jan. 8 after the 11:15 a.m. Mass. Both events will be held in the south wing of St. Paul Church.

*Thank You* to our sponsors

SS. Isidore and Maria Parish sincerely thanks the sponsors whose generosity makes our bulletin possible.

Our Sponsor Spotlight this week is:  
**Glastonbury Automotive, Inc.**



## THE GRAND ILLUSION

By Rev. Mark Suslenko

tend to follow the masses and are easily convinced of something's authenticity when most folks seemingly verify it. This is the case for fashion trends, the latest figures of speech, philosophies, or social styles. We need a yardstick to measure whether what we buy is authentic, trustworthy, and real or just something trendy and illusory. Perhaps we do not need to be too careful about the trustworthiness of matters like fashion and style, but we ought to be when it comes to an understanding ourselves as human beings. The web may affirm what we want to hear but cannot tell us who we are.

Who are we? To what reliable and trustworthy source do we look to understand ourselves? We live in a consumption-based, disposable world. If something breaks, we buy a new one. In our materially dependent world, it is easy to cast aside the permanent in favor of the changeable and replaceable. Everything becomes fluid. What worked yesterday will be replaced with a new and improved version tomorrow. We fill our lives with business. Often feeling stressed, what is immediately before us is enough to attend to. It is no wonder that many choose not to explore more profound existential questions. Human life runs the risk of being viewed with the same lens as everything else: disposable, replaceable, and changeable.

However, one interesting fact about life is most certain: none of us chose to be here. We simply are. Taking the world at face value, one can undoubtedly conclude that human life is just a random affair. Make the best of it, get whatever you can, and avoid hardship and suffering. Soon enough, the ride will be over. Is this true? "But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God." (John 1:12-13) Today we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, which reveals God's most significant accomplishment. Today humanity knows that it is not here by some random act or by pure human choice but because of a magnificent and wonderful Divine blessing. The humble birth of Jesus Christ shows the world that every human being is a unique, incredible, blessed and infinitely loved child of God. God

We are easily misled. Media stories often leave us wondering what actually happened. Faked photos of astounding things go 'viral', and many believe they are real. The internet can be a confusing and misleading place to discover the truth. Is what we see or hear the truth or simply some illusion created by an imaginative or devious mind? We

wants us to be who we are! There is no way that the world can reveal this eternal truth to us. All the world can do is offer us illusions and myths that entertain us but do not redeem us.

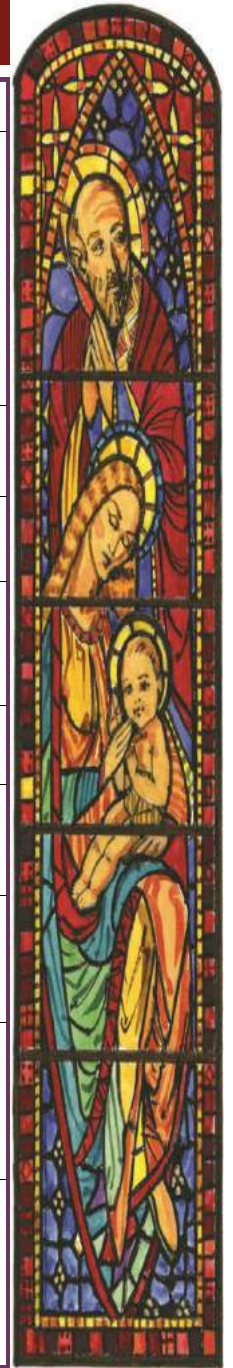
Much of the violence we see in the world occurs at the hands of people who do not know they are loved. Loving well can only happen when a human soul first knows that God loves it and then realizes their sacred obligation to love others. Rooting the gift of love in God is the only way to perfect it. Sadly, human love has been distorted due to centuries of sin and error, and the unloved and unaccepted now walk among us. Consider what life would be like if Advent's peaceful and harmonious vision could be tasted just a bit as we walk through this world. Life would look so different if we only believed, with our whole hearts, minds, and souls, in God's vision for who we are meant to be. Harmony, gentleness, and peace would more easily be found. Christmas would not be something we celebrate but live.

If people take their cues about who they are solely from the secular world, they will most certainly be lost. Many people aren't willing to give up on the "god-idea" but are very reluctant to invest entirely into specific ideologies, conceptions, and theologies about God. Hence, we find the growing popularity of the phrase "spiritual but not religious." Instinctively they realize there is something more to who they are but are hesitant to commit to what precisely that is. Given the growing popularity of this illusion, it is no wonder why institutional Christianity is in decline in many parts of the world, including here. Yet, in the midst of all that captures and intrigues us in our self-created virtual worlds, this longing for the anchor of faith that makes sense of it all still pulses within each soul.

For the birth of Christ to have power and effectively mean something, it cannot be celebrated just once a year. We must completely buy into what God is saying to us today and find the courage to allow it to change our lives. How do we live the incarnation? Do we have faith that God became one of us in Jesus Christ? If we do, we will surely see that it is a game-changer. A genuine living faith in the incarnation means that our lives need to change. Our priorities have to shift, how we understand our identities in God becomes more evident, and our life goals and our souls all take on crisper importance. As we sing Silent Night, O Holy Night, Joy to the World, and Hark the Herald Angels Sing with fervor these next couple of weeks, we also ought to be thinking about how all this talk can translate into more significant action.

Christianity is in decline. That is for sure. There is a reason why people are no longer finding faith, hope, and love within our walls and in our lives. The birth of Christ will not fit into a neat little box like those we find under our Christmas trees. It never did, and it never will. The incarnation is always carried forth by the creative and rejuvenating power of God's Holy Spirit. The message today confirms that God never abandons his people; he is always with us. And so, God is with us even in the confusing moments where the tides of life

Date	Time	Intention	Requested by
<b>Saturday, Dec. 24</b> <i>Nativity of the Lord</i>	4 p.m. 6 p.m. 9:30 p.m. 10 p.m.	<b>No Confessions</b> Robert Shepard William Henry <i>Christmas Concert and Sing-along</i> Michael and Marion Connors <i>(All Christmas Masses with live stream)</i>	Family Family Marion Valenti and Family
<b>Sunday, Dec. 25</b> <i>Nativity of the Lord</i>	9 a.m.	Russell Erickson (2nd Anniv.)	Wife and Family
<b>Monday, Dec. 26</b> <i>St. Stephen, First Martyr</i>	7:30 a.m.	Anthony and Edith Scalia	Daughters
<b>Tuesday, Dec. 27</b> <i>St. John, Apostle and Evangelist</i>	7:30 a.m. 7 p.m.	Thomas Moorcroft <b>Rosary (St. Augustine Church)</b>	Elaine Henry
<b>Wednesday, Dec. 28</b> <i>Holy Innocents, Martyrs</i>	7:30 a.m.	Parishioners of SS Isidore and Maria	
<b>Thursday, Dec. 29</b> <i>Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord</i>		<b>No Mass</b>	
<b>Friday, Dec. 30</b> <i>The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph</i>	12:15 p.m. <b>After Mass until 2 p.m.</b>	Ron Clisham <b>Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament</b>	Carol Eckert
<b>Saturday, Dec. 31</b> <i>Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God; Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord</i>	<b>2:30 p.m.</b> 4 p.m.	<b>Reconciliation (Confession)</b> Cecilio, Rose, Don Giles and Joy Flores <i>With Live Stream</i>	Family
<b>Sunday, Jan. 1, 2023</b> <i>Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God; Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord</i>	8 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 11:15 a.m.	D. Joon Yoo Francisco (Paco) Garrido John McGovern <i>With Live Stream</i>	Family Son and Family Rooney Family



**PRAYER REQUESTS**

Tim Blomstrom  
Susan Bowhall  
Bob Caisse  
Diane Varni Caisse  
Sandra Cavanna  
Thomas Cavanna  
Kathy Cerne  
Ashley Chapman  
Donna Chapman  
Keith Chapman

Gerald Delany  
Deacon Bill Dziatko  
Patricia Feeny  
Richard Giguere  
Ernesto Guardia  
Dan Hebert  
Keith Henson  
Julia Krawiec  
Gilbert Morin  
Gil Morin

Roger Morin  
Jack Murphy  
Clara O'Brien  
Jacob Rivera  
Jaxson Rivera  
Lilly Sinnamon  
Frank Schultz  
Doreen Thurz  
John Thurz  
Roger Yost

To add a prayer intention, please contact our parish office and their name will be listed for ONE month. We cannot publish names of friends. Thank you for your understanding.

If you are offering a Mass Intention and you and your loved ones would like to bring up the gifts, please see the greeters prior to the start of Mass. One of them will be happy to assist you..



**Altar Flower Offerings**

Dec. 24 - Dec. 30, 2022

In loving memory of  
**Rosalie and Carmine Esposito**  
Requested by the Family



are bringing us today. The silence is not truly silent as it speaks softly to us and always calls. Some people may not call themselves Christian, but there are those who are living the Beatitudes and the unconditional love taught and embodied by the Son of God. There is something instinctual about the incarnation. God does not leave his people.

If the systems around us, both secular and religious, are losing their effectiveness and relevance, what will we do about it? This question must be at the heart of dialogue in the Church's magisterium, dioceses worldwide, and every parish in every town and home. We have been given the gift of a message today that God wants the world to hear. If it remains just a pious sentiment with little relevance or purpose, the sights, sounds, and smells that lift our souls today will soon become nostalgic memories. Trusting in the guidance that led that first star to Bethlehem, we have to trust that if we can remain open and listen, God will bring us where we need to be. We need to trust. Faith inspired Joseph and Mary to leave their home; love brought them to Bethlehem, and hope was brought into the world. People need this. People need to believe in the Gospel. People need a Church that can bring that Gospel into the world. People want what is real.



## Weekly Prayer

### Scripture Readings for the Week

<b>SUN</b>	<b>12/25/22</b>	<i>Vigil:</i> Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 (2a)/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25 <i>Night:</i> Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14 <i>Dawn:</i> Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20 <i>Day:</i> Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 [3])/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14
<b>MON</b>	<b>12/26/22</b>	Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17/Mt 10:17-22
<b>TUE</b>	<b>12/27/22</b>	1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12/Jn 20:1a, 2-8
<b>WED</b>	<b>12/28/22</b>	1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8/Mt 2:13-18
<b>THR</b>	<b>12/29/22</b>	1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6/Lk 2:22-35
<b>FRI</b>	<b>12/30/22</b>	Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23
<b>SAT</b>	<b>12/31/22</b>	Saturday: 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13/Jn 1:1-18
<b>SUN</b>	<b>1/1/23</b>	Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 (2a)/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21

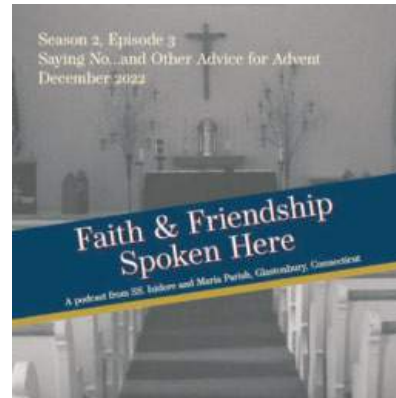


## I Am Here: Bethane's Story

*"I just froze. I was glued to what was on the altar." ~ Bethane Cabrera*

People like you share their personal stories of transformation by an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist as part of the *National Eucharistic Revival*. Learn

more about the revival and how to share your story at: [isidoreandmaria.org/eucharisticrevival](http://isidoreandmaria.org/eucharisticrevival).



## PODCAST:

### Saying No...and Other Advice for Advent

December can be an overwhelmingly busy time of year. Laura and Michelle know this well, and have some thoughts and advice on how to move toward Christmas with a bit less stress and a bit more Jesus.

Listen to the latest episode of "Faith & Friendship Spoken Here," now available at [www.isidoreandmaria.org/podcasts](http://www.isidoreandmaria.org/podcasts)

When we leave Mass, we ought to go out the way Moses descended Mt Sinai: with his face shining, with his heart brave and strong to face the world's difficulties. ~ St. Oscar Romero

## Pray for Those Who Are Serving

God, keep special watch over these men and women serving in the Navy, National Guard, Army, Marine Corps., Air Force, Coast Guard and keep them safe:

Tammy Breiner  
Oliver Cary  
Charles Edward  
Celia Fajardo  
Brandon Farrell  
Chris Gibb  
Michael Hitzer  
Samuel David Hovanec

Peter Kamianowski  
Samuel MacDonald  
Alexis Maher  
Michael Scott Mullin  
John W. Murphy  
Drew Scarfone  
Jack M. Zaremba

Do you know someone who is currently on active duty with the U. S. Armed Forces for whom our community prayers would bring comfort, please email the person's name, rank and military branch to: [contact@isidoreandmaria.org](mailto:contact@isidoreandmaria.org), or call the parish office at 860-633-9419.

## CHRISTMAS DINNER PRAYER

Loving God and Father of us all, we joyfully celebrate the birth of Your Son, the Eternal Word who came to dwell with us and is born this day of the Virgin Mary.

May the meal we share on this great feast satisfy us not only with the good food you give us, but also grace us with the fullness of Your love, which you bestowed on our human nature when your Son took on our very flesh.

May we come to share completely in Your Divine life through the coming of Your Son among us. May His self-giving love be made manifest in our hearts so that the joy of our Christmas feast may extend beyond our family and home to touch the lives of others with the love that makes this day holy and makes us all children of one family in You. Amen.



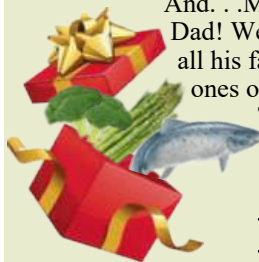
## This Day in History — Dec. 25, 2022



Harry and I wish all our friends at SS. Isidore and Maria Parish, a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year. May your stockings be filled to the brim with all your favorite treats!

And... Merry Christmas to our Dad! We're giving Fr. Mark all his favorite treats. Healthy ones of course! Let's all try to eat well and have a healthier New Year!

Oliver and I wish to thank our talented photographers, **Diane Sereduck** and **Marion Valenti** for contributing the many photos of us throughout the year. They have captured our most handsome selves! ❤️



### Harry & Oliver's Corner

## SS. Isidore and Maria Parish Directory

### Clergy

Rev. Mark S. Suslenko, Pastor  
William G. Dziatko, Deacon  
Stephen L. Weaver, Deacon

Melissa Lacafta  
*Admin. Assistant to the Pastor*  
[melissa@isidoreandmaria.org](mailto:melissa@isidoreandmaria.org)

Kristina DiDominzio  
*Business Manager*  
[kristina@isidoreandmaria.org](mailto:kristina@isidoreandmaria.org)

Carol Vassar  
*Director of Communications*  
[carol@isidoreandmaria.org](mailto:carol@isidoreandmaria.org)

David Garrido-Cid  
*Director of Music Ministries*  
[david@isidoreandmaria.org](mailto:david@isidoreandmaria.org)

### Faith Formation Office

[faithformation@isidoreandmaria.org](mailto:faithformation@isidoreandmaria.org)

Donna Berger  
*Interim Faith Formation Director*  
[donna@isidoreandmaria.org](mailto:donna@isidoreandmaria.org)

Ann Poker, *Program Coordinator*  
[ann@isidoreandmaria.org](mailto:ann@isidoreandmaria.org)

### Weekend Masses

*St. Paul Church*  
Sat. Vigil: 4 p.m.  
Sun.: 8 a.m.  
Sun.: 9:30 a.m.  
Sun.: 11:15 a.m.

### Daily Mass

*St. Paul Church*  
Mon., Tues., Wed.: 7:30 a.m.  
Fri.: 12:15 p.m.

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

Confessions at St. Paul Church  
Sat. 2:30 p.m.

### Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place each Fri. following the 12:15 p.m. daily Mass (approximately 12:45 p.m.) at St. Paul Church. It concludes at 2 p.m.

### Rosary

Pray the Rosary each Tues. evening at 7 p.m. at St. Augustine Church.

### Live streaming of weekend Masses

*St. Paul Church*  
Sat. at 4 p.m. and Sun. at 11:15 a.m., with rebroadcasts of the 4 p.m. Vigil streamed at 8 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. Please visit our Facebook page, YouTube channel or the parish website to worship remotely.

### How to Report an Incident of Sexual Abuse to the Archdiocese of Hartford

If you have knowledge or suspect that a minor or vulnerable adult (an adult with an intellectual disability) has been sexually abused, in any manner, by personnel of the Archdiocese of Hartford, you are urged to report this information to:

**Kathleen D. Nowosadko**  
*Victim Assistance Coordinator*  
860-541-6475  
[kathleen.nowosadko@aohct.org](mailto:kathleen.nowosadko@aohct.org)



Looking to update your parish registration?

Or register with SS. Isidore and Maria Parish? Scan this handy QR code to begin the process.

**Bulletin submission deadline is Friday.** All submissions must be received in advance by Friday to be published in the following week's bulletin. Send notices to: [theresa@isidoreandmaria.org](mailto:theresa@isidoreandmaria.org)

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## Holy Land Discovery Tour

Land Tour Dates:  
March 10, 2023 - March 17, 2023  
April 14, 2023 - April 21, 2023 | May 5, 2023 - May 12, 2023  
Land tour starting at \$1819 per person  
(based on double occupancy)

## Fatima, Lourdes & Shrines of Spain Pilgrimage

Land Tour Dates:  
May 12, 2023 - May 23, 2023 | July 7, 2023 - July 18, 2023  
Special Journey with Fr. Tomasz Wilk April 17-29, 2023  
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(based on double occupancy)  
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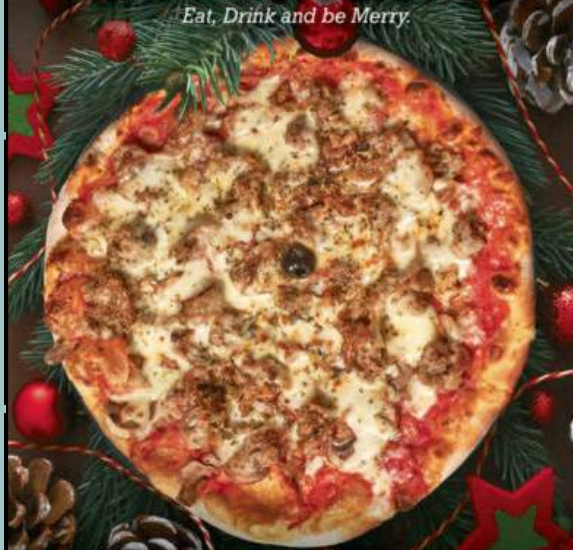
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