



IHOC MEN'S SHELTER TO MEET AT GRACE CHURCH: Grace Church will host 11 homeless men from Sunday afternoon, January 29th to Sunday afternoon, February 12th. The program is designed to help men re-enter life by providing shelter, food, counseling, and support. Grace Church will need people to provide the following: a hot meal each night; a male overnight host; hosts in the evenings; and on the weekends, along with other support. A sign-up list is available in the Parish House. For more information, please check with the Parish Office. This program depends on our volunteer support. Please help wherever you can. Thank you.



INTERESTED IN RENEWING YOUR WEDDING VOWS? Grace Church offers an opportunity to renew wedding vows on the Sunday nearest Valentine's Day each year. This year we are offering a special service at 11:15 am on Sunday, February 12th in the Church. Please call the office or sign up on the bulletin board in the parish hall. There will be cake and champagne to celebrate immediately following the service. For more information, please speak with Father Pat.



CANDLEMAS: The Feast of the Presentation falls on February 2nd of each year. This recalls the story of Jesus being presented in the Temple and being recognized by the Messiah! Both Simeon and Anna are in the Temple when Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to be blessed and offerings made in thanksgiving of his birth. It was the custom in this time to dedicate the first-born male to God (recalling the sparing of the first born when the plagues were visited upon the Egyptians during the story of the Exodus). In our culture, this is also known as "groundhog day", when a woodchuck is supposed to predict whether there will be an early spring or six

more months of winter. It is also known as "candlemas" in British and Celtic lands. This day was when all Christmas decorations were to be removed and stored until the next observance. It also became a custom to bless candles and carry them to people's homes, recognizing the return of spring, life, and longer (and hopefully warmer days). The candles represented the "light of Christ" come into the world. We will bless candles at the Parish House Holy Communion. If you wish to have candles blessed, please bring them to the service or drop them off at the office before February 5th.