ST. ANN CHURCH
AND NATIONAL SHRINE
4940 Meadowdale St., Metairie, LA 70006
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Twitter: https://twitter.com/stannmetairie
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CHURCH HOURS
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 6:00 am - 5:00 pm
Tuesday 6:00 am to 8:15 pm

WEEKEND EUCHARIST
Saturday: 7:30 am Mass
4:00 pm Vigil Mass
Sunday Masses:
8:00, 9:30, 11:00 am and 5:00 pm

WEEKDAY EUCHARIST
Monday - Friday: 6:30 am & 8:45 am
Tuesday: 7:00 pm

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
Tuesday: 9:30 am to 6:00 pm ending with Benediction
First Friday: 9:30 - 10:30 am

RECONCILIATION
Tuesday: 6:00 to 6:45 pm
Saturday: 3:00 to 3:45 pm
5:00 to 5:30 pm

BAPTISM
Baptisms are celebrated on the first Sunday of each month at 12:30 pm. Please call the Church Office at least three months before the anticipated date of birth. To schedule an interview and date for Pre-Baptism Seminar, call Deacon Ray Bertin at 455-7071, ext. 226. The celebration of infant Baptism will be arranged during the interview process.

MATRIMONY
The prospective bride or groom must contact one of the parish priests or deacons at least 6 months in advance.

FUNERALS
Families should contact the Church Office before making any arrangements with the funeral home.

VISITATION OF THE SICK
Please notify the Church Office when someone is in the hospital or sick at home and unable to attend Mass.

ROSARY GROUPS
1st Saturday of each month following the 7:30 am Mass in Church.
Every Saturday 3:20 pm-3:40 pm, before the 4:00 pm Mass in Church.
Rosary & Divine Mercy, every Wednesday 9:30 am to 10:30 am in the St. Ann Room.

NOVENA TO ST. ANN
Every Tuesday after the 8:45 am and 7:00 pm Masses. Twice a year a solemn nine day novena is held at 10:00 am and 7:00 pm, consisting of Mass, homily and novena prayers. July 18th through 26th (Feast of St. Ann) and the Thursday after Ash Wednesday through Friday of the first week of Lent.

“LITTLE CHURCH”
“Little Church” is a babysitting service which is available every Sunday during the 9:30 am Mass for children ages 1 to 5 years old. Please bring your children to the Parish Ministry Center, behind the church.
Third Sunday of Advent Year A
Isaiah 35:1-6, 10  James 5:7-10  Matthew 11:7-11

Advent enters its final phase and the liturgy becomes more joyful, so to speak. The Church encourages us to persevere and remain faithful. Traditionally this Sunday was known as “Gaudete Sunday” from the opening words of the entrance antiphon for Mass “Gaudete in Domino,” “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice! The Lord is near.” Advent joy is born out of the belief that the Lord is very near. That nearness becomes more visible with the passing of time and the lighting of another candle on the Advent Wreath. The optional rose vestments and the lighting of the third candle with the rose-colored scarf announce that the season of waiting is nearing the end. We also sense the coming of Christmas with people decorating their homes, Christmas cards arriving in the mail, and last minute shoppers rushing to get gifts. **Wish everyone Merry Christmas!**

This Sunday is also known as Bambinelli Sunday. You may ask: What is that? Every year on the Third Sunday of Advent, children gather with their families in St. Peter’s Square in Vatican City bringing with them figures of the Christ Child - the Bambinelli, from their Nativity Set so that the Holy Father, Pope Francis will bless the figures. It was started by the pope St. John Paul II over 30 years ago. Families traditionally make small sacrifices during Advent in preparation for Christmas, doing good deeds for others, and when Christmas comes, the Christ Child is placed in the empty manger/crèche made comfortable by these small acts of charity.

The Lord is not found with the “most” but with “the least.” How are you preparing for Christmas? With two weeks left, how are you spending your time and energy? It’s interesting to note Jesus’ response to John the Baptist’s question: “Are you the one who is to come or should we wait for another?” Jesus’ answer is interesting: “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed ...” Are you a source of these kinds of blessings in the Lord this Advent time? **Advent is remembering God’s vision for the world!**

Reflection by Fr. Billy

**Respect Life Focus for December- Violence**

Choose 9 days during the month of December to pray this prayer:

“Let us pray,
God have mercy on us in the United States and throughout the world as we refuse to follow your command of peace. Give your blessing to those who have died, their families, and to those who protect us through law enforcement.

Lord Jesus we weep with you. Please use our prayers, hearts, and hands to build peace in our families and in our world. Wherever in my heart there is a hint of violence and revenge, mercifully help me have a change of heart. Lord, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me. Amen.” -Archbishop Aymond
Christmas Giving Tree

Once again we at St. Ann are invited to share OUR blessings and gifts with the multitudes who are not as fortunate. Hope House and Catholic Charities have numerous children, families, elderly and homeless whom they serve and whom we also, are called to serve. These wonderful Catholic facilities provide for these needs on a daily basis and St. Ann is always extremely generous in our Christmas sharing. The “Giving Tree” will be up from Thanksgiving through SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11. The Angel tags on the tree will indicate the necessary information for you to be able to provide a truly Merry Christmas for MANY considerably less fortunate than us. The tags will indicate specific gift requests along with age, size etc.

IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT WHEN YOU SELECT AN ANGEL TAG YOU MAKE YOUR PURCHASE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

PLEASE WRAP SECURELY WITHOUT A BOW AND PLACE IT UNDER THE TREE AT THE SATURDAY AND SUNDAY MASSES ONLY!!!!

PLEASE TAPE THE ANGEL TAG SECURELY TO THE PACKAGE WITHOUT THE STRING.

PLEASE BE SURE TO GET A GIFT AND RETURN IT ON OR BEFORE SUNDAY DECEMBER 11. We must have time to sort and deliver the gifts before Christmas. We ask that all gifts be NEW.

Again for SECURITY reasons, please place your gifts under the tree ONLY AT MASS ON SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS.

St. Ann Parish Christmas Breakfast

Sunday, December 18
9:00 am to Noon • St. Ann Cafeteria

St. Ann family and friends are invited to join the St. Ann Men’s Club to ring in the Christmas holidays! For those who choose, we will be serving a traditional breakfast of scrambled eggs, grits, sausage and biscuit for a $3 donation. In addition, we will have crafts and fun for the children along with a special visit from St Nicholas. All proceeds and additional donations collected will go to support St. Ann’s St. Anthony Ministry. For more information, please contact the St. Ann Men’s Club at: StAnnMensClub@gmail.com or check out our website at www.stannmensclub.org.

We are very grateful to all who contributed to the St. Ann Family Fest 2016. We especially thank our chairwoman, Sara Cooper and all committee members. A check for $96,500.00 was presented to the school.

Our annual Parish/School Christmas Pageant is this Sunday, Dec. 11 at 7:00 pm in the gym. The fifth graders will reenact the Nativity. The band and choir will perform Christmas songs. All are invited to the performances and to the cafeteria after for refreshments.

Job Opening for Administrative Assistant

Magnificat, A Ministry to Catholic Women, seeks an Administrative Assistant with strong people skills and ability to multi-task, good telephone skills and proficient computer skills, including: Microsoft Excel, Publisher, Access and other databases. Thirty hours a week, Monday thru Friday, six hours a day. Salary commensurate with skills. Email resume to magnificatcst1@aol.com or mail to Magnificat,1629 Metairie Rd, Suite 3; Metairie, LA 70005.
HOW TO REGISTER

• Go to Formed.org
• Enter our **PARISH CODE XX87MF** on the homepage
• Create a personal account with your user name/email and password
• Start enjoying the best Catholic content all in one place!

In the future, log in by going directly to Formed.org and entering your user name/email and password.

**IMPORTANT**
DO NOT sign up as an individual - the parish access code provides more content than the individual subscription.
Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel (which means, God with us)” [Matthew 1:23].

Why did He do it? Why did God become one of us? St. Athanasius gives a startling answer to that question: “For the Son of God became man so that we might become God.” In other words, the transforming effect of God’s grace made available to us through Jesus Christ literally makes us more divine, more like God. Understanding this expands our understanding of salvation. Jesus became one of us to save us from something, our sin, but also to save us for something, participating in divine life! What a gift!

Mary: God's Yes to Man
Encyclical Letter: Redemptoris Mater
Saint Pope John Paul II

Saint Pope John Paul II's only encyclical on our Blessed Mother, with introduction by the Cardinal Prefect of the congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, and commentary by one of the world's leading Catholic theologians, Hans Urs von Balthasar. The Church's supreme magisterium and representative of the Church's most penetrating theological reflection combine to provide for all the faithful a rich and concise compendium of the Mother of the Redeemer.

The development of traditional Marian dogma in the light of the present day bears the Pope's unmistakable personal stamp. The three parts of the encyclical ("Mary in the Mystery of Christ", "The Mother of God in the Midst of the Pilgrim Church" and "Motherly Mediation") draw predominantly from two sources: Sacred Scripture and the central documents of the Second Vatican Council. There is a particular emphasis on ecumenism. What binds all Christians to Mary becomes ever clearer: she is the model of their faith.

"Preparing for the advent of the year 2000, the great memorial of Christ's birth, is a fundamental concern of the encyclical. In the liturgy, Advent is a Marian time: the time when Mary made room in her womb for the Savior of the world and bore within her humanity's hope and expectation. Celebrating Advent means becoming Marian, imitating Mary's unconditional Yes which is ever anew the place of God's birth, the 'fullness of time’" — Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger
St. Ann Church & National Shrine
Pastoral Plan for 2017

EVANGELIZATION

“A Dynamic Catholics invite others to grow spiritually by sharing the love of God with them.”

_The Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic – Matthew Kelly_

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**A Whole Liturgical Month of Content on FORMED.org!**

4th **Second Sunday of Advent**
Program: Advent, Session 2: Trust in God, YDisciple Advent, Session 2: Trust in God

8th **Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin**
Programs: Symbolon: Knowing the Faith, Session 9: Mary & The Saints
Audio: Mary: Handmaid of the Lord

11th **Third Sunday of Advent**
Program: Advent, Session 3: Watch and Pray, YDisciple, Session 3: Watch and Pray

12th **Our Lady of Guadalupe**
Program: Catholicism, Session 4: Our Tainted Nature’s Solitary Boast
Programa: La Solitaria Presuncion de Nuestra Naturaleza Caida
Movie: Guadalupe: The Miracle and the Message
Movie/ SPANISH: Guadalupe

14th **St. John of the Cross**
E-book: Deep Conversion, Deep Prayer

18th **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

25th **Solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord**
Movie: The Story of the Nativity
Audio: The True Meaning of Christmas

27th **St. John the Apostle**
Program: Catholicism, Session 2: Happy are We
Programa: Catholicismo, sesion 2: Somos Bienaventurados
Audio: Searching the Scriptures: The Gospel of John

28th **Feast of the Holy Innocents**
Program: Catholicism, Session 6: A Body Both Suffering and Glorious
Programa: Catholicismo, Sesion 6: Un Cuerpo Doliente y Glorioso

31st **Feast of the Holy Family**
Movie: Joseph of Nazareth
Audio: Be a Man!, ¡Sé Hombre!

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**December 2016**

**Universal:**
End to Child-Soldiers
That the scandal of child-soldiers may be eliminated the world over.

**Evangelization:**
Europe
That the peoples of Europe may rediscover the beauty, goodness, and truth of the Gospel which gives joy and hope to life.

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**2016 Christmas Season Mass Schedule**

**Solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord**
Saturday, December 24th
Vigil Masses: 4:00 PM & 6:00 PM
Candlelight Christmas Mass at 10:00 PM

**Sunday, December 25th**
Christmas Day Masses: 8:00 AM & 10:00 AM

**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**
New Year’s Day
Saturday, December 31st
Vigil Mass: 4:00 PM
Sunday, January 1st
New Year’s Day Masses: 8:00, 9:30 AM & 11:00 AM & 5:00 PM
Patience, Hope, Joy

Gracious, merciful, and patient God,
your generosity rewards our complaint.
You reap a fruitful harvest when we plant only
hardness of heart.
Strengthen us in this season of hope,
grant patience in troubled times,
and lift our fearful hearts.

As the farmer waits for the fruitful harvest
and the desert anticipates abundant blossoms
may we, too, be blessed with patient hearts
as we approach the coming of our Lord Jesus
Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sunday, December 11, 2016
REJOICE!

Today’s Readings: Isaiah 35:1–6a, 10; Psalm 146:6–7, 8–9, 9–10; James 5:7–10; Matthew 11:2–11. The coming of Christ and his Kingdom will be understood when the blind see, the deaf hear, and the lame leap. In today’s readings, we are reminded by both Isaiah and Jesus that we do not need to look any further. The signs of healing and wholeness should be enough. Traditionally, the Third Sunday of Advent is a joyous reminder that God is already in our midst, even as we prepare to commemorate his coming into the world. In the world’s terms, we know that the blind see, the deaf hear, weak knees and hearts are made firm, and even the arid desert is in full bloom. This is cause for rejoicing.

The words of Jesus in the Gospel are a challenge to look beyond the messenger, John the Baptist, and to realize the truth of the message.

Rejoice in the topsy-turvy world where those apparently blind can now see through the rough nomad in the dry desert and recognize a prophet. Rejoice in the prophetic message heard by the deaf, pulsating through the lame, and blooming with abundant flowers.

Today you can sing the refrain “Rejoice! Rejoice, O Israel! To thee shall come Emmanuel,” knowing that Emmanuel has come. Take some time today with your family or friends to recognize the goodness that you witness in your lives: where adversity can produce joy, where the deaf have heard some Good News and a change of heart is the result. Today is the day of which Isaiah prophesies when he says, “Sorrow and sighing shall flee,” because the ransomed of the Lord will obtain “joy and gladness.”
This Week At Home

Monday, December 12  
Our Lady of Guadalupe

In 1531, a poor, uneducated Aztec Indian received the image of Mary on his tilma. Today is the feast of the season when Mary brings a renewed faith through an unexpected and unassuming Juan Diego to others. Advent invites us to share our faith to all the world simply and plainly. Today’s Readings: Revelation 11:19a, 12:1–6a, 10ab; Judith 13:18bcde, 19; Luke 1:26–38.

Tuesday, December 13  
St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

St. Lucy, a martyr of the early Church, is celebrated as a bringer of light. Though she was from Sicily, Italy, the most profound celebrations on this day are found in Sweden, where girls wear a crown of lit candles to serve breakfast. Today, light your Advent wreath candles for breakfast! Today’s Readings: Zephaniah 3:1–2, 9–13; Psalm 34:2–3, 6–7, 17–18, 19, 23; Matthew 21:28–32.

Wednesday, December 14  
St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

John of the Cross (1542–1591), mystic and doctor of the Church, authored the Dark Night of the Soul. This writing is an invitation to retreat into a dark place where, after much prayer and reflection, God is rediscovered. How appropriate that his feast day is on a dark Advent day. Find time to sit in the darkness and search where God has led you this season. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 45:6b–8, 18, 21b–25; Psalm 85:9ab, 10, 11–12, 13–14; Luke 7:18b–23.

Thursday, December 15  
Prepare the Way

Jesus challenges us today to take a second look, a second understanding of the message of John the Baptist. Of John and his message, he says “What did you go out to see?” He refers to soft robes, fine clothing, and to those who live a life of luxury. That is not the case with John, nor should it be with us. We prepare by living with integrity, whether that is in the wilderness or in a palace. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 54:1–10; Psalm 30:2, 4, 5–6, 11–12a, 13b; Luke 7:24–30.

Friday, December 16  
Let All the Nations Praise You!

Today’s psalm response, “O God, let all the nations praise you!” underscores a message of universality that has been present this entire week. Emmanuel comes for all peoples, from Mexico to Sweden, from dark places to light, and from luxurious palaces to impoverished mountains and deserts. Take a second look at today’s reading from Isaiah, sharing your responses over the dinner table. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 56:1–3a, 6–8; Psalm 67:2–3, 5, 7–8; John 5:33–36.

Saturday, December 17  
Come, O Wisdom

The “O Antiphons,” which begin today, have been used since at least the eighth century to accompany the Magnificat at Evening Prayer, from December 17 through December 23. They are also the verses for the “Alleluia” chanted at Mass. Today we call on Wisdom to come and teach us the path of knowledge. Today’s Readings: Genesis 49:2, 8–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 3–4ab, 7–8, 17; Matthew 1:1–17.