



MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

Sunday, December 8, 2019
Second 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 A Voice Cries Out BB 44
 Mass Parts Mass of Christ the Savior
 Communion Bread Of Life BB 320
 Recessional: Ready The Way BB 62

10:00 AM

Gathering: Come, Come Emmanuel
 Dismissal Rite: You Have Called Us BB 636
 Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 85)
Show us your kindness, O God. (2x)

Preparation Every Valley BB 67
 Like A Shepherd BB 606
 Mass Parts Mass of Joy and Peace
 Communion Christ Be Our Light BB 597
 Lord, Let Us See Your Kindness BB 779
 Recessional: Ready The Way BB 62



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 & 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!

November 24, 2019

Offertory \$6,311.56
Christmas Flowers \$2,314.00

COLLECTION AMOUNTS FOR
DECEMBER 1, 2019
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 8, 2019 Retired Religious Fund
 December 15, 2019 Fuel

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 ✠

PAINT THE TOWN!

THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH

Our Parish community continues with our Capital Campaign. Our next projects include exterior painting for the church and Parish house in Newton. We'd also like to paint the interior sanctuary of the church in Newton and complete some electrical upgrades to the church.

Other possible projects include work on our Plaistow and Newton parking lots, and ramp access to the church in Plaistow.

Can you help?

Any contribution is welcome. Make checks payable to
Saint Luke the Evangelist – Capital Campaign.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (Patroness of the U.S.A.) has been transferred to Monday, December 9 this year. It is NOT a holy day of obligation this year. The Solemnity will be celebrated at the 8:00 AM Mass in Newton on **Monday, December 9.**

SANCTUARY CANDLES

The Sanctuary Candles in both Newton and Plaistow may be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00. Please call the Parish Office at 382-8324.

TAI CHI

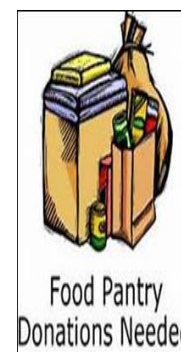
Tai Chi is the ancient Chinese martial art that is used for meditation, exercise, balance, and mind and body wellness. St. Luke the Evangelist Parish is offering this form of graceful, slow movement to help parishioners to gain strength, to improve their balance, flexibility, and range-of-motion, and to relieve stress. Classes are taught by members of the Oriental Healing Arts Association – a Senior Friendly and Senior Safe Tai Chi Program with the purpose of bringing Tai Chi to all age groups. Classes are on **Mondays at 9:00 AM** and **Thursdays at 3:00 PM and 6:30 PM** in the Plaistow Church Hall. The cost is \$5.00 per class, and for seniors on a fixed income, the cost is \$3.00 per class.



ST. LUKE'S WEBSITE! <http://stlukenh.org>

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.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Sunday, December 8

11:00 AM	Religious Ed – PreK 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 11
HOLY ANGELS CHURCH OPEN
ALL DAY FOR PRAYER

Thursday, December 12

8:30 AM	Adoration Begins	<i>Newton</i>
9:00 AM	Intercessory Prayer	<i>Plaistow</i>
8:30 PM	Adoration Ends	<i>Newton</i>

Saturday, December 14

3:00 PM	Sacrament of Reconciliation	<i>Plaistow</i>
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Sunday, December 15

10:00 AM	Religious Ed – PreK 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>

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS SURVEY

The Catholic Schools Office for the Diocese of Manchester has launched a state-wide research project to learn more about the perception and influence of Catholic schools. Please help our schools by completing this survey at tinyurl.com/DioceseOfManchesterSurvey.

St. Vincent
de Paul
Society



Don't forget to "Drop Your Dollar" the next time you're at Mass. It may not seem like much to you, but to those we help, it makes a huge difference in their lives.

Keep us in your thoughts and prayers as we head into the colder months and food and fuel may become an issue with neighbors and friends.

Our next meeting on **Wednesday, December 18 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 7 ~ Vigil / Second Sunday of Advent

Is 11:1-10; Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12

4:00 PM	Martin & Florence Fogel and Frank Kelcourse by Elaine Kelcourse	<i>Plaistow</i>
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Sunday, December 8 ~ Second Sunday of Advent

Is 11:1-10; Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12

8:00 AM	Carol Bettencourt by Elaine Bettencourt and family	<i>Newton</i>
10:00 AM	Mary Sceggell (2 nd Anniversary) by Carole Lueders	<i>Plaistow</i>

Monday, December 9 ~ The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Gen 3:9-15, 20; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38

8:00 AM	Carol Radford (Month's Mind)	<i>Newton</i>
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Tuesday, December 10 ~ Advent Weekday

Is 40:1-11; Mt 18:12-14

8:00 AM	John, Sr. and Mary Duhamel by Edward Duhamel	<i>Plaistow</i>
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Wednesday, December 11 ~ Damasus I, Pope

Is 40:25-31; Mt 11:28-30

6:30 PM	Bill Knowles by his wife, Marjorie Knowles	<i>Plaistow</i>
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Thursday, December 12 ~ Our Lady of Guadalupe

Zec 2:14-17; Lk 1:26-38

8:00 AM	In Thanksgiving for Prayers Answered by Carol Tucker	<i>Newton</i>
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Friday, December 13 ~ Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

Is 48:17-19; Mt 11:16-19

No Mass

Saturday, December 14 ~ John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

Sir 48:1-4, 9-11; Mt 17:9a, 10-13 (Day)

Is 35:1-6a, 10; Jas 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11 (Vigil)

4:00 PM	Gertrude and Frank De Cesenno by Pat Zakiewicz	<i>Plaistow</i>
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Sunday, December 15 ~ Third Sunday of Advent

Is 35:1-6a, 10; Jas 5:7-10; Mt 11:2-11

8:00 AM	Wayne Bettencourt by Janice Bettencourt	<i>Newton</i>
10:00 AM	William Knowles by Catherine Willis	<i>Plaistow</i>

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.

❖ FAITH FORMATION & PARISH INFORMATION ❖

MEN'S RETREAT

**35th Annual Vita Nova Men's Retreat 2020
January 3-5, 2020**

The 35th Annual Vita Nova Men's Retreat, led by Fr. Jeff Paveglio, will be held at the Barbara C. Harris Center in Greenfield, NH on the weekend of **January 3-5, 2020**. Register at www.vitanova.org.

RCIA

The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. 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.

ADULT CONFIRMATION

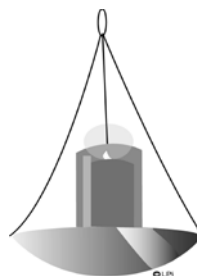
Are you an adult who has been Baptized and received Eucharist, but has not celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation? The adult Confirmation process is an opportunity to complete the Sacraments of Initiation. If you would like to prepare for Confirmation, or if you have questions, call Cathy Smith at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

PARENTS BAPTISM PREPARATION SESSION

The monthly preparation session for infant Baptism will be held after the 10:00 AM Liturgy on **Sunday, January 5, 2020** 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.

CREIGHTON FERTILITYCARE SYSTEM

The Creighton FertilityCare System is a highly effective and morally acceptable natural method of family planning. It is healthy and strengthens marriage. It is used to achieve a pregnancy or avoid a pregnancy and can be useful in the diagnosis and treatment of reproductive disease. Online introductory classes will be held on the first Wednesday and third Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM. For more information, contact Mary Menendez, CFCP, St. Gerard Majella FertilityCare Services, at 603-642-8050 or CreightonFertility@yahoo.com.



The Sanctuary Candle in Holy Angels Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Eileen Donovan**

ADORATION

We are truly blessed to have times for Adoration of Our Lord in our Parish. This time of prayer and intercession is not only a source of great grace for the individual, but it is a great source of grace for us as a parish family, as well.

We have many who have made the commitment to spend an hour each week with our Eucharistic Lord, **but** we need more people so there will be at least two people at each hour. We are also looking for people who would be able to substitute.

**Newton – Thursday
8:30 AM – 8:30 PM**

If you can commit to one hour a week in Adoration of our Lord, or if you can be a substitute, please contact Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

The Church in Plaistow is open all day on Wednesdays for people to stop by and pray before the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.

❖ 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 Szapa	jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
Jackie Tremblay	jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
Thomas Kondel	tkondel@stluketheevangelist.net
Val Barczak	mvmbarczak@comcast.net
Youth Ministry	youth@stluketheevangelist.net
Parish Council	parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net

✠ Parish News ~ Youth News ~ Around The Diocese ✠

CHRISTMAS TREE SALE

Knight of Columbus, Andy Gagnon Jr., is holding a Christmas Tree Sale at 239 Lover's Lane, Haverhill, MA (just off Rte 108 at NH/MA Line) on **Saturday and Sunday, December 7-8 and 14-15 from 9:00 AM to Dusk**. Andy, in memory of his father, Andy Sr., who donated net proceeds to our food pantry through Christmas tree sales in years past, will be donating 20 trees to our Food Pantry. Food donations for St. Luke's Food Pantry will be accepted during the sale. Trees will be fresh cut the day of sale and will be priced at \$20 and \$25 each. The Knights and the Gagnon Family wish you a very Blessed Christmas.

EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINES

With the holiday season upon us, we also have several early bulletin deadlines:

Deadline for the December 22 bulletin is **Monday, December 9 at 12:00 Noon**

Deadline for the December 29 bulletin is **Monday, December 16 at 12:00 Noon**

Deadline for the January 5 bulletin is **Monday, December 16 at 12:00 Noon.**

AMAZON SMILE

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.amazonmile.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 CLOSING

With the end of the Fall season and the coming of the Winter months, **Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is closed from December 1, 2019 until Spring 2020**. 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.



GIVING TREES

Giving Trees will be located in the back of both churches on the weekend of **December 1**. 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 14-15** (the Third Sunday of Advent).

Thank you for your generosity in helping those in need!

NIGHT IN BETHLEHEM

Follow in the footsteps of Mary and Joseph on the night Jesus was born

Friday, December 13, 2019 ~ 5:30 to 8:30 PM
St. Michael Parish, Exeter, NH

Tours leave every 15 minutes

www.stmichaelparish.org

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
ST JUDE COUNCIL # 6617
GIVE YOUR PARISH COMMUNITY
1 HOUR A MONTH**

The Knights of Columbus are a vital and vibrant part of the St Luke the Evangelist Parish. We welcome any practicing Catholic man 18 or older to join the Knights, whose main purpose is charitable works in support of our parish and community. Joining is simple – talk to a brother Knight or you can now join on-line. Go to www.kofc.org/joinus. Your Council is involved in many activities from collecting money for people with intellectual disabilities through the Tootsie Roll Drive to the annual St Jude Golf Open which raises money for parish families in need. The list is as long as you want it to be. Do you have a certain passion you would like to get involved in? Come join us and make it a reality! We are Catholic men. We live by principles informed by faith. We are sons, fathers, husbands, and grandfathers. Join us on life's greatest adventure to discover the man God calls you to be. Feel free to call Dan Sullivan at 603-770-4803, email him at dans49@comcast.net, or catch him at the 8:00 AM Sunday Mass in Newton. For more information about the Knights, go to www.kofc.org/un/en/todays-knights/what-we-do.html

A HUGE THANK YOU to our entire Parish Community!!

*Thank
You*

This year's Christmas Craft Fair was another astounding success!!

Somehow, we surpassed all wishes, dreams & expectations and we, **as a community**, raised over \$20,000 for our Parish!! Thanks be to God and thanks to all of YOU!!

A million thanks to EVERYONE who came, went, spent, donated, bought, schlepped, transported, carried, swept, cleaned, taped, hung, greeted, parked, directed, played, stayed, paid, painted, decorated, arranged, tallied, collected, counted, called, minced, diced, cut, cooked, boiled, sautéed, baked, ate, etc. Each action, big & small, was necessary for the success of our fair. Thank you for all you did to help.

And last, but certainly not least, greatest blessings and thanks to those of you whose names have been, unintentionally, omitted from the list below. Thank YOU, most especially, for your quiet contributions.

Alice Litwinovich	Faith Kelly	Justine Caron	Ray Madore
Andrea Comeau	Father Albert	Karen Buchanan	Ray Viglione
Andy Bufano	Frances Harper	Kathy Chambers	Reg Lamere
Angela McVey	Francine Hart	Kaylin Hennessey	Rich Healey
Ann Marie Sheehan	Fran LaChance	Laura Metellus	Robert King
April Caporizzo	Gabby DeRoche	Linda Church	Robin Lambert
Ashley Desjardins	Glenn Hughes	Linda Langlais	Robin Thompson
Barbara Brotz	Grace Bukowski	Lisa Duffy	Rudy Ferrandi
Barbara Lawrence	Grace Daly	Lucia Guilmette	Sandra Kvajewski
Bill Tucker	Harlan Cheney	Marci Marciano	Sandra Nadeau
Bob Bourque	Heather Pratt	Margaret Madeiros	Santa Claus
Bob Garrant	Jack Borisko	Marge Anderson	Sarah Matson
Bob Harb	Jack Brotz	Mark Langlais	Sharon Breault
Bob Litwinovich	Jack Cote	Maria Ferrandi	Sr. Claire
Bob Nadeau	Jack Ronan	Marie Farren	Sr. Doris
Brent Mackenzie	Jackie Tremblay	Marie Foley	Sr. Holly
Brian Guilmette	James Glendye	Martha Healey	Sr. Lorraine
Brian Lessard	Jane Culbert	Mary Monk	Sr. Marylyn
Candia LaRochelle	Janice Bettencourt	Mary Walsh	Stephanie Meader
Carole Burke	Jean Hennessey	Matt Manasian	Stephanie Stanely
Carole Lueders	Jean Lanctot	Matt Matson	Stephen Fournier
Cathy Cronin	Jean Llyod	Maureen Connolly	Steve Lambert
Cathy O'Rourke	Jean Martin	Meg Thurnquist	Sue Ronan
Cathy Smith	Jeanne Marcinkowski	Michael Kelly	Summer Mottram
Claudia Maciel	Jeanne Sullivan	Michael Chambers	Susan Mokray
Collette Ferrandi	Jeannette Wuerdemann	Mike Barczak	Suzanne Touhey
Dan Llyod	Jennifer Lyons	Mike Mercier	Terri Karavedas
Dan Sullivan	Jim Edwards	Mike Rosa	Terri Mottram
Danielle Genovese	Jim Foley	Mindy Richardson	The Borgesi Family
Danielle Kelly	JoAnne Consentino	Molly Richardson	The Hunt Family
David Meader	Joanne Carbone	Nancy Lumnah	The Lajoie Family
David Touhey	Jody Mercier	Nancy Ross	The Lamere Family
Debbie Thompson	Joe Klimaszewski	Nicholas LaRossa	The Urick Family
Diane Lozeau	Joey Cadorette	Nick Ferrandi	Thomas Cronin
Donna Desjardins	John Mainella	Pam Borisko	Tim O'Rourke
Don Harper	John Tucker	Paul Caron	Tommy Donahue
Doug Ross	Joseph Quaratiello	Paul Maciel	Trish Mainella
Ed Murphy	Joseph Sheehan	Paula Fournier	Val Barczak
Ed Wencis	Joyce Szczapa	Peggy Connors	Valerie LaRossa
Elaine Kindler	Judy Cadorette	Pete Sullivan	Vanessa Burrill



You know what else you can save?

- Flower Vases – the kind you get from the florist for a special occasion
- New and “Like New” gifts for the Penny Sale and Silent Auction Tables such as: small appliances, digital audio/video/photograph equipment, toys, bikes, ski and/or sports equipment.
- New Toys for “Lollipop Game” prizes
- Jewelry for our Jewelry Table
- Bottles of wine for the Wine Raffle
- Items to turn into Cellophane-wrapped, Ready-to-Raffle Theme Baskets for the, you guessed it, Theme Basket Table!

HELP and IDEAS WANTED

Photos with Santa: This year one of you donated a brand-new printer and photo paper! We plan to use these to offer actual Photos with Santa at our 2020 Fair!!

For the past few years, fairgoers have been taking their own pictures with their phones, but we want to offer them an actual 4x6 photograph inside a photo card that they can hold in their hand and walk away with for \$5.

To this end we need someone, or 2 someone’s, who can run this newest venture.

Greet fairgoer & kiddo. Take Picture. Print Picture. Collect \$5. Repeat.

It is not necessary that the right person(s) for this job be a photographer by trade, but they would have a friendly demeanor, an interest in photography, and some aptitude for electronic and digital equipment.

Compensation for this gig would be, like all our Fair jobs, undying gratitude and, maybe, a candy cane. 😊

So, if you, or anyone you know, would fit this bill, or if you have any ideas about how we can make this happen, please email Julie Lamere at stlukenhfair@gmail.com.

We want your BRIGHT IDEAS: Do you have an idea for something that would make our fair more awesome, cool, profitable, fun, entertaining, delicious, creative, useful, practical, efficient, effective, etc.?

We want to hear about it!!!! Please email Julie Lamere at stlukenhfair@gmail.com.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Fruition

Holy Lord,
from your Chosen People came
a royal descendant,
a righteous ruler, a Savior filled with
your Spirit.
In him you reveal your perfect
and powerful love,
a love that encompasses all people.
Through your Son, you liberate the world

from hatred, injustice, and violence,
so that all creation may know true harmony
and lasting peace.

By the power of the Holy Spirit,
grant us wisdom, strength, patience
and mercy.

Grant us the gifts we need to bear good fruit
and to be signs that your kingdom has begun.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, December 8, 2019

Busy Waiting

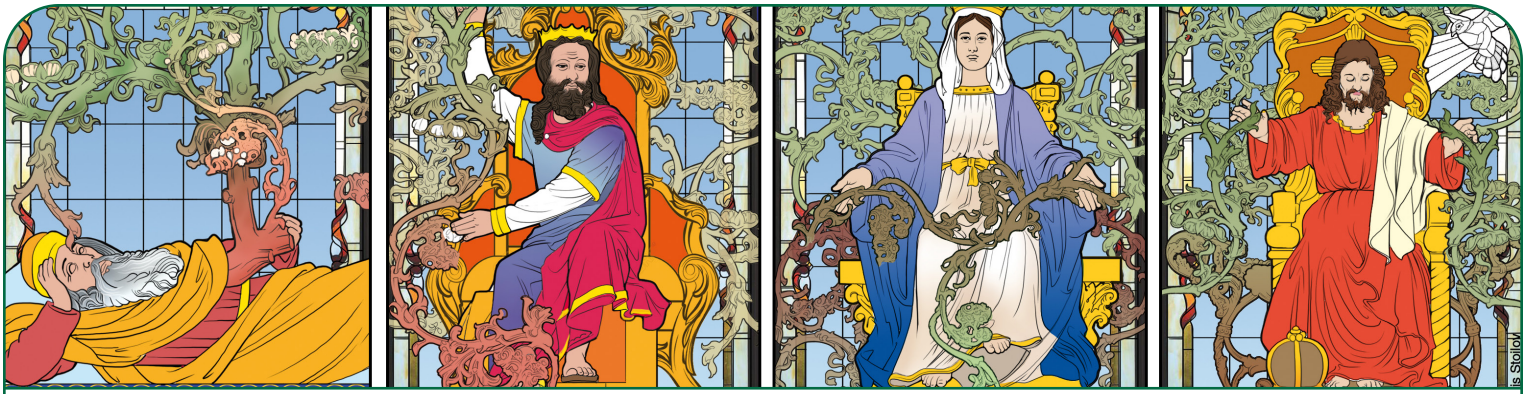


Today's Readings: Isaiah 11:1–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 12–13, 17; Romans 15:4–9; Matthew 3:1–12. John the Baptist warned people to change their lives or be excluded from God's kingdom. His water ritual was a way for people to show that they believed him, but it wasn't the only sign they were to give. When some Jewish religious leaders said they wanted to be baptized, John demanded that they prove it. These leaders thought that, simply because they were Jewish, God would include them in his kingdom.

We cannot claim that our Christian Baptism guarantees us a place in God's kingdom, either. In the Second Reading, St. Paul makes it clear that although God has extended salvation to all, both Jews and Gentiles must treat one another

with patience, mercy, and love. Everyone who wants to live in a world without violence or pain, danger or devastation, must surrender to God's Spirit, just as Jesus did.

Sometimes we think of Advent as a season of waiting for God, but John the Baptist reminds us that God is waiting for us, too. God waits for us to blossom into holiness, to spring up with deeds of love. If we don't get busy preparing for God's arrival, "the ax lies at the root of the trees." But if we demonstrate our sincere desire to turn toward the Lord, we become signs for others to follow. And then, with Christ in our midst, "the earth shall be filled with knowledge of the Lord" and God's kingdom "shall be glorious."



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 9 Immaculate Conception

It is impossible for us to prevent sin from passing into the next generation. We see how quickly children imitate us and our sins. In the dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception, we celebrate a moment in which God kept someone free from sin so that she could be mother to the sinless Son of God. This perfect Son, who came into our world as an infant, gives us hope that one day our children will perfectly imitate our Savior. Ask God to forgive you for a time that a child saw or heard you act sinfully. *Today's Readings: Genesis 3:9–20; Psalm 98:1–4; Ephesians 1:3–12; Luke 1:26–38.*

Tuesday, December 10 Shepherding the Lost

Jesus offered consolation and forgiveness instead of immediate condemnation. He looked upon God's people differently than they looked upon themselves. Where some saw only hopeless sinners, Jesus saw people who yearned to be led back to God. Show that you are ready for God to find you by asking someone for forgiveness and by letting go of a grudge. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 40:1–11; Psalm 96:1–3, 10–13; Matthew 18:12–14.*

Wednesday, December 11 Burdens

God helps us carry our burdens. He lifts us up when our bodies drag us down. He yokes himself beside us in the person of his Son. We must, therefore, ask ourselves what burdens we ought to carry and what loads we can set down. Our arms might be full of things we do not need to hold onto. Check your Christmas to-do list, and cross off anything that doesn't truly help you and others prepare to celebrate the gift of God's Son. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 40:25–31; Psalm 103:1–10; Matthew 11:28–30.*

Thursday, December 12 The Faces of Grace

The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe celebrates Mary's appearance to Juan Diego, an appearance that inspired thousands to convert to Christianity. Many have venerated since childhood the image of Mary that was revealed to Juan Diego. We rejoice that God makes himself known across cultures and languages. Pray with an image of Mary or Jesus from a different part of the world, and reflect on God's love for all people, everywhere. *Today's Readings: Zechariah 2:14–17 or Revelation 11:19a; 12:1–6a, 10ab; Luke 1:26–38 or Luke 1:39–47.*

Friday, December 13 Expectations

Sometimes we refuse to see God at work. We dismiss a teaching or invitation from God because it doesn't fit our expectations of how God should act. We might even think it is foolish. Jesus insists that what seems silly to us is wise to God. It seemed absurd that God would become human, yet that's exactly what happened. God's way is difficult for us to accept, but it is the only way for us to become one with God who came to be one with us. Make a list of things you expect from God, and surrender that list in prayer. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 48:17–19; Psalm 1:1–6; Matthew 11:16–19.*

Saturday, December 14 Turn

We read in 2 Kings 2:11 that the prophet Elijah was taken up to heaven. In the centuries that followed, people came to believe that Elijah would return to prepare people for the day of judgment and a new era. The most significant similarity between Elijah and John the Baptist was that both devoted themselves to turning people back to God. In this season of preparation, the words of Elijah and John echo in our ears. Participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Acknowledge the ways you have turned away from God, and renew your efforts to turn back to him. *Today's Readings: Sirach 48:1–11; Psalm 80:1–19; Matthew 17:9–13.*





A reflection for the second Sunday in Advent

Year A

Who is this strange man named John?

Certainly he was a little wild and crazy. John looked like something right out of the “old days” even to the people of his time. He wore the garments that symbolized a prophet – he spoke the way an old time, “fire-and brimstone” prophet would speak – he minced no words...”*Judgment day is coming!*”

We don’t necessarily like the Judgment Day of which John speaks. We don’t like to “judge.” We tell each other to be “tolerant” and to “get along.” We tell ourselves that we can “get along with everyone,” and that judging others is a sign of a weak character.

But the truth is that we must make some judgments if we are to get along in the world. We need to struggle with the “right” choice versus the “wrong” ones; we must decide a course of action in our lives before we get ourselves into trouble.

John’s message helps clarify the muddy waters of decision. In no uncertain terms, John called on the people – just as he calls us today – to choose wisely about the things of God.

John calls out of the desert today to those who would hear his voice and look around. Judgment is a thing thrown around like so many reality television shows. Judgment has become entertainment, where we ourselves are the jury.

It is not like that with God. We are always the defendants before God – yet we are also sons and daughters at the same time. We are justified and redeemed by the cross. Yet we are also called to be watchful and wary about the decisions we make in life.

Advent is ultimately about assessing our lives in the light of a Messiah who comes among us to judge how we built up the Kingdom. It is about our working for, not against God’s plan for the world. It is about proclaiming a Messiah who is dead serious about our role in working out the salvation of the world.

You and I have a role in working out the salvation of the world.

Wild and crazy??? You be the judge.

The Gospel at Home

This Week's Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

In this Sunday's Gospel, John the Baptist urges people to turn toward God. He baptizes people when they want to change their lives. John insists that Baptism expresses a real change of heart and not a shallow safeguard against God's judgment. Note: The Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, normally a Holy Day of Obligation, will not be one this year and it moves to December 9.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): Your child is continuing his or her journey to Jesus' birth by learning more about the Christmas story. Spreading the story out over a longer period of time helps children make the story their own. The class learned about Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Ask your child to tell you about Jesus' human mother. Talk with your child about how we receive messages from others. Ask your child to show you the map to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Promise (Grades K-1): In the spirit of John the Baptist's preaching, your child's class discussed their experiences of preparing for an event, such as the arrival of guests. They shared ideas of what it takes to get ready for a new baby in the family; they also talked about how Mary and Joseph got ready for the coming of the Baby Jesus. Your child made a booklet about that preparation. One page of the booklet is a day-by-day calendar. Starting on December 6, the Feast of Saint Nicholas, remind your child to outline one of the boxes on that page each day until Christmas. Discuss how each image relates to your celebration of Advent and Christmas.

Good News (Grades 2-3): This week the class learned how the prophet Isaiah and John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus. Ask

your child to tell you what a prophet does. Talk about how your family can prepare the way for Jesus by making good choices and doing what is right. Your child can tell you how he or she is committed to making peace.

Venture (Grades 4-6): Ask your youngster to share with the family how the prophet Isaiah described the "peaceable kingdom." Discuss the importance of Our Lady of Guadalupe for the people of the Americas, and invite your child to recount the story of her first appearance. Let your child lead the family in choosing things to do for the coming feast of Christmas. He or she can use the suggestions from the Week 2 Calendar List featured on Page 5.

Visions (Grades 7-9): The lesson this week started with an explanation of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We celebrated that feast day, and your youngster should be able to tell you what the Immaculate Conception refers to. This week your youngster's class also created a Jesse Tree. This activity can help your family focus on the season as a time to prepare for the birth of Jesus and for the rebirth of love in your hearts. Ask your son or daughter to explain the significance of the Jesse Tree to your family, and lead everyone in creating one for your home. Be sure to spend some time talking about John the Baptist's call for all people to have a change of heart as they prepare for the coming Savior.

Pray Together

To celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, add the Hail Mary prayer to your Advent wreath prayer this week. You may even want to place a statue or picture of Mary in the center of your wreath.



Bringing Home the Word +

Second Sunday of Advent (A)
December 8, 2019

Preparing Ourselves

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

John the Baptist was a prophet who fully embraced his mission in Israel. He was so good at delivering his message that some people thought he was the Messiah. He preached with authority, and people traveled from all over Judea to hear his words.

His mission was to prepare the way, but not just for any man. As any pope, king, or president announces his intentions in advance so preparations can be made, John was sent to announce the coming of the Son of God and to tell the people how to prepare.

Jesus came into the world when he

was born in Bethlehem and walked the earth. He will come again at the end of time. And—importantly—he comes to us whenever we invite him in and always in the sacraments and liturgy. Preparing for his arrival is not a matter of fixing roads, painting houses, or organizing a parade. Our king desires a transformed spirit: “Not by appearance shall he judge (Isaiah 11:3). John warns that we cannot hide behind the faith of another; each one of us needs to show the fruits of our own faith. Yet we need not fear, for he who comes has every intention of saving us. He appears as Lord and invites us to accept his kingdom. He is also a teacher who shows us the way to the Father. Above all he is a friend who forgives unconditionally and accepts our sincere yet feeble efforts.

This week, reflect on the life of John the Baptist, heed his words, and imitate him: cry out for repentance, cleanse others of their sins, and prepare the way to God. +

John warns that we cannot hide behind another’s faith; we need to show the fruits of our own faith.

A Word from Pope Francis

It is the mystery of Christ’s flesh: one doesn’t understand love for thy neighbor, one doesn’t understand love for thy brother if one doesn’t understand this mystery of Incarnation. I love my brother because he too is Christ, is Christlike, is the flesh of Christ.

—Visit to Pentecostal Church of Reconciliation, July 28, 2014



Sunday Readings

Isaiah 11:1–10

He shall judge the poor with justice, and decide fairly for the land’s afflicted.

Romans 15:4–9

Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Matthew 3:1–12

[John the Baptist said,] “Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How does John the Baptist’s call to repentance challenge me?
- Where do I need to ask for God’s mercy?

A Christian Perspective on Time

By Jim and Susan Vogt

Have you ever: ...texted a coworker during the family meal? ...tried to drive while putting on makeup? ...raced out of the house and then remembered you forgot to turn off the iron? These are symptoms of our hurried lives.

The Bible passage Susan recalls when

tempted to pack too much into too little time is Jesus' "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part" (Luke 10:41–42). Mary had chosen presence—to sit with Jesus and attend to him.

The irony is the Church calendar asks us to slow down during Advent—the very time that cultural demands press us to hurry up and crowd more into Christmastime. Advent should be calm and reflective, not hectic and stressful. Jesus makes it clear that attentiveness to the person next to us always trumps Martha's to-do list.

So how do we sort it all out when our lives are filled with the expectation to do more and do it faster? Let's look at time through the prisms of saving, wasting, and ignoring.

Saving Time

Saving time sounds virtuous, especially when it frees us from mundane chores



in order to spend quality time with our family. Some examples: multitasking allows us to fold laundry while watching TV, catch up on kids' news while driving them to school, listen to a podcast while exercising. Timesaving technology allows us to skip commercials when watching a recorded TV

program or shorten time-consuming chores by using home appliances.

These things are good when they free us to do more important tasks, especially those that focus on those around us. But doing tasks faster and more efficiently can be like a hamster running around a wheel. Sometimes we don't really get anywhere.

Wasting Time

Wasting time sounds inherently bad, but consider these ways that it can enhance your life:

Time for reflection, prayer, or savoring a sunset may seem unproductive unless you realize that spending time with God isn't a waste. These times keep us centered on what is important, calming our weary and stressed-out spirits.

Sabbath time. Sunday as a day of rest has become an American anomaly. Too often, Sunday is a catchup day, filled with shopping and household chores. At times, accomplishing these tasks reduces

stress. But a day of rest with focus on God and family refreshes our spirits, pulling us back into what's important.

Recreation. Yes, some people fritter away hours before the TV, at parties, or playing sports. Recreation, however, isn't only fun, but it's also a way to build marriage, parenting, and friendship bonds. Besides, it can double as networking and relationship time, which puts it in the category of multitasking.

Ignoring Time

Is ignoring time irresponsible? There are deadlines to meet, kids to feed, a dish to make for the potluck. But sometimes it's healthy to ignore time. Children often prompt us to ignore time when they interrupt us. Think of it as Jesus breaking into your life and saying, "Pay attention to me. I'm only here for a short time."

Which brings us back to Advent—the season of waiting. Sometimes it's good for the soul to wait—in line, for a birthday, for marriage, for Christmas. It's a pause that gives us a chance to take a deep breath and remember what's really important, to listen to Christ speaking in the silence. +



Lord, you have created me for goodness, love, compassion, and peace. Help me to make use of the gifts you have given me to make a difference where I am at this moment of my life.

—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 9–14

Monday, Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Gn 3:9–15, 20 / Eph 1:3–6, 11–12 / Lk 1:26–38


Tuesday, Advent Weekday: Is 40:1–11 / Mt 18:12–14

Wednesday, Advent Weekday: Is 40:25–31 / Mt 11:28–30

Thursday, Our Lady of Guadalupe: Zec 2:14–17 or Rv 11:19a, 12:1–6a, 10ab / Lk 1:26–38 or Lk 1:39–47

Friday, St. Lucy: Is 48:17–19 / Mt 11:16–19

Saturday, St. John of the Cross: Sir 48:1–4, 9–11 / Mt 17:9a, 10–13

Bringing Home
the Word 
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