



MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

Sunday, December 22, 2019
Fourth 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 O Come, O Come Emmanuel BB 38
 Mass Parts Mass of Christ the Savior
 Communion The Body Of Christ
 Recessional: Ready The Way BB 62

10:00 AM

Gathering: Come, Come Emmanuel
 Dismissal Rite: You Have Called Us BB 636
 Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 80)
Show us your kindness, O God. (2x)
 Preparation Child Of Our Dreams / Night of Silence
 Be Not Afraid BB 431
 Mass Parts Mass of Joy and Peace
 Communion Jesus, Come To Us BB 394
 Christ Be Our Light BB 587
 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/Plaiستow** 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!

COLLECTION AMOUNTS FOR
DECEMBER 15, 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 22, 2019	No Second Collection
December 25, 2019	Christmas
December 29, 2019	No Second Collection
January 1, 2020	Mary, Mother of God

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!

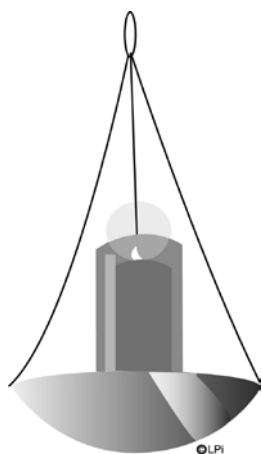
THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH

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.



The Sanctuary Candle in Holy Angels Church will burn this week in loving memory of
Martin & Florence Fogel and Frank Kelcourse
by Elaine Kelcourse

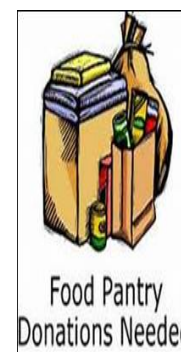
The Sanctuary Candle in Mary, Mother of the Church will burn this week in loving memory of
Carol Bettencourt
by Janice Bettencourt



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**.

HOSPITAL VISITATION

If you or someone you know is in the hospital and wants to receive a visit, please contact the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. 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.

WHILE AWAY THIS WINTER...

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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Sunday, December 22

11:00 AM Religious Ed – PreK to 8 *Plaistow*
11:00 AM RCIA *Plaistow*
6:00 PM Vespers *Newton*
6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Newton*

Monday, December 23

PARISH OFFICE CLOSURES AT 12:00 NOON

Tuesday, December 24

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

NO DAILY MASS IN PLAISTOW

Wednesday, December 25

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

HOLY ANGELS CHURCH CLOSED

NO DAILY MASS IN PLAISTOW

Thursday, December 26

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

NO DAILY MASS IN NEWTON

NO ADORATION IN NEWTON

Saturday, December 28

3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*

Sunday, December 29

11:00 AM RCIA *Plaistow*
6:00 PM Vespers *Newton*

✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

Saturday, December 21 ~ Vigil / Fourth Sunday of Advent

Is 7:10-14; Rom 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24

4:00 PM Joan Foster by Pat Zakiewicz
Plaistow

Sunday, December 22 ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent

Is 7:10-14; Rom 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24

8:00 AM Joseph A. Krafton (44th Anniversary)
by his family
Newton

10:00 AM In Thanksgiving to St. Michael the Archangel
Plaistow

Monday, December 23 ~ John of Kanty, Priest

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

8:00 AM People of the Parish
Newton

Tuesday, December 24 ~ Late Advent Weekday

2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Lk 1:67-79 (Day)

Is 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 (Vigil)

4:00 PM People of the Parish
Plaistow

6:30 PM People of the Parish
Newton

Wednesday, December 25 ~ Nativity of the Lord

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

9:00 AM People of the Parish
Newton

Thursday, December 26 ~ Stephen, the First Martyr

Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59; Mt 10:17-22

No Mass

Friday, December 27 ~ John, Apostle and Evangelist

1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:1a, 2-8

No Mass

Saturday, December 28 ~ The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

1 Jn 1:5—2:2; Mt 2:13-18 (Day)

Sir 3:2-6; 12-14; Col 3:12-21; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23 (Vigil)

4:00 PM Joan Foster by Pat and Janet Hurley
Plaistow

Sunday, December 29 ~ The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6; 12-14; Col 3:12-21; Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

8:00 AM People of the Parish
Newton

10:00 AM Don Nadeau by Bob and Sandy Nadeau
Plaistow

**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, January 15 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.**

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.

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.

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 ✂

ANNUAL CLOTHING DRIVE

Kimberly's 14th Annual Holiday Give Away!!!

It's that time again – to clean your closets and start again!!! We all have clothes taking up space in our homes while there are people on the streets who are cold. Because of this, I am holding my 14th Annual Clothing/Coat/Canned Food Drive at St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Plaistow, NH from **12:00 to 4:00 PM on January 4 & 5, 2020**. The 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). I request that all clothing be cleaned prior to donation. The clothing received will be donated to organizations such as Ruth's House, Emmaus House, and Catie's Closet. The 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 me personally at kimberly-andrade@comcast.net. Thank you so much for your generosity.

Merry Christmas and God bless you!

Kimberly (Andrade) Clenord

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

In observance of the Christmas and New Year's holidays, the Parish Office will **close at 12:00 Noon on Monday, December 23, 2019 and will remain closed until Monday, January 6, 2020**.

NO ADORATION

There will be NO Adoration in Newton or Plaistow during Christmas and New Year's weeks.

WINTER WEATHER CLOSINGS

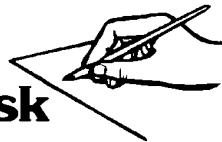
Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Office, Holy Angels Cemetery Office, Saint Luke Food Pantry and the Parish Liturgical schedule complies with the longstanding inclement weather policy of Saint Luke Religious Education Program and Holy Angels Pre-School-Kindergarten: **If the Timberlane and/or Sanborn 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 to travel to Church during winter storms.**



GIVING TREES

Thanks to all who took ornaments from the Giving Tree this year. You have helped to make the Christmas season brighter for children of the community and for many people who are struggling to make ends meet. Your generosity is truly appreciated!

From the Pastor's Desk



HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSING

Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is closed 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.

**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

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Be with us

Emmanuel,
soon we will celebrate your birth,
the day God came crying and laughing,
a child in our midst.

On this day we celebrate that you are with us,
you have always been with us,
and you want all people to be with you.
Help us entrust our lives to you, to belong
to you alone.

Be with us as we answer your call to be
humble and holy.

Keep us as your brothers and sisters,
as children of your Father,
no matter how often we step away from you.
Stay always by our side
so that we will be with you forever in
your kingdom.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, December 22, 2019

Fulfillment



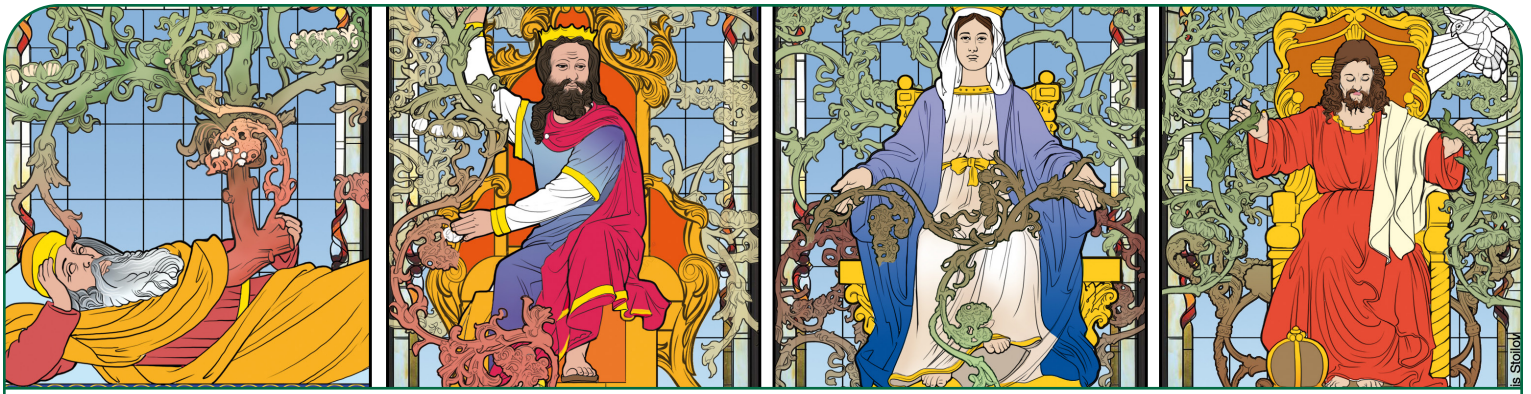
Today's Readings: Isaiah 7:10–14; Psalm 24:1–2, 3–4, 5–6 (7c, 10b); Romans 1:1–7; Matthew 1:18–24. When King Ahaz and the people of southern Israel were under attack, the king sought help from a foreign power. The prophet Isaiah told him to trust in God instead. Isaiah even offered proof of God's protection, but the king refused it. Ahaz probably suspected that if he trusted in God, his life would change in a way he would not like.

Like King Ahaz, Joseph found himself in what looked like an impossible situation. Even if he discreetly divorced Mary, everyone would find out why. Unlike King Ahaz, however, when Joseph is given the chance to entrust himself to God's plan, he takes it. He bravely brings his betrothed into his home. By doing so, Joseph fulfills two prophecies.

He receives the sign promised to an ancient king, and he incorporates the unborn child of the virgin into his family line, the line of King David.

Although Ahaz failed to trust in his Lord, God vowed to remain with his people. God's enduring presence takes a startling turn in the house of Joseph, for the child is more than a son of David; he is also, as St. Paul writes, "Son of God in power." The child is Emmanuel, God living in the midst of his people as one of his people.

Yet this child belongs not only to Jews, but to everyone. And everyone belongs to him. In Jesus, God fulfills his plan of salvation. In Jesus, God calls us to entrust ourselves to him, to become holy, and to belong to him forever.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 23 Elijah Returns

Our Old Testament ends with the prophecy that Elijah will return to prepare people for God's arrival. It would be several centuries, however, before someone would again speak for God. When John the Baptist began his prophetic ministry, people believed that God was at last speaking to them. The unusual elements of John's birth point to the new era that is about to begin. Find or draw an image of John the Baptist and use it to reflect on the ways people of his era might have reacted to him. *Today's Readings: Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Psalm 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14; Luke 1:57-66.*

Tuesday, December 24 Peace

King David united Israel, brought the nation peace, and upheld God's covenant. God's promise that a descendant of David would reign forever is part of God's promise to bring peace to the world. By calling Jesus the "son of David," we acknowledge that Jesus is the "daybreak from on high" who will "guide our feet into the path of peace." Pray for all the nations of the world, especially those that are in the deadly grip of violence. *Today's Readings: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Psalm 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29; Luke 1:67-79.*

Wednesday, December 25 God's Goodness

When God created the world, he saw that it was good. Sin plunged the world back into darkness, but God did not give up on his creation. Instead, he prepared to bring light to the world once again. Today we celebrate God's advent in our world. We celebrate his affirmation of the goodness of creation and his promise that "all the ends of the earth will behold the salvation of our God." Look for the goodness in each moment of this day. Thank God for the goodness that surrounds and fills you. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18.*

Thursday, December 26 St. Stephen, the First of Many

The light has come into the world, but not everyone wants to hear about it. Jesus warned his followers that they would face persecution. Stephen was the first to face persecution: he was brutally killed for proclaiming the Gospel. Thousands have given their lives since then. Their courage shows the unwavering light and truth of the Incarnation. Place the names or images of Christian martyrs you admire by your nativity set. *Today's Readings: Acts of the Apostles 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Psalm 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17; Matthew 10:17-22.*

Friday, December 27 St. John, Evangelist and Apostle

Although St. John does not include stories about Jesus' birth in his Gospel, he emphasizes that Jesus is God's Son in the flesh. Those who believe that Jesus is the fullest and most perfect revelation of God enter into communion with his Father. Through this fellowship with God, all who believe will enter eternal life. St. John longed for people to believe that Jesus was truly God-in-the-flesh, and he rejoiced when they did. Celebrate the Incarnation by praying the Angelus today. *Today's Readings: 1 John 1:1-4; Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; John 20:1a and 2-8.*

Saturday, December 28 The Holy Innocents

The joyful, uplifting stories surrounding the birth of Jesus come to us mostly from the Gospel according to Luke. St. Matthew's stories foreshadow Jesus' passion and death. We're reminded of the threat that looms over Jesus as we hear how King Herod goes to horrific lengths to eliminate a potential rival. Not only did King Herod walk in darkness, he even tried to destroy the light itself. Confess the ways you still walk in darkness, and ask God to forgive you and bring you back into the light of Christ. *Today's Readings: 1 John 1:5-2:2; Psalm 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8; Matthew 2:13-18.*





A reflection for the Fourth Sunday in Advent Year A

Research suggests that newborn infants dream almost constantly during their long hours of slumber. As we get older, the dream time diminishes to about two hours for every eight hours of adult sleep. Adult dreams last from 5 to 20 minutes a piece. Researchers also tell us that

dreams are a way for us to process our unconscious, revealing all kinds of truth to ourselves in symbol language.

Our sacred Scriptures are full of dreams. Jacob and Joseph dream. The great Prophets dream. Daniel and so many others are given the divine wisdom to interpret dreams. Ancient people thought of dreams as a way that God communicates with his people.

We hear on this last Sunday of Advent the story of one of four dreams Joseph has while sleeping. The dream Joseph experiences tells him of his and his pregnant betrothed one, Mary. The child she carries is not his; the child is someone quite extraordinary. God's plan is being worked out, the dream of prophets and kings is being worked out in the life of these little people.

And Joseph is left with a choice – his plan was to send Mary away quietly – because to be found pregnant with another's child after being betrothed to a man meant being stoned to death under the law. Joseph's plan of action was all worked out. Yet his dream changes everything. God's plan was suddenly in charge, and Joseph's plans go the way of all things.

On this last Sunday of Advent, in the shadow of the brightness of the coming of the Savior, what is God's dream for you? We all have plans, goals, and directions. We trick ourselves into thinking that we are completely in charge.

Yet God dreams a dream for each of us. God speaks to us in our dreams, in the people who gather around us as family and friends, in the situation of our lives. In all truth, we are really the dream children of a God who dreams a special plan for each of us.

You and I must listen, however, lest so much noise and distraction block out God's dream for us. It is so easy to get lost, to misinterpret the signs, to listen to the wrong voice.

God is with us. God dreams a wonderful, life-giving, full-of-promise dream for each of us. All God asks is that we open our eyes, look around, and in our own little lives, find his presence, and challenge, and blessing.

✠ AROUND THE DIOCESE ✠



MARRIAGE IN THE CHURCH Did you know that ALL Catholics are required to be married in the Church as a condition of the validity of their marriage?

Any Catholic married in a civil ceremony (JP) or in any religious ceremony other than a Catholic one (unless specifically excepted by the Bishop) is not living out the Sacrament of Marriage in its fullness according to the teaching of the Church. Contact Father Albert at the parish office for more information.



STAY INFORMED WITH FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP NEWS

The Diocese of Manchester wants to inform Catholics about important public policy matters facing our elected officials. Faithful Citizenship News provides briefs on legislation as well as information about Catholic social teaching on some of today's pressing issues. To read the current issue of Faithful Citizenship News and to subscribe, visit www.catholicnh.org/fcnews.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES COUNSELING

New Hampshire Catholic Charities provides individual, marital, family, and couples' counseling, helping people with a variety of personal difficulties, including: Depression, Stress, Family Conflicts, Relationship Problems, Anxiety, Substance Abuse, Life Adjustment Issues, Grief and Loss. Counseling also helps individuals and families strengthen communication skills in order to build and sustain healthy relationships and live more satisfying lives. A sliding scale fee is offered. Contact Arlene Dody, LCMHC in Salem at 603-893-1971 for more information.

HOW TO MAKE A REPORT OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Child sexual abuse is a crime in the State of New Hampshire and the Church. New Hampshire law requires that anyone who has reason to suspect that a child is being or has been abused or neglected must make a report to the Division for Children, Youth & Families ("DCYF") of the State of New Hampshire, 1-800-894-5533. Any person who suspects or alleges child abuse on the part of a priest, deacon, employee, or volunteer of a parish, school, or institution of the diocese of Manchester is also encouraged to make a report to the Office for Ministerial Conduct, 603-669-3100. Church personnel – clergy, paid employees, and volunteers – have additional reporting requirements if they believe that Church personnel have sexually abused a child. You can learn more about these reporting requirements on the diocesan website at www.catholicnh.org or by speaking with our Parish Safe Environment Coordinator, Cathy Smith at 382-8324.

The Pregnancy Care Center

The Pregnancy Care Center is a non-profit organization that offers its confidential services at no cost to its clients. We are committed to promoting the culture of life by assisting expectant parents in the birth and subsequent development of their child during his or her first year of life. We are also committed to helping young people embrace the virtues of chastity and continence as a sign of their Christian dignity.

Main Center

496 Main St., Haverhill, MA (978-373-5700)

www.pccnortheast.org

Helpline: 866-254-4440



MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

Don't you and your spouse deserve a beautiful, romantic weekend away together? Get away from all those worldly anxieties and take time to just focus on each other by making a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. Deepen your communication, strengthen your relationship, rekindle your romance, and renew your sacrament by attending the next Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend in New England. For more information, call Ralph & Jane Becker at 1-800-710-9963 or visit www.wwme.org.

NH COUPLE ENRICHMENT CIRCLE

Have you attended a Marriage Encounter Weekend? If your answer is yes, you are invited to participate in the NH Couple Enrichment Circle to continue to strengthen your marriage relationship. For more information, contact David and Karen Demers at 617-480-9989 or ddemers@aviconpartners.com.

RETRouvaille...A Lifeline

Rediscover a loving marriage with a Retrouvaille weekend. If your marriage is tearing the two of you apart, if there is little or no meaningful communication, if you are considering separation or divorce, we believe Retrouvaille can help you. For more information, call 1-800-470-2230 or visit www.HelpOurMarriage.com.



SUPPORT FOR DIVORCED AND SEPARATED

Divorce and separation can be painful experiences. Support groups are available to those who are seeking healing, comfort, and empowerment. Visit www.catholicnh.org/support for a listing of groups.



**SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH
LITURGICAL CALENDAR ADVENT-CHRISTMAS, 2019 - 20**

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT -

**Christmas Liturgy schedule signups for all ministers
Giving Tree tags available - all gifts due December 15**

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

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE
(A Holy Day of Obligation)

Tuesday, December 24	VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD 4:00 PM Liturgy (Plaistow) 6:30 PM Liturgy (Newton)
Wednesday, December 25	SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD 9:00 am Liturgy (Newton)

Sunday, December 1 11:30 am Family Advent Activity (Plaistow)
4:00 PM Reconciliation Service - Saint Michael, Exeter
6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton)
6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)

Sunday, December 8 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton)
6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)

Monday, December 9 Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*transferred - NOT a Holy Day of Obligation*) LITURGY: 8:00 AM - Newton

Sunday, December 15 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton)
6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)

Giving Tree gifts due today!

Monday, December 16 **LAST DAY TO RETURN GIVING TREE GIFTS AT PARISH OFFICE**

Sunday, December 22 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton)
6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)

Tuesday, December 24 No 8 am Liturgy in Plaistow

Thursday, December 26 NO 8:00 am Liturgy or Adoration at Newton

Saturday, December 28 3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Plaistow)
4:00 PM Vigil Liturgy, Feast of the Holy Family (Plaistow)

Sunday, December 29 8:00 am Liturgy, Feast of the Holy Family (Newton)
10:00 am Liturgy, Feast of the Holy Family (Plaistow)
6:00 PM Christmas Evening Prayer, Newton

Tuesday, December 31 No 8 am Liturgy at Plaistow
4:00 PM Vigil Liturgy, SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD
OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS (*A Holy Day of Obligation*) (Plaistow)

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

Thursday, January 2 NO 8:00 am Liturgy or Adoration at Newton

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

Sunday, January 5 8:00 am Liturgy, THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (Newton)
10:00 am Liturgy, THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (Plaistow)
6:00 PM Christmas Evening Prayer (Newton)

Saturday, January 11 3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Plaistow)
4:00 PM Vigil - BAPTISM OF THE LORD (Plaistow)

Sunday, January 12 8:00 am Liturgy, BAPTISM OF THE LORD (Newton)
10:00 am Liturgy, BAPTISM OF THE LORD (Plaistow)
6:00 PM Christmas Evening Prayer (Newton)

**PARISH OFFICES CLOSED: DEC. 23 (NOON), 24-27, 30 (NOON), 31
AND JAN. 1-3**

The Gospel at Home

This Week's Gospel: Matthew 1:18-24

Joseph faces a dilemma in this Sunday's Gospel. He is engaged to Mary, but she is pregnant and Joseph is not the father. By legal right, Joseph could accuse Mary of adultery and subject her to the punishment of death by stoning. Instead, Joseph takes her and Baby Jesus to live with him as his wife and adopted son. They form a family circle in which Mary and Joseph raise and nurture Jesus. Matthew points Jesus out as Emmanuel, meaning, "God-with-us," which fulfills Isaiah's ancient description of the Messiah.

Exploring the Gospel Message

Seeds (Preschool): This week the class learned that an angel spoke to Joseph about Mary and Jesus. The class also talked about waiting for Jesus. Talk with your child about how the wait is almost over. The class also made and decorated paper Christmas trees. Display your child's tree in a prominent place in the home. Attach the final flamed candle to your child's little Advent wreath and discuss all of the ways your family has prepared for Christmas during Advent.

Promise (Grades K-1): Christmas is just days away, and your child will be filled with anticipation. Waiting gets harder and harder as Christmas nears. Ask your child to share the stories of Joseph and Mary with the angels. Be sure to ask why Joseph and Mary gave Jesus his name. You can also tell your child about his or her name. Talk as a family about all the ways you each have said yes to God's will like Mary and Joseph did. Pray for God's help to continue saying yes to him in your lives.

Good News (Grades 2-3): This week your child's class learned about Joseph's fears and excitement leading up to the birth of Jesus. Ask your child to share with the family the Gospel

story of Joseph and the angel. Your child also made a "Christmas Prayers Centerpiece." Display this on your kitchen table to remind you to pray together each day leading up to Christmas day.

Venture (Grades 4-6): Your youngster learned about some of the symbols of the Christmas season. Ask him or her to tell the family about these symbols. One symbol children strongly associate with Christmas is gifts. Ask your child to tell your family the story of Amy and Darcy's bus ride and discuss how the girls must have felt when Darcy gave Amy her book. Finally, spend some time talking about Saint Joseph—the foster father of Jesus. What do the Gospels say about him? Be sure to include a simple prayer to Saint Joseph, such as: "Dear Saint Joseph, help us follow in the footsteps of Jesus."

Visions (Grades 7-9): The theme of this week's lesson was dreaming. The word dream often is a symbol for what people hope for the future. Ask your child to share with you the story of Martin the Shoemaker and how Martin met Jesus. These days before Christmas are a good time to talk about your hopes and dreams for your family, your Church, your community, and for the world. The class also celebrated *Las Posadas*, a traditional Spanish Advent event. Ask your child to share what they learned about *Las Posadas*, and lead your family through the script on page 5.

Pray Together

When your conversation is over, ask for Mary and Joseph to pray for Jesus and the Holy Spirit to watch over your family as you try to follow the example set by the Holy Family. Finish by praying an Our Father and a Hail Mary together.



Bringing Home the Word +

Fourth Sunday of Advent (A)
December 22, 2019

Focusing on God

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

A painting by Domenico Ghirlandaio, *The Nativity*, shows the figures set in a golden, eternal background. Details are missing: no landscape, cave, stable, or cattle. Ghirlandaio, Michelangelo's teacher, focuses on the people. The Gospel also refrains from external details and focuses only on the main actors: Mary and Joseph and what is going on in their hearts and minds.

Joseph has to decide how to handle surprising news: His wife is with child and he isn't the father. She claims it was by divine intervention. He had every intention of protecting her while at the same time respecting the law.

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 7:10–14

The Lord himself will give you a sign; the young woman, pregnant and about to bear a son, shall name him Emmanuel.

Romans 1:1–7

Through him we have received the grace of apostleship.

Matthew 1:18–24

"Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her."

Luckily his open and honest heart hears indications from an angel. He is to do the unthinkable—take her to himself—because the unimaginable has happened: "It is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived" (Matthew 1:20).

The artist paints Joseph sleeping peacefully because he is the just man who silences his troubled heart in order to hear God's voice. He, like Mary, reflects on things profoundly and grapples with God's will and the amazing vocation placed before him. His struggle in prayer leads him to have faith and trust. Following God's plan will mean pilgrimage, thus the walking stick, water jug, and knapsack.

We are all tempted to flee from the challenges of discipleship. Yet today Joseph shows us how to "man up." He assumes his role as a servant leader, teacher, and example. His dozing is not one of laziness but of silent self-control that leads to attentiveness and obedience to God's voice. +

*We are all tempted to flee
from the challenges
of discipleship.*

*Yet today Joseph shows us
how to "man up."*

A Word from Pope Francis

We need, then, to open our hearts to the true light, Jesus Christ. He is the light that can illumine life and turn our darkness into light; the light of goodness that conquers evil; the light of the love that overcomes hatred; the light of the life that triumphs over death.

—Address to Vatican Curia,
December 21, 2018



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Am I listening for Jesus' call in everyday life experiences?
- How do I face the challenges of following Jesus?

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 slogging 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 and 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. +

PRAYER

*Lord, you are Emmanuel,
"God with us." Open the eyes and
ears of my heart that I may see
your presence in every person
I meet, and hear your voice
in the cry of the poor.*

—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 23–28

Monday, Advent Weekday:
Mal 3:1–4, 23–24 / Lk 1:57–66


Tuesday, Advent Weekday:
Sir 35:1–12 / Mk 10:28–31

Wednesday, Christmas: Is 52:7–10 /
Heb 1:1–6 / Jn 1:1–18 or Jn 1:1–5, 9–14

Thursday, St. Stephen:
Acts 6:8–10; 7:54–59 / Mt 10:17–22

Friday, St. John: 1 Jn 1:1–4 /
Jn 20:1a and 2–8

Saturday, The Holy Innocents:
1 Jn 1:5–2:2 / Mt 2:13–18

Bringing Home
the Word 
December 22, 2019

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