

St. Mary's Catholic Church

4th Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2019

Dear Parishioners:

I am not able to define what Christmas spirit is all about but I do know what it is. Christmas spirit is cheerful kindness, unselfish generosity and exuberant joy.

Two persons who exemplify Christmas spirit are our Blessed Mother Mary and beloved St. Joseph. They did so in an eminent manner in the Gospel stories regarding the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. All of us are familiar with the Annunciation account which is found in St. Luke's Gospel that tells the story of a wonder-filled and trusting young maiden named Mary who accepted God's invitation to become the mother of His Son Jesus. But on this Fourth Sunday of Advent of this year we hear an Annunciation account that gives us a different perspective and point of view. Today's Gospel passage from St. Matthew tells the story of St. Joseph's experience as he discovers that his beloved fiancée Mary is pregnant.

In ancient Jewish times an engagement was a formal process in which a couple was considered to be husband and wife although they did not live together. In order to break an engagement a divorce was necessary. Mary and Joseph were engaged when Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant and he knew he was not the father of the unborn child. Joseph was a righteous man, meaning that he was faithful to the observance of the Jewish law. According to Jewish law he could have done the acceptable and legal thing and had Mary put to death for committing adultery. However Joseph did not want to bring shame and pain upon Mary and her family so he decided to quietly divorce her, legally ending the engagement. Such was his intention when angel of God spoke to him in a dream and told him why and how Mary conceived this unborn child. It was through the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit that this child was conceived. This unborn child would receive the name Jesus which meant "God saves us from our sins." All of this would then fulfill Isaiah's prophecy: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, meaning 'God is with us.'" Being a man of deep faith and trusting in God's word, Joseph submits to God's plan and marries Mary and he becomes the legal guardian of Jesus.

"God is with us" is the truth that we know and experience in our daily lives. In these final days of Advent may we offer to God our praise and thanksgiving for this special time of anticipation and preparation for Christmas. May we be like Mary and Joseph always trusting in God's plan for us. And may we exemplify their Christmas spirit by continually doing God's will all the days of our lives. Merry Christmas and blessings to you and your families.

Love & prayers,
Fr. John

Weekend Masses

Sat Dec 21	4:00 p.m.	Leonard & Sally Rieman, Ann Wiechart
Sun Dec 22	10:00 a.m.	Dennis Warren
Sat Dec 28	4:00 p.m.	In thanksgiving, George Donaldson
Sun Dec 29	10:00 a.m.	Dick & Tootie Schlumbohm

Communion Service

Fri Dec 27 8:00 a.m. St. Mary's

SUNDAY COLLECTION

Adults	\$3,174.00	Loose \$487.00
Children	\$28.65	Total \$3,661.00

76 envelopes returned = 36%



*Thank you for your generosity!
Thank you also to those who give
electronically!!*

Assignments for December 28 & 29, 2019

Money Counters: Janet Begg and Barb Galvan

4:00 p.m. – please sign the sheet in the main entrance

Greeters: Basil Meyer

Cantor: Steve McCullough

Ushers: John Parinello and Chuck Niese

Lector: Jenny Roby

E.M.: Edna Conkling, Basil Meyer, Jeanne Parinello

Servers: Jacob Granger and Addison Businger

10:00 a.m.

Greeters: Lisa and Logan Welch

Cantor: Choir

Ushers: Cindy Bandish and Roger Brodman

Lectors: Joe Herrmann and Chris Denecker

E.M.: John Schulte, Kim Garmatter, Mike Klima,
Jerry Wehri, Kelly Yarnell

Servers: Grace Yarnell, Ayla Grandey

Readings for December 29, 2019

Feast of the Holy Family

1st Reading: Sirach 3:2 – 6, 12 – 14

2nd Reading: Colossians 3:12 – 21

Gospel Reading: Matthew 2:13–15, 19–23

