



MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

Sunday, December 17, 2017
Third Sunday of Advent

4:00 PM
8:00 AM

Gathering: Come, Come Emmanuel
 Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 80)
Show us your kindness, O God. (2x)
 Preparation Maranatha BB 67
 Mass Parts Mass of Christ the Savior
 Communion: Song Of The Body Of Christ BB 333
 I Received The Living God BB 327
 Recessional: Ready The Way BB 63

10:00 AM

Gathering: Come, Come, Emmanuel
 Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 80)
Show us your kindness, O God. (2x)
 Preparation Mary's Song BB 694
 Lo, How A Rose BB 90
 Mass Parts Mass of Joy and Peace
 Communion: My Soul Rejoices BB 821
 Patience, People BB 47
 Recessional: Ready The Way BB 63



St. Luke the Evangelist is now on Facebook! Go to www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/ or **St. Luke the Evangelist Parish – Newton/Plaistow** and give us a Like! Please invite fellow parishioners and friends to do the same.

✠ PARISH TITHING ✠

Our Parish needs to take in \$7,000.00 each week in order to make ends meet. Thank you for your generosity to our parish! Your weekly contribution helps ensure that the parish remains a vibrant community. Please remember to submit your weekly gift even if you will be away. We depend upon your support!

COLLECTION AMOUNTS FOR
DECEMBER 10, 2017
WILL APPEAR IN NEXT WEEK'S BULLETIN

PARISH GIVING

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish has engaged *Parish Giving* to provide parishioners with an opportunity to make your offertory and other contributions through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Parish Giving is a simple, secure, and convenient way to manage your stewardship without weekly envelopes and without worries. It allows you to select contribution amounts and special collections right from your own computer or smart phone. You can be a good steward for the Parish even when you are away from the area on a weekend. Parish Giving allows you to print out a report detailing your contributions for the year. This program is available to parishioners at no cost. Log on to the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish website at <http://stlukenh.org>, click on the Parish Giving logo, and follow the easy registration instructions.

UPCOMING SECOND & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

December 17, 2017 Fuel
 December 24, 2017 No Second Collection
 December 25, 2017 Christmas
 December 31, 2017 No Second Collection



Out of respect, please remember to silence or turn off your cell phones during Mass. Thank you!

Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on Income

Annual Income	5% Commitment annually/ weekly	3% Commitment annually/ weekly
\$100,000	\$5,000/\$100	\$3,000/\$60
\$75,000	\$3,750/\$75	\$2,250/\$45
\$60,000	\$3,000/\$60	\$1,800/\$36
\$50,000	\$2,500/\$50	\$1,500/\$30
\$40,000	\$2,000/\$40	\$1,200/\$24
\$30,000	\$1,500/\$30	\$900/\$18
\$25,000	\$1,250/\$25	\$750/\$15
\$15,000	\$750/\$15	\$450/\$9

Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on a Percentage Increase

Your Current Offertory Contribution	25% Increase	30% Increase	40% Increase
\$75.00	\$93.75	\$97.50	\$105.00
\$50.00	\$62.50	\$65.00	\$70.00
\$40.00	\$50.00	\$52.00	\$56.00
\$35.00	\$43.75	\$45.50	\$49.00
\$30.00	\$37.50	\$39.00	\$42.00
\$25.00	\$31.25	\$32.50	\$35.00
\$20.00	\$25.00	\$26.00	\$28.00
\$15.00	\$18.75	\$19.50	\$21.00
\$10.00	\$12.50	\$13.00	\$14.00
\$5.00	\$6.25	\$6.50	\$7.00

✠ PARISH NEWS ✠

EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINES

Due to the Christmas and New Year's holidays, two bulletins will have to be submitted early.

The deadline for the **December 24** bulletin is at **12:00 Noon on Thursday, December 14.**

The deadline for the **December 31** bulletin is at **12:00 Noon on Wednesday, December 20.**

Thank you for your understanding!

ADVENT EVENING PRAYER

Join us on Sunday evenings of the Advent season for sung Evening Prayer at 6:00 PM at Mary, Mother of the Church in Newton. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available following Evening Prayer.



AMAZON SMILE DONATION

St. Luke the Evangelist Parish has been issued a **\$48.71 donation from the AmazonSmile Foundation** as a result of AmazonSmile program activity between July 1 and September 30, 2017.

AmazonSmile.com is the same market platform as Amazon.com, but with the added benefit of allowing customers to donate 0.5% of the price of items purchased to a charitable organization. Please register today to start shopping and donating at www.amazonsmile.com. For questions, please call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. Be sure to choose:

St Luke the Evangelist Parish, Plaistow.

From the Pastor's Desk



HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSED

Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is now closed until Spring 2018. This decision comes as result of the real dangers of snow and ice in the Cemetery and the costs to Parishioners to inter during the winter months. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions.
Fr. Albert



THE ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT AND CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH

Our Parish community continues with our Capital Campaign to replace roofs on the Plaistow campus, and to raise funds to complete other projects in Newton and in Plaistow. Our three-year goal is to raise \$250,000.00. Besides the Plaistow roofs, we would like to accomplish the following projects: Plaistow church access ramp, Plaistow office building & convent window replacement, Newton rectory interior flooring, Newton church lighting and painting, Newton rectory painting as funds become available.

How can you help?

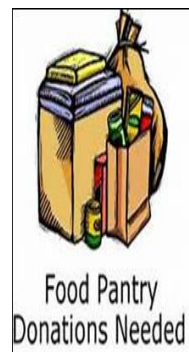
Any contribution is welcome.

Make checks payable to

Saint Luke the Evangelist - Capital Campaign.

ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST FOOD PANTRY

Food or care items are always needed – donations can be dropped off at Church or are welcome at the Parish Office during regular business hours. Cash donations for food are always welcome – make checks payable to **St. Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry**. All donations to the Food Pantry go toward helping the needy of our communities.



FOOD PANTRY HOURS

Wednesday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

Thursday from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Friday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

For more information, call the St. Luke Food Pantry at **603-819-4949.**

WHILE AWAY THIS FALL / WINTER...

We appreciate all of you who remember to send in your Parish Offertory during the Fall /Winter even when on vacation or visiting other parishes. Thank you for remembering that our expenses also continue through the Fall / Winter months. We invite others to consider doing the same before or even after you return home.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Sunday, December 17

Move Gifts To Food Pantry

10:00 AM	Religious Education – Pre-K to 8	<i>Plaistow</i>
11:00 AM	RCIA	<i>Plaistow</i>
6:00 PM	Vespers	<i>Newton</i>
6:30 PM	Sacrament of Reconciliation	<i>Newton</i>

Wednesday, December 20

NO ADORATION

7:00 PM	NO Reader Scripture Share	<i>Plaistow</i>
7:00 PM	St. Vincent de Paul Society Meeting	<i>Plaistow</i>

Thursday, December 21

NO ADORATION

NO INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Saturday, December 23

3:00 PM	Sacrament of Reconciliation	<i>Plaistow</i>
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Sunday, December 24

10:00 AM	NO Religious Education – Pre-K to 8	<i>Plaistow</i>
4:00 PM	Christmas Liturgy	<i>Plaistow</i>
6:30 PM	Christmas Liturgy	<i>Newton</i>

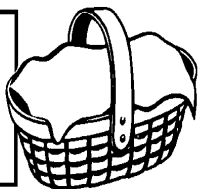
Monday, December 25

9:00 AM	Christmas Liturgy	<i>Newton</i>
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PRAYER LINE

St. Luke's offers a prayer line as a resource for those seeking prayer assistance. To submit your prayer request please call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 314 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

St. Vincent
de Paul
Society



The generosity of your contributions have allowed us to help out those in need with rent, medical, and heating oil assistance. The St. Vincent de Paul Society is so grateful and blessed.

Our next meeting on **Wednesday, December 20 at 7:00 PM**. We meet downstairs in the Church Hall in Plaistow. **New members are always welcome!**

If you seek assistance or need information about the St. Vincent de Paul Society, call 603-382-8324 x315.

**Hear, OH LORD, and answer me
for I am poor and needy.**

✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

Saturday, December 16 ~ Vigil / Third Sunday of Advent

Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

4:00 PM	Mary Coltin and Intentions of Paul & Lucia O'Leary by Mark and Colleen Hammond	<i>Plaistow</i>
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Sunday, December 17 ~ Third Sunday of Advent

Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

8:00 AM	Deborah Caron by Frances and Don Harper	<i>Newton</i>
10:00 AM	Deceased Members of the Charles and Mary Jesionowski family by their daughter Sonia and family	<i>Plaistow</i>

Monday, December 18 ~ Late Advent Weekday

Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-25

8:00 AM	Frank Verdillo (20 th Anniversary) by his family	<i>Newton</i>
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Tuesday, December 19 ~ Late Advent Weekday

Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Lk 1:5-25

8:00 AM	Howard Foster (Birthday Remembrance) by his wife and family	<i>Plaistow</i>
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Wednesday, December 20 ~ Late Advent Weekday

Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38

6:30 PM	James and Gertrude Pratt by the Pratt family	<i>Plaistow</i>
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Thursday, December 21 ~ Peter Canisius, Priest and

Doctor of the Church

Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Lk 1:39-45

8:00 AM	In Thanksgiving for Favor Received	<i>Newton</i>
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Friday, December 22 ~ Late Advent Weekday

1 Sm 1:24-28; Lk 1:46-56

No Mass

Saturday, December 23 ~ John of Kanty, Priest

Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Lk 1:57-66 (Day)

2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38 (Vigil)		
4:00 PM	Donald King by Ann Marie and Joe Sheehan	<i>Plaistow</i>

Sunday, December 24 ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38 (Day)

8:00 AM	Liz Shirley by the Stanley Family	<i>Newton</i>
10:00 AM	Susan Sible Peck by Kathleen White and family	<i>Plaistow</i>
	<i>Is 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 (Vigil)</i>	
4:00 PM	Christmas Eve Liturgy – People of the Parish	<i>Plaistow</i>
6:30 PM	Christmas Eve Liturgy – People of the Parish	<i>Newton</i>

Monday, December 25, 2017

Is 52:7-10; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18

9:00 AM	Christmas Day Liturgy – People of the Parish	<i>Newton</i>
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✠ FAITH FORMATION & PARISH INFORMATION ✠

ADULT CONFIRMATION

Are you an adult who has been Baptized and received Eucharist, but has not celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation? The adult Confirmation process is an opportunity to complete the Sacraments of Initiation. If you would like to prepare for Confirmation, or if you have questions, call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

RCIA

The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. **RCIA** is intended to serve:

- Those not Baptized who would like to learn more about the Catholic religion.
- Those Baptized in another religion who think they might like to become Catholic.
- Those Baptized Catholic but have not been raised in the Faith.

If you or someone you know is interested in inquiring about becoming a member of the Roman Catholic Church, call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

PARENTS BAPTISM PREPARATION SESSION

The monthly preparation session for infant Baptism will be held after the 10:00 AM Liturgy on **Sunday, January 7, 2018** in the Parish Office living room. All parents planning to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism are welcome. Families wishing to celebrate Baptism in the Church must be registered (according to Church Canon Law) and practicing (attending Sunday Mass) for 3 full months before a Baptism can be scheduled. The use of the envelope system is always optional; however, it does guarantee a manner of accountability. For most families, the Pastor or staff can easily verify attendance during these three months. Church Canon Law also regulates baptismal sponsors (godparents). Sponsors must be at least 16, fully initiated (having received Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation), and be practicing Catholics living Christian lives consistent with the Church's teaching. Please see Fr. Albert with questions.

HELP WANTED – CHRISTMAS PREPARATIONS

Volunteers are invited to help do some decorating on **Sunday, December 17 following the 8:00 AM Liturgy in Newton and the 10:00 AM Liturgy in Plaistow**. Our tasks include Christmas decorating and some light clean up of the churches in preparation for Christmas Masses. All are welcome to lend a hand – our work usually lasts just over an hour if we have all the help we can muster!

IMPORTANT ADORATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Thank you to the many parishioners who have dedicated an hour or two each week for ten years. Due to the continued difficulty of covering the hours of Eucharistic Adoration of Our Lord in Plaistow, we are unable to move forward in continuing Adoration on Wednesdays. **The last day for Adoration in Plaistow was on Wednesday, December 13.** The church will continue to be open all day on Wednesdays for people to stop by and pray before the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.

Eucharistic Adoration of Our Lord in Newton on Thursdays will continue from 8:30 AM to 8:30 PM.

PLEASE NOTE: There is NO Adoration during the week before and the week of Christmas.

CONTEMPLATIVE WEEKENDS

Our Lady of Hope House of Prayer

Our Lady of Hope House of Prayer invites you to come away for awhile and BE STILL! These weekends are precious times of silence to be alone with God. Cost is \$140 for the weekend. The retreat weekend dates are:

January 19-21, 2018

February 16-18, 2018

For more information, or to register, call Sisters Rita Pay or Suzanne Rivard, p.m. at 603-878-2346.

ST. LUKE'S WEBSITE!

<http://stlukenh.org>

✠ PARISH DIRECTORY ✠

Parish Office	382-8324
Parish Prayer Line	382-8324 x 314
St. Vincent de Paul Society	382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry	819-4949
Preschool	382-9783
Presentation of Mary Convent	382-2744

Fr. Albert Tremblay	fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net
Cathy Smith	csmith@stluketheevangelist.net
Joyce Szczapa	jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
Jackie Tremblay	jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
Thomas Kondel	tkondel@stluketheevangelist.net
Val Barczak	music@stluketheevangelist.net
Youth Ministry	youth@stluketheevangelist.net
Parish Council	parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net

✠ Parish News ~ Youth News ~ Around The Diocese ✠

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

In observance of the Christmas and New Year's holidays, the Parish Office will be closed on:

Monday, December 25
Tuesday, December 26
Monday, January 1

Kimberly's 12th Annual Holiday Give Away!!!

It's time again to clean your closets and start fresh!!! We all have clothes taking up space in our homes while there are people on the streets who are cold. Because of this, Kimberly Andrade is holding her 12th Annual Clothing/Coat/Canned Food Drive at **St. Luke the Evangelist Parish** in Plaistow, NH from **12:00 to 4:00 PM on January 6 & 7, 2018**. Items that will be collected include, but are not limited to: winter jackets, new and used clothing from any season and any decade, non-perishable food items, business clothing, blankets, sheets, hats, gloves, and unused socks and underwear (*preferably in their packages*). **All clothing must be cleaned prior to donation.** Clothing received will be donated to organizations such as Ruth's House, Emmaus House, and Catie's Closet. Non-perishable food items will be brought to St. Luke's Food Pantry. If there are any questions, or individuals interested in volunteering, please contact Kimberly at kimberly-andrade@comcast.net. Thank you so much for your generosity.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS, MUSIC, & LIGHTS

St. Lucy Church in Methuen, MA invites you to celebrate its 60th Anniversary by joining them for a concert featuring Gregory Norbet on **December 17, 2017 at 2:00 PM**.

The LaSalette Shrine in Enfield, NH invites to you enjoy their Christmas Lights, Concerts, and other programs during the month of December. For more information, go to www.lasaletteofenfield.org.

WINTER WEATHER CLOSINGS

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Office, Holy Angels Cemetery Office, Saint Luke Food Pantry and the Parish Liturgical schedule complies with the longstanding inclement weather policy of Saint Luke Religious Education Program and Holy Angels Pre-School-Kindergarten: **If the Timberlane and/or Sanborn regional school districts close because of inclement weather, ALL Parish Offices and Parish programs will be closed or suspended. All activities by any Parish or non-Parish groups will be cancelled for that day/evening on both campuses.** In the event of a weather related closing, the scheduled weekday Liturgy will not be held and the intention (if any) will be moved to a conveniently available date. **Sunday (or Saturday evening) liturgies can never be cancelled, but all are advised to use prudence when deciding when to travel to Church during winter storms.**

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS – CHRISTMAS TREE SALE

The St Jude Council is co-sponsoring a Christmas Tree Sale at the Lover's Lane Tree Farm located on Lover's Lane off Rte 108 on the Haverhill/Plaistow line. The sale is taking place on **Saturdays and Sundays through December 17 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM**. Knight Andy Gagnon, Jr will be donating the profits to the Knights and the monies will be used to help fund the Knights' charitable activities during the year. The sale is being run in memory of Andy's father, Knight Andy Gagnon, Sr., who passed away last year. The trees are located on a beautiful piece of property and are "cut your own." There will be plenty of help available to cut the tree and get it to your vehicle. The cost of each tree is \$40. There will also be refreshments and a warming campfire for your enjoyment.

GIVING TREES

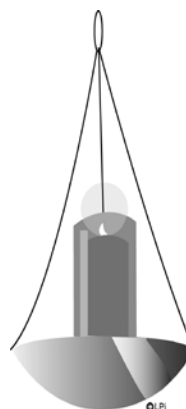
Giving Trees are located in the back of both churches. Please take an ornament, buy the item(s) listed, and return it - **with the ornament attached** - to the church or the parish office **no later than December 17**. Thank you for your generosity in helping those in need!



SURVEY FOR YOUTH

The Vatican recently launched a website and survey for youth and young adults related to the 15th Ordinary Synod of Bishops on *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment*. You can find the survey on the website at <https://survey-synod2018.glauco.it/limesurvey>.

Responses go directly and confidentially to the Vatican Synod Office. Any person between the ages of 16 and 29 is invited to participate. **The deadline for the survey is December 31, 2017.**



The Sanctuary Candle in Holy Angels Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Joseph M. Cutuli** by the Mezquita Family

The Sanctuary Candle in Mary, Mother of the Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Timothy J. Holland** by his parents



COME, O COME....

Yes, you read the title right. That's "O" - the letter of the alphabet that most reminds us of breakfast cereal, inner tubes, doughnuts, hula hoops, no hitters... and Advent. In many parishes, "O" is the first word said in the new church year. We sing it in Advent's most popular song, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." It announces the season which anticipates the coming of Christ at Christmas.

This hymn, which is almost synonymous with the whole season of Advent was actually first composed and sung to announce that Advent was ending. **The last eight days of Advent (beginning on December 17 and ending on December 24) form a little season all by themselves.** As the church prepares to celebrate the nativity of Christ, the Liturgy gets more intense. At daily Mass, the Gospels relate the events leading up to the first Christmas. At evening prayer, the Church prays a special series of antiphons that beckon the Messiah to come. Each night gives him a new name, drawn from the Old Testament tradition. "O Wisdom," "O Sacred Lord," "O Flower of Jesse's Stem," "O Key of David," "O Radiant Dawn," "O King of All Nations," and, on Christmas eve, the greatest of them all, "O Emmanuel," a name that means "God is with us."

For the reasons which will be immediately obvious, we call that group of refrains the "O Antiphons." They are a hallmark of late Advent, and a collection of music our church has treasured for centuries. The Mass now includes a version of them as the alleluia verses for the same eight days before Christmas.



In the Middle Ages, those seven antiphons got strung together into a popular hymn. The last one became verse one and “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” was born. Thus, the antiphon originally established for the last evening before Christmas Eve is now often sung to begin Advent. That “O” of course, simply tells us that we’re talking to someone. It is like saying, “Hey, you,” only more politely. But “O” reminds us of much more. It makes us think of something having no beginning and no end, like God’s love or an Advent wreath. It resembles the shape of our mouth and the sound we make when we face a mystery we cannot fully comprehend.

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O come, Thou **Wisdom** from on high,
Who orders all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.

O come, great **Lord of might**,
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai’s height
In ancient times once gave the law
In cloud and majesty and awe.

O come, Thou **Rod of Jesse**, free
Thine own from Satan’s tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save,
And give them victory over the grave.

O come, Thou **Root of Jesse’s tree**,
An ensign of Thy people be;
Before Thee rulers silent fall;
All peoples on Thy mercy call.

O come, Thou **Day-spring**, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
O Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death’s dark shadows put to flight.

O come, **Desire of nations**, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of Peace.

O come, Thou **Key of David**, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

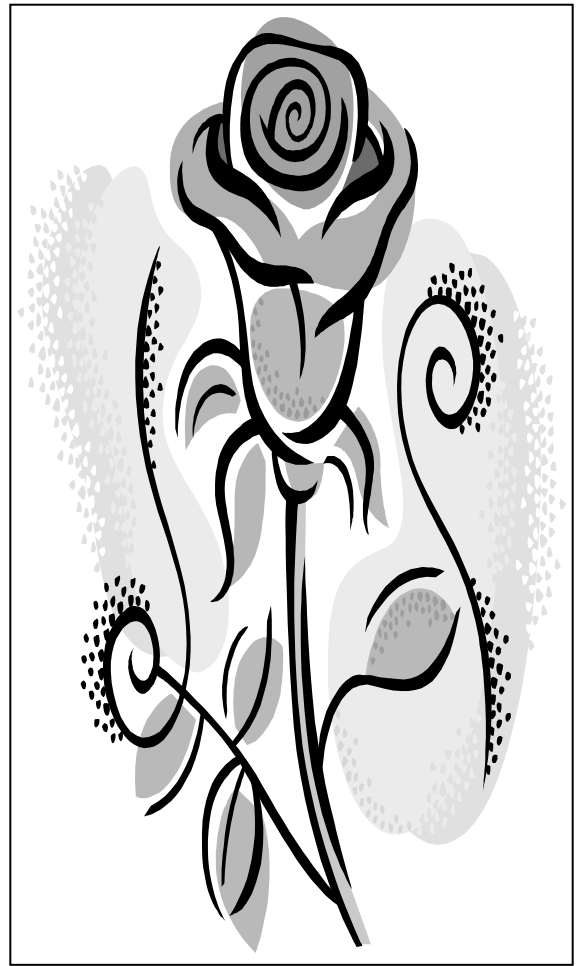
O come, O come, **Emmanuel**,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.



THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Why roses and joyful music on the third Sunday of Advent? It all starts with a golden rose. Long ago, the third Sunday of Advent was sort of a “break” in the fasting that was taking place before the celebration of Christmas. The third Sunday of Advent’s chants and songs talked about “looking up,” being “joy-filled and full of hope” at the nearness of the Savior. In church, the story of the Annunciation was common as the Gospel of the third Sunday of Advent.

The German name for the third Sunday of Advent was *Rosensonntag*, or the “Sunday of the Roses.” That name came as a result of 15th century German pilgrim’s witnessing Mass in Rome, where the Pope, after Mass on the third Sunday of Advent, would carry a golden rose in procession out of the church. The rose itself would be sent to an exemplary Christian after mass that day as a gift.



This custom was in use at Rome as far back as the 11th century, where the Pope would present bouquets of roses to people in the church on the third Sunday of Advent. Over the years, the real roses were replaced by golden roses, often encrusted with jewels. In churches all over Christendom in the West, the custom of presenting roses to exemplary Christians of a particular place caught on. From there, the liturgical color for the day was changed to reflect the joy of the liturgy and the custom of presenting roses – the Church wore “old rose” as a way to signal the nearness of the Christmas festival.

Today, we sing joyful songs and meditate on the image of the rose – whose purity and beauty are reflected in the person of the Blessed Mother Mary, and whose fragrance and loveliness are reflected in the coming “rose of the winter night” – Jesus, Immanuel.

The Birth Date of Jesus ?



The opening of the third millennium harmonizes with the traditional date for the first Christmas. Without a doubt, the birth of Jesus is the most important human event in our history, because the Incarnation sets into motion God's saving plan for the world. But there is plenty of doubt as to exactly when the actual birth of Jesus took place.

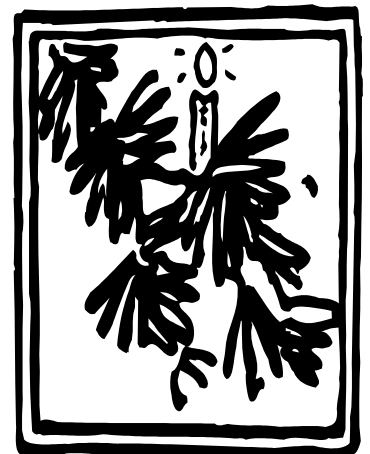
There is no clear historical record of the date or year of Jesus' birth. Although two of the canonical Gospels record significant events surrounding the event, neither records a date.

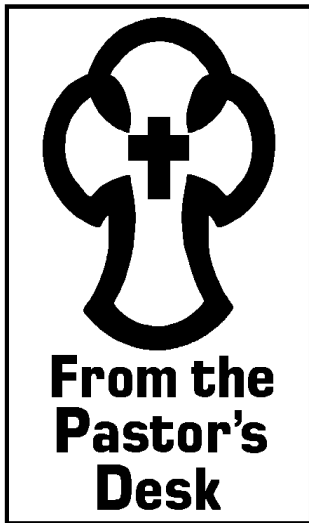
Two main theories surround the date of December 25 to commemorate the Nativity of the Lord. The first theory looks to a 3rd century Roman pagan celebration coinciding with the winter solstice. As the days began to lengthen each year, December 25 became the festival of the re-birth of the "unconquered sun." Christians, who believed that Christ was the real unconquered source of light and the "Son" of God, celebrated the birth of Jesus on the same day. It is not the first time in the history of Christianity that believers "baptized" a former pagan observance.

The second theory looks to the passion of Jesus. According to early conjectures by faithful Christians, the actual date of Jesus' death was March 25. Some Christians began to believe and promote that Jesus died on the date of his conception, because in the ancient world it was considered a good omen if a famous person died on the date of their birth. For this reason, Christians celebrated March 25 as the Annunciation (the Church still does!), and counting forward nine months, we arrive at a birth on December 25.

The traditional year of Jesus' birth was fixed in the mid-sixth century by *Dionysius Exiguus*, a monk and scholar who set the calendar according to the system we know today as "A.D. - *anno Domini*" - the year of our Lord. However, Matthew and Luke both say Jesus was born during the reign of Herod the Great, which scholars calculate from 37-4 B.C. Oddly, then, Jesus was in all likelihood born "before Christ" - our best guess falls in the years 6-4 B.C.

Although the actual birth of Jesus cannot be known, what is important is that he was born, and the Christian Church on Christmas celebrates the arrival of a child promised by prophets and destined to achieve God's ultimate victory over sin and death by his own death and resurrection.





CHRISTMAS IS COMING!!! Or hadn't you heard?.....

With the Christmas holiday feast upon us, a few planning reminders for the "big day..."

Please note that the last opportunity for the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** before Christmas is Saturday, December 23 beginning at 3:00 PM at Plaistow.

The Parish Office will be closed **Monday, December 25 and Tuesday, December 26**. Parish Offices will re-open for business on **Wednesday, December 27 at 8:30 am**. Parish Offices will be closed on **January 1**. We will re-open for business on **Tuesday, January 2 at 8:30 am**.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent this year is December 24. The regular Liturgical schedule for the Parish is in effect for the weekend of December 23-24.

The Liturgies for the **Solemnity of Christmas** begin with the Vigil Liturgies celebrated on **December 24 at 4:00 PM in Plaistow and at 6:30 PM in Newton**. On December 25, Christmas Day, we will celebrate Liturgy at **9:00 am in Newton**. Christmas is a Solemnity and is **always** a holy day of obligation for all Catholics.

As you make your family plans for Christmas Mass, please remember that the 4:00 Vigil Liturgy on **December 24** tends to be *very* well attended. If you are coming to the 4:00 PM Liturgy, *please plan to arrive early*. If your holiday plans allow for any changes, consider the Vigil at 6:30 PM in Newton, or Christmas morning 9:00 am in Newton. Please note that there is no public Evening Prayer on December 25, and no morning Liturgy at Plaistow in Tuesday, December 26.

The regular liturgical schedule for the Parish will be observed on the weekend of **December 30-31**. The Octave Day of Christmas and the Solemnity of Mary, Θεοτόκος - the Mother of God - a **holy day of obligation** - will be celebrated at a **Vigil Liturgy at Plaistow at 6:30 PM on Sunday, December 31, and on January 1 at 9:00 am in Newton**. There is no public Evening Prayer on January 1.



January 7 is the **Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord**. We will follow our usual Sunday Liturgy schedule, and we will gather to sing Christmas Evening Prayer on **Sunday, January 7** at 6:00 PM in Newton.

The Christmas season will close early this year with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord on **Monday, January 10**. Liturgy that day will be as usual in Newton at 8:00 am.

**SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH
LITURGICAL CALENDAR ADVENT-CHRISTMAS, 2017-18**

**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT –
Christmas Liturgy schedule signups for all ministers**

EVENING PRAYER (VESPERS)
SUNDAYS OF ADVENT - CHRISTMAS SEASON
6:00 PM IN NEWTON
SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION FOLLOWS
DURING THE ADVENT SEASON

Sunday, December 3 11:30 am Parish Advent Activity (Plaistow)
6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton)
6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)

Thursday, December 7 Vigil of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*A Holy Day of Obligation*)
LITURGY: 6:30 PM – Vigil - Plaistow

Friday, December 8 Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*A Holy Day of Obligation*)
LITURGY: 8:00 AM – Newton

Sunday, December 10 4:00 PM Reconciliation Service - Saint Michael, Exeter
6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton)
6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)

Sunday, December 17 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton)
6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)

Giving Tree gifts due today!

Monday, December 18 **LAST DAY TO RETURN GIVING TREE GIFTS AT PARISH OFFICE**

Wednesday, December 20 NO Adoration at Plaistow

Thursday, December 21 NO Adoration at Newton

Saturday, December 23 3:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Plaistow)
4:00 PM Vigil Liturgy, 4th Advent Sunday (Plaistow)

Sunday, December 24 8:00 am Liturgy, 4th Advent Sunday (Newton)
10:00 am Liturgy, 4th Advent Sunday (Plaistow)

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE
(A Holy Day of Obligation)

Sunday, December 24 VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
4:00 PM Liturgy (Plaistow)
6:30 PM Liturgy (Newton)

Monday, December 25 SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
9:00 am Liturgy (Newton)

PARISH OFFICES CLOSED: DEC. 25, 26, JAN. 1

Tuesday, December 26 NO Liturgy at Plaistow

Wednesday, December 27 NO Adoration at Plaistow (Liturgy 6:30 PM)

Thursday, December 28 NO Adoration at Newton (Liturgy 8:00 am)

Saturday, December 30 3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Plaistow)
4:00 PM Vigil Liturgy, Feast of the Holy Family (Plaistow)

Sunday, December 31 8:00 am Liturgy, Feast of the Holy Family (Newton)
10:00 am Liturgy, Feast of the Holy Family (Plaistow)

Sunday, December 31 4:00 PM Vigil Liturgy, SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD
OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS (*A Holy Day of Obligation*) (Plaistow)

Monday, January 1 9:00 am Liturgy SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD
OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS (*A Holy Day of Obligation*) (Newton)

Saturday, January 6 3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Plaistow)
4:00 PM Vigil - SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
(Plaistow)

Sunday, January 7 SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
8:00 am Liturgy, Solemnity of the Epiphany (Newton)
10:00 am Liturgy, Solemnity of the Epiphany (Plaistow)
6:00 PM Christmas Evening Prayer (Newton)

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Herald of Light

O God of Justice,
you called the prophet John the Baptist,
to prepare the way for the coming of your Son.
John's message of repentance led others to
embrace you.

Grant your servants ears to hear his cry in
the desert of their hearts
so that, transformed by love,
we, too, may turn and embrace you.

Fill us, O God, with the Spirit of courage
and strengthen our will to be heralds
of the Light.

Make us fervent in our prayer
and direct us to bring glad tidings to the poor
so that, on that final day,
we may be found holy and blameless
in your sight
as we rejoice in the gift of your mercy.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, December 17, 2017

Glad Tidings

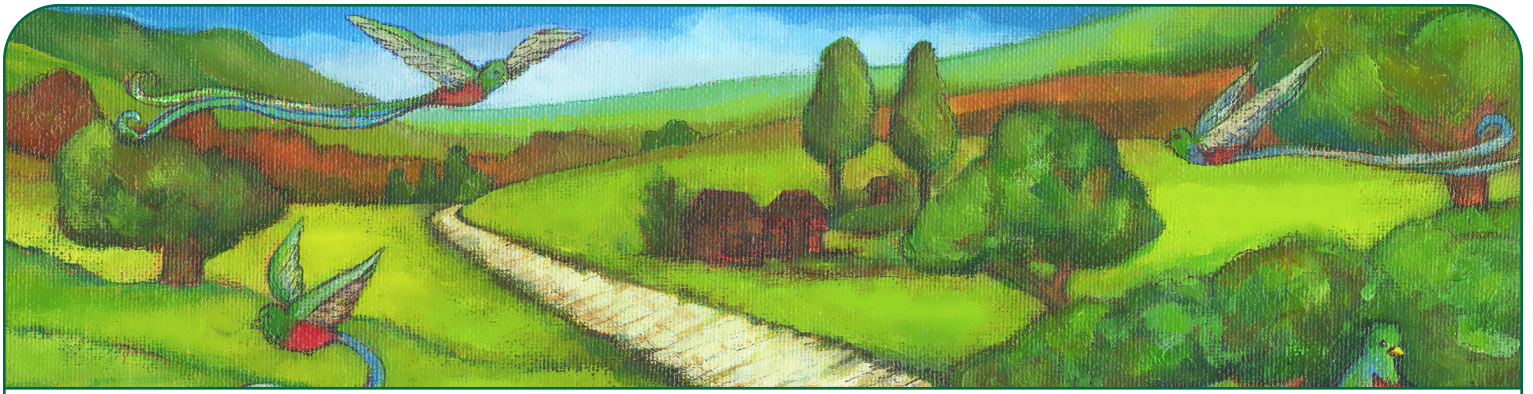


Today's Readings: Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11; Luke 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54 (antiphon: Isaiah 61:10b); 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28. Today is Gaudete Sunday, the turning point in the season of Advent. After two weeks of contemplating the end-time and Christ's Second Coming, the Church invites us to rejoice in Christ our Savior. We are filled with joy because we know that the coming of Christ is the coming of our salvation. Like Mary, we rejoice because God's love overflows into the world and takes root in our hearts.

Today's response, taken from the Magnificat, is Mary's great song of praise and puts her words of praise on our lips. Imagine the joy she must have experienced. When has Christ filled you with joy? When we ponder the Incarnation,

how can we not be filled with joy? Jesus is the Anointed One who brings Good News to the poor and frees the enslaved. Everything that God has promised to his people is revealed in Jesus and continues today to be revealed in his Church.

Even though this Sunday is joy filled, we cannot forget that many have lost hope and that they find themselves on the margins. Jesus calls us to carry the cross and be heralds of the Good News to the poor and brokenhearted. It is not always easy, but this is the work of all the baptized. This week, gather a group from your family or parish and using these readings for prayer, begin discerning how your community can bring glad tidings to the poor and release to prisoners.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 18

O Lord

In this third week of Advent, the readings begin to focus more directly on the birth of Christ. In today's Gospel, Joseph learns how Mary conceived Jesus. Although Scripture does not provide a lot of insight on Jesus' foster father, the glimpse we get here shows an obedient, loving, and generous man. This passage helps us know that God, through the Incarnation, is truly with us. The praying of the "O" Antiphons begins this week. Consider using them with your meal prayer this week. *Today's Readings: Jeremiah 23:5–8; Psalm 72:1–2, 12–13, 18–19; Matthew 1:18–25.*

Tuesday, December 19

O Root of Jesse

The two readings today present God's awesome power to overcome any trial. First, we hear the story of the wife of Manoah who learns from an angel that she will bear a son. Second, the angel Gabriel tells Zechariah that his wife, Elizabeth, will conceive a son. Imagine how these two women, once barren, rejoiced at the news of conception. Upon their lips were songs of praise. Light candles and pray today for all the unborn and for those who are unable to conceive. *Today's Readings: Judges 13:2–7, 24–25a; Psalm 71:3–4a, 5–6ab, 16–17; Luke 1:5–25.*

Wednesday, December 20

O Key of David

The Gospel Acclamation tells of the Key of David setting prisoners free. As we draw closer to Christmas, it is good to reflect on Christ, the Key who unlocks the gates of heaven. It is Christ, the descendant of David, who ransoms us from sin and darkness so we can walk in the light of his countenance. Take your keys today and use them in your prayer as you do *lectio divina* with today's psalm. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 7:10–14; Psalm 24:1–2, 3–4ab, 5–6; Luke 1:26–38.*

Thursday, December 21

O Dayspring

This is the second time during Advent that we have heard this portion of the Gospel reading from Luke. Because John leapt in Elizabeth's womb, she seems to know that Mary is carrying the Christ. Her prayer, which we say in the Hail Mary explains it all. Mary's womb is blessed. Imagine if you were Elizabeth. How might you react to this news? Song of Songs provides images to ponder when we think of the bridegroom coming to be with us. How can we not leap for joy and sing a new song! *Today's Readings: Song of Songs 2:8–14 or Zephaniah 3:14–18a; Psalm 33:2–3, 11–12, 20–21; Luke 1:39–45.*

Friday, December 22

O King of Nations

Today we encounter Hannah, the mother of Samuel, and Mary. These two women sing the praises of God at the birth of their children. Listen carefully to the psalm response today and notice its connection to the Magnificat in the Gospel proclamation. Both texts praise God's power to cast the rich aside and raise up the poor. Jesus, the King of the Nations, has conquered the enemy—so let us rejoice. Today read a commentary on the Gospel and meditate on its rich imagery. *Today's Readings: 1 Samuel 1:24–28; 1 Samuel 2:1, 4–5, 6–7, 8abcd; Luke 1:46–56.*

Saturday, December 23

O Emmanuel

In the First Reading, the prophet Malachi announces a messenger who will prepare the way for God's coming. The Gospel tells of the birth of John the Baptist, the one whose call to repent and prepare a way for the Lord began our Advent season. Have you listened to John's plea? Review your Advent journey tonight, and be attentive to the rough ways in your life that still need straightening. Praise God for the good works already accomplished. *Today's Readings: Malachi 3:1–4, 23–24; Psalm 25:4–5ab, 8–9, 10 and 14; Luke 1:57–66.*



The Gospel at Home

This Sunday's Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

During Advent, we prepare for Christmas by listening to the people who prepared the way for Jesus' coming. In this Sunday's Gospel, people ask John the Baptist who he is—the Messiah or a prophet. John answers by identifying himself as a voice in the desert, crying out, "Make straight the way of the Lord." He insists that someone more important than he is coming. The Gospel asks us to recognize Jesus among us by answering his call to be our best Christian selves.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): This week, the class learned to tell the Christmas story. Ask your child to share his or her booklet and use it to tell the story to your family. Remember to keep the real meaning of Christmas—God's coming to live with us—a most important part of your family's preparation for the feast. Don't let a day go by without some reminder that you are preparing for the celebration of Jesus' birth.

Promise (Grades K-1): This week, your child learned why it is important to make preparations for Christmas. Talk about how your family prepares for the feast. Talk about how Mary and Joseph prepared for the birth of Jesus. Ask your child to share the story of "The Just-Right Christmas Plate" with the family. Make sure that everyone in the family has a part to play in getting ready for Christmas.

Good News (Grades 2-3): This week, your child recognized the preparations for Christmas that are happening in the parish. Ask your child to share what some of those preparations are. Talk, too, about how John the Baptist

announced that Jesus was coming to be with all the people. Ask your child to share with the family the story, "Waiting for a Surprise."

Venture (Grades 4-6): This week, your child learned about the Messiah from the words of the prophet Isaiah and from the Blessed Virgin Mary. They learned that the Messiah brings Good News to the poor and comforts the sorrowful. They learned, too, that God fills the hungry with good things. Talk about ways your family can bring the Good News of Christ to others and how you can feed the hungry and comfort the sorrowful during this Advent season. Discuss why this is a good preparation for the coming of the Messiah on Christmas.

Visions (Grades 7-8): In class this week, your teen explored how to spread the Good News. The class learned that it was the mission of John the Baptist to prepare people for the coming of Jesus. John's life and preaching pointed not to himself, but to "the one who is to come." Ask: How is spreading the Good News to others part of our family's Advent activities? How does the way our family lives and acts point to Jesus? The class also compared the two narratives of Jesus' birth in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Share both stories. Talk about the similarities and the differences.

Pray Together

As you say your Advent wreath prayer this week, include prayers for all the people who need the message that John the Baptist proclaimed. As each member mentions someone who needs the message, the whole family can respond: "Lord, help us be Good News for others."

✠ PARISH MINISTRIES & INFORMATION ✠

JOIN THE CHOIR!

Why not join the Choir? We have lots of fun, work hard, and singing is a great way to worship! You don't have to know how to read music to join – come on down!

CONTEMPORARY CHOIR

The Contemporary Choir is always looking for new members. If you would like to sing with us or you can play an instrument, we would be overjoyed to have you join us! All ages and abilities are invited.

ALTAR SERVERS

We welcome any student who has celebrated their First Eucharist to become an **Altar Server**. Training typically begins with the new server being an "observer" until they are ready to function as servers. Parents – see Fr. Albert or call the Parish Office for more information at 382-8324.



READERS WANTED

Our Parish community is in need of new **READERS** for weekend and weekday Liturgies. Readers proclaim the readings and lead the Assembly in the General Intercessions on Sundays. A good heart and clear speaking voice are the only qualifications needed – all other training and materials are provided. Any adult or high school age student is welcome to become a **READER**. Anyone who is interested can see Father Albert. Prospective **READERS** can also call the Parish Office for more information at 382-8324.

GREETERS AND USHERS WANTED

Our Parish community is in need of **GREETERS** and **USHERS** to assist us at the weekend liturgies. **Greeters** are principally concerned with offering a welcome to all who come through the doors of our churches, distributing the weekly Bulletin and making guests feel part of our Parish. They also help designate people to bring up the gifts during the offertory. The ministry of **Usher** is also concerned with hospitality; helping with the collections at Mass, helping people who need handicap access to the church in Plaistow, and helping to designate people to bring up the gifts during the offertory. Couples or families are invited to serve together! Anyone who is interested can see Father Albert. Prospective **GREETERS** and **USHERS** can also call the Parish Office for more information at 382-8324.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Altar Flowers are a special opportunity for remembering a departed loved one or offering thanksgiving for a blessing or family event. A floral arrangement placed in front of the altar for the Sunday Liturgy can be purchased for an offering of \$85, with an accompanying announcement in the weekly bulletin. Availability is limited according to the Liturgical Calendar. Offerings can be reserved on a first-come basis by contacting the Parish Office at 382-8324.

HOSPITAL VISITATION

If you or someone you know is in the hospital and wants to receive a visit, please contact the parish office at 382-8324. If you or someone you know faces a hospital admission, make sure they know to inform the hospital that they are Catholic and are members of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish. If a person cannot make this information known at the time of admission, a family member may be able to make that information known to the hospital staff.

PRAYER LINE

St. Luke's offers a prayer line as a resource for those seeking prayer assistance. Submit your prayer request to csmith@stluketheevangelist.net or call 382-8324, ext. 314.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ST JUDE COUNCIL #6617 SEEKING NEW MEMBERS

The St. Jude Council is a vital part of your parish. We are a Catholic men's fraternal organization whose main purposes are charitable works and supporting our parish and community. We are involved with many activities during the year, including: A yearly Golf Tournament to raise money to help local families in need; Blood Drives; A Wedding Vows/Valentine's Day Meal & Dance; Food Baskets; Family Pool Party & BBQ. This is just a small sampling of the many activities of the St. Jude Council. We offer opportunities not just for the men, but for our members' entire family, including a Squires Club for young men between the ages of 10 and 18. The only requirement for membership is that you are a practicing Catholic who wants to join other men and their families of the parish to help those who are in need, support your parish, and enjoy the fellowship of other members and their families. If you would like to find out more about the Knights, please contact Bernie Gosselin at 603-642-4012.



Bringing Home the Word

Third Sunday of Advent | December 17, 2017

Proclaiming Our Joy

By Mary Katharine Deeley

Today is **Gaudete** (GOW de tay) Sunday. The name comes from the Latin word that begins the introit (opening antiphon) of the day's liturgy. It means, simply, "rejoice." When I think about the many times I've rejoiced, I'm usually very moved. When I graduated college and graduate school, when my husband and I married, when our daughters were born, and when they married—all of these were periods of great rejoicing marked by parties, congratulations, and the sweet feeling that something wonderful had taken place and that our lives were richer for it.

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 61:11–2a, 10–11

He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–24

God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son.

John 1:6–8, 19–28

[Jesus said,] "I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord.'"

This third Sunday of Advent is our liturgical reminder that we have much to rejoice about. God didn't become incarnate just for the people who lived a long time ago. The Word became flesh in Jesus Christ for all of us living today and for all the generations to come. He came for sinners and saints and for those who haven't yet had an opportunity to know him.

Why do we rejoice? Because what Scripture said is true: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Something wonderful has taken place for everyone, and we join St. Paul, the prophet Isaiah, the psalmist, and John in proclaiming our joy. It's a good day to look up from what we're doing and rejoice at the great gift of faith we've been given, even while we continue our own prayer and preparation. +

*We rejoice because
of the truth of the
holy Scriptures.*

A Word From Pope Francis

To celebrate Christmas in a fruitful manner, we are called to pause in "places" of astonishment....The first place is *the other*, in whom we recognize a brother or sister, because since the birth of Jesus occurred, every face is marked with a semblance to the Son of God. Above all when it is the face of the poor, because God entered the world poor, and it was to the poor, in the first place, that he allowed himself to draw near.

—Angelus,
December 20, 2015



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What makes you joyful? Would those same things make Jesus joyful, too?
- Do I point people toward the true source of joy with my words and example?



Home for the Holidays

By Alice Camille

I always get the creeps from Currier and Ives. It's not that I don't have my sentimental streak. I save old Christmas cards and the caps from champagne bottles. And my heart quivers at the sight of Rudolph being spurned by the other reindeer.

But I find myself in resistance mode about this time, when the Currier-and-Ives-style holiday seems jammed down my throat. Sleigh scenes and chubby Santas aside, not every Christmastime has been a memory of roaring fires, hot chocolate, and close-knit family. Some Christmases in my memory were three-alarm disasters that can awaken me in a cold sweat.

Paradoxically, part of the trouble with the holidays is that it's homecoming season. Traveling can be a bear, but it's not only navigating airports and highways in bad weather that bugs me. It's what I might have to navigate when I reach my destination that's the real worry.

My family is fairly well behaved. We have no serial killers or deviants, and much of the time we can be counted on to be normal about festive gatherings, their religious and cultural significance.

But we do have prodigal members, those who have gone certifiably astray by the usual markers and whose presence or absence at every holiday is an issue.

I don't know which I mind more: the years when a disruptive arrival leads to shouting and tears, or the times when a quiet boycott makes us retell the old stories about what went wrong and why someone is unwelcome. I anticipate those conflicts with dread.

Universal Message

This story is common and probably why Jesus included a prodigal parable in his repertoire. A son turns out to be a disappointment to his father and a source of shame to his brother. The son who does everything wrong disappears for years. The son who plays it by the book remains at home, working in the family business. Then one day, guess who returns? And guess what the anxious parent and furious stay-at-home sibling do next?

The point of the parable—variously called the parable of the Prodigal Son or the story of the forgiving father—is aimed at neither the son who was lost, nor the father who finds it in his heart to embrace him again. It's the third party in this tale, the obedient brother, who receives the moral lesson. Jesus, remember, is addressing the Pharisees, who can be self-righteous about how obedient they are, like the older brother in the story. The parable affirms that sinners will sin and that God, who is

absolute mercy, will forgive. That much is unquestioned.

But how do average Christians react to this news? Does understanding God's mercy comfort or offend us?

God's Justice

Most of us are not villains, but law-abiding people with a few peccadilloes. Our wrongdoing is minor and run-of-the-mill—the kind of thing easily swept under the rug of our conscience. And because we toe the line, we greatly appreciate it if others do, too. If they don't, we would prefer that they pay the consequences. But what if God lets them off scot-free? Where's the justice in that?

Divine compassion often offends our sense of justice. After all, people shouldn't be able to do anything they want! That's certainly true—but God's mercy doesn't imply that they can. Sin is still a bad idea that leads to heartache. But God chooses to respond to the wayward child with open arms and not a door slammed in the face. If we're part of this family, we'd better make room for that notion. +



Lord, you are the source of my strength, peace, and joy. Send your Spirit to renew my trust and hope in you and give me peace.

From *Joyful Meditations for Every Day of Advent and the 12 Days of Christmas*,
Rev. Warren J. Savage
and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

December 18-23

Mon. Advent Weekday:
Jer 23:5-8 / Mt 1:18-25
Tue. Advent Weekday:
Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a / Luke 1:5-25
Wed. Advent Weekday:
Is 7:10-14 / Lk 1:26-38

Thu. Advent Weekday:
Sg 2:8-14 / Lk 1:39-45
Fri. Advent Weekday:
1 Sm 1:24-28 / 1 Lk 1:46-56
Sat. Advent Weekday:
Mal 3:1-4, 23-24 / Lk 1:57-66