



MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

Sunday, December 3, 2023

First Sunday of Advent

Gathering: Come, Come, Emmanuel

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 85)

Show us your kindness, Of God. Show us your kindness, O God.

Preparation People, Look East BB 43

Mass Parts Mass of Creation

Communion Lord! Maranatha BB 66

Recessional: Ready The Way BB 63



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!

PLEASE HELP US!

As you leave church, kindly take your Bulletin with you - or return it to the basket at the entrance of the Church, return your music book and Mass card to their proper place, and pick up after yourself as you leave. Thanks for being attentive and respectful! F. Albert.



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

✠ 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!

November 19, 2023

Offertory \$5,926.62
Fuel \$1,628.71

November 26, 2023

Offertory \$5,839.60
Christmas Flowers \$2,126.00



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 3 Property Management
December 8 Immaculate Conception
December 10 Retired Religious Fund

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

CLOTHING DRIVE

Kimberly's 18th Annual Holiday Give Away!!!

I'm back!!! Despite having a toddler now and baby #2 on the way, I'm preparing for another collection!!! We will be collecting clothing and nonperishable food items on **January 6 and 7** at Holy Angels Church in Plaistow (in the Parish Hall), from **12:00 to 4:00 PM** each day. We are accepting CLEAN clothing of any size, any season, any decade. Any donations of socks or underwear must be new and packaged. If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to volunteer, please contact me at: kimberly-andrade@comcast.net. Thank you so much for your continued support throughout the years. I couldn't do it without you!

God bless,
Kimberly Clenord



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.

NEW HAMPSHIRE CATHOLIC APPEAL

Thank you on behalf of Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish for making a donation to the New Hampshire Catholic Appeal. If you have not made a donation to the Appeal, you can do so by filling out a donation envelope found in the pews or at the church entrance. You can make an online gift by visiting www.catholicnh.org/about/get-involved/giving/nhca/. You can also use your smartphone with the QR code below.

Our Parish target is \$46,740.00. **As of November 13, 2023, we have raised \$45,298.00.** Thank you again for your support of our NH Catholic community and these important diocesan ministries.



EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINES

With the holiday season approaching, we have several early bulletin deadlines:

Deadline for the December 17 bulletin is **Monday, December 4 at 12:00 Noon**

Deadline for the December 24 bulletin is **Monday, December 11 at 12:00 Noon**

Deadline for the December 31 bulletin is **Monday, December 18 at 12:00 Noon.**

Deadline for the January 7 bulletin is **Monday, December 18 at 12:00 Noon.**

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



The feast of the Immaculate Conception is a Holy Day of Obligation. Our Mass schedule for the holy day is: **Thursday, December 7 at 6:30 PM in Plaistow and Friday, December 8 at 8:00 AM in Newton.**

GIVING TREES

Giving Trees are located in the back of both churches. Please take an ornament, buy the item(s) listed, and return it - **with the ornament attached** - to the church or the parish office **no later than December 9-10** (the Second Sunday of Advent).



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.

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Sunday, December 3

10:00 AM Religious Ed – K to 6 *Plaistow*
 6:00 PM Vespers *Newton*
 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Newton*

Monday, December 4

7:00 PM Knights of Columbus Meeting *Plaistow*

Tuesday, December 5

6:00 PM Grief Share Group *Plaistow*
 6:30 PM The Gospel of Mark *Plaistow*

Wednesday, December 6
 Holy Angels Church Open
 All Day For Prayer

Thursday, December 7

8:30 AM – 8:30 PM Eucharistic Adoration *Newton*
 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting

Saturday, December 9

3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *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.



The Sanctuary Candle in Holy Angels Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Allen Neale** by William Tucker

VIGIL LIGHT

The Vigil Light in front of the Blessed Mother icon at Mary Mother of the Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Thomas Antczak** by the Burge family



The Sanctuary Candle in Mary, Mother of the Church will burn this week in loving memory of **Marcia Gallant** by William Tucker

✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

Saturday, December 2 ~ First Sunday of Advent

Is 63:16b-17, 19b, 64:2-7; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mk 13:33-37 (Vigil)

4:00 PM In Honor of St. Benedict and Our Lady of Lourdes by George Giraldo
Plaistow

Sunday, December 3 ~ First Sunday of Advent

Is 63:16b-17, 19b, 64:2-7; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Mk 13:33-37

8:00 AM Thomas Antczak by the Burge family
Newton

10:00 AM Albert Chaff by his wife, Rosemary Chaff
Plaistow

Monday, December 4 ~ John Damascene, Priest and Doctor of the Church

Is 2:1-5; Mt 8:5-11

8:00 AM For the Benefit of Prayer Shawl Committee Members, Past and Present by Barbara Metcalf
Newton

Tuesday, December 5 ~ Advent Weekday

Is 11:1-10; Lk 10:21-24

8:00 AM All Souls Intentions
Plaistow

Wednesday, December 6 ~ Nicholas, Bishop

Is 25:6-10a; Mt 15:29-37

6:30 PM J. Michael Quinlan by Kathy Doran and Saul Chadis
Plaistow

Thursday, December 7 ~ Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Is 26:1-6; Mt 7:21, 24-27 (Day)

Gen 2:9-15, 20; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 26-38 (Vigil)

6:30 PM People of the Parish
Plaistow

Friday, December 8 ~ 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 Mary Stevens by Marjorie Knowles
Newton

Saturday, December 9 ~ Juan Diego Cuauthlatatzin`

Is 30:19-21, 23-26; Mt 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6-8 (Day)

Is 40:1-5, 9-11; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8 (Vigil)

4:00 PM Deceased Members of the Fogel Family and Frank Kelcourse by Elaine Kelcourse
Plaistow

Sunday, December 10 ~ Second Sunday of Advent

Is 40:1-5, 9-11; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8

8:00 AM Deceased Members of the Ballard and Justin Families by Charlie and Lisa Angwin
Newton

10:00 AM Jesselyn and Donald Driscoll by their family
Plaistow



WELCOME IN CHRIST!

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish invites all to a deeper love of Jesus and to a fullness of communion with the Church. The **rites of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA)** is a process where adults and older children are welcomed into the Catholic Church. Some have never been Baptized, others never received Eucharist or

Confirmation, and others arrive at our door after a long faith journey.

Do you know someone who is thinking about becoming part of our Catholic community? Are you the non-Catholic spouse of a parishioner who is wondering about full communion with the Church? Are you an adult Catholic who for whatever reason, "missed" one or more of the sacraments of initiation while growing up? Do you have children over 7 years of age who were never Baptized, or older children who "missed" sacraments?

The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (and its adapted form for children) welcomes all kinds of people into the Catholic family. The RCIA is for any adult who is: unbaptized and recognizes a need for spirituality in their life, or Baptized and raised in another Christian tradition but interested in learning about the Catholic faith, or Baptized in the Catholic faith, but never received any formal religious training.

Children of all ages are welcome and participate in age appropriate meetings for their RCIA experience.

Contact Father Albert or Cathy Smith in the Parish Office at 603.382.8324 for more information.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

The Compassionate Friends provide support for bereaved families after the loss of a child, grandchild, or sibling—any age, any cause. Visit our website at www.tcfnewburyport.org.

VITA NOVA – MEN’S RETREAT

Join other Catholic men for fellowship and spiritual growth as they explore *Surrendering To Divine Providence* on **January 5-7, 2024**. For more information, go to www.vitanova.org/catholic-mens-retreat.

MEN OF ST. JOSEPH

Our ministry aims to emulate St. Joseph and become better husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers. There are no dues and the Men of St. Joseph do not participate in projects or other volunteer efforts as a group. Instead, we gather together for sharing among men to help each of us to become a better person, a better family man, and a better member of the Church. Join us on Saturday, morning, **December 16, 2023 from 8:00 to 9:00 AM** in the parish hall in Plaistow.

ADORERS NEEDED AT 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 is a great source of grace for us as a parish family. We have many who have made the commitment to spend an hour each week with our Eucharistic Lord. Adoration takes place each Thursday in Newton from 8:30 AM to 8:30 PM. We also need people at all times so we can have 2 people at each hour. 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 a 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.

HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSED

Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow will be closed from December 2023 until Spring 2024. 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.

✦ 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 fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net
Cathy Smith csmith@stluketheevangelist.net
Joyce Szczapa jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
Jackie Tremblay jtremlay@stluketheevangelist.net
Val Barczak mvmbarczak@comcast.net
Parish Council parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net



MONTHLY FOOD DRIVE

**Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus
St. Jude Council #6617**

The Knights of Columbus and Saint Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry would like to thank our parishioners for the ongoing support to feed those in need. Over the last two months, support has been provided to 135 families. That represents 118 children under the age of 18 and 111 adults over the age of 60, for a total of 370 individuals served. Shopping lists and bags are provided on the 3rd week of every month with the general collection of non-perishable items happening the following (4th) weekend. Food donations can also be left in the plastic totes at the rear of either church or brought to the Parish Office any time they are open. Prefer not to shop? Gift cards or checks can be made out to Saint Luke Food Pantry anytime. Your generosity and support are greatly appreciated!

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
HAPPENINGS**

The St. Jude Council of the Knights of Columbus allocated \$750 to assist the Giving Tree this year. Five Knights and their families will be pulling tags and purchasing gifts to fulfill the donation made by the Council. The Knights have also purchased several Thanksgiving food baskets for our Food Pantry for Thanksgiving and will be doing the same for Christmas.

**THE KNIGHTS OF
COLUMBUS
ST. JUDE COUNCIL
#6617**



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

A Men's AA Step Meeting is 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.

CURSILLO

If you have a desire to know Jesus more closely, a Cursillo is for you. The Cursillo weekend is a short course in Christianity. The purpose of the weekend is to facilitate a meaningful personal encounter with Christ and his body, the Church. Cursillo weekends are being offered at the Sarto Center in Hookset, NH. To find out more, contact Mark Collopy at 603-833-7341 or explore www.nhcursillo.org.



GIVE BACK REUSABLE BAG PROGRAM

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Luke the Evangelist Parish, has been chosen by **Shaw's**, 4 Plaistow Road, Plaistow, NH to participate in the *Give Back Where It Counts Reusable Bag Program*. For the entire month of December, for every \$3.00 bag purchased at **Shaw's in Plaistow**, they will donate \$1.00 to St. Vincent de Paul. The bags will be displayed near the self-checkout or ask a customer service representative for help.

**St. Vincent
de Paul
Society**



Your "Dropped Dollar" Hard At Work

Thank you for your continued support of the St. Vincent de Paul Society! Please know that your "dropped dollars" are being used wisely to help the poor in our area. Your generosity does not go unnoticed.

Drop-a-Dollar in the St. Vincent de Paul box on your way out of church. Remember ~ 100% of your donation is used to help those who need a hand up, not a handout.

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

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

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

2023 Advent



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

<p>3 DECEMBER</p> <p>Come Down, O God!</p> <p>Invite God to be with us this Advent.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 64:2-3</i></p>	<p>4</p> <p>Come and Cure Us, Jesus!</p> <p>Ask Jesus to heal us in mind and body.</p> <p><i>Matthew 8:5-7</i></p>	<p>5</p> <p>Send Your Spirit Upon Us</p> <p>Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you today.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 11:2-3</i></p>	<p>6</p> <p>Call on God and Be Saved!</p> <p>If we grow in trust, God will give us new life.</p> <p><i>Romans 10:9-13</i></p>	<p>7 ST. AMBROSE</p> <p>Trust in God Always</p> <p>Ask God to guard and keep you from harm.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 26:4</i></p>	<p>8 IMMACULATE CONCEPTION</p> <p>Say "Yes" As Mary Did</p> <p>Let God be born now and live in us.</p> <p><i>Luke 1:38</i></p>	<p>9</p> <p>God Will Answer Me</p> <p>When we cry out to God, we know God will be there for us.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 30:19-20</i></p>
<p>10</p> <p>One Mightier Is Coming!</p> <p>Spend time today to make room for Jesus in your life.</p> <p><i>Mark 1:7</i></p>	<p>11</p> <p>Your Sins Are Forgiven</p> <p>Let us forgive others as we have been forgiven.</p> <p><i>Luke 5:20</i></p>	<p>12 OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE</p> <p>Proclaim God's Greatness!</p> <p>Let us tell someone today what God means to us.</p> <p><i>Luke 1:46-47</i></p>	<p>13 ST. LUCY</p> <p>God Will Not Get Weary</p> <p>Ask God to give you strength to change your life.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 40:28-31</i></p>	<p>14 ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS</p> <p>God Will Help Us</p> <p>Ask God to help you become more like Jesus.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 41:13</i></p>	<p>15</p> <p>Lead Us to Yourself, O God</p> <p>Let us follow more closely God's ways today.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 48:17</i></p>	<p>16</p> <p>Give Us New Life</p> <p>Let us turn from our sinful ways and let God heal us.</p> <p><i>Psalms 80:18-19</i></p>
<p>17</p> <p>God Is My Joy</p> <p>Share your joy that God is coming nearer.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 61:10</i></p>	<p>18</p> <p>Joseph Accepts Jesus</p> <p>Like Joseph, let us decide to focus our life on Jesus.</p> <p><i>Matthew 1:18-25</i></p>	<p>19</p> <p>Trust God's Messengers</p> <p>Like Zechariah, trust in God and not be afraid.</p> <p><i>Luke 1:10-17</i></p>	<p>20</p> <p>Nothing Is Impossible for God!</p> <p>Like Mary, invite God to be with you.</p> <p><i>Luke 1:36-38</i></p>	<p>21</p> <p>Share Your Joy</p> <p>Like Elizabeth and Mary, share your joy today.</p> <p><i>Luke 1:39-45</i></p>	<p>22</p> <p>God Has Come to Help!</p> <p>Mary praises God who always helps those in need.</p> <p><i>Luke 1:46-56</i></p>	<p>23</p> <p>The Messenger is Born!</p> <p>John the Baptist's birth prepares for that of Jesus.</p> <p><i>Luke 1:57-66</i></p>
<p>24</p> <p>Do Not Be Afraid!</p> <p>Like Mary, let us welcome Christ into our lives.</p> <p><i>Luke 1:30-32</i></p>	<p>25 CHRISTMAS</p> <p>A Child Is Born for Us</p> <p>Jesus becomes like us so we may become like him.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 9:6-7</i></p>					

SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH
LITURGICAL CALENDAR ADVENT-CHRISTMAS, 2023- 24

GIVING TREE GIFTS DUE DECEMBER 9/10 – Advent 2

ADVENT 1
 Sunday, December 3 Regular weekend schedule
 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton)
 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)

Thursday, December 7 Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the BVM
 Patronal Feast of the USA
 Holy Day Vigil Liturgy 6:30 PM (Plaistow)
 No 8 am Liturgy or Eucharistic Adoration at Newton

Friday, December 8 Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the BVM
 Patronal Feast of the USA
 Holy Day Liturgy 8:00 AM (Newton)

ADVENT 2
 Sunday, December 10 Regular weekend schedule
 Advent Penance Service St. Michael Exeter 3 PM
 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton)
 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)

Giving Tree gifts due today!

Wednesday, December 13 **LAST DAY TO RETURN GIVING TREE GIFTS AT PARISH OFFICE**

ADVENT 3
 Sunday, December 17 Regular weekend schedule
 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer (Newton)
 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation (Newton)

ADVENT 4
 Sunday, December 24 Regular weekend schedule

PARISH OFFICES CLOSED: DEC. 22 & 26
PARISH OFFICE RESUMES REGULAR HOURS AS OF JAN 2

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE
(A Holy Day of Obligation)

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

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

Monday, December 26 NO MASS at Newton

Thursday, December 28 No Adoration at Newton

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY
 Sunday, December 31 Regular weekend schedule

Christmas Octave January 1 is NOT a Holy Day of Obligation this year.

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

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

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

Sunday, January 7 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)

Monday, January 8 8:00 am Liturgy, BAPTISM OF THE LORD (Newton)
 6:00 PM Christmas Evening Prayer (Newton)

Advent: Preparing for the Life to come!

The season of Advent is a time of expectation for the Christian community. It is a season of waiting and watching for God's promise of life and light. The Church prepares as it waits for the coming of the One who brings new life: Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

The Church prepares by watching in three directions...

The Church looks in the direction of those promises in Holy Scripture that the Messiah would come, that a virgin would conceive and bear a Son who is called Emmanuel, "God with us." These are the promises of Christmas. The Church also watches for those ways by which Christ's

life is present now in our midst: the preaching of the Word of God and the offering of the Sacraments of forgiveness. Finally, the Church watches with patience and hope for Christ's final coming in judgment. Then His word of judgment will clothe with eternal life all who believe in Him.

Yet, as the Church lives in this world it is surrounded by a darkness resembling that of the Titanic's hull. Advent calls this darkness to mind and penetrates this darkness with promises about the Light of life. While the world is immersed in preparations for the secular celebration of Christmas, Advent allows the Church time to prepare for rejoicing in the full glow of Christ's light shining in the darkness.

The Church prepares for that Light by observing the disciplines of Advent. These disciplines bring to the Church the nourishment that comes from the Lord's life. Advent is a season for immersion in the words of Scripture, especially those promises of Christ's birth, of His life-giving presence in His Church through the Holy Sacraments, and of eternal life at His final coming.

Advent is also a season of confession and repentance. It allows the Church to see its own sin-filled darkness, confess its sin, and receive the Lord's forgiveness. Advent is a season of fervent prayer, the Church repeating to the Lord His words that He will come again. The Church cries, *Maranatha!* Come, O Lord! Come quickly! (1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 22:20)

By practicing these disciplines in Advent, Christ leads His Church back to the relationship of absolute dependence He has established. So the Church waits in hope for the Lord's final appearance. On that day He, who became what we are to redeem us, will clothe us in the life of His righteousness.

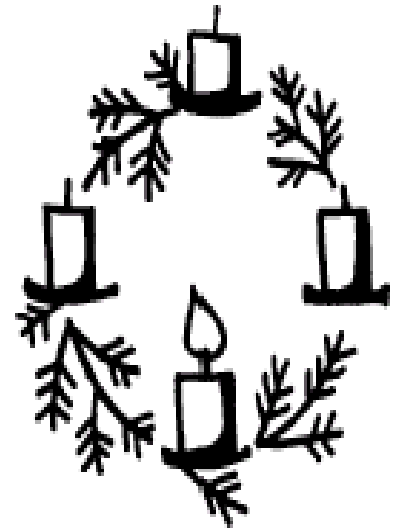


During the Advent season, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated in Plaistow on Saturday afternoons from 3:00-3:30 PM, and in Newton on Sunday evenings following 6:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer. An Advent communal Penance Service will be held at Saint Michael, Exeter on Sunday, December 10 at 3 PM.

The origins of the Advent wreath are found in the folk practices of the pre-Christian Germanic peoples who, during the cold December darkness of Eastern Europe, gathered wreaths of evergreen, made them into circles (symbols of eternity), and lit fires as signs of hope in a coming spring and renewed light. Farmers pulled wheels off their wagons in exchange for sleigh tracks, and often used their wagon wheels as frames for the wreaths, reminding themselves of the springtime to come.

Christians kept these popular traditions alive, and by the 16th century Catholics and Protestants throughout Germany used these symbols to celebrate their Advent hope in Christ, the everlasting Light. From Germany the use of the Advent wreath spread to other parts of the Christian world.

Traditionally, the wreath is made of four candles in a circle of evergreens. Three candles are violet and the fourth is rose, but four white candles or four violet candles can also be used. Each day at home, the candles are lighted, perhaps before the evening meal— one candle the first week, and then another each succeeding week until December 25th. The rose candle is usually lit on the third Sunday of Advent. As the candles are lit, a prayer may be said. A short prayer may accompany the lighting.



A RITE FOR THE BEGINNING OF ADVENT AT HOME

The first day the wreath is in the home, the leader prays:

As our nights grow longer and our days grow short, we look on these earthly signs—light and green branches— and remember God's promise to our world: Christ, our Light and our Hope, will come.

Listen to the words of Isaiah the prophet: *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who lived in a land as dark as death a light has dawned. You have increased their joy and given them gladness; They rejoice in your presence as those who rejoice at harvest, as warriors exult when dividing spoil.* (Is. 9:1-2)

Then all pray: *O God, rejoicing, we remember the promise of your Son. As the light shines from this candle, may the blessing of Christ come upon us, brightening our way, and guiding us by his truth. May Christ our Savior bring life into the darkness of our world, and to us, as we wait for his coming. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Then the candle is lit.

DAILY PRAYERS FOR LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

First Week- *O Emmanuel, Jesus Christ, desire of every nation, Savior of all peoples, come and dwell among us.*

Second Week - *O King of all nations, Jesus Christ, only joy of every heart, come and save your people.*

Third Week - *O Key of David, Jesus Christ, the gates of heaven open at your command, come and show us the way to salvation.*

Fourth Week - *O Wisdom, holy Word of God, Jesus Christ, all things are in your hands, come and show us the way to salvation.*

A reflection for the First Sunday in Advent Year B

“A watched pot never boils.” So the adage goes. Everything about this time of year seems to turn December (and Advent) into a “watched pot.” Society is propelling us toward Christmas with alarming speed. We get a regular countdown of the number of shopping days until Christmas. Snarled traffic, Salvation Army bell ringers, Christmas music everywhere are some of the constant reminders of the holidays ahead. In the midst of all this, do we miss what we're watching for?



This Sunday's Gospel includes the image of “gatekeeper,” one who keeps watch. Indeed, Jesus admonishes us to “Be watchful! Be alert!” He is addressing all of us. We are the gatekeepers. The first and second readings spell out more concretely what being a gatekeeper means. In the first reading Isaiah describes what is happening in his time: the people have chosen their own ways, the way of sinning. But without God they are lost, pulled in many directions with nothing satisfying them. And so they lament God's absence and cry out that God would “rend the heavens and come down.” Isaiah's world is one in which our own human frailty and weakness are very evident. Without God we, too, “have all withered like leaves.” Like Israel, we await “awesome deeds we could not hope for.”

Paul gives us a glimpse of this very situation, a world in which Jesus has come to bestow on us the “grace of God” which has “enriched [us] in every way . . . so that [we] are not lacking in any spiritual gift.” Paul declares that “God is faithful” and in Christ Jesus we share in a new nearness to God, that of “fellowship with his Son.” Paul describes a world in which fullness of life abounds—that for which we are waiting has come and in Christ the awesome deeds of God are already evident. To be gatekeeper means we look at Isaiah's world with all its longing, a world where God is hidden because of sinfulness; but at the same time we see Paul's world where the fullness of God's nearness has already been realized. We must be alert that our watching does not miss what we wait for. We await the fullness of Christ's coming in a world still darkened by sinfulness. In spite of our watching, this is the mystery we can so easily miss: in the midst of our own sinfulness, God comes!



Why don't you think about it too?

Parish Giving is a simple, secure and convenient way to manage your stewardship without weekly envelopes and without worries.

- **Parish Giving allows you to select contribution amounts and special collections right from your own computer or smartphone**
- **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.**
- **Log on to the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish website <http://stlukenh.org>, click on the Parish Giving logo and follow the easy registration instructions.**

Parish Giving

SAINT LUKE PARISH AND THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CATHOLIC APPEAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the New Hampshire Catholic Appeal: Future of our Faith II?

The New Hampshire Catholic Appeal (NHCA) is a combined campaign and fundraising effort with the parishes and ministries of the Church in New Hampshire.

What ministries and needs will be included in the New Hampshire Catholic Appeal?

The following will be funded by the NHCA:

- Catholic Education and Catholic Schools
- Seminarians, Deacons, and Vocations
- Priest Retirement
- *Parable* magazine
- Parish needs (Parish to Parish Support Fund and individual parish support)
- Missionaries abroad and multicultural ministry in N.H.
- Catholic University of America and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
- Catholic Charities NH

Many of these needs and ministries were previously funded through second collections. These second collections have been eliminated or consolidated into the NHCA. Parishioners can still give to any of these causes and programs separately, though it does not count towards the overall NHCA Parish goal.

→ *Gifts to Catholic Charities NH separately do not count toward the Catholic Appeal Parish Goal.*

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish goal is \$46,740.00

How are the goals for each parish determined?

The parish NHCA goal is calculated as 10% of the parish average assessable income over the last three fiscal years. Due to Covid concerns, we excluded fiscal year 2020 from the calculation. This year's calculation was 10% of the average assessable income for fiscal years 2022, 2021, and 2019. The goal formula will be reviewed after the 2023 appeal cycle.

If the parish goal is exceeded, does the parish get to keep the amount raised over the goal?

Yes. The NHCA will allow parishes to keep 100% of their revenue over their set goal for the first three years of the appeal. In June 2024, the Diocese will assess whether or not this has been successful or may need adjustments.

What happens if a parish does not make their goal?

If a parish does not reach its goal, it will be assessed (billed) the remainder.

Why should I give to the New Hampshire Catholic Appeal if I already give to my parish?

Your participation helps the entire Church in New Hampshire where the needs are the greatest – recruiting new priests, evangelization, the vulnerable, and more. Your support makes these ministries possible that no one parish could support on its own. Your gift demonstrates your commitment to the greater Church. We are many parts in the Diocese of Manchester but one body in Christ with a common mission.

Does my parish have to support the NHCA?

Yes. Each parish in the diocese has a set goal which represents the parish share of the total Appeal. A good faith effort is requested of all parishes. Additionally, individual parishes can benefit significantly by retaining any funds raised over their set goal; administering fewer second collections; and parishes will see a reduction in fees and administrative costs (assessments) paid to the Diocese.

How much should I give?

Charitable giving reflects our Christian stewardship of treasure. Giving back to God, either through contributions to your parish, the New Hampshire Catholic Appeal, or other worthwhile charities, should require a sacrifice, one that recognizes God's generosity to us individually. Therefore, your gift is a personal decision between you and God and should be made after careful reflection. Please consider the dollars you have donated in the past to the six discontinued 2nd collections plus the Catholic Charities NH special collection and the *Parable* magazine drive to help you determine how much to give. The pledge and recurring gift option may make this amount feasible.

Should I make a pledge, recurring gift, or a one-time gift?

Making a pledge or a recurring gift allows you to spread your gift over several months, which may make it easier for you to budget, and may also allow you to give a larger gift.

How Should I Give?

There are many ways that you can give to the New Hampshire Catholic Appeal.

- Donate online with credit/debit card.
- Pledge – submit your pledge (through the gift envelope, or online)
 - All check pledges will receive a monthly reminder.
- Recurring Gift – set up a monthly recurring gift (through the gift envelope, or online)
- Check – make checks payable to the **New Hampshire Catholic Appeal**.
- Cash may be sent in using the gift envelope, but we encourage check or credit card.
- Donate stock – call (603) 663-0136 for broker instructions.
- Donate through your IRA – contact your IRA administrator and have your gift sent directly to the Office of Development and Communications at 153 Ash Street, Manchester, NH 03104 – include your name, and the parish you want the gift credit to go towards.

Can Saint Luke parishioners donate using our online giving platform used for parish offertories?

No. At this time, Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish electronic giving is not connected to the NH Catholic Appeal. This is because of the complications of reporting to the Diocese and the tax-deductible reporting that must be done for all donations.



Bringing Home the Word

First Sunday of Advent (B)
December 3, 2023

Hurry Up and Wait!

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

We've all had this experience. We rush to get ready...and then we wait: at the doctor's office, for a train, at a restaurant. For what do we hurry up and wait this Sunday? Some might say we are waiting for the birth of Jesus. But today's readings don't say this.

The first reading describes people waiting for relief from the guilt of their sinfulness. Paul talks about waiting for "the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" at the end time (1 Corinthians 1:7). The people in the Gospel are waiting for the return of the householder to settle accounts. There's no waiting for Christmas—yet.

What should we wait for if not for Christmas? Isaiah tells us to hurry up and

change our lives of pettiness, selfishness, and arrogance, and then to wait for the graciousness of God to "rend the heavens and come down" (Isaiah 63:19). Paul tells us to hurry up and embrace "the grace of God bestowed on [us] in Christ Jesus" (1 Corinthians 1:4), and then to wait for the final revelation of his glory. The Gospel tells us to hurry up, be alert and ready for Christ's return, and then to wait for it to happen.

If we don't prepare ourselves for the coming of God in the reality of our own lives, we might not recognize this salvation when it comes. We're not waiting for an event that happened in the past; we are waiting for the grace of God that is calling us into the future. So, hurry up and wait! †

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 63:16b–17, 19b; 64:2–7

LORD, you are our father;
we are the clay and you our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.

1 Corinthians 1:3–9

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

Mark 13:33–37

[Jesus said,] "May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping."

*The Gospel tells us
to hurry up, be alert and
ready for Christ's return,
and then to wait
for it to happen.*



A Word from Pope Francis

[The Lord] comes every day to visit his people, to visit every man and woman who receives him in the Word, in the Sacraments, in their brothers and sisters....He is at the door to our heart. He knocks. Do you know how to listen to the Lord who knocks, who has come today to visit you...?

ANGELUS, ROME, NOVEMBER 29, 2020



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How patient are you with waiting?
- If waiting is difficult for you, what is one thing you can do to be better at it?

Created in Our Image

Johan van Parys

During the Advent and Christmas seasons, the art gallery at the Basilica of Saint Mary in Minneapolis exhibits nearly 200 crèches from around the world. The composition varies in matter and magnitude. Some are carved in wood or stone, and others are made from scrap materials such as newspapers, bottle caps, or soda cans. Some are made of fired clay either colorfully painted or left to its natural state. One is composed of painted pebbles. Sizes range from miniature to almost life-size.

What is remarkable is that in each of these handmade crèches, individual artists present the familiar story of the birth of Jesus in their own image. Featured are African, American, Asian, Australian, and European versions of



Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Sometimes artists replace the traditional sheep and donkey with local animals: llamas, wart hogs, or lions. In some crèches, instead of the traditional gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, artists include gifts representing their culture, such as monkeys and armadillos, which are presented to Jesus by the Magi of the Amazon.

People from all around the world visit the gallery exhibit and look for a crèche from their native land. There is joy when they find it because it is a validation of their faith and an affirmation of their part in the great story of the Incarnation. Each of us is made in the image of God. And in Jesus, God took on the image of each of us so that we might become like Christ. This is the message of Christmas. †

From *Liguorian*, December 2013



Lord Jesus, so that we may be patient in our waiting and energetic in our service, we pray—Be born in us, be born in our world.

The Redemptorists

Signs of the Season – Part I: Decorations

Paige Byrne Shortal

In our house, Christmas comes gradually. On the First Sunday of Advent, the Advent candles go on the table; the wreath on the door; the Advent calendar on the kitchen wall where we open one door each day. Gradually throughout this all-too-short season appear Christmas books, the outside lights, the angels, nutcrackers, stockings, and, of course, the tree—always a real one that we cut down ourselves.

From the poorest to the richest, folks of every nation, race, and religion decorate their homes to make a day more special. It's about honoring—as in “decorate a general.” And it's about remembering. Each year I remember my friend Jean who gave me the angel ornament with 1975 printed on it. I remember when the children were tiny babies as I hang the “Child's-First-Christmas” ornaments. I remember our oldest son's first Christmas with us. He was ten

when we adopted him and he said in his broken English, “In Guatemala, Santa just sleeps and sleeps.”

Now we welcome our children's spouses and children and many of their friends around the dinner table and the tree. And that is also why we decorate. It's about hospitality.

To all who pass by and see the wreath and the lights and the Christmas tree inside, we say, “Welcome Friend and Stranger: Christmas is observed here.” †



WEEKDAY READINGS

December 4–9

Monday, Advent Weekday:

Is 2:1–5 / Mt 8:5–11

Tuesday, Advent Weekday:

Is 11:1–10 / Lk 10:21–24

Wednesday, Advent Weekday:

Is 25:6–10a / Mt 15:29–37

Thursday, St. Ambrose: Is 26:1–6 / Mt 7:21, 24–27

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

Saturday, Advent Weekday: Is 30:19–21, 23–26 / Mt 9:35—10:1, 5a, 6–8