SUNDAY MASSES
Saturday 5:00pm
Sunday 7:30am, 9:00am,
11:00am, 12:45pm, 5:00pm

DAILY MASSES
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday
7:30am, 12:00pm
Wednesday 7:30am, 6:30pm
Friday 8:15am, 12:00pm
Saturday 8:30am

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
Saturday 4:00pm–4:45pm
Wednesday 5:30pm–6:20pm
Monday–Thursday after morning Mass

ROSARY
Friday 6:30am

FIRST FRIDAY MASS
January 6 — In the Chapel
7:00pm - Rosary & Confessions
7:30pm - Mass

FIRST SATURDAY MASS
January 7 — In the Church
7:45am - Meditation & Rosary
8:30am - Mass

MISA EN ESPAÑOL
Diciembre 10 — En la Capilla
Segundo y cuarto sábado de cada mes a las
7:00pm. Confesiones en Español antes de
la misa de 6:00 a 6:45 pm. Comunión a los
enfermos, Irma Martínez
Tel 281-313-2833
OUR MISSION:

We the people of St. Laurence Catholic Church are centered in the love of Christ and live to glorify God in all we do.

PARISH OFFICE

3100 Sweetwater Blvd, Sugar Land, TX 77479
281-980-9812

Pastor: Fr. Drew Wood
Parochial Vicar: Fr. Jaison Thomas, MSFS, jaisonthomas@stlaurence.org
Deacon: Renato (Rey) Arellano, deacon.rey@stlaurence.org
Deacon: Albert Bothe, deaconal@ssjd.org
Deacon: Don Burns, don@donburns.com
Deacon: Charles Plant, stlaurencedeacon@aol.com
Parish Administrator: Tony Oltremari, toltremari@stlaurence.org
Liturgy: Theresa Rawls, trawls@stlaurence.org
Facilities: Deanna Ennis, dennis@stlaurence.org
Social Concerns: Pennie DeGroot, pdegroot@stlaurence.org
Parish Life & Communications: Sharon Ehrenkranz, sehrenkranz@stlaurence.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICES

3103 Sweetwater Blvd, Sugar Land, TX 77479
281-265-5774

Director Religious Education: Laura Stephens, lstephens@stlaurence.org
Religious Education Registrar: Ruba Kaiser, rkaiser@stlaurence.org
Adult Faith Formation: Justin Frato, jfrato@stlaurence.org
Children’s Faith Formation: Joan Hastreiter, jhastreiter@stlaurence.org
Youth Ministry: Kris Frank, kfrank@stlaurence.org
Sara Sahlezghi, ssahlezghi@stlaurence.org
Eric Painter, epainter@stlaurence.org

ST. LAURENCE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

2630 Austin Parkway, Sugar Land, TX 77479
281-980-0500

Principal: Suzanne Barto, sbarto@stlaurence.org
Registrar: Marie Brown, mbrown@stlaurence.org

WEEKDAY CHILDREN’S PROGRAM

3103 Sweetwater Blvd, Sugar Land, TX 77479
281-313-0329

Director: Becky Wilkinson, b Wilkinson@stlaurence.org

PARISH LEADERSHIP COUNCILS

281-980-9812

Pastoral Council: Tom Ruck, rucktg@gmail.com
Finance Council: Bob Ladd, robert.ladd@haynesboone.com
Discipleship Council: Marc Sherman, MarcSherman@iheartmedia.com

PARISH OFFICE & COURTYARD

The parish office provides services including pastoral care, liturgical planning, business, communications, & administrative support, and social concerns & social justice support. The parish hall and meeting rooms are available through reservation by calling Nia Sepe at 281-980-9812.
Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:00am-9:00pm; Friday 8:00am-6:00pm; and Saturday 8:30am-12:00noon.

AVE MARIA PARISH LIFE CENTER

The Ave Maria Parish Life Center is located across the street from the church and is the site for all religious education classes, programs and offices. Inquiries and drop-ins are welcome during office hours: Monday through Thursday 8:00am-9:00pm and Friday 8:00am-4:00pm. The Weekday Children’s Program is offered for infants through pre-school aged children. During the school year, WCP hours Monday-Friday are 8:00am-3:00pm.

PARISH SCHOOL & CHAPEL

St. Laurence Catholic School provides strong academics in a Christian environment to 720 students enrolled in PreK4 through Grade 8. Office Hours: Monday-Friday are 8:00am-4:00pm.
Adjacent to the school is the Chapel of the Divine Mercy which offers Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and serves as the site for smaller liturgies.
The peace that comes from the Holy Spirit

Peace is the theme of the Second Sunday of Advent. The first reading describes Christ the Messiah, who came from the line of Jesse, the father of King David. It also describes how to obtain peace - a peace that sustains us even in the midst of troubles: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him." Can you feel the Holy Spirit "resting" on you?

We experience true peace when we're in a restful relationship with God, i.e., when we're not struggling against him and his ways and his plans for us. Peace does not depend on bringing to an end the struggles we have with people or the problems we have with financial shortages or addictions or health, etc. We can work hard to accomplish peace in any trial, win the war, and still not be at peace.

Peace comes to us in the wisdom and understanding that we get from the Holy Spirit. Peace comes from following the Spirit’s counsel and relying upon God’s strength. Peace comes from gaining knowledge of the truth that God wants us to know, in total submission to his authority, obediently acting upon the truth.

In the Gospel reading, John the Baptist reminds us to "prepare the way of the Lord and make straight his paths." To receive the Spirit of God and his peace, we must prepare ourselves to meet Jesus in the Eucharist and in all the other ways that he comes to us. What kind of preparation produces peace? It’s the work of honestly identifying our sins, happy that God is merciful, and straightening our crooked paths, because we realize that God’s ways are really what’s best for us.

Whatever separates us from God’s peace, we must get rid of it. To do this, we have the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Penitential Rite at the beginning of every Mass. Christ equips us for the journey into true peace!

Questions for Personal Reflection:
What turmoil is going on in your life? What has stolen your peace? Where is Jesus? What obstacles (e.g., unforgiveness or resentment) do you need to repent of to see him and feel his peace?

Questions for Community Faith Sharing:
What methods do you use to settle down and rest in the Spirit of Jesus when turmoil is spinning around you? What kind of prayer helps? Do you go on retreat or confide in a spiritual director? What are some other ideas?

**PRAY FOR THE SICK**

Please pray for these members of our parish family and all our loved ones listed in the Book of the Sick:


**PRAY FOR SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN**

CW2 Brett Aderhold, US Army, AV
Spc David Ambrocik, US Army
Pvt Michael Baird, US Army
SA Matthew Baird, US Navy
P.O. 5 Debra Barnette, US Navy
LCpl Trevor Bello, USMC
PFC John Blair, US Army
Maj. Michael Carroll, USMC
Staff Sgt. Jason Chacon, USMC
Lt. Matthew Chesney, US Navy
Maj. Christopher Coffman, US Air Force
Cap. Patrick Coffman, USMC
LTJG Colin Day, US Navy
1stLt Andrew DeSplinter, US Army
Sgt. Nicholas Dockum, US Army
Cap. Brandon Driscoll, USMC
Maj. James Dunphy, US Army
2ndLt Michael Eberhardt, US Army
Cap. Stacey Eberhardt, US Army
Derek Farias, US Navy
Cap. Matthew Fenelon, USMC
Pvt. Johnneil Xavier George, US Army
Sgt. Philip Graham, US Army
1stLt Spencer Henry, US Army
PVT Liam Hill, US Army
Daniel Hines, US Navy
SGG Matthew Hollobaugh, US Army Reserve
1LT Michelle Horstman, US Army
SPC Joshua Keenan, US Army
Joseph Kingserki, US Navy
EM4 James Locus, US Navy
PFC Philip Loera, US Army
PFC John Lundgren, US Army
Amn Joseph Marcellus, USAF
LCpl William Marcellus, USMC
TSgt David March, Texas Air National Guard
Cap. Brendan McPartland, USMC
1stLt Todd Miller, US Army
CB, Richard Pinard, US Navy
QMSN Bryce Prochaska, US Navy
LCpl Byron Ray Ramirez, USMC
Sgt. Santiago Ramirez, US Army
1stLt Taylor Ramrath, US Army
Sgt. Barbara L. Rangel, USMC
SSgt Jonathan Slusser, US Air Force
LTJG Kevin Stransky, US Navy
CTM3 Nicholas Stuhlman, US Navy
Cpl Daniel Thesing, USMC
Maj. Michael Thesing, USMC
1stLt Kevin Wheeler, US Army
Sgt. Bryce Whitley, US Army
AM Troy Yelverton, US Navy
PVT Adrian Zaldivar, USMC

**MASS INTENTIONS**

**SATURDAY, DEC 3**
5:00pm – Mr. & Mrs. D.F. Coats (D)

**SUNDAY, DEC 4**
7:30am – Ron McGinty (D)
9:00am – Charles Donovan (D)
11:00am – Philip Le (D)
12:45pm – Joseph Flaherty (D)
5:00pm – St. Laurence Parishioners

**MONDAY, DEC 5**
7:30am – John In-Sik Cho (D)
12:00pm – Jaime Urrego (D)

**TUESDAY, DEC 6**
7:30am – Mike Mule (D)
12:00pm – Albert Bossley (D)

**WEDS, DEC 7**
7:30am – Chuong Ly (D)
6:30pm – Sampaguita Simeon (D)

**THURSDAY, DEC 8**
8:15am – Violeta Teran (D)
12:00pm – Carmeline Cangelosi (D)
6:30 pm – Victoria LaPlaca (D)

**FRIDAY, DEC 9**
12:45pm – Joseph Flaherty (D)
11:00am – Philip Le (D)
7:30am – Jaime Urrego (D)
12:00pm – Jaime Urrego (D)

**SATURDAY, DEC 10**
8:30am – Vicky Chang (I)
5:00pm – Cooter Larrieu (D)

**SUNDAY, DEC 11**
7:30am – Sr. Catherine Manning, OSB (D)
9:00am – Eugeneio Rios (D)
11:00am – Charles Donovan (D)
12:45pm – Rosa Recupero (D)
5:00pm – St. Laurence Parishioners

**PRAY FOR OUR PARISHIONERS IN RELIGIOUS FORMATION**

Marc Fryer, Brother Peter Francis (Brian Kelsch), Chad Henry, Bryan Williams, Sister M. Philomena (Krystle Cagandahan), Sister Daniela (Megan Bennett), Sister Rachel Marie of the Pierced Hearts of Jesus & Mary (Rachel Gosda), Collin Brown, Christopher Meyer, Margaret Uche, Dennis Henderson

**PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THOSE IN PRISON**

Following are the prayer intentions of people visited by our Correctional Ministry. Pray for:

AROUND THE ARCHDIOCESE

DEC 7: MILITIA IMMACULATA CONSECRATION
Join others in a Marian consecration through St. Maximilian Kolbe’s Militia of the Immaculata on the vigil of the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 7, at Our Lady of Czestochowa Catholic Church (1731 Blalock Road, Houston). The Vigil Mass will be celebrated by Fr. Alvaro Interiano at 7:00pm, and the Consecration Ceremony will follow the homily at Mass. Call 281-793-3394 to RSVP.

DEC 10: ‘CARDINAL’S CHRISTMAS’ FUNDRAISER
A Cardinal’s Christmas will be held at River Oaks Country Club on Saturday, Dec 10, 12:00-2:00pm. Each table purchase includes a Christmas activity bag for each child, a 2016 commemorative gift, and a scrumptious menu for children and adults. Tables at the $5,000 level include a keepsake family portrait with His Eminence. Proceeds benefit Catholic Charities’ children and family services. For details and to purchase tickets, go to www.catholiccharities.org or call 713-874-6629.

DEC 15: INTERFAITH CONVERSATION WITH “3 AMIGOS”
The “three amigos” Rabbi Samuel Karff, Archbishop Joseph Fiorenza, and Rev. William Lawson will share their interfaith work and how it’s influenced their own spirituality and ministry in service to the community at a special event on Thursday, Dec 15, at 7:00pm at the Rothko Chapel. Moderated by journalist Melanie Lawson, this session will highlight how by working together, these three faith leaders tackled some of Houston’s most challenging problems, including homelessness, juvenile incarceration, and fair housing. A reception follows the program. Rabbi Karff is Rabbi Emeritus at Congregation Beth Israel; Archbishop Fiorenza is Archbishop Emeritus of Galveston-Houston; and Rev. Lawson is the founding pastor of Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church. Get more info and register at rothkochapel.org/experience/events/register/761.

DEC 18: “THE NATIVITY” A CHRISTMAS PLAY
The Catholic Charismatic Center is presenting “The Nativity” a Christmas play, on Sunday, December 18, at 7:00pm. There is no admission fee and everyone is welcome to attend. The Catholic Charismatic Center is located at 1949 Cullen Blvd, Houston. For more information, please go to www.cccgh.com or call 713-236-9977.

PARISH CELEBRATIONS THIS WEEK

BAPTISMS
Noah Albarran, Bastian Smith, Avery Smith, Andrew Carruthers, Tripp Wilson, Isla McMillan, Ellie McMillan, Lincoln Trevino

FUNERALS
Maria Navarro, mother of Alina Nungesser

PARISH FINANCIAL INFORMATION

WEEKLY OFFERTORY
- November 27 Collection $ 53,639
- Registered Households 7,391
- Envelopes Used 778
- Loose Checks 211
- 2nd Collection: MISSION APPEAL $ 54,213

AUTOMATED GIVING
- Monthly Offertory $ 178,410
- Participants 912

DIOCESAN SERVICES FUND
- 2016 Parish Goal $ 495,000
- Amount Paid $ 432,190
- Amount Pledged $ 450,404
- Participants 1,072

Diocesan Services Fund
His Mercy Endures Forever
If you haven’t yet pledged or contributed to the Diocesan Services Fund, please do so before year-end. Your gift to the DSF enables us to reach people across the archdiocese through more than 60 programs. We are still $60,000 short of our parish goal of $495,000. Please go to www.archgh.org/dsf or pick up a donation envelope at the Hospitality Desk, donate, and mail it in today!

THANK YOU!

MISSION APPEAL THANKS
Last week, Sister Lisa Valentini, MSC, of the Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, spoke at all six Masses. She described her mission work and invited our parish to support her order’s mission to bring our faith, love, comfort, refuge and necessities to the most underprivileged around the globe. In response, our parish contributed over $50,000 on Sunday, and the donations are still coming in! Thank you for uniting with these sisters in their important mission work!

KINGDOM CARE
Childcare is provided through Kingdom Care, a loving, Christian, and safe environment for young children while their parents attend Mass and other parish programs. Register in advance at the parish office with Christy Delamora at 281-980-9812.

WEDDING PREPARATION
Next classes: DEC 13 and JAN 12
The standard preparation time for weddings is 9-12 months in advance of the desired date. All engaged couples must attend an information session, usually offered every other month. Register with Theresa Rawls at 281-980-9812.

BAPTISM PREPARATION
Next classes: JAN 14 and FEB 11
The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated on the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Sundays each month. To schedule a baptism call Rose Davis at 281-980-9812. The parent prep class is offered monthly.
**CHILDREN’S FAITH FORMATION**

**PRESCHOOL CCE MEETS TODAY!**

**ELEMENTARY CCE THIS WEEK**

**Advent and Mary**

We begin CCE this week by praying the 5th Decade of the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary together in Guardian Angels Hall. *Parents are welcome!* Advent is a season of hope as well as a time to search our hearts in preparation for rededicating our lives to Christ. Take action by serving others, spending additional time in prayer, reading Scripture, and participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation to prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas. This week in CCE, we will also learn about Mary, who trusted God with all her heart. She listened closely to God and did what God wanted her to do, making her our role model in faith. As a family, discuss ways you can each acknowledge and display your trust of God in your lives.

**CCE Home Study Families**

The 2nd mandatory Parent Enrichment/Homework Checkpoint Meeting is TOMORROW, **Monday, Dec 5, 7-8pm**, in Marian Hall. Children are welcome, but not required to attend. Our topic, presented by Sara Alexander, MA, is *Nurtured Heart Approach: Fostering Greatness and Peace in Your Home*.

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**CHILDREN LEARNING & SERVING AT WCP**

The Weekday Children’s Program helped to fill pantry packs for the Share God’s Bounty Thanksgiving meal drive by collecting and sorting over **400 cans of soup and pasta**. Social Concerns says thank you for your service!

Find the **WCP Calendar** on the parish website: [www.stlaurence.org/weekday-childrens-program](http://www.stlaurence.org/weekday-childrens-program)

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**CALLING ALL SLCS ALUMNI**

Preparation is underway for the winter edition of *The Saints’ Scoop*, our Alumni Magazine! We want to know what our Saints have been up to since leaving SLCS. Please share your info and photos at [https://goo.gl/forms/i9qa44n4pTEPXlX2](https://goo.gl/forms/i9qa44n4pTEPXlX2) or email Adriana Gutierrez at agutierrez@stlaurence.org.

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**SLCS MISSION STATEMENT**

As a pastoral instrument of the Church, St. Laurence Catholic School educates and develops the whole Christian person in body, mind, and spirit through the trinity of parent, child, and educator.
EDGE is way more than effective catechesis. It’s Catholic Middle School Youth Ministry that helps young people with life’s most challenging years. Edge Nights take place Wednesday evenings, September through April at the Ave Maria Center. All 6th-8th graders are invited and encouraged to attend. Interested in helping out? Contact Eric Painter at epainter@stlaurence.org.

WEDNESDAY IS EDGE NIGHT
DEC 7: 700-815pm, Edge in Marian Hall
All middle school youth are invited and encouraged to join us. If you haven’t registered yet, you can find the forms online or at the Ave Maria Center.

Life Teen is for any teen currently in high school. This ministry is St. Laurence’s main outreach to 9-12th graders. Through teaching and social events we hope to build up the kingdom of God one teen at a time. For info and to help, please contact Kris Frank at kfrank@stlaurence.org.

LIFE TEEN TONIGHT!
SUNDAY, DEC 4 630-815pm Ave Maria Center
Current focus is "The Summit" a series on the Mass. Encountering Jesus in the Eucharist at Mass changes everything!

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS
TUESDAYS 600-730pm Youth Hall
Discipleship Groups offer teens an opportunity to dig even deeper. Open to all high school students.

LEGACY
2ND/4TH TUESDAYS, 800-900pm Youth Hall
Open to Juniors and Seniors.

WKND Retreat
Jan 13-16, 2017
$175
All high schoolers invited
Contact Kris Frank

Babies and all signs of new things are reminders of His deep love for us. When we welcome them, we share in this "gaze" of love. I wanted to convey this through the painting. The circle is symbolic of the Blessed Sacrament. The mass of colors are symbolic of the beautiful mess that is this life.

All things can work together for good for those who love God. So let Him gaze upon you in love; He will transform your heart.

Sonya Purdy is a parishioner and artist. You can reach her at texanpurdys@gmail.com.

CONFIRMATION
Confirmation at St. Laurence is part of Youth Ministry and Religious Education. We bring teens closer to Christ through this Sacrament of the Church. Contact Sara Sahlezghi at ssahlezghi@stlaurence.org. Confirmation is open to sophomores and juniors in high school. Teens who do not attend Catholic School should attend Life Nights (HS religious education) for at least a year prior to beginning preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, to ensure they have been catechized and are prepared for the journey to Confirmation.
Make it your best Advent ever! Listed are some resources to prepare your hearts for the coming of Christ this Christmas:

**FORMED Advent Study:** Experience the joy of the true meaning of Christmas at FORMED.org (use parish code 012fc)

**DYNAMIC CATHOLIC Best Advent Ever:** A free email program to help prepare for Christmas at www.dynamiccatholic.com

**JOY IS ON THE WAY:** A Day by Day with Pope Francis, which provides helpful insights along with a meditative musing. Go to stlaurence.org/advent

**JOURNEY THROUGH ADVENT:** Reflections on the lectionary readings by Art Zannoni, an award-winning freelance writer, scripture scholar, teacher, and theologian. Access it at stlaurence.org/advent

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**THIS WEEK IN ADULT FAITH FORMATION**

**MONDAY**
- Men's Bible Study (Weekly)
  7:30-9:00pm, St Francis Room
  Contact: Steve Ewbank | 281-703-3873 | ewbanksix@gmail.com
- Lay Apostle Prayer Group (1st Monday, December 5)
  10:30am-12:00pm OR 7:00-8:30pm, St. Anne Room
  Contact: Kay Quenan | 281-265-3238 | kquenan@icloud.com

**TUESDAY**
- Men's Bible Study (Weekly)
  6:15-7:15am, St Francis Room
  Contact: Steve Ewbank | 281-703-3873 | ewbanksix@gmail.com
- Tuesday Morning Bible Study (Weekly)
  9:00-11:45am, Marian Hall, Contact: Joe Kanusky | 281-265-4084

**WEDNESDAY**
- That Man Is You
  5:30-7:00am Marian Hall
  Contact: Steve Ewbank | 281-980-5575 | ewbanksix@gmail.com
- Contemplative Prayer
  9:30am-12:00 pm Corpus Christi Room
  Contact: Elaine Smith | 281-499-6660 | emchabert@comcast.net
- Eucharistic Apostles of Divine Mercy (1st and 3rd Wednesdays)
  7:30-9:00pm, Corpus Christi Room
  Contact: Patti Kallemeen | 281-438-0696

**THURSDAY**
- Catholic Men Called to be Saints (Weekly)
  6:00-7:30am, Guardian Angels Hall
  Contact: Jim Kij | 713-855-0108 | jimmkij@comcast.net
- Divine Mercy Cenacle
  9:00am-12:00pm, St Francis Room
  Contact: Sally Flowers | sallyjoflowers@comcast.net
- Thursday Bible Study (No December, starts again Jan 12)
  1:00-2:00pm, St Anne Room or 7:15-8:30pm AMC Room 205
  Contact: Julie Evett | jevett@comcast.net

**WWW.STLAURENCE.ORG/AFF**

facebook.com/groups/stlaurenceadultfaith

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**NEW Classes Starting Soon**

**Attend a Preview Session**
- **Wednesday, Dec 14, 7-8 pm, AMC St. Clare**

**Classes held on Wednesday evenings 7:00-8:30pm**
- **Jan 4-Mar 8, 2017**
  **Ave Maria Center, St. Clare Meeting Room**

We all need a plan for our money. FPU teaches God's way of handling money. Videos, class discussions and interactive small group activities provided. For more info, contact Jason Davalos: jdv99@gmail.com or 832-876-9874.

**To register:** Go to fpu.com/1019835.

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**LAY APOSTLE PRAYER GROUP**
- **Meeting this Monday, Dec 5, St. Anne Room**
- Choose from either 10:30am-12:00pm or 7:00-8:30pm

For more info, contact Kay Quenan at 281-265-3238

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**ADVENT BEGINS TODAY**

Deepen your Experience of the Advent Season

Make it your best Advent ever! Listed are some resources to prepare your hearts for the coming of Christ this Christmas:

**FORMED Advent Study:** Experience the joy of the true meaning of Christmas at FORMED.org (use parish code 012fc)

**DYNAMIC CATHOLIC Best Advent Ever:** A free email program to help prepare for Christmas at www.dynamiccatholic.com

**JOY IS ON THE WAY:** A Day by Day with Pope Francis, which provides helpful insights along with a meditative musing. Go to stlaurence.org/advent

**JOURNEY THROUGH ADVENT:** Reflections on the lectionary readings by Art Zannoni, an award-winning freelance writer, scripture scholar, teacher, and theologian. Access it at stlaurence.org/advent
As Catholics our Faith is meant to be put into practice. Christianity is more than a set of beliefs; it’s a way of life. Walking Toward Eternity is a powerful seminar that will help you to put your faith into practice, draw you closer to Christ, and challenge you to make real and lasting changes in your life, changes that will help you to become the person you hope to be. Jeff Cavins is the creator of The Great Adventure Catholic Bible Study Program and director of the Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Catechetical Institute.

Friday Night January 6, 2017
Join us for a FREE Talk:
Living The Life You Don’t Have Time For
Check-in: 6:00 pm
Talk: 7-8:30 pm
Refreshments and book-signing reception with Jeff Cavins following the talk.

Saturday January 7, 2017
Walking Toward Eternity Seminar
Registration: 8 am
Seminar: 9 am-3 pm
Light Breakfast and Lunch Included.

Saturday Seminar Registration Cost:
$50 per person, $75 for immediate family up to 4.
Registration includes seminar materials.

Online registration at stlaurence.org/jeffcavins

For more information:
Justin Frato, Adult Faith Formation Coordinator
Phone: 281-265-5774 • Email: jfrato@stlaurence.org
In today’s Gospel reading John the Baptist warns his listeners: “Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!” The Church’s yearly Advent herald is a call to repentance. The season of Advent urges us to be open to a conversion of heart. Christian stewards heed this call daily, and take the need for conversion in their lives seriously. As a family of faith, do we hear this call to conversion amidst the massive holiday spending? The increase in credit card debt? The urge to buy things that are not necessary? The incivility on the roadways during the holidays? Are there patterns in our own lives that need to be converted?

www.catholicstewardship.org

STEWARD AMONG US

CINDY MARTIN

My family joined St. Laurence six years ago. We fell in love with the LifeTeen Mass and have been there every Sunday ever since. I've been married to an extremely generous and compassionate man, Dave, for 23 years. Together we have two high school aged sons, Jessy and Abe. I was blown away by our Youth Ministry program and became a Core Member for Edge 4 years ago. When my oldest moved on to LifeTeen, I added LifeTeen Core Member to my service and I have been doing double duty for the last 3 years. I have attended 7 youth conferences & retreats with our teens and have loved every minute. In 2012, I felt called to follow my grandmother’s example and became an Extraordinary Minister for the Sick and Homebound. I receive so much joy by bringing Jesus to those who cannot come to our Eucharistic celebration. One of my passions is serving those with special needs and St. Laurence has invited me to help facilitate the faith formation for these students, along with all students in the Preschool and Elementary CCE programs. My family and I feel blessed to be a part of such a vibrant and interactive parish, which offers so many beautiful opportunities to live out our faith by serving those among us.

It is impossible for peace to exist without dialogue. All the wars, all the strife, all the unsolved problems over which we clash are due to a lack of dialogue.

When there is a problem, talk: this makes peace.

Pope Francis
August 21, 2013

Ask Paula

Q.

Happy 20th Anniversary, Paula!

A.

Continuing on my 20 year stretch (or sentence— just kidding), I have made SO many good friends here. Actually, Mark and I both have. When we moved here from Connecticut, we didn’t know anyone. We started coming to Mass here, and that’s when I saw the job opening. I’m not bragging, but I applied, interviewed and was hired that day by Deacon Lee Tollett. (I was probably the only one who applied, right??) Anyway, if you know me, you know what a talker I am. So much that some parishioners stop by the office just to chat. We refer to them as “the regulars” or FOP (friends of Paula). There’s too many of you to list, but know that you guys make my day! FD and I talk about how long we both have been here, and how long we both will be here… Like I say, what else would I doo…?

Paula Savo has been our Parish Receptionist for 20 years and knows the practical answers to (practically) everything. Call 281-980-9812 or email her at psavo@stlaurence.org.
The Kingdom of Heaven Is at Hand
Matthew 3:1-12

Who is the strange character in today’s Gospel who lives in the desert, wears camel’s hair clothing, and eats wild food? Even though he seems eccentric, people flock to hear him and to be baptized.

In challenging the Pharisees and Sadducees, and in pointing to the One who is to come after him, John the Baptist paints a picture of an ideal world. While doing that, John is convinced that the One to come isn’t going to bring about this world alone. The new world, God’s kingdom, will only come when each person courageously lives his or her life as Jesus lived his. For instance, John tells his followers that the Messiah they’re expecting to transform this world will actually be concerned with judging their attempts to change this world. Jesus’ image and expectation of the ideal world is that it will be a do-it-yourself venture, but not a solitary do-it-yourself project. The Baptist assures the people (and us) that the Holy Spirit will always be the spark enkindling all we do to live God’s kingdom.

This strange man, John the Baptist, is a prophet, judge, and precursor; he visions, assurces, and challenges: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

“Feeling sorry, acknowledging guilt, and prolonging regret may be components of the human condition, but they are not what Jesus means by repentance. Repentance is the response to grace that overcomes the past and opens out to a new future.... The message of Jesus is not ‘Repent,’ but ‘Repent for the kingdom of God is near.’”

— John Shea, A Star at its Rising

POINTS TO PONDER

How does the message of John the Baptist sound today — like a warning? Praise? Reprimand?

What is the good fruit that God is calling me to produce this week?

How do I make it easier for others to see the kingdom of God in our midst?
The feast of the **Immaculate Conception**, proclaimed on December 8, 1854, celebrates the belief that Mary was uniquely blessed from the very beginning with the gift of grace. Often we say that Mary was preserved from original sin from the moment of her birth — very true. Another way of saying it is that Mary was filled with grace, surrounded from the beginning in the love of God. Mary then lived her daily life — the joys and sorrows as well as the challenges — in and with grace, in a trusting relationship with God, and continually aware of the presence of God, always and everywhere.

---

**FAMILY TIME**

Legends surrounding St. Nicholas tell us that he led a life of giving, of sharing his wealth, especially to families and children. Celebrate his feast day (December 6) with an ancient tradition — leaving small gifts in your children’s shoes (such as chocolate coins). Also invite your children to “help St. Nicholas” by giving to children in need some of their toys and books that they no longer use.

---

**5 Ways to Practice Advent Joy**

**Ask a trusted friend** or family member their thoughts about what you need to “repent” from (drawing attention to yourself, inattentiveness to those who are bothersome, etc.).

**John shouted his message to the people.** Decide on one thing you can do that “shouts” to your world that you are a disciple of Jesus.

**We can’t wait for others to do something to bring about the kingdom of God.** What things are not what they ought to be? Write a letter to the editor or to politicians; become involved in grass-roots efforts for change.

**To celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception, place out-of-season flowers at your Mary statue as a reminder that “nothing is impossible for God.”**

**Grace isn’t a thing:** it’s a relationship. Grace doesn’t have to be extraordinary; it can be very ordinary. Grace-filled times aren’t only in church; they’re everywhere. Be very aware today. Be alive to the wonder, the gift, and the presence of grace.

---

**Advent Prayer**

God of challenge, you raised up John the baptizer as a messenger calling us to change. Nudge us to conversion, to change, and to repent so that all our actions will reflect and intensify the presence of the kingdom of God.
COME TO THE CHRISTMAS CRAFT SALE TODAY!

The Women of the Cloth invite you for wassail and holiday cheer at the annual Christmas Craft Sale today in the parish hall following all Masses (except 5pm Life Teen). Offered for sale are quilts, tree skirts, table runners, gifts and much more! Proceeds from the craft sale will benefit St. Laurence Habitat for Humanity and other ministries. Buy a raffle ticket to win the “It Must Be Magic” quilt. Tickets are just $2 each or $10 for a book of 6. The winner will be announced after the 12:45pm Mass. To learn more about Women of the Cloth, contact Margie Koenig (281-313-3625) or Eileen Scamardo (281-242-0183).

JOB POSTING: FACILITIES DIRECTOR

St. Laurence Catholic Church is accepting applications for the Facilities Director position. The Facilities Director supervises and oversees all aspects of construction, maintenance, and safety of the parish, school buildings and grounds. Expectations for candidates: previous experience in facility operation preferred, 2+ years supervisory experience in related field, safety certification preferred, basic mechanical knowledge and skills, good interpersonal communication skills, time management and organizational skills. Bachelor degree preferred. Suitable applicants should email cover letter and resume to Tony Oltremari, Parish Administrator at toltemari@stlaurence.org with “Facilities Director” in the subject line.

DEC 16: YOU ARE INVITED TO SIMBANG GABI

Everyone is invited to “Simbang Gabi” (Filipino for “Night Mass”) on Friday, December 16, at 6:30pm in the church. The evening begins with traditional carols and Mass, with a reception and entertainment in the School Gym. Simbang Gabi is a devotional 9-day series of Masses in the Philippines practiced by Catholics in anticipation of Christmas. Organized by the Filipino Community, contact Fe Vicerra for info at 713-248-1164, bertandfevicerra@yahoo.com.

HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE WITH FR. JAISON

All are invited to join Fr. Jaison on an 11-day Holy Land Pilgrimage June 2-12, 2017. The cost is $3,390 per person (includes roundtrip airfare from Houston, first class hotels, 2 meals a day, daily Mass, taxes, surcharges and tips). For a brochure and more information, contact Maria Jacobson at 713-582-8424 or mjabcsone1984@yahoo.com, or call Inspirational Tours at 713-961-2785. Inspirational Tours has made this once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage a fundraiser for the Medical Missionaries of Divine Mercy, so your involvement will benefit our medical missions as well! Visit www.inspirationaltoursinc.com for details.

REGISTER NOW

HEART OF WORSHIP
Saturday, February 25, 2017

Featuring Deacon Alex Jones, Roland Millare & Brother Peter Francis
www.stlaurence.org/how

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
Holy Day of Obligation
Wednesday, December 7
Vigil Mass at 6:30pm

Thursday, December 8
8:15am, 12:00noon, 6:30pm
All Masses in the Church

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
Monday, December 12
5:30am
Bilingual Rosary, Traditional Song & Mexican Breakfast

6:15pm
Traditional Children’s Dance, Bilingual Mass & Reception

ADVENT ROSARY
11:30am (Before Noon Mass)
Each Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday
Serving Others

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

EVERY WEEK AT ST. LAURENCE

MONDAYS: Our Daily Bread 9:30am, SCM Workroom
WEDNESDAYS: Coupons for a Cause 1:00pm, SCM Workroom

OTHER GREAT OPPORTUNITIES

Bingo: Call weekend Bingo games for nursing home residents at Sugar Land Health Care Center
Birthday Celebrations: Organize bi-monthly birthday/holiday celebrations at Sugar Land Health Care Center
Caring Creations: Meets first 3 Fridays each month to create crafts to donate to Mamie George Community Center and other Fort Bend agencies
Child Advocates Snack Bags: Monthly assembly of 100+ snack bags for children
Fresh Food Delivery: Twice a month, purchase and deliver fresh food St. John Fisher food pantry
Learn English Ministry: Teach English to non-English-speaking adults; no teaching or foreign language experience necessary
Lunches of Love: Decorate lunch bags; over 2,200 brown bag meals provided each week to children in Richmond-Rosenberg
Village Program: Matches parish families with families that struggle each month to make ends meet

For more info about these and other great ways to serve others, please go to www.stlaurence.org/social-concerns

WISH UPON A STAR
Christmas Gift Drive

SENDING LOVE AT CHRISTMAS

The Catholic Daughters, along with ladies from the ACTS Retreat, recently gathered to fill and wrap care packages for their yearly Seaman’s project. Over 200 Christmas boxes filled with socks, toiletries, games and other needed items will be delivered to the Port of Houston and carried to each ship by the Port Chaplains to deliver to the Seafarers. Seafarers are a vast number of men and women operating ships very distant from their homes. Their living conditions and wages are very poor. The seafarers appreciate these items tremendously and it is the highlight of their day to receive these boxes each year!

Meanwhile, the Junior Catholic Daughters recently helped out Social Concerns by bagging candy for Wish Upon A Star. Thank you for pitching in to help us get all that candy ready to send out for the holidays!

HELP PLEASE

Due to an increase of people seeking assistance, we are in need of the following: paper towels, toilet paper, laundry detergent (64 load size or smaller), men’s & women’s deodorant, toothpaste, dishwashing liquid, disinfectant spray cleaners. Please drop your donations in the SCM bin in the narthex or bring to the SCM office.

THANK YOU!
WHAT WE NEED

You can help with these simple donations. Look around the house and see what you have to share and drop off at the parish office or in the SCM Donation bin in the church.

- men’s clothing for residents of ROSARY HOUSE, a halfway house for ex-prisoners: new underwear and gently used and new long & short sleeve shirts, pants, socks, shoes, jackets.
- mini/trial sizes shampoo, men’s deodorant, soap, lotion, toothpaste & toothbrush for MILITARY, HOMELESS, REFUGEES
- new white crew socks, new white t-shirts (size large), pop-top tuna/meat, individual peanut butters, granola bars for the HOMELESS
- birthday party gifts of new/unused toys, $10-$20 gift cards (fast food, Wal-Mart, Target), new/gently used children’s books & small fleece blankets for CHILDREN IN SHELTERS
- Sunday Coupon inserts for COUPONS FOR A CAUSE program; drop off in parish office or the Hospitality Desk in the church
- Gently used Christmas gift bags, tissue paper, gift boxes, and small jewelry boxes for WISH UPON A STAR
- Paper towels, toilet paper, laundry detergent, dishwashing liquid, disinfectant spray cleaners for PEOPLE IN CRISIS.

RESPECT FOR LIFE

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Some people seem to view babies as products – if they are defective, send them back. About 90% of preborn children diagnosed with Down syndrome are aborted. The inherent value of every child of God is unrecognized. And the threat to the lives of people with disabilities does not end with birth. Parents of special needs children often have to fight for medical treatments that would routinely be given to someone with no disability. St John Paul II said, “The wounded humanity of the disabled challenges us to recognize, accept and promote in each one of these brothers and sisters of ours the incomparable value of the human being created by God.” Pick up a brochure at the Hospitality Desk in both English and Spanish. Links are also available at www.stlaurence.org/brochure-of-the-month.

DEC 10: HEALING AFTER ABORTION

On Saturday, December 10, a private and confidential retreat in Spanish will be held for women who suffer after an abortion. The retreat will begin at 9:30am, led by Fr. Paul Felix. The retreat location is confidential and provided only to retreat participants. Please contact Julie F. at 713-741-8728. All inquiries and registrations are confidential.

IN THANKSGIVING FOR YOU! (PART 2)

It takes so many volunteers to accomplish all that we do in the Social Concerns Ministry. There are so many behind the scenes volunteers who so generously give their time and make our job so much easier! Here is Part 1 of our callout to all of these volunteers, with BIG THANKS from Pennie, Melanie and Monica in SCM...

Share God’s Bounty & Wish Upon A Star

Thank you to all of our Share God’s Bounty volunteers. In all, over 150 people of various ages helped out that day! We especially want to thank all of our fantastic chairpersons: Keith Broussard, Suzanne Byrne, Terri Conti, Mark & Katie Coppedge, Paulette Egan, Bill & Sharon McGlaun, Peggy Oltremari, Donna Romaine, and Natalie Curtis. They keep everything running smoothly and make SCM look really good! Special thanks to the SLCS Teen Leadership Team who helped decorate over 200 of our fresh fruit bags.

And thank you St. Laurence parishioners for your generous support in making this yet another successful event! With your help, we were able to provide over 700 Thanksgiving meals and 500 Pantry Packs to those in need in our community!

Thank you to Frances Conway, our amazing Wish Upon A Star chairperson. For the past 5 years, Frances (along with several volunteers) has dedicated hundreds of hours making sure each person is granted their Christmas wish. We could not accomplish the enormous task of providing over 2,000 gifts to our neighbors in need without her leadership and organizational skills!

And thank you to everyone who worked the SGB and WUAS taglines!

DIY Service Project

With a desire to help children this holiday season, Natalia Grassi raised over $400, with the help of her friends and social media. After shopping for and filling 15 boxes, she delivered the Boxes of Joy to the SCM office. Thank you, Natalia, for showing these precious children the love of Christ at Christmas!

感谢您！

当您每消费一次时，Amazon将会向St. Laurence Catholic Church 社区关怀部捐赠0.5%的购买价，用于支持我们的各种项目。请访问smile.amazon.com/ch/76-0157777来支持我们。

SUPPORT SOCIAL CONCERNS WITH AMAZON SMILE
ADORATION IN THE CHAPEL

We at St. Laurence pray that all may know the true presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and be graced with the holy desire to spend time with our God in adoration. Please prayerfully consider the hours listed that we are in need of committed adorers and substitutes. Contact Denise MacDougall or Fran Magelssen at adoration@stlaurence.org or 281-224-6122(Fran) or 281-235-8008(Denise). NOTE: There will be no scheduled adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during Christmas break from 2pm Friday, Dec 16 until 8am Monday, Jan 2.

ADORERS STILL NEEDED FOR THESE HOURS:
- Friday 11am - 12pm
- Thursday 6pm - 7pm
- Saturday 2am - 3am
- Saturday 10am - 11am

MEDICAL MISSION REPORT & THANKS

To all the generous hearts that made our Laredo Mission possible, MMDM wants to say Thank You! We had an amazing mission and it could not have been possible without each of you. After a slow start on Saturday due to bus issues, the missionaries left St Laurence around 12:30pm. We arrived in Laredo safe and sound, and got to work immediately unloading supplies and setting up.

We ministered to 1,333 patients in just under 5 days (not including all the people seen by the spiritual team). Our spiritual team of four worked the longest hours, starting with the Rosary and Liturgy of the Hours for the missionaries at 6:00am and ending at 9:30pm with an evening healing Mass each day. Our dental team of 4 dentists from Sugar Land (plus 2 Laredo dentists and 2 hygienists) saw 430 patients and managed 1,025 procedures. Our vision team, with the help of one optometrist, who was there 1-1/2 days, saw 709 patients. We had an amazing 8 doctors and 6 nurses that went with us and came from as far as Florida. We took numerous donations of medical supplies, walkers, crutches, and wheelchairs, which were all used.

Overall, the bonds and friendships formed are unforgettable. To the people of Laredo, we thank you for welcoming us and allowing us to touch your lives! To all the medical professionals, we thank you and pray that God will bless you for sharing your talents. And to all the missionaries and donors of MMDM you are "good and faithful servants"!

May God Bless you! - Maria Jacobson, MMDM

COPING WITH GRIEF THRU HOLIDAYS

TUESDAY, DEC 13: St. Clare Room (AMC) 6:30-8:30pm

Holidays are times to gather with family and friends. If you have suffered the loss of a loved one, the holidays can be filled with sorrow and grief, making you feel as though everyone has joy but you. Join the Grief Support Ministry for this special holiday focused session. Videos of grief counseling specialists will provide tools/suggestions for dealing with expectations of family and friends during these most difficult times, plus opportunities to share. All are welcome and the session is free. For more info and to register, contact Sandy Barber at 281-633-9090, help2grieve@hotmail.com.

DEC 5: CAREGIVER SUPPORT OUTING

Advent Greetings, Caregivers! We hope you can join us for a delightful excursion to The Brookwood Community on Monday, December 5, to explore Brookwood’s inspirational, world-renowned model for providing spiritual, educational, and vocational opportunities for adults with special needs. The event includes a 9:30am tour of the community followed by lunch at the lovely café and a chance to do some holiday shopping at the gift shop. Caregivers interested in carpooling from St. Laurence will meet at the Ave Maria Center at 8:15am and return at 2:00pm.

Whether the loved one you are caring for cope with autism, cerebral palsy, dementia, Down Syndrome, or another diagnosis, we believe you will find hope and encouragement among others who understand the ups and downs of the caregiving journey. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Jane Jewell (281-265-9658, ejcomp@aol.com) or Lori Knowles (281-261-5738, knowlesml5@gmail.com).
Couples, want to give each other something really special this Christmas? How about a gift filled with Romance and Excitement? That’s just the beginning of what you will receive on a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. Some upcoming dates are February 17-19 and March 24-26. Register early to reserve a spot. Go to www.houstonme.org for more information and to register online. Or contact Brian & Tina Little at 281-773-4014 with questions.

CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR MARRIED COUPLES

FEB 10-12: Love and Be Loved
A Women’s Retreat at the Cenacle Retreat House, Houston
God loves us, creates us, and wants to share life with us forever. During this retreat in contemplative silence, we will grow deeper in our relationship with God through prayerful reflections on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. St. Laurence Spiritual Directors will facilitate this silent retreat at the Cenacle, from 7pm Friday, Feb 10 – 1:30pm Sunday, Feb 12. The Cenacle Retreat House is located at 420 N Kirkwood Rd., Houston. For more information and to register for this retreat, contact the Cenacle at 281-497-3131 or register online at www.cenacleretreathouse.org. Minimum Offering is $195. Consider this as a great Christmas gift for a loved one. Spots go quickly!

PRAY WITH THE LEGION OF MARY

This Advent, the Legion of Mary invites parishioners to join them to pray the Rosary before the daily Noon Mass, each Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Gather in the church at 11:30am. The Legion of Mary is the largest apostolic organization of lay people in the Catholic Church whose purpose is to give glory to God through the sanctification of its members. For more information, please contact Carmelita Kussad at cskussad@hotmail.com or call 713-922-2446.

JOY CLUB FOR SENIORS

The J.O.Y. Club (stands for Just Older Youth) is for parishioners 55-and-up. The group typically meets at the Ave Maria Center on the 1st Monday of the month. Contact Anne Higgins at 832-755-5597.

DEC 5—Annual Potluck Lunch and gift exchange ($15 limit) from 11:00am-1:00pm in Marian Hall. Turkey & ham provided, so bring a favorite dessert or side dish to share.

JAN 9—Join the JOY Club on the 2nd Monday in January to FLOAT INTO THE NEW YEAR from 11am-1pm. Bring a sack lunch and we’ll play games, with root beer floats or black cows for all!
One definition of spirituality includes how you find meaning or purpose in life. Do you find this all alone or do you find meaning and purpose in life with others?

God wants an intimate relationship directly with you, also known as communion with you. God also pours his Spirit into your intimate relationships with others as well, so God is found in communion with others.

**God is found in communion with others.**

“Wherever two or more are gathered together, there I am in the midst of them.” (Mt 18:20)

**God is found in communion with your spouse.**

When you said your vows at your wedding, you said “receive this ring as a sign of my love, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” God is in the very union of you and your spouse.

**God is found in communion with your children.**

“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me” (Mt 18:15). When we receive our children who have had a soul given to them by God, we receive God.

Pursue intimate relationships with others and with God. Be open and sharing. Talk about God with others. God is found in communion, and in Holy Communion.
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<td>Moms &amp; Tots</td>
<td>Chrissy Campbell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Laurence Singles</td>
<td>Kathy Gawlik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors (JOY Club)</td>
<td>Anne Higgins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese Group</td>
<td>Amy Le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women of the Cloth</td>
<td>Margie Koenig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Adult Group</td>
<td>Michaela Barta</td>
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