

**KIMBERLY'S 15TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY  
GIVE AWAY!!!**

Although 2020 has been unique in so many ways it is important to still acknowledge that charity is necessary. This year many of my typical donation sites are unable to accept donations due to the pandemic. I will still be collecting clothing on **January 2 and 3** at Holy Angels Church, but this year **only from 12:00 to 2:00 PM** each day. I will be in the parking lot, strictly accepting children's clothing for Catie's Closet, through contactless delivery. For all other donations, Ruth's House is still accepting goods, including gently used clothing and housing items on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM and on Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM (111 Lafayette Square, Haverhill, MA).

If you have larger items, including furniture, that Ruth's House may not be able to accept you can make an appointment to deliver to: The Wish Project (866) 947-4360, 166 Middlesex St, North Chelmsford, MA.

For any and all donations that you would like to be added to "Kimberly's Holiday Give Away's" Annual Total, please notify me at: [kimberly-andrade@comcast.net](mailto:kimberly-andrade@comcast.net). Thank you so much for your continued support throughout the years. I look forward to next year, hoping that things may be closer to normal. May God continue to bless you all, and I wish you and your families a safe and healthy holiday season.

Kimberly Clenord

**Worldwide Marriage Encounter has gone "Virtual"!**

To support married couples during this time of social distancing, Worldwide Marriage Encounter is sponsoring a virtual marriage experience called **Restore – Rekindle – Renew**. This Enrichment Experience meets via Zoom. For more information or to apply, call John and Toni Torio at 718-344-3700 or visit them at <https://www.mema.org/>.



Out of respect for the Lord and in consideration of fellow parishioners, please remember to silence or turn off your cell phones during Mass. Thank you!

**✠ PARISH TITHING ✠**

**Our Parish needs to take in \$9700.00 each week in order to make ends meet.** This amount represents an adjusted budget offertory of \$8500.00 per week plus the combination of budgeted Property and Fuel second collections (\$4800.00 per month divided into 4 weeks or \$1200.00 weekly). 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. Consider signing up for electronic giving (see below). Especially in these trying times, your Parish depends on your responsible stewardship and support!

**December 6, 2020**

<b>Offertory</b>	<b>\$8,515.33</b>
<b>Property Mgmt</b>	<b>\$ 922.30</b>



Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish uses **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. 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 13	Fuel
December 20	Retired Religious Fund
December 25	Christmas & Needs of Parish
December 27	No Second Collection
January 1	Mary, Mother of God
January 3	Property Management

**Suggested Weekly Contribution  
Based on Income**

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

**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 ✠

## 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, 2020 until Spring 2021.** 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 Tree gifts are due back this weekend!**

If you forgot to bring your gift **(with gift tag attached)**, kindly drop it off at the Parish Office on **Monday, December 14.**

Thank you to all who took tags to help those in need!

### 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 will be available following Evening Prayer.



### STOVE TO A GOOD HOME

Available: **ESA gas cast iron stove heater unit**, complete with remote and gas line. Currently in the garage at the house in Newton. Contact Father Albert for information.

### COVID-19 IS STILL AROUND!

The obligation to attend Sunday Liturgy remains suspended in the Diocese of Manchester for all who are health compromised. No person who has been ill or exposed to someone who is ill should be attending Liturgy.

Anyone who has had recent symptoms of fever, any respiratory symptoms (runny nose, nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath), chills, severe fatigue or changes in sense of smell or taste may have been exposed to COVID-19. Testing is encouraged. Please refrain from attending any liturgical service.

#### Liturgy online or on TV...

**Boston Catholic Television** [catholictv.org](http://catholictv.org)

Sunday Mass from Notre Dame

[catholictv.org/masses/notre-dame-mass](http://catholictv.org/masses/notre-dame-mass)

Salt & Light TV

[saltandlighttv.org](http://saltandlighttv.org)

Eternal Word Television

[ewtn.com](http://ewtn.com)



**FEED THE HUNGRY**

### **ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST FOOD PANTRY**

Thank you for your generosity towards the hungry of our area!

**Non-perishable food or personal 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. **Call the Pantry at 819-4949 for more information.**

### **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 13 **GIVING TREE GIFTS DUE BACK**

6:00 PM Vespers *Newton*  
6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Newton*

#### Tuesday, December 15

6:00 PM Finance Council Meeting *Plaistow*

Wednesday, December 16  
Holy Angels Church Plaistow open for  
private prayer all day

#### Thursday, December 17

8:30 AM – 8:30 PM Eucharistic Adoration *Newton*

#### Saturday, December 19

3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*

#### Sunday, December 20

6:00 PM Vespers *Newton*  
6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Newton*

Because of COVID restrictions, many Parish events and groups are currently cancelled. We will begin more Parish programs, with all precautions, as restrictions ease.



We're looking for new members! Have you ever wondered what the St. Vincent de Paul Society is all about? Our meetings are held on the **3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 7 PM of each month**. New members are always welcome. We look forward to meeting you and answering

any questions you may have. Please contact SVdP Secretary, Jim Edwards, at (603) 642-5236 or [jimmy69180@hotmail.com](mailto:jimmy69180@hotmail.com) to find out if our meeting is live at the church hall or virtual on ZOOM.) If you seek assistance or need information about the Society, call (603) 382-8324, ext.315. Visit us on our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pg/SVDPSL>

### 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.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). For questions, please call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. Be sure to choose:

**St Luke the Evangelist Parish, Plaistow.**

### ❖ MASS INTENTIONS ❖

#### Saturday, December 12 ~ Vigil / Third Sunday of Advent *Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28 (Vigil)*

4:00 PM Gertrude & Frank DeCrescenzo  
by Pat Zakiewicz  
*Plaistow*

#### Sunday, December 13 ~ Third Sunday of Advent *Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28*

8:00 AM Peter Teague by Grace Bukowski  
*Newton*  
10:00 AM Don Nadeau by Bob and Sandy Nadeau  
*Plaistow*

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

*Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a; Mt 21:23-27*  
8:00 AM People of the Parish  
*Newton*

#### Tuesday, December 15 ~ Advent Weekday *Zep 3:1-2, 9-13; Mt 21:28-32*

8:00 AM James and Trudy Pratt by their family  
*Plaistow*

#### Wednesday, December 16 ~ Advent Weekday *Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25; Lk 7:18b-23*

6:30 PM Bill Knowles by his wife, Marjorie Knowles  
*Plaistow*

#### Thursday, December 17 ~ Late Advent Weekday *Gn 49:2, 8-10; Mt 1:1-17*

8:00 AM People of the Parish  
*Newton*

#### Friday, December 18 ~ Late Advent Weekday *Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-25*

*No Mass*

#### Saturday, December 19 ~ Late Advent Weekday *Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Lk 1:5-25 (Day)*

*2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38 (Vigil)*  
4:00 PM Roland and Mary Guilmette by the Matson family  
*Plaistow*

#### Sunday, December 20 ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent *2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Rom 16:25-27; Lk 1:26-38*

8:00 AM Thomas Antczak by the Burge family  
*Newton*  
10:00 AM Mark Hammond by Janice Bettencourt  
*Plaistow*

### 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](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).



## ✠ FAITH FORMATION & PARISH INFORMATION ✠

### DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER FAMILY AND FAITH IN THE HOME WEBINAR SERIES

Please join Mike and Alicia Hernon of the Messy Family Project in a three-part, interactive webinar series, "Family & Faith in the Home", sponsored by the Diocese of Manchester. Each session will focus on introducing basic concepts of fostering strong marriage and family life. For more information about the webinar series **beginning January 13, 2021**, please [download this flyer](#). To register, visit <https://messyfamily.eventbrite.com>.



### 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](mailto:CreightonFertility@yahoo.com).



St. Luke the Evangelist is now on Facebook! Go to [www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/](http://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.



The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. Be a good agent of welcome and evangelization! If you or someone you know is interested in inquiring about becoming a member of the Roman Catholic Church, contact Cathy Smith in the Parish Office.

### 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 call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at

[csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).

### 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](mailto: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	603-382-8324
Parish Prayer Line	603-382-8324 x 314
St. Vincent de Paul Society	603-382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry	603-819-4949
Preschool	603-382-9783
Presentation of Mary Convent	603-382-2744

Fr. Albert Tremblay	<a href="mailto:fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net">fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Cathy Smith	<a href="mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net">csmith@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Joyce Szapa	<a href="mailto:jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net">jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Jackie Tremblay	<a href="mailto:jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net">jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net</a>
Val Barczak	<a href="mailto:mvmbarczak@comcast.net">mvmbarczak@comcast.net</a>
Parish Council	<a href="mailto:parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net">parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net</a>

✠ Parish News ~ Youth News ~ Around The Diocese ✠

**KNIGHTS of COLUMBUS  
ST. JUDE COUNCIL #6617**



Recently, the Knights of Columbus were privileged to sponsor a Red Cross Blood Drive. With a need that is constant throughout the year, we would like to thank all those who came and generously gave the gift of life. Over 32 pints of blood were collected. Watch for our next Blood Drive in March 2021.



Come join the Knights of Columbus **every Thursday at 7:00 PM** at Mary Mother Church in Newton to pray the rosary. Let us pray for an end to the pandemic, the right for life, and all of our personal intentions before our Lady.

**2020 CHRISTMAS FAIR BREAKDOWN**

Auction	\$ 6,594.00
Raffle Sales via Office	\$ 3,637.00
Bidding Owl Raffle Sales	\$ 1,352.00
Jewelry Sale	\$ 900.00
Vendor Fees	\$ 600.00
Donations	\$ 365.00
Anonymous Gift	<u>\$ 5,000.00</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$18,448.00</b>
Cash Raffle Prizes	<u>-\$ 1,440.40</u>
	\$17,007.60
5% Bidding Owl Fee	<u>-\$ 329.70</u>
<b>Fair Profit 2020</b>	<b>\$16,677.90</b>

The Sanctuary Candle in  
Holy Angels Church  
will burn this week  
in loving memory of  
**Mark Hammond**  
by Walter and Joanne Lord



**FOR OUR RECORDS**

We need your help to keep our records current. If there are any births, deaths, marriages, moves, or address changes in your family, please notify the Parish Office at 603-382-8324 or by email at [jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net). If you are new to our parish, registration forms are available at the entrances of both churches. You can also find a registration form on our website at <http://stlukenh.org>.

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

A Men's AA Step Meeting is being held on Sunday mornings from 7:00 to 8:00 AM at the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish Hall (Holy Angels). Masks are required. Bring your own coffee. For more information, call Joe at 617-921-9899.

**EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINES**

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

Deadline for the December 27 bulletin is **Monday, December 14 at 12:00 Noon**

Deadline for the January 3 bulletin is **Monday, December 14 at 12:00 Noon.**

**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.

**VIGIL LIGHT**

The Vigil Light in front of the Blessed Mother Icon in Newton may be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00.

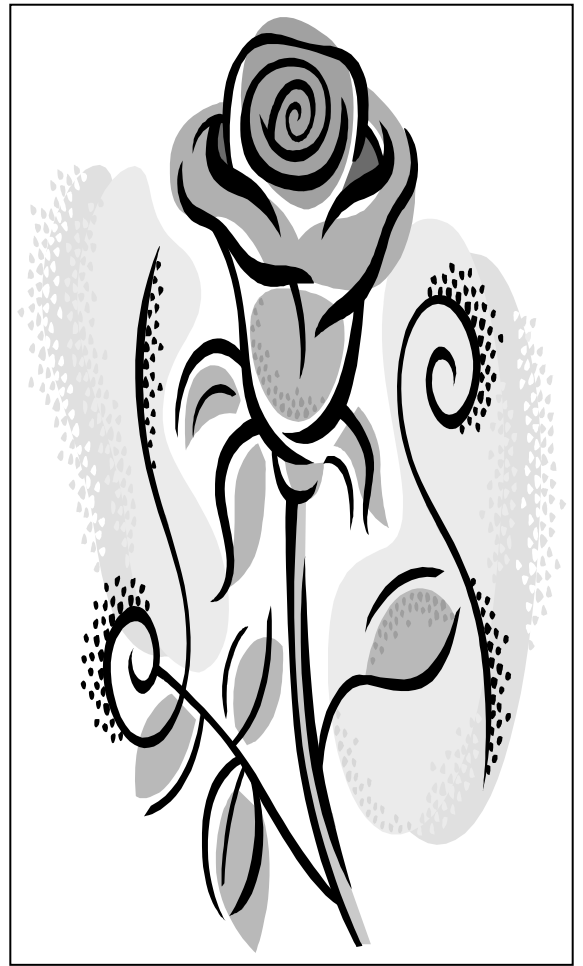
**TAI CHI RETURNS!**

The Parish is once again offering Tai Chi classes on **Thursdays at 3:00 PM and at 7:00 PM**. A minimum of three (3) students per class will be needed to hold the class. Social distancing and all COVID-19 protocols, including masks, are required. Contact the Parish Office to register. 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.

## 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 11<sup>th</sup> 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.



**Besides sharing Christmas joy through the Giving Tree, our Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Food Pantry provides Christmas Dinners to needy families in our area. The cost of purchasing items for the baskets typically runs to well over \$2000.00, and with hard times facing so many, we anticipate the need to be even greater than previous years.**

**If you would like to contribute towards the cost of CHRISTMAS DINNER BASKETS, please place your contribution in an envelope marked *"Christmas dinner baskets,"* and place it in the offering basket. You may also visit the Parish Office or Food Pantry and make a contribution in person.**

***Thank you for your support of the poor among us.***

# 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 made a special Christmas card. Ask your child to show it to the family. Who is he or she giving it to? 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. Your child played a game matching ornaments. Maybe talk about the meaning behind some of your family's Christmas ornaments and decorations.

**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. Consider displaying your child's "Getting-Ready Mobile" from class in a prominent place at home.

**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. Prepare to add the O Antiphons to your daily prayer starting December 17.

**Visions (Grades 7-9):** 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."





**SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH**  
**LITURGICAL CALENDAR      ADVENT-CHRISTMAS, 2020-21**

**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT -**

Christmas Liturgy schedule signups for all ministers  
 Giving Tree tags available - all gifts due December 13

COVID PROCEDURES  
 6' SOCIAL DISTANCING & MASKS REQUIRED  
 CAPACITY LIMIT AT PLAISTOW CHURCH IS 100  
 CAPACITY LIMIT AT NEWTON CHURCH IS 75

Sunday, November 29	Regular weekend schedule 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton) 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)
Sunday, December 6	Regular weekend schedule 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton) 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">                 XMAS MASS SIGN UPS TODAY             </div>	
Monday, December 7	6:30 PM Vigil Holy Day Liturgy (Plaistow) Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the BVM
Tuesday, December 8	Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the BVM Holy Day Liturgy 8:00 AM (Newton)
Sunday, December 13	Regular weekend schedule 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton) 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">                 Giving Tree gifts due today!             </div>	
Monday, December 14	LAST DAY TO RETURN GIVING TREE GIFTS AT PARISH OFFICE
Sunday, December 20	Regular weekend schedule 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton) 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)
Thursday, December 24	No 8 am Liturgy or Adoration in Newton

**PARISH OFFICES CLOSED: DEC. 23 (NOON), 24-27, 30 (NOON), 31  
 AND JAN. 1. PARISH OFFICE RESUMES HOURS AS OF JAN 4**

**CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE**  
*(A Holy Day of Obligation)*

**ALL LITURGIES ARE BY RESERVATION ONLY.**

Thursday, December 24	<b>VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD</b> 4:00 PM Liturgy (Plaistow) 6:30 PM Liturgy (Newton)
Friday, December 25	<b>SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD</b> 8:00 am Liturgy (Newton) 10:00 am Liturgy (Plaistow)
Saturday, December 26	3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Plaistow) 4:00 PM Vigil Liturgy, Feast of the Holy Family (Plaistow)
Sunday, December 27	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
Thursday, December 31	No 8 am Liturgy or Adoration at Newton 4:00 PM Vigil Liturgy, SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS <i>(A Holy Day of Obligation)</i> (Plaistow)
Wednesday, January 1	9:00 am Liturgy SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS <i>(A Holy Day of Obligation)</i> (Newton)
Saturday, January 2	3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Plaistow) 4:00 PM Vigil - THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD (Plaistow)
Sunday, January 3	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 9	3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Plaistow) 4:00 PM Vigil - BAPTISM OF THE LORD (Plaistow)
Sunday, January 10	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)



"We don't know what the future holds, but it's all God's work," says Sister Theresa McGrath (center), 86, a member of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, for nearly 70 years.

# Retirement Fund for Religious

**Please give to those who have given a lifetime.**

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**retiredreligious.org**

Above, from left: Sister Alice Garcia, SSCJ, 91; Brother Martin Gonzales, OCSO, 95; Sister Theresa McGrath, CCVI, 86; Sister Anne Cecile Muldoon, OSU, 93; Abbot Emeritus Peter Eberle, OSB, 79.

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# Bringing Home the Word +

Third Sunday of Advent (B)

December 13, 2020

## John's Joyful Preaching

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

**W**hy go into the desert and cry out? The voice in the desert is lonesome, heard only by those who go there to listen. Let's leave our routines, go into the spiritual deserts of our hearts, and listen today.

The words of preparation John preaches are joyful. Why? First, to be told you are on the wrong path is good news. Have you ever followed your GPS to the wrong place because of an address typo? "It would have been nice to know this before I traveled across town to the wrong place," you thought.

Second, it is joyful to be told what makes your beloved happy, because you then know what will please him or her.

Good news! John's preaching points us to our destination in Jesus and to what makes him happy. The rose vestments worn by our priests today symbolize that joy. Notice in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel fresco titled *Prophet Isaiah*, the prophet is wearing that color, too.

Another interesting detail is that Isaiah is holding his finger in the book while looking back at a young cherub, who in turn points to his neighbor. Isaiah's finger is in the Gospels, where he is the most quoted prophet of the Old Testament. Jesus reads from the prophet Isaiah, and John the Baptist quotes Isaiah's prophesy about "the voice crying out in the desert."

Perhaps the cherub behind Isaiah is John the Baptist. And perhaps the barely visible baby to whom the little John the Baptist is pointing represents Christ, the reason for our joy. +

## Sunday Readings

**Isaiah 61:1–2a, 10–11**

I will rejoice heartily in the LORD,  
my being exults in my God.

**1 Thessalonians 5:16–24**

Rejoice always.  
Pray without ceasing.

**John 1:6–8, 19–28**

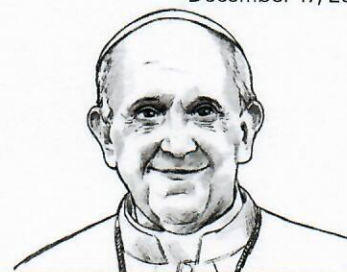
[John the Baptist said,] "I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Make straight the way of the Lord.'"

*Let's leave our routines,  
go into the spiritual  
deserts of our hearts,  
and listen today.*

## A Word from Pope Francis

Anxieties, difficulties, and sufferings permeate our lives, and so many times the reality around us seems to be inhospitable and arid, like the desert....But the words of [John] the Baptist reveal that our joy rests on the certainty that this desert is inhabited: "Among you there is one whom you do not know."

—Angelus, Gaudete Sunday,  
December 17, 2017



## 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?



# Celebrate the Incarnation

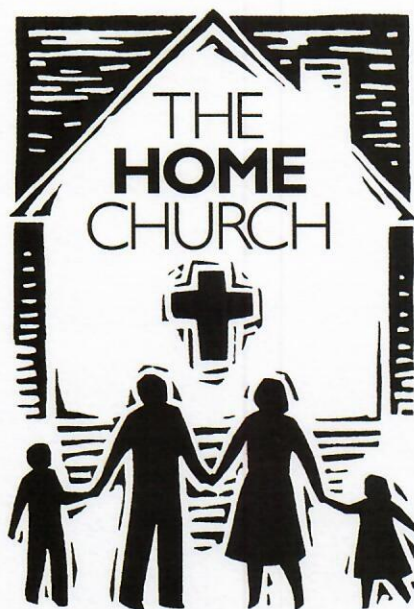
By Kathleen M. Basi

Soon after I met my husband, I began experiencing paralyzing anxiety. Was he or was he not the one God meant for me to marry? I was terrified of misinterpreting God's will, yet I was too afraid of hearing an unwelcome answer to ask for help. So, it went on for four years. Thankfully, once we were married, that particular fear resolved itself.

Nonetheless, to this day, severe anxiety still crops up occasionally. The trigger is always different—infertility, insomnia, professional concerns—but the symptoms are the same: my heart pounds, my brain fixates on *what-if* questions, and my chest tightens to the point that I find it difficult to even draw a deep breath. Anxiety consumes my thoughts and spoils the enjoyment of everyday life. And then...in the midst of this darkness, sometimes, I find relief in thinking: *by becoming human, Jesus sanctified even this plague of humankind.*

***Sometimes we forget  
how relevant the celebration  
of the Incarnation is  
to our faith.***

At this time of year, our senses are filled with the celebration of the Incarnation—God becoming a human being. Stories of stables, shepherds, and angels remind us that God is with us. Yet



sometimes, we forget just how relevant this tenet of faith really is.

When God took on human flesh, he accepted the whole works, including human imperfections. Jesus could have stayed up in heaven to hang out with the choirs of angels. Instead, he came down and got his hands dirty. He took on everything but sin, and for that reason, the entire human experience has been made holy—even the difficult parts.

It's in the Garden of Gethsemane that I see this most clearly. Jesus' prayer rings so true: *Please don't make me go through this. You know I want to do your will, God—but is this really it?* To be fully human is to know uncertainty and feelings of abandonment. It's a

lonely place to inhabit, and seemingly reassuring Scripture can sometimes have the opposite effect. Philippians 4:6–7 says, "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." Such passages as these can actually feed the *what-if* questions: What if I'm mired in this darkness because my faith isn't strong enough to lift me above it?

We're not alone, though. Jesus experienced terror and uncertainty, too. He walked a similar path of darkness right to the cross. And because he did, there's light in times of darkness—right here, right in the middle of the mire. And while knowing that doesn't take away my anxiety, it does help me get through it. +



***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 14–19

**Monday, Advent Weekday:**  
Nm 24:2–7, 15–17a / Mt 21:23–27


**Tuesday, Advent Weekday:**  
Zep 3:1–2, 9–13 / Mt 21:28–32

**Wednesday, Advent Weekday:**  
Is 45:6c–8, 18, 21c–25 / Lk 7:18b–23

**Thursday, Advent Weekday:**  
Gn 49:2, 8–10 / Mt 1:1–17

**Friday, Advent Weekday:**  
Jer 23:5–8 / Mt 1:18–25

**Saturday, Advent Weekday:**  
Jgs 13:2–7, 24–25a / Lk 1:5–25

Bringing Home  
the Word   
December 13, 2020

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