



**MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY**

**Sunday, December 8, 2024**

**Second Sunday Of Advent**

Gathering: Come, Come, Emmanuel

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 85)

*Show us your kindness, O God; Show us your kindness O God.*

Preparation: A Voice Cries Out BB 46

Mass Parts Storrington Mass

Communion: Maranatha BB 68

Recessional: Ready The Way BB 63

**✠ 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). Consider signing up for electronic giving (see below). Especially in these trying times, your Parish depends on your responsible stewardship and support!

**November 24, 2024**

**Offertory \$5,582.70**  
**Christmas Flowers \$1,893.00**

**December 1, 2024**

**Offertory \$7,151.30**  
**Property Management \$1,784.20**



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.

You can also use your smart phone to scan the QR code below. The link will take you directly to Parish Giving so you can donate.



**UPCOMING SECOND & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

December 8 Retired Religious Fund  
 December 15 Fuel  
 December 22 No Second Collection



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!

**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



**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.

**EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINES**

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

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

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

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



**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

The feast of the Immaculate Conception is a Holy Day of Obligation. Our Mass schedule for the holy day is: **Monday, December 9 at 8:00 AM in Newton and Monday, December 9 at 6:30 PM in Plaistow.**

**HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSED**

**Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is closed from December 2024 until Spring 2025.** This decision comes as result of the real dangers of snow and ice in the Cemetery and the costs to Parishioners to inter during the winter months. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions.



**GIVING TREES**

Giving Trees are located in the back of both churches. Please take an ornament, buy the item(s) listed, and return it wrapped - **with the ornament attached** - to the church or the parish office **no later than December 14-15** (the Third Sunday of Advent).

**THE GOD MINUTE**

Every morning a small group of priests, religious, and lay people start their day in prayer. Soft music, sacred scripture, and thoughtful reflection are weaved into a 10-minute prayer called The God Minute. It's then uploaded for you to access and prayer along with on your own time. And it's free. Listen with your coffee in the morning, while driving to work, or taking a walk. See how easy and beautiful prayer can be.

[www.thegodminute.org](http://www.thegodminute.org)

**RETROUVAILLE**

**A Lifeline For Married Couples**

Does your marriage need help? We are a marriage program that continues after the initial weekend with follow-up sessions that further develop the concepts that we introduce on the weekend. Some of the topics we cover are: Communication Skills, Conflict Management, Family of Origin, Forgiveness and Trust, Love and Commitment, Marriage as a Vocation, Intimacy and Sexual Relationship. Email us at [NewEngland@HelpOurMarriage.org](mailto:NewEngland@HelpOurMarriage.org) or call 508-271-7155.

**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 8**

10:00 AM Religious Ed – Gr. K to 6 *Plaistow*  
 6:00 PM Evening Prayer *Newton*  
 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Newton*

**Monday, December 9**

5:30 PM Christmas Choir Practice *Plaistow*

**Wednesday, December 11**

Holy Angels Church Open  
 All Day for Prayer

**Thursday, December 12**

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

**Saturday, December 14**

**GIVING TREE GIFTS DUE**

3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*

**Sunday, December 15**

**GIVING TREE GIFTS DUE**

10:00 AM Religious Ed – Gr. K to 6 *Plaistow*  
 6:00 PM Evening Prayer *Newton*  
 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Newton*

**RESTROOM BREAKS DURING MASS**

**Attention Parents**

Please be sure to accompany your young children when they need to use the restroom during Mass. This is for their safety and your peace of mind!

**BUSTED HALO**

Busted Halo is a unique media resource sponsored by the Paulist Fathers of the US that utilizes a relevant and accessible voice to help people understand the Catholic faith, put it into practice in their everyday lives, and share it with others. Check out their site, podcasts and videos at [www.bustedhalo.com](http://www.bustedhalo.com).

**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).

**RADIO CATÓLICA**

Escuche Radio Católica WGUA 98.1 FM con una programación 24 horas al día. Música, oraciones, Misas, información y formación en la fe. Teléfono en cabina 978-683-1030. Oficina y línea de oración 978-688-9811. Descargue nuestra aplicación en su celular."



✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

**Saturday, December 7 ~ Second Sunday of Advent**

*Bar 5:1-9; Phil: 1:4-6, 8-11; Lk 3:1-6 (Vigil)*

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

**Sunday, December 8 ~ Second Sunday of Advent**

*Bar 5:1-9; Phil: 1:4-6, 8-11; Lk 3:1-6*

8:00 AM Marie Reilly (Birthday Remembrance) by the Stanley family  
*Newton*

10:00 AM Beverly Gosselin by her family  
*Plaistow*

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

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

8:00 AM Brian Gabriel by his wife, Patricia  
*Newton*

6:30 PM Therese Monette by Ann Marie Sheehan  
*Plaistow*

**Tuesday, December 10 ~ Our Lady of Loreto**

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

8:00 AM Dickie, Gary, and Jody Mottram by Bill Perreault and family  
*Plaistow*

**Wednesday, December 11 ~ Damasus I, Pope**

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

6:30 PM Margaret "Peggy" Sullivan DeBoyes by Roland and Mindy Richardson  
*Plaistow*

**Thursday, December 12 ~ Our Lady of Guadalupe**

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

8:00 AM Vincent Early by Jack Brotz  
*Newton*

**Friday, December 13 ~ Lucy, Virgin and Martyr**

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

**No Mass**

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

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

*Zep 3:14-18a; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18 (Vigil)*

4:00 PM Rick Field by Jackie Tremblay  
*Plaistow*

**Sunday, December 15 ~ Third Sunday of Advent**

*Zep 3:14-18a; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18*

8:00 AM Michelina Inzero (32<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary) by the Stanley family  
*Newton*

10:00 AM Carl Jesionowski by his wife  
*Plaistow*



**JOIN OUR CHRISTMAS CHOIR!**

We welcome Parishioners of all ages to help sing at Christmas time! All you need is a voice to sing and a heart willing to learn! Our rehearsals are held at Plaistow as follows:

- Monday, November 25 from 5:30 to 6:45 PM**
- Monday, December 2 from 5:30 to 6:45 PM**
- Monday, December 9 from 5:30 to 6:45 PM**
- Monday, December 16 from 5:30 to 7:00 PM**
- Monday, December 23 from 5:30 to 7:00 PM**

Please contact Val Barczak at church or email her at [mvmbarczak@comcast.net](mailto:mvmbarczak@comcast.net).

**INCLEMENT 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.**

**From the Pastor's Desk**



**SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Our Parish properties are active places, where traffic and parked vehicles are a constant presence in the ebb and flow of a busy week. It is important to remember that because of the activity on both campuses, it is easy for someone looking for a quick deed to find a vehicle. **Please be sure to lock and secure your vehicle when you are parked on either campus.** If possible, secure valuables out of sight or make sure valuables in an open bed truck are secure. We have requested extra police presence in our lots during Masses, but patrols can only do so much. Each of us are responsible for making sure, as best we as are able, that our vehicles are safe and secure. Anyone seeing something or someone unusual in the lots is welcome to contact the local police.

**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 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. Luke's Outreach Ministry	603-382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry	603-819-4949
Preschool	603-382-9783

Fr. Albert Tremblay	fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net
Cathy Smith	csmith@stluketheevangelist.net
Joyce Szczapa	jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
Jackie Tremblay	jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
Val Barczak	mvmbarczak@comcast.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. Shopping lists and bags are provided on the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of every month with the general collection of non-perishable items happening the following (4<sup>th</sup>) 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**

**Thank You From The Knights Of Columbus**

Our 2nd Annual Pasta For A Purpose to benefit our Food Pantry and the Giving Tree was a huge success. We had a great turn out to enjoy dinner with us along with Italian music and trivia. Chef Rudi Ferrandi's homemade sauce and meatballs were excellent, as usual, along with the pasta, salad, garlic bread, and desserts. The Knights would like to thank everyone for their generous support of this event and of our Council's good works in the community.

**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.) Bring your own coffee. For more information, call Joe at 617-921-9899.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ST. GIANNA'S PLACE**

St. Gianna's Place needs Catholic women to help women in unexpected pregnancies at our home in southern NH. Opportunities include: teaching weekly classes, cleaning, babysitting, transportation, office help, providing dinner, and more. If you want to serve, please email [Admin@StGiannasPlace.org](mailto:Admin@StGiannasPlace.org).



**Saint Luke the Evangelist**

**OUTREACH MINISTRY**

**FIGHT HUNGER BAG**

St. Luke the Evangelist Outreach Ministry has been selected by the Store Leadership Team as a Hannaford Fight Hunger Bag Program Nonprofit Partner! St. Luke's Outreach Ministry will receive \$1 for each \$2.50 reusable Fight Hunger Bag sold during the month of December 2024 at the Hannaford's located at 305 Sandown Road in East Hampstead, NH. The bags are readily displayed in the middle of the main aisle leading to the cash registers.

St. Luke's Outreach Ministry (formerly St. Vincent de Paul) helps those in need in our community. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.

**Your "Dropped Dollar" Hard At Work**

Thank you for your continued support of the St. Luke Outreach Ministry! 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. Luke Outreach Ministry 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 18 at 7:00 PM**. We meet downstairs in the Church Hall in Plaistow. **New members are always welcome!**

If you seek assistance or need information about St. Luke's Outreach Ministry, call 603-382-8324 x315.

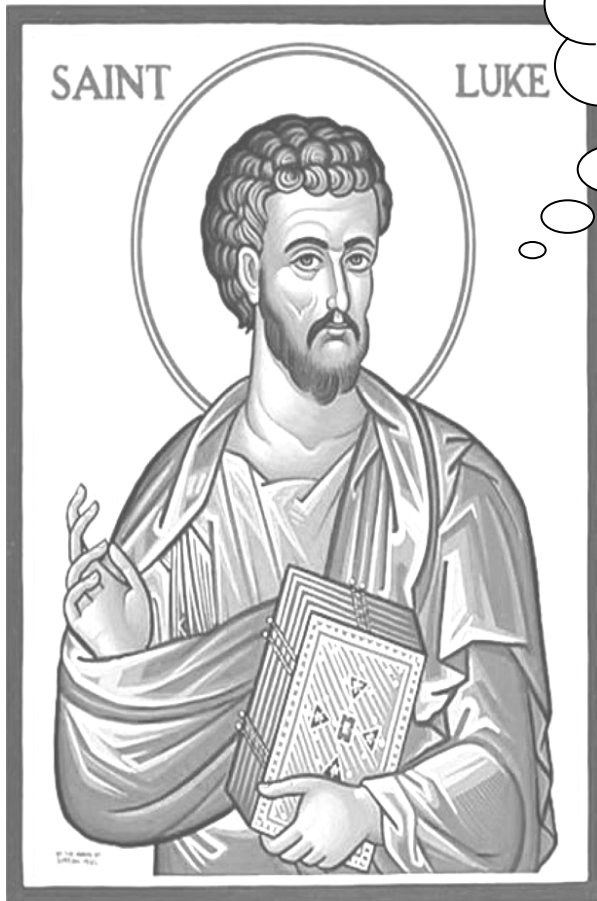
**Hear, O LORD, and answer me  
for I am poor and needy.**



**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.***



## **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**

# An OUTSTANDING Success - Approx. \$21,000 earned

Success takes a lot of prayer, many small favors, people showing up to do the work, and people showing up to spend money. Many thanks to each of you for everything you did and donated, and for those of you whose names may be unintentionally missing from the list below: Thanks to you, most especially!

Jose & Corinne Andrade	Jim Edwards	Bob & Candia LaRochelle	Don Richard
Brett Andrus	Marie & Joe Farren	Joe & Christina Latino	Peter Richards
Elaine Antkowiak	The Ferrandi Family	Jane Leach	The Richardson Family
Sr. Lorraine Aucoin, pm	John Feur	Nancy Leduc	Ken Riley
Sharon & Tony Assaf	Lisa Filio	Brian & Marie Lessard	Susan Ronan
Val & Mike Barczak	Jim & Marie Foley	Alice & Bob Litwinovich	Mike Rosa
Molly Bashaw	Stephan & Paula Fournier	Dan & Jean Llyod	Nancy Ross
Ginny Bergeron	Andy & Sylvie Gagnon	The Lozeau Family	Helen & Ron Savage
Geri Bernard	Mary Galpin	Carol Lueders	Liz Smartz
Pamela & Jack Borisko	The Garcia Family	Nancy & Bob Lumnah	AnnMarie Sheehan
Barbara & Jack Brotz	Bob & Sue Garrant	Claudia & Paul Maciel	Cathy Smith
Darrell Britton	Pat Gates	Brent Mackenzie	Erin Spera
Andy Bufano	Marci Giallongo	Margaret & Brian Madeiros	Rita Stahl
Patty & John Burge	Susan & Erin Grady	Trisha & John Mainella	Stephanie Stanley
Carole Burke	The Guglielmino Family	Marci Marciano	Dan & Kathy Sullivan
Ann & Bill Cabral	Gloria Hamel	Jean Martin	Jeanne Sullivan
Judy & Joe Cadorette	Gretchen Handerson	Sue & Matt Matson	Pete Sullivan
Joanne Carbone	David Hansbury	Evelyn McCarthy	Joyce Szczapa
Justine Caron	Bob Harb	Charlene McLellan	Jean Tammaro
Justine Carrigan	Don & Fran Harper	Angela McVey	Mark Taraborelli
The Chambers Family	Francine Hart	Joan Meader	Deborah Thompson
Eileen Clifford	Martha & Rich Healey	The Mercier Family	Robin Thompson
Carol & Jim Clements	Jean Hennessey	Susan Mokray	Meg Thurnquist
Andrea Comeau	Glenn Hughes	Paul Mongeau	Ed Tivnan
Peggy Connors	Debra Jesionowski	Roberta Monroe	David & Suzanne Touhey
Jodi Consentino	Carolyn Johnson	Lisa & David Montanus	Fr. Albert Tremblay
Jack Cote	Terri Karavedas	Terri & Summer Mottram	Jackie Tremblay
Cathy & Tom Cronin	Elaine Kindler	Tess Moulaison	Bill Tucker
Jane Culbert	Joe Klimaszewski	Bob & Sandra Nadeau	John Tucker
Grace Daly	Jan Knowles	Art Nigro	Gayle & Ed Wencis
Ed & Lindy Davis	The Lajoie Family	Jean O'Brien	Susan Whipple
Eric Denoncourt	Steve & Robin Lambert	Eileen Parry	Paula Wood
Thomas Dawson	The Lamere Family	Bob Radford	Jeannette Wuerdemann
Regina Downey	Linda Langlais	Mike & Diane Rametta	Bob & Carole Young
	Jean Lanctot	Diedre & Mike Remick	Beverly & Ray Viglione

**"SAVE THE DATE!!"**

The 2025 Christmas Craft Fair will be held on  
**Saturday, November 8, 2025!!**



I cannot believe six years have passed since I, somewhat reluctantly, said “ok” to Fr. Albert’s plea to take on the role of Fair “Boss”. Boy oh boy, I had little, to almost no, faith that I had the skills to take on such a big task/role. I literally prayed for guidance, wisdom, stamina, confidence, and even, at times, the will to get out of bed regardless of the fear I was feeling every single day that first year.

Thankfully, everywhere I turned you were there encouraging me and doing what you always did... run the fair yourselves!

I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again, YOU MAKE THIS FAIR HAPPEN!

Without YOU, there is no fair. Thank you for being wonderful brothers and sisters in Chris.

As my husband Reg and I prepare to put our house on the market in the Spring of 2025 and move to his hometown of Island Pond VT, the only thing I’ll be sad about leaving after 27 years of living in Newton NH, is St. Luke the Evangelist Parish and YOU.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me the opportunity to learn SO MUCH about myself and my previously untapped capabilities. I pray I will be of use in our new community.

Sincerely,

Julie Lamere, retired Fair Boss 😊

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HELP WANTED: Fair Boss Assistant – the fair lead has a lot of tasks to manage and having a handy dandy helper/parent in crime is SUPER helpful. If you’d like to find out more, please email Francine Hart at [StLukeNHFair@gmail.com](mailto:StLukeNHFair@gmail.com).

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

All ideas are MUCH appreciated and taken into serious consideration. Even if you think your idea might be “obvious”, PLEASE share it.

Please email Francine Hart at [StLukeNHFair@gmail.com](mailto:StLukeNHFair@gmail.com).

 **Saint Luke**  
**the Evangelist**  
**Parish** 



# Bringing Home the Word

Second Sunday of Advent (C)  
December 8, 2024

## And the Word Was Made Flesh

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

Many of us grew up thinking that this life doesn't amount to much. It's full of pitfalls and enticements that threaten our eternal salvation. Such disdain often boils over into contempt for the world. According to this thinking, it is only the next life that is important, which will unfold in a much better place. Today's readings challenge such extreme thinking. They assure us that the glory of God is partially revealed to us even within this life. They astound us by insisting that God speaks to us through life's events—events that often appear to be quite mundane.

### Sunday Readings

#### Baruch 5:1-9

Jerusalem, take off your robe of mourning and misery; put on forever the splendor of glory from God.

#### Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11

Discern what is of value, so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.

#### Luke 3:1-6

John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Baruch tells of Jerusalem, the city loved passionately by every Israelite. This was a city like so many other cities. However, God dwelt there, and wherever God dwells is, for that reason, a holy city—be it is Jerusalem, Munich, or Detroit. God dwells in our midst, right here, right now. Hence, this imperfect life and this damaged world are holy.

The gospel situates John the Baptist in the middle of the ancient Near Eastern world. It was a Roman world controlled by Caesar and a Jewish province ruled by Herod. John stated that it was to that place at that time that the Promised One would come, and it was up to John to "prepare the way of the LORD" (Isaiah 40:3; Luke 3:4).

Most importantly, we must never forget that God took on the troubles and sins of this world and entered our life, making it his life. This is the real reason this world is holy. †



**God dwells in our midst,  
right here, right now.  
Hence, this imperfect life  
and this damaged world  
are holy.**

### A Word from Pope Francis

We are in the age of walls and barbed wire. To be sure, we can appreciate people's fears and insecurities, the difficulties and dangers involved, and the general sense of fatigue and frustration, exacerbated by the economic and pandemic crises. Yet, problems are not resolved, and coexistence improved by building walls higher, but by joining forces to care for others...

ADDRESS TO REFUGEES,  
MYTILENE, GREECE, DECEMBER 5, 2021



### REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What do I most value?
- How do my actions reflect my values?



# Prayer Before the Blessed Sacrament

*Saint Alphonsus Liguori*

My sacramental Savior and divine Love, how full of kindness and tenderness are the means your love has invented to win over the love of souls. Eternal Word, you were not satisfied with becoming human and dying for us; you have also given us the Blessed Sacrament as a companion, as food, and as a reassurance of heaven. At one time, you show yourself to us as an infant in a stable, at another, as a poor man in a workshop, then as a criminal on a cross, and now as bread on an altar. Tell me, is there anything else you could do to win over our love? Infinite Goodness, when shall I really begin to be in accord with such a refinement of love?

Lord, I wish to live for the one purpose of loving you alone. And what use is life to me if I do not spend it entirely in loving and pleasing you, my beloved Redeemer, who has given your whole life for me? And what have I to love if not you, who are all beauty and grace, all goodness and love and worthy of love? May I live only to love you. May the simple memory of your love make my heart tender with that love. May the very words crib and cross and sacrament set it on fire with the wish to do great things for you, my Jesus, who have indeed done so much and suffered so greatly for me. †

This reflection is an excerpt from *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady* by Saint Alphonsus Liguori, Liguori Publications (828706). Visit [Liguori.org](http://Liguori.org) for other spiritual reading.

## Wisdom from Catholic UPDATE

*From "The Christmas Crèche: A Franciscan Tradition" by Kathleen M. Carroll*

I can relate to the image of Mary bent over her infant son in the Christmas crèche, marveling at this new life. But unlike that most perfect of mothers, I can well imagine what would fill my thoughts: *You put your newborn child in what? With all of those smelly animals around? What kind of mother are you? Surely, if any mother was "good enough," Mary must have known herself worthy of that label. But to be the mother of such a Son? And what was good enough for that child? To be born without an earthly father? To spend his first night on a bed of straw? The miracle of birth is too much for any of us to understand, but the miracle of this birth was on a different scale altogether. Mary did well to ponder these things in her heart.*

*Catholic Update*—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. [Liguori.org](http://Liguori.org) • 800-325-9521.



Lord Jesus, so that this season may inspire respectful dialogue among those who disagree, we pray:

Be born in us,  
be born in our world.

The Redemptorists

## WEEKDAY READINGS

December 9–14

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

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

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

**Thursday, Our Lady of Guadalupe:**

Zec 2:14–17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1–6a, 10ab / Lk 1:26–38 or Lk 1:39–47

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

**Saturday, St. John of the Cross:**

Sir 48:1–4, 9–11 / Mt 17:9a, 10–13