

December 24, 2017
4th Sunday of Advent

"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" – Luke 1:28

Faith is a gift from God. Take time in silence and thank Him for all the gifts He has given you. Try to set aside any anger or resentment you have and really open your heart to receive the gift of God's mercy and forgiveness. We can't give what we don't have. We need to receive God's mercy and forgiveness first before we can give it to others.

Readings for December 31, 2017

First Reading : Sirach 3.2-6, 12-14

Those who respect the Lord honor their parents.

Psalm : 128

Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord.

Second Reading : Colossians 3.12-21

Family life in the Lord.

Gospel : Luke 2.22-40

The Child grew, filled with wisdom.

Eucharistic Adoration—Monday 9.30am—Tuesday, 8.45am.

"I knelt there in front of our Lord in the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. . . I poured out everything to the Lord, placing myself into His hands. . . I was suddenly struck with a peace from the depths of my soul. . . I just basked in His love. . . My life was transformed from only knowing about Jesus. . . to knowing Him in a profound relationship,"

Jessica Valera, Leominster, MA



Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in its radiance.

Be with us as we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the world asunder. We kneel before you shepherds, innkeepers, wisemen. Help us to rise bigger than we are.

Amen.

St. John the Baptist Parish—Weekly Activities

Sunday, December 24, 2017

8am Mass 4th Sunday of Advent

10am Mass 4th Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 24th, 2017

Christmas Eve

5pm, 7:30pm; 10pm

Monday, December 25th, 2017

Christmas Day

8am, 10am

Tuesday, December 26, 2017

8:35 - Rosary before 9am Mass

† Doreen Stanley by Gladys Hebert

† Reg LaMarre by Christina D'Aloisio

Living Diana Pernal by Christina D'Aloisio

10am Staff Meeting

Wednesday, December 27, 2017

8:35am Rosary before 9am Mass

† Marieangela Capaldi by the Capaldi Family

† Pasquale DiPierdomenico by Dan DiPierdomenico

† Clemintine DiPierdomenico by Dan DiPierdomenico

9:30 Book Study—Fr. Ware Room

1pm Centering Prayer—Fr. Martin Room

1pm—Legionari Della Sacra Famiglia: Gabriele & Leda Rosati

Thursday, December 28, 2017

8:35am Rosary before 9am Mass

† Clemintina DiPierdomenico by Angela & John D'Amore

† Gerry Knight by Mary Jane Murphy

† Lucille Berthiaume by Margaret & Mike Regnier

7pm Mass

† Dino DiBiase

† Howard Pillon by Debbie & Bill Meloche

† Guiseppe Toracchio by the Toracchio Family

11am—3pm Youth Ministry Leaders Party

7:30pm Bible Study Fr. Ware room

7pm Rosary Cenacle - Please call for location 519 713 9586

Friday, December 29, 2017

8:35am Rosary before 9am Mass

† Angolina Palumbo by Maria Parete

† Ferenzo DiGiovanni by Maria Parete

† Pat Higgins by Mary Whittal

3pm Divine Mercy Hour—Church

4:30-6:30pm K of C Fish Fry

Saturday, December 30, 2017

8:35am Rosary before 9am Mass

† John D'Amore by Filomena & Guido DiBiase

† Amedina Simone by Carmela Danese

† Rosalina DiBartolomeo by Maria & Mario Rosati

4-4:45pm—Reconciliation

5pm—Mass

Sunday, December 31, 2017

8am Mass

10am Mass

3pm Holy Family Prayer Service

5pm Mass

11:30pm 1st Mass of the New Year

Monday, January 1, 2018

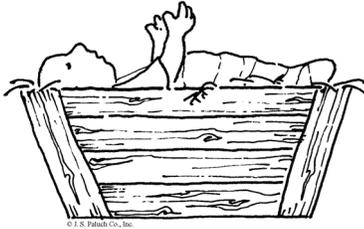
10am Mass

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2017

The child to be born will be called holy,
the Son of God.

—Luke 1:35



Christmas Message



Christmas is a time of great significance in the liturgical year, second only to Easter. We celebrate God's great love in giving his only Son to take on our flesh thereby becoming one of us. When we come to Mass throughout the year its like Christmas again and again where Jesus in his Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity becomes present to us, born anew on the altar.

Christmas is such an important event that the season extends from December 25th to and including the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord on January 8th, 2018.

On behalf of the entire staff I want to extend our heartfelt blessings to you and your family that you rejoice in His great saving love.

Merry Christmas,
Fr. Brian

GOD'S PROMISE

The lengthy passage from Samuel is a wonderful exposition of God's promise to the house of David: that his throne would forever be gloriously occupied by his descendants. Hidden in the mystery of the prophecy is the promise of the Savior, the Messiah, Son of God and Son of David. The prophet Nathan, speaking in God's name, poetically turns around David's plan to build a house for God, and announces God's plan to build a "house," that is, a dynasty for David. From this house of David will come the Messiah, the Christ, not in kingly splendor as David ruled, but as a humble man, destined to rule forever and over all. When God gives a gift, it's amazing what we are given—so different from what we ever could have imagined.

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TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

Children of the parish are somewhat focused on Santa Claus these days, who is keeping an eye on who's naughty and who's nice. Santa Claus, with his heavenly patron Saint Nicholas, has been more or less in charge of gift-giving to American children for a hundred years or so. In other places, perhaps more attentive to our Christian tradition, there are different gift-bearers. In Greece, Saint Basil delivers the presents on his feast day, December 31, and makes sure everyone is sprinkled with holy water. The Baby Jesus is in charge elsewhere, called the *Christkind* in Austria and Belgium, *El Niño Jesús* in Columbia, and *Le Petit Jesus* in France, where he shares his duties with *Père Noël*. In the Czech Republic almost everyone is atheist, but *Ježíšek*, the infant Jesus, brings gifts to one and all. In Poland the "Star Man" is said to bring the gifts, although often he turns out to be the village priest in disguise. Saint Nicholas, not his Americanized cousin, is the giver in Holland, where he wears a bishop's miter, and in Russia, where he wears a bishop's crown. Soviet Russia tried to dethrone Saint Nicholas and promote Grandfather Frost, but no one was much fooled by this attempt to squeeze religion out of Christ's birth. One country has a saintly woman in charge of the gifts, Saint Lucy, honored in Sweden on December 13, when children serve their parents breakfast in bed, and others awake to news that they have been nominated for a Nobel Prize. Some children have a second round of gifts on Epiphany, when the magi assume the gift-giving duties. In general, the gifts of Christmas are simple pleasures, not great heaps of treasures. Once upon a time, a new pair of socks or an orange was enough for us. No matter what gifts we receive, all of them are to point us to the true gift, and the true giver.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.