



Fourth Sunday of Advent
12/19/2020 - 12/27/2020
Welcome to Mater Dei Parish!



DAILY & WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE

DAILY MASSES

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY:
 9:00 AM, 12:00 NOON, & 4:00 PM
 & SATURDAY MORNING AT 9:00 AM
 ALL MASSES ARE AT ST. MARY'S

**MASS IS ALSO CELEBRATED
 EACH FRIDAY AT ST. JAMES AT 4:00 PM**

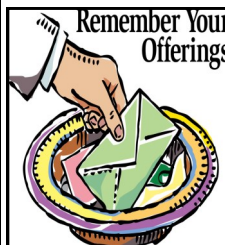
WEEKEND MASSES

SATURDAY: 4:00 PM @ ST. MARY'S
 5:30 PM @ ST. BENEDICT'S
SUNDAY: 8:30 AM @ ST. EDWARD'S
 9:30 AM @ ST. MARY'S
 10:30 AM @ ST. JAMES
 11:00 AM @ ST. MARY'S



**Thank You for Your Generosity to
 our Mater Dei Parish Churches**

Week of December 13, 2020



Envelopes:	\$ 4,425.00
Loose:	\$ 1,140.26
Online:	\$ 491.00
TOTAL:	\$ 6,056.26
Religious Retirement:	\$793.26
Budget:	\$10,439.00
Surplus/Deficit:	\$- 4,382.74

*Christ Our Hope:
 Building A Vibrant Church*

From our 700 parish families, Mater Dei has received **83 gifts** totaling **\$122,800**, which is **26%** of our parish goal. Thank you to everyone who has so generously donated to the campaign. If you have not yet contributed, please prayerfully consider how you can help. Every gift makes a difference. Your sacrifice will help us build a vibrant parish now and well into the future.



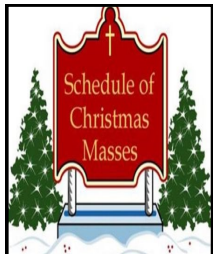
Christmas Mass Schedule

**Thursday, December 24th
 Christmas Vigil**

4:00 pm - St. James the Greater
 4:00 pm - St. Edward the Confessor
 4:00 pm - St. Mary Star of the Sea
 7:00 pm - St. Mary Star of the Sea
 12:00 am Midnight - St. Mary Star of the Sea

**Friday, December 25th
 The Nativity of the Lord**

9:30 am - St. Mary Star of the Sea
 11:30 am - St. Benedict Labre



SCAM ALERT.....SCAM ALERT.....SCAM ALERT



A scam has been discovered here in the Northeast Kingdom. Caller ID identifies the caller as Fr. Yvon Royer and the individual on the phone requests donations for "Catholic Charities" on behalf of Fr. Yvon. A fake Facebook page has also been created in Fr. Yvon's name to benefit this "cause". **THIS IS A SCAM.** Please be careful! Fr. Yvon is not involved in any solicitations for donations.

ADVENT CONFESSIONS

There are still opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before Christmas.

St. James

Sunday, **December 20th:** 9:45 am—10:30 am
 before 10:30 Mass

St. Mary's

Sunday, **December 20th:** 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
 following 11:00 Mass

St. Edward's

Monday, **December 21st:** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

You are also invited to call the parish office at (802) 334-5066 to schedule an appointment for Confession with one of our priests.



**Parish Office Closed
 December 24th & 25th**



The Parish office will be closed this week on Thursday and Friday, December 24th & 25th to celebrate Christmas.

The office staff wishes everyone a Blessed and Merry Christmas and all of God's Blessings in the new year.

www.materdeivermont.com

Log in to our **new & improved Parish Website** to keep up with upcoming parish events & happenings at Mater Dei.



*Please pray for the repose of the
 souls of † Fausto Isaiah Tejada
 & † Fr. Thomas Nadeau and
 for their grieving families.*





Mary was called to be open to the extraordinary. What about you? Will you say “let it be” in response to God’s call to you? If you think God is calling you to be a priest, deacon, brother or sister, please contact

Fr. James Dodson, Director of Vocations, at the Vocation Office at **(802) 658-6110 X 2275** visit **vocations@vermontcatholic.org**.



St. Stephen: The First Martyr

St. Stephen was one of the first ordained deacons of the Church and is venerated as the first Christian martyr. The Greek word from which we derive the English word *martyr* literally means witness.

In that sense, every Christian is called to bear witness to Jesus Christ, in both their words and by their actions. Not all are asked to shed their blood. Those who do shed their blood for the faith are the greatest of witnesses.

As the Apostles continued the ministry of Jesus, they decided to ordain seven deacons to oversee the care of Greek-speaking widows whose practical needs were being neglected. Stephen was one of the seven ordained and given the title of “archdeacon” or chief deacon.

Great preaching and miracles were attributed to Stephen. The Bible records that Stephen was “full of grace and power, and did great wonders and signs among the people”.

Stephen’s popularity created enemies among some Jews who debated with him trying to generate evidence of blasphemy against him to further their prosecution of the early Church.

At Stephen’s trial, several false witnesses were brought forward by the Sanhedrin to testify that he was guilty of preaching against God and the Mosaic law. Stephen was filled with wisdom from heaven. He responded by detailing the history of Israel and outlining the blessings God had bestowed upon his chosen people. He explained that Jesus had come to fulfill the law of Moses, not destroy it. Stephen concluded his defense by admonishing the Sanhedrin, calling them “stubborn people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears”. (Acts 7:51)

After Stephen had finished speaking, he looked up, saw a vision of Jesus and proclaimed, “Look, I can see heaven thrown open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God”. The crowd carried Stephen outside of the city to stone him to death.

As Stephen was being brutally stoned, he spoke his last words, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” With these words, Stephen died at the age of 34.

VOCATIONIST’S CORNER

Fr. Tom is presently in quarantine after giving Last Rites to a person with the Corona virus. Please pray for her health and that Fr. Tom will remain free of the virus.



Surrender Yourself to God

The readings this weekend from Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 and Luke 1:26-38 inform us of the graces God bestowed on David the King of Israel and Mary the Mother of God.

David tells Nathan, “Here I am living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God dwells in a tent!” The prophet Nathan tells David to go and build God a temple. But God informs Nathan that it is NOT David’s place to build God a temple for everything that David has: from the field as a shepherd, to a kingdom to shepherd the people of Israel, destroying his enemies, and becoming a King.

All this has been done because God created him and loved him. If not for God, David would be nothing.

David surrenders himself to God.

The Gospel from Luke tells us about the angel Gabriel, sent by God to Mary, “a handmaid of the Lord”, who will become the Mother of God. Mary is perplexed by how this could happen to her. Gabriel tells her that “she will conceive a child and call him Jesus, and he will be great and be called the Son of the Most High.”

Does Mary think she is not worthy? Is she wondering why she was picked out of all the girls in the land to hold such a place with God? No one really knows, but we do know one thing: she has great faith and sacrifice! She gives herself to God. “May it be done to me according to thy word.” Wow! What faith! She gives her whole self to God and becomes the Mother of God. Not just that, but she surrenders her whole life entirely and completely to God. David and Mary both surrender themselves to God.

So as Christmas draws closer, we are preparing for the coming of Jesus Christ, our Savior. It is our time to give ourselves completely and wholly to Him. God sent us His Son Jesus, to walk, work and live as a human. He journeys with all of us in our lives. He was born to Mary just to understand what being human entails.

So as Christmas nears and we prepare for Jesus Christ our Savior to be born, let us give ourselves to God as Mary did by simply listening, accepting, and committing to Him. It is a perfect time to quiet ourselves and know that God is with us, and to begin a conversation with Him that continues now and forever. To know God and be in His presence now is much richer than just looking for the future time when we meet Him face to face.

Faith and surrender - the common actions from David and Mary; they show us this spiritual phenomenon known as “sanctifying grace”. Let all of us share in the divine life with Christ that begins now, not later. Amen.

