

 <p><b>St. Cyril of Alexandria</b> 28 Walton St. Alexandria Bay, NY</p> <hr/> <p>Saturday 5:00 p.m. Sunday 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p><b>The Catholic Community of Alexandria</b> 17 Rock St. Alexandria Bay, NY 13607 315-482-2670</p> <p><a href="mailto:pastor@stcyriils.org">pastor@stcyriils.org</a>   <a href="http://www.stcyriils.org">www.stcyriils.org</a></p> <p><b>Rev. Douglas G. Comstock, Pastor</b> <b>Bernard Slate, Deacon</b> <b>Joel Walentuk, Deacon</b></p>	 <p><b>St. Francis Xavier</b> 43596 State Route 37 Redwood, NY</p> <hr/> <p>Sunday 8:30 a.m.</p>
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**Liturgy Schedule for Week of December 22, 2019**

**Saturday, Dec. 21, 2019      Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
5:00 p.m.      Larry McCauley by Dean & LouAnn Honeywell

**Sunday, Dec. 22, 2019**  
8:30 a.m. (SFX)      Arthur Watson by the Estate of Emma George  
10:00 a.m.      Tom Black by Peg & Dan Wallo

**Monday, Dec. 23, 2019**  
8:00 a.m.      Our Parishioners

**Tuesday, Dec. 24, 2013      Christmas Eve**  
5:00 p.m.      The Members of our Parish Family      (SC)  
7:00 p.m.      The Faithful Departed      (SFX)

**Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2013      Christmas Day**  
10:00 a.m.      The Intentions of the Celebrant      (SC)

**Thursday, Dec. 26, 2019**  
8:00 a.m.      *No Liturgy*

**Friday, Dec. 27, 2019**  
8:00 a.m.      *No Liturgy*

**Saturday, Dec. 28, 2019      The Holy Family**  
5:00 p.m.      Kevin Tift by Tammy & John Quinn

**Sunday, Dec. 29, 2019**  
8:30 a.m. (SFX)      The Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day)  
10:00 a.m.      Nancy Wallo by the Wallo and Rose Families

**Sacrament of Reconciliation**

**Saturday      3:45 – 4:30 p.m. at St. Cyril of Alexandria Church**  
**Sunday      8:00 – 8:15 a.m. at St. Francis Xavier Church**

**Our Stewardship**

December 14 - 15, 2019

Envelopes	\$2,111.50	Priests' Retirement	\$802.50
Plate	\$730.00	Christmas Flowers	\$190.00
Youth		Religious Retirement	\$65.00
Electronic Giving	\$369.21	Fuel Collection	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,210.71</b>	<b>Total Fuel Contrib.to Date</b>	<b>\$17,852.00</b>
Last Year	\$2,784.45	Total Fuel Goal in '19-'20	\$20,298.00

**Collection to support the Retirement Plan for Priests.**

The Diocese of Ogdensburg's Retirement Plan for Priests has long been supported by parish contributions from its annual Christmas Collection. Currently 33 retired priests, and 12 active priests age 70 and older, are expected to receive pension benefits of \$900,000 in 2019-20. Also 100% of the cost of health insurance premiums for retired priests, estimated at \$220,000 this Fiscal year, is paid by the Plan. Your generous contribution not only supports current retirees but will also help provide for the retirement needs of priests who will retire in the future. Say *thank you* to your pastor and all priests of the diocese through a generous contribution to our Christmas Collection.

## Christmas 2019

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

*“Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord.” (Luke 2:10-11)*

A constant theme that Pope Francis has incorporated into his teaching is that of accompaniment. Of course, the premier example of accompaniment is the Incarnation, that Joyful Mystery of our faith when God, born of the Virgin Mary, chose to accompany us on our earthly journeys. The Christmas story is a divine love story of accompaniment.

In our recent *ad limina* visit to Rome, the Holy Father spoke of the importance of the family and its tragic brokenness today. He urged us to accompany, with tenderness and care, members of broken families and to support struggling and strong families. We each have a role to play in the Christmas story as fellow companions in faith, beginning with those closest to us, our families.

So many persons need someone to lean on, someone to show them Jesus. Our Godparents and Confirmation sponsors will want to recommit themselves to accompanying the baptized and confirmed in their walk of faith. We enter more fully the Christmas story when we take the time to understand and support the fearful migrant, the confused teen, the depressed homeless, the victim of abuse, the mentally ill, the desperate addict, the overwhelmed parent, the forgotten elderly. No one should walk alone.

Christmas is the divine reminder that our God never forgets us. Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life who never leaves us alone. It is no wonder that this is a time of great hope, joy and peace. The Christmas story is our love story! For the faithful one, we know how the story ends. As the New Year approaches, let us turn the page to a new chapter in our story. *Christ-led, Christ-fed and Hope-filled*, we seek to be the companion whose own personal encounter with Jesus becomes the witness for others to want to seek the Prince of Peace.

May the Christ Child bring you and your loved ones the Gift of Love, the Blessing of Hope and the Promise of Peace. A blessed Christmas and joy-filled New Year!

Faithfully yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley  
Bishop of Ogdensburg

### **“O Little Town of Bethlehem”**

This religious hymn tells the story of the birth of Jesus and was inspired by a pilgrim’s moving Christmas Eve experience in the Holy Land.

Phillips Brooks, an Episcopal priest, wrote this beautiful Christmas hymn for his parish’s Sunday School children at Holy Trinity Church, Philadelphia, following a pilgrimage to Bethlehem in 1865. The hymn was printed on an informal leaflet in December 1868 and later appeared in *The Sunday School Hymnal* in 1871.

According to the story, Brooks traveled on horseback between Jerusalem and Bethlehem on Christmas Eve. “Before dark we rode out of town to the field where they say the shepherds saw the star. It is a fenced piece of ground with a cave in it, in which, strangely enough, they put the shepherds. . . . Somewhere in those fields we rode through, the shepherds must have been. As we passed, the shepherds were still ‘keeping watch over their flocks,’ or leading them home to fold.” [From: *Dr. Hawn, Professor of Sacred Music at Perkins School of Theology.*]

*Rev. Brooks participated in the Christmas Eve service at the Church of the Nativity. It was “conducted in . . . Constantine’s ancient basilica (326 A.D.) built over the traditional site of the Nativity, a cave. The service lasted from 10 P.M. to 3 A.M.!”*

Phillips asked the church organist, Lewis Redner, to compose a simple melody for the children to sing on Christmas Eve. Redner had great trouble finding the perfect tune, so decided to go to bed and try in the morning. During his restless sleep, he said he heard just the right music, got up, and wrote it down; it is the melody just as we sing it today. He told Rev. Brooks, “I think it was a gift from heaven.”

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) paired this text with the British folk tune “Forest Green” for *The English Hymnal* (1906); this tune is the dominant in Great Britain, while the Americans use the tune “St. Louis”.

Although there is a difference of opinion on the tune, hymnologists on both sides of the Atlantic agree on the poignancy of the text. Dr. Watson sums it up well: “Not only does the hymn beautifully describe the little town asleep in the December night; it also gracefully modulates from a description of Christmas into an examination of the meaning of Christmas: first in its encouragement of charity and faith, and then into the coming of Christ into the human heart.”

*Judy Pearson*