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PARISH TRUSTEES
Catherine Halayko / Joseph Sinisgalli

ST. AMBROSE SCHOOL
518-785-6453
Website: www.stambroselatham.org
E-Mail: principal@stambroselatham.com
Terri McGraw, Principal
Kelly Sano, Secretary

MASS SCHEDULE
Saturday Vigil: 4:30pm
Sunday: 7:30, 9:00, 11:30am & 5:30pm-Life Teen
Daily: Monday & Wednesday 6:30am
Tuesday & Thursday 9:00am
Communion Service: Friday 6:30am
Holydays and Holidays subject to change
(see bulletin)

CHURCH OF ST. AMBROSE
347 Old Loudon Road, Latham, NY 12110
518-785-1351
WEBSITE: www.stambroselatham.com
E-MAIL: parishsecretary@stambroselatham.com

OFFICE HOURS
Monday–Thursday 9:00am–6:00pm
Friday 9:00am–4:00pm
Saturday & Sunday CLOSED
THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT

Our continuing journey of Advent can seem so brief and it is hard to imagine that in just under two weeks’ time we will be celebrating the great feast of Christmas together. As we have seen over the first two weeks of our season, with each week of Advent we are given markers or signs to guide us through this season and so to help us prepare for the coming of Jesus. So far we have had the two spiritual guides of “watching and waiting” and of “preparing a way for the Lord”.

Our sign post or guide for this third week is a simple and yet potentially quite difficult message: rejoice, for the Lord is near! Today we celebrate what is sometimes called “Gaudete” or “rejoicing” Sunday, echoing the first words of the entrance antiphon for the Mass. We are asked to rejoice because the coming of our Lord and Saviour is near. This theme of rejoicing is marked in our readings, our prayers and in the option of having rose coloured vestments and Advent Wreath candle (rose being a mix of the purple of Advent and the white of Christmas).

The word “joy” occurs so many times in the Sacred Scriptures in both the Old and the New Testaments and yet it is not always an easy word to understand, yet alone to live. It can be hard to be joyful if we are experiencing loss, or hurt, or a crisis in our lives. We can think of all the recent events in Paris, San Bernardino and in so many other places. Joy can also seem to be something fleeting or even superficial, or frustratingly elusive. So, when as Christians, we speak of joy (rather like other everyday words such as “love”, or “peace”, or “freedom”) we need to recall that the word has a very particular meaning.

Despite all this, in our second reading at Mass today, St. Paul says “rejoice always” and then repeats himself! In fact, the word “joy” occurs twenty two times in the letters of St. Paul. He does not say this lightly or as a tired cliché and we can remember that St. Paul suffered much, both personally and also for preaching and living the Gospel. He asks us to rejoice in hope, in repentance, in salvation and even in suffering. So, what does he mean and what exactly is Christian joy…?

Well, the Christian understanding of joy certainly does not mean pretending all is fine, or of putting on a happy face or fixed smile when all is not good. The word used for “joy” in the New Testament is *chairete* and it is actually a word with many meanings and levels. To name a few of these, it first means a profound and real sense of God’s love for us, a great feeling of trust and confidence in God so that whatever happens, we have His love and care. Christian joy then is not something superficial, nor as Bernard Bassett remarked is it “contingent” (that is depending on things going well, or on circumstances, or on others), but rather it is a gift and an inner peace and strength that is there regardless of life and its ups and downs. We might also say then that joy is also not so much a feeling, but rather a choice or a decision: to be joyful.

Christian joy is also a spiritual way of living and seeing ourselves, others and the world so that we are tuned into God’s will. As Abbot Marmion wrote, “joy is the very echo of God’s life within us.” In this sense, joy is certainly an attitude to life and a spiritual gift. It is also eminently practical, especially when, with God’s help, we try to develop spiritual values and a way of everyday living that are what we might call joy-giving, rather than joy-killing. A great exercise during this third week of our Advent journey might be to strengthen all those things that, spiritually speaking, bring us joy and also root out those attitudes or values in our life that we know are joy-killers. To help us with this, a reminder that we have our Advent Reconciliation Service this week on Tuesday, 15th: a wonderful opportunity to tackle those “joy killers” with God’s help and so to receive His gift of pardon and peace.

As we hear in the Gospel, St. John the Baptist proclaims that he is not the Christ and that one is coming after him who is so much greater than him. We can rejoice because that “greater one”, Jesus Christ, comes to us. So, as we begin what is probably a crazy and busy week ahead whether at work or school or with all those Christmas preparations at home, let us live the words prayed at Mass today and our Advent theme: “we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.”

Fr. Anthony
"The Light is On For You!"

December 15, 2015

Advent Reconciliation

Tuesday night, December 15th from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM, a number of priests will be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the Parish Center.

If you have been reluctant to come to the sacrament or have been away for some time or just found it difficult to get to a Saturday afternoon confession time, this is a great opportunity to receive the gift of healing and forgiveness.

To remind us about the parts of confession and the Act of Contrition, a brochure will be available to guide us.

"Jesus' attitude is striking: we do not hear the words of scorn, we do not hear words of condemnation, but only words of love, of mercy, which are an invitation to conversation. "Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again." Ah! Brothers and Sisters, God's face is the face of a merciful father who is always patient. Have you thought about God's patience, the patience He has with each one of us? That is His mercy. He always has patience with us, He understands us, He waits for us, He does not tire of forgiving us if we are able to return to Him with a contrite heart. "Great is God's mercy," says the Psalm."

— Angelus on March 17, 2013 — Pope Francis
Faith Formation News

Come check out this week’s speaker series! Hopefully you’ve seen that the theme for this year’s speaker series is the family.

This Thursday Fr. Barratt is talking about the Church and the Modern Family. The Universal Church has been having a very constructive and frank conversation on the real struggles of today’s families. We know that we live in complicated times and the Church desires to proclaim the truth AND meet people wherever they are in life’s journey. This talk will be a great guide to where the Church is on that conversation!

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We need volunteers to help distribute this year’s parish gift for parish families at the Christmas Eve masses: 4:30pm (2 masses), 8pm Christmas Day masses: 9am and 11:30am

Please e-mail us at: faithformationAA@stambroselatham.com or call us at 785-1351 (x307).

THANK YOU!

Advent Speaker Series 2015

Thursday, December 17
The Church and the Modern Family: Reflections on the Synod of the Family (Fr. Barratt)

You can find past installments of the Speaker Series @ www.stambroselatham.com/media

Nativity Play
Our annual Nativity Play is happening during the 4:30pm Christmas Mass and we need YOUR help!

Open to all kids from Kindergarten to 6th Grade!

If you’re interested, please contact the Faith Formation office at 785-1351 x307
Tickets on sale now Jan. 8th

They’re coming back!
Save the Date!!
The Premier Irish band
in the Capital District

Support the St. Ambrose Family, Lifeteen Mission Trip to the Dominican Republic.
Adult Raffle
Tickets are $100.00 ea.
Each ticket has 1/12 chance of winning. There will be only 200 tickets sold.

one winner;
First Prize $5,000
two winners;
Second Prize $1,000
four winners;
Third Prize $500
ten winners;
Fourth Prize $100

Sold after each Mass or in the Church Office. Drawing is January 8th at the Mission Pub Dinner featuring: Hair of the Dog

Tickets $29 per person

Pub style food will be available for purchase.
Wings, Pub Fries,
Onion Rings, Sliders, Flat Breads,
Chili, Turkey wraps and much more.

Come and enjoy a night of raffle drawing, silent auction, great fun and friends to share; all while supporting the mission trip to the Dominican Republic. Support our teens to be our hands and feet, serving the poor.

A Special Christmas Event

If you have never been then please mark your calendars to attend an Advent Reflection presented by the teens of our Parish Family to all of you. It is a beautiful look back at the covenant pursuit God made of us, His creation, and how much He loves us and wants to give us His mercy and love. Please join us immediately after the 5:30pm Mass on December 20th. It will last approximately 45 minutes and we will have a Christmas Party to follow. This is a great event for the entire family and we, Lifeteen, wish you all a very happy and joyful Advent leading to the praise and worship of the birth of our King, Jesus Christ.
At St. Ambrose School, we are  “Learning to be all God wants us to be.”

Prepare the way of the Lord

SERVE

Give Hope

Grade 6 helps unpack and sort items for the food pantry!

Parish Nurse
Nancy Acemoglu, RN

A Christmas Version (1 Corinthians 13)
Author Unknown (The Ifs)

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family, I’m just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir’s cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

• Love stops the cooking to hug a child.
• Love is kind, though harried and tired.
• Love doesn’t envy another’s home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.
• Love doesn’t yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way.
• Love doesn’t give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can’t.
• Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
• Love never fails. Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust, but giving the gift of love will endure.

P.S. Is you have taken Angels off the trees, could you please return them to me as soon as possible. Thanks so much for all you do!
SACRED SPACE
An Advent Retreat in Everyday Life

This Retreat invites us to develop a closer relationship with God during this season of preparation and anticipation that is accessible, engaging and meaningful in daily life.

Wednesday
December 16th @ 7pm
St. Ambrose Parish Center

Prepare for the Birth of Christ by Entering a Sacred Space. Throughout Advent, each day includes a Scripture reading and points of reflection, as well as a weekly topic enhanced by six steps of prayer and reflection. Our three gatherings will discuss the weekly scriptures and the weekly topic. Each daily prayer requires 20-30 minutes.

If you would like to participate, please call the St. Ambrose parish office (785-1351) and leave your name, email and phone number.

Pope Francis Opens Jubilee Year With Call for Church That Puts Mercy before Judgment

Pope Francis has launched his yearlong push for a global Catholic church of mercy and forgiveness, starting the Jubilee year focused on the subject by opening the holy door at St. Peter’s Basilica and calling for a church that always puts mercy before judgment. The pontiff also praised the work of the Second Vatican Council and said the newly-opened Jubilee "compels us not to neglect the spirit which emerged" from that event. This Extraordinary Holy Year is itself a gift of grace," Francis said during the homily at the Mass. "To enter through the Holy Door means to rediscover the deepness of the mercy of the Father who welcomes all and goes out to meet everyone personally."

"How much wrong we do to God and his grace when we affirm that sins are punished by his judgment before putting first that they are forgiven by his mercy!" the pope exhorted. "It is truly so," he said. "We have to put mercy before judgment, and in every case God’s judgment will always be in the light of his mercy."

The ALTAR ROSARY SOCIETY will be preparing the Church for the Advent/Christmas season and we would like to invite the parish family to participate. We will be decorating the altars in the church, chapel and McCormick Center on December 18 at 9 AM and December 23 at 9 AM, with beautiful live poinsettia plants. If you wish to help us with this endeavor, for a small donation, you may purchase a plant in memory of a loved one or in your family's name. Information on this project can be found on the red and green handouts located at the Church entrances.

Thank you and God Bless!

The EVANGELIST SUBSCRIPTION

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_______ Add my name to the subscription list, here is my $18.00/yr.

Please cut out, make check payable to St. Ambrose Church, drop it in the Collection Box or mail to the Parish Office.
Thanksgiving Thanks and Christmas Dinner Needs

We give many heartfelt thanks to St. Ambrose parishioners and community for their most-appreciated donations which supplied 995 persons with bountiful Thanksgiving baskets. The request for Christmas dinner assistance may surpass this number; pantries in Cohoes provide for Thanksgiving but not Christmas baskets.

Through the generosity of St. Ambrose parishioners, the pantry volunteers hope to again provide families this year with 5 lbs. of potatoes and gift certificates for the remainder of vegetables, meat, rolls, fruit, etc. for their Christmas dinner needs.

If you are able to help “these least of my children”, please bring potatoes and gift certificates ASAP or by December 12-13 and no later than December 19-20.

Thank You for Your Continued Generosity!

Stewardship UPDATE

“We Are A Tithing Parish Following “God’s Plan for Giving”

December 7, 2014 $17,521.10
December 6, 2015 $23,340.24

“Thank you for being so generous!”

Thank you to all who are responding so generously to our financial need. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Also, thank you to those who signed up for electronic withdrawal. If you decide to sign up for this option in the future, forms are available at the entrances to the church, or just call the Parish Office.

Many Thanks.

Mass Intentions

Monday – December 14—St. John of the Cross
6:30 AM Parish Intention
9:00 AM Mass at Our Lady of the Assumption

Tuesday – December 15—Advent Weekday
6:30 AM Mass at Our Lady of the Assumption
9:00 AM Anna Cavallo by Bassotti & Dambrowski Families
Patricia & Therese Hunt by Robert Hunt

Wednesday – December 16—Advent Weekday
6:30 AM The Richard Family by Madeleine
9:00 AM Mass at Our Lady of the Assumption

Thursday – December 17—Advent Weekday
6:30 AM Communion Service at Our Lady of the Assumption
9:00 AM Louis Charles Landauer by Family
Marion Kardas by Clara Domblewski

Friday – December 18—Late Advent Weekday
6:30 AM Communion Service
9:00 AM Mass at Our Lady of the Assumption

Saturday – December 19—Late Advent Weekday
4:30 PM Laurie, Theresa & Marcel Carey by Richard & Debbie DeVoe
Jean Wonderlich by Family
Susan LaVerne by Linda & Tom Molloy
Ann Marie Riley by Mary & Peter Riley

Sunday – December 20—Fourth Sunday of Advent
7:30 AM Matilde & Nicola Popolizio by Granddaughter
Helen Clark by Marion & Danny
9:00 AM Jim Danner by Family
Carol Bodo by Clara Aliberti
Anna Biggs by Sue & Bob Hartmann
11:30 AM Rocco, Nicola, Teresa and Luciano Mele by Vittoria Renda Family
Frank Sala by Goddaughter Kathryn Kromrey
5:30 PM Life Teen—People of St. Ambrose

Are you struggling with your emotions, a loss, an addiction, a relationship or family issues? COUNSELING is available in the evenings at St. Ambrose.

A $25 donation is appreciated.

Contact Dave Dobkowski, Ph.D. at 859-4015 to make an appointment.

Keep the Legacy Alive

Please remember St. Ambrose Parish in your will
St. Ambrose Roman Catholic Church
347 Old Loudon Rd., Latham, NY 12110
### Parishioner Registration/Update Request

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Please check:
- [ ] New Registration
- [ ] Change of Address
- [ ] Moving out of Parish
- [ ] Want Envelopes
- [ ] Name Change *(Please contact Parish Secretary)*

Please cut out and drop it in the Collection Basket or mail to the Parish Office.

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**Third Sunday of Advent**

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### Liturgical Roles for Week Ending December 20, 2015

**Money Counters, Sunday, December 20th**

Team #3—Barbara Stampfl, Richard Lasky and George Parker

**Money Counters, Monday, December 21st**

Team #1—Tina Zandri and Richard Ostiguy

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<td>Bill Murray</td>
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<td><strong>Lectors:</strong></td>
<td>#1-Nancy DiMarino</td>
<td>#2-Ralph DiMarino</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Altar Servers:</strong></td>
<td>J. O’Brien, D. Cushing, L. Francesconi, J. Paradis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Eucharistic Ministers:</strong></td>
<td>J. Proctor, K. Maxwell, M. Trudeau, J. Rayball, M. Rayball, M. Riley, B. Sage</td>
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<td><strong>Ushers:</strong></td>
<td>D. Mason, J. Couch, M. Commerford, Volunteer</td>
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<td><strong>Media Ministry:</strong></td>
<td>Sandi T.</td>
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<td>Gail C.</td>
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<td>Rene M.</td>
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<td>Dominic C./Tenn C.</td>
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<td>ADULT MISSION</td>
<td>Mike Blair</td>
<td>376-0082</td>
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<td>ALTAR ROSARY SOCIETY</td>
<td>Cathy Boudreau</td>
<td>785-3460</td>
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<td>ALTAR SERVERS</td>
<td>Walter Ewing</td>
<td>320-0662</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Scheduling)</td>
<td>Lynn Wozniak</td>
<td>456-5990</td>
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<td>(Training)</td>
<td>Jim LaBombard</td>
<td>371-1996</td>
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<td>ATHLETIC PROGRAM</td>
<td>Helmut &amp; Vicky Neurohr</td>
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<td>BAPTISMAL PREPARATION</td>
<td>Renee Hallock</td>
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<td>BISHOPS APPEAL (DDP)</td>
<td>Rich Zmijewski</td>
<td>785-3142</td>
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<td>BUILDING AND GROUNDS</td>
<td>Mary Beth Pallack</td>
<td>771-221-1357</td>
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<td>CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP</td>
<td>Tom Acemoglu</td>
<td>785-1351 x307</td>
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<td>CONFIRMATION</td>
<td>Nancy Hooley</td>
<td>783-3411</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUCHARISTICADORATION</td>
<td>Mary Stewart</td>
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<td>EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS</td>
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<td>Pauline Kubizne</td>
<td>785-7816</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAITH, HOPE AND SHARE</td>
<td>Connie Strassburg</td>
<td>783-3342</td>
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<td>FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTION</td>
<td>Patricia Pyndus</td>
<td>785-4664</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOOD PANTRY</td>
<td>Mary Sue Ray</td>
<td>469-1329</td>
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<tr>
<td>GARDEN CLUB</td>
<td>Nancy Acemoglu</td>
<td>785-1351 x304</td>
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<td>GRIEF LOSS GROUP</td>
<td>Jo Leombruno</td>
<td>373-2353</td>
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<td>LECTORS</td>
<td>Mark Trudeau</td>
<td>785-1351 x309</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIFE TEEN &amp; JR. HIGH LIFE</td>
<td>Paula Borkowski</td>
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<td>Donna Sabatino</td>
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<td>Frances Fieglers</td>
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<td>Mary Alice Hunt</td>
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<td>Terri McGraw</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:principal@stambroselatham.com">principal@stambroselatham.com</a></td>
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<td>SECRETARY</td>
<td>Kelly Sano</td>
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<td>Cary Lombardo</td>
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<td>Carolyn Chabot</td>
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Readings for the Week of December 13, 2015

Sunday: Zep 3:14-18a/Is 12:2-6/Phil 4:4-7/Lk 3:10-18
Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a/Ps 25:4-9/Mt 21:23-27
Tuesday: Zep 3:1-2, 9-13/Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-19, 23/Mt 21:28-32
Wednesday: Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21b-25/Ps 85:9-14/Lk 7:18b-23
Thursday: Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-4, 7-8, 17/Mt 1:1-17
Friday: Jgs 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19/Mt 1:18-25
Saturday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-6, 16-17/Lk 1:5-25
Next Sunday: Mi 5:1-4a/Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19/Heb 10:5-10/
Lk 1:39-45

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