

December 24, 2017

ADVENT

Fourth Sunday of Advent



Holy Spaces Waiting for the Lord

Given God's power to be anywhere and everywhere, the Incarnation is all the more wondrous. What a mystery that God would choose to take up residence within the confines of our human condition. Today's Gospel

gives words to this mystery as Mary is honored as the living temple of God made flesh. We who await the Coming One often prepare symbols of welcome; the manger, the crèche, the inn. In truth, all these symbols are to be realized in each of us. We are the empty manger awaiting the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ.

MASS INTENTIONS



Sunday, December 24

10:00 p.m. The Benefactors of the Parish

Monday, December 25

8:00 a.m. The Welfare of All Parishioners

Saturday, December 30

4:30 p.m. Dorothy Vana Jasek, Benedict Jasek

Sunday, December 31

8:00 a.m. The Welfare of All Parishioners

Monday, January 1

8:00 a.m. The Benefactors of the Parish

Full, Conscious and Active Participation in the Liturgy



Next weekend is *The Feast of the Holy Family*. Prepare for the liturgy by reflecting on these passages from your Bible.

First Reading: Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 105

Second Reading: Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

2017 DIOCESAN SERVICES APPEAL

2017 Assessment	\$7,670.00
Contributions So Far	\$ 5,910.00
Amount Yet to be Contributed	\$ 1,760.00

We thank the following for their recent contributions:

*Pat Masek
Ollie Pospisil
Ellene Vrazel
Georgia Cerny
Melvin Hutzler
Deloris Smolik
Timothy Pospisil
Frances & Leon Kubenka*

We thank all those who have contributed towards our D.S.A. assessment so far. With your generous donations we should be able to pay off the remaining debt to the bishop before year's end. We are counting on all who have not yet contributed to the fund so far to also help.

St. Mary's Restoration Endowment Fund Maintaining & Preserving Maticka Praha



To make a tax deductible donation towards *St. Mary's Restoration Endowment Fund Maintaining & Preserving Maticka Praha* contact Fr. Gabriel at 361-596-4674.

ORIENTATION FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Today we light the fourth candle (violet) on the Advent wreath. The fullness of the lit wreath reminds us of the coming celebration of Christmas and our commemoration of the incarnation. The rhythm of Advent differs from that of Lent. It rises in a steady crescendo towards the full light of Christmas. The crescendo of Advent is reflected in the liturgical readings, which, beginning with the prophecies of the prophet Isaiah and John the Baptist, find their culmination on this Fourth Sunday of Advent in a series of readings that focus on the Blessed Virgin Mary and the annunciation of Jesus' birth.

REFLECTION

God Works the Impossible

The waiting of Advent is over. In the face of the impossible God works the possible. Mary is asked to believe this. She is open and accepting. She is to believe something else equally impossible: the old and barren Elizabeth is pregnant, for nothing is impossible for God.

What we have been waiting for all Advent is now revealed. We have been waiting for the realization of the promise made to David. We have been waiting for Mary's **yes**. According to ancient Christian writers, God waits for Mary's yes: creation waits; Adam and Eve wait; the dead in the underworld wait; the angels wait; and so do we. With Mary's yes, hope is enlivened and history is changed. There is an unimaginable future for all people, and gratitude. Salvation is created among us, and the fate of history is altered by a godly presence. This salvation resides in the hearts of those who believe in the gift and who stay awake eagerly to know its coming. With David we wait, with the nations we long for it, with Mary we behold it.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



December 25 – Sidney Kubenka
December 26 – Dennis Olsovsky
December 27 – Diane Decker
December 28 – Leon Kubenka

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



December 29 – Carol & Gene Patalik Jr.

VOTIVE CANDLE INTENTIONS

The Catholic custom of lighting candles is rooted in Church teaching that Christ is the Light of the World. Candles serve as an outward sign of the light of faith burning in our hearts. They are our silent sentinels lifting up our prayer intentions to the Lord.



Remember to pray for the following intentions:

For My Mother
Keep My Daddy Safe
For Noah Philip Lloyd
For A Job For My Son & For A Safe Trip
For Successful Surgery for My Brother-in-law, Allen K.
For Financial Help & for My Great Niece Who Has Stage 2 Cancer

– Votive Candle Intentions to be continued

CHRISTMAS COLLECTION FOR THE POOR

In the spirit of sharing blessings with our less fortunate brothers and sisters, a collection will be taken up at the Christmas Masses. *We encourage you to be generous.*

MARANATHA!



Advent is the season when we stand on the threshold of fulfillment. However, it is the fulfillment of an event that has already taken place. We remember it, we ritually reenact it so we never take it for granted, so we never forget that it is in and through history that the marvelous deeds of God are accomplished. Each year we pause to celebrate these events, not because they have not yet occurred but because they *have* happened and are happening now before our eyes. The celebration of anticipation is also the celebration of fulfillment, fulfillment of the promises made, fulfillment of our redemption, fulfillment of our transformation. Blessed are we who believe that what was spoken to us by the Lord has been fulfilled!

Communion to the Homebound on Christmas Day: Holy Communion will be taken to the homebound parishioners who called in their request.

2018 Religious Calendars have been placed at the main entrance to Church. One calendar per family please.

Christmas Altar Flower Fund Donations: See insert..

Veselé Vánoce

My dear friends,

May you have a blessed Christmas. May Christ's coming among us bring happiness and peace to all families.

God bless,



Mass at Raphael's Refuge, Dec. 28, 11:00 a.m. **Feast Day of the Holy Innocents**

Bishop Cahill will celebrate Mass. Rosary will begin at 10:15 a.m. The Monument is located at 2715 W. Hwy 90 (two miles west of Flatonia). For more information contact Midge Elam at 361-258-1514.

Congratulations and God's blessing to ***Brianna Lyn & Hank Joseph Janecka*** who were recently united in the sacrament of Holy Matrimony here at St. Mary's.

