

December 23, 2018

## Advent

### Fourth Sunday of Advent



#### The Threshold of Fulfillment

On this Sunday we stand on the threshold of fulfillment, filled with anticipation of the Lord's coming, while we celebrate his presence in our midst. The future God has prepared for us is open before us, even though we have not yet stepped out into it. Today, we are invited to pause at the treshold and gaze for a moment into this future as with joy and hope Mary and Elizabeth meet.

An invitation is extended to us today so that we can appreciate the gift being given to us.

#### MASS INTENTIONS



**Monday, December 24**

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

**Tuesday, December 25**

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

**Saturday, December 29**

**4:30 p.m.** Eugene A. Patalik Sr.

**Sunday, December 30**

**8:00 a.m.** The Deceased of the Joe Michalec & Charles Patek Families

#### Full, Conscious and Active Participation in the Liturgy



Next weekend is *The Fourth Sunday of Advent*. Prepare for the liturgy by reflecting on these passages from your Bible.

**First Reading:** 1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 84

**Second Reading:** 1 John 3:1-12, 21-24

**Gospel:** Luke 2:41-52

The Sanctuary Light  
will be lit this week  
in memory of Henry J. Migl.



#### 2018 DIOCESAN SERVICES APPEAL

2018 Assessment .....	\$7,761.00
Contributions So Far .....	\$ 6,287.00
Amount Yet to be Contributed .....	\$ 1,474.00

*We thank all those who have contributed towards our D.S.A. assessment so far. We are counting on all to do their part so we can pay off our debt by year's end.*

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



We thank the following for their recent contribution:

*Melvin Hutzler, Bulverde, TX - \$200  
(pledged payment)*

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

#### ST. MARY'S MEMORIAL FUND

*In Memory of Mariella Lemon  
Mary & Charlie Bartos  
Synergy Enterprises, Inc., Houston*

#### ORIENTATION –4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

##### Maranatha!

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 Advent is reflected in the liturgical readings, which, beginning with 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. The readings bring together the major themes of the first three Sundays of Advent. Namely, promise, repentance, transformation and joy. We now stand on the threshold, eager for the doors to be opened so that we can step inside and enjoy the marvels prepared for us there.



The Annual Mass for the Feast of the Holy Innocents at Raphael's Refuge will be celebrated by Bishop Cahill on December 28. A Rosary will begin at 10:00 a.m., followed by Christmas carols, with Mass at 11:00 a.m. Refreshments will follow.

## REFLECTION

### Standing on the Threshold

Today's readings open a crack and we are amazed that everything inside seems so ordinary. The readings get us ready for the imminent future, giving us glimpses into the mysteries we are about to celebrate.

Through the crack, we see Bethlehem, an unsophisticated little village that is but a stone's throw from the thriving capital, Jerusalem. If we look further through the crack in the door, to the side we will see a young pregnant woman hastening to help an older relative who is also with child. There is nothing extraordinary about this either, especially in a society that is family oriented. Young women acted in this way. Catching these glimpses of ordinary life we might ask: Just what is God up to? Why does God choose what is ordinary to carry the radiance of the divine? Is it possible that we overlook the unpretentious through which God is revealed and mistake what is loud and flashy for what is truly marvelous?

God's choices recounted in today's readings insist that the mystery of the incarnation comes to ordinary people living ordinary lives. All that is required is an openness to do God's will, a willingness to respond to God's call.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



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

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!



December 29 – Congratulations Carol & Gene Patalik Jr.  
on your 45<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary

## 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:z**  
*Thanks For Grace Received*  
*Thanksgiving For Benjamin's Healing*  
*For Michael, Miranda, Mom & Dad*  
*Prayers For My Daughter, That She Will Distance Herself From Her Abuser*  
*Prayers For All Suffering Distress And Need Peace In Their Hearts And Minds*

– 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.

### Christmas Cookies for the Homebound



We thank Georgie Cerny, Robin Cerny, Lori Janecka, Josie Kubenka, Pat Masek, Helen Schaefer, Gail Stryk and Kathleen Svatek for making the cookies. Special thanks to Pat Masek for coordinating the project and for

helping Fr. Gabriel deliver the cookies.

**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,



**Remember the sick in your prayers this week, especially Cindy Masek.**

