The Seasons of Advent & Christmas

**Solemn Vespers**
Sundays of Advent at 6:00pm

Vespers, or Evening Prayer, is part of the public prayer of the Church called the *Liturgy of the Hours*. Based on the psalms and Jewish synagogue worship, in the *Liturgy of the Hours* the Church sanctifies the significant hours of the day: matins (early morning); lauds (the beginning of the workday); terce, sext, and none (midmorning, midday and midafternoon); vespers (the end of the workday); and compline (nighttime).

**Visits to Church and Eucharistic Adoration**

Any parishioner is always welcome to get away from the hectic nature of your schedules and stop into Church to pray in a quiet place without interruption. Contact the Parish Office for side door access information. Eucharistic Adoration with the Blessed Sacrament exposed will be available as always from Tuesday at 8:30am to Wednesday at 7:00pm and from Saturday at 6:00pm until Sunday at 7:00am.

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**Women’s Advent Tea**
December 1
Join moms, grandmas, sisters, aunts, and friends for an afternoon of prayer, shared time in the Spirit, musical reflection, and an inspirational speaker on Sunday, December 1st, from 4:00 to 6:00 pm in the Care Service Celebration Room. To register contact the Parish Religious Education Office at 636.926.0021 or psr@stsja.org.

**Advent Prayer Service for Children**
December 2
Our Religious Education Department for Children will celebrate Advent Prayer Services during PSR on Monday, December 2, 7:00pm. Please feel welcome to join the children in prayer as we ready the way of the Lord in our hearts.

**Sacrament of Penance for Children**
November 25 & December 5
We will celebrate the Sacrament of Penance for our children in full-time school on the afternoon of December 5. Our children in the Parish School of Religion will have already had opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance during their regular class time on the evening of November 25. Please take the opportunity in your family life at home to prepare the children to celebrate God’s forgiveness and mercy.

**Honorarium to the Blessed Mother**

The east addition to the nave of our church will be set aside as a shrine for prayer to the Blessed Mother throughout the Season of Advent, which includes the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Please feel free to make a visit there for prayer before the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe throughout the Season. Come individually or come as a family. Prayer resources will be available.

**Adoration for Life**
December 8
Please join fellow Catholics around the country in praying for the respect for Life on Sunday, December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Eucharistic Adoration will be available immediately following the 6:00pm Vespers until 11:00pm.

**Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception**
December 8
This Solemnity honors the Blessed Mother until the title which proclaims her as having been conceived without the influence or effect of sin in the womb of her mother, St. Ann. It is under the title of the *Immaculate Conception* that Mary is Patroness of the Church in the United States. Because December 8th falls on a Sunday and is the Second Sunday of Advent, the Feast will be observed on Monday, December 9th. Though the Feast does not bear an obligation to participate in Eucharist this year, we will celebrate an additional Mass at 7:00pm on Monday, December 9.
**Sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation) for Adults**

December 11 & 21

The Sacrament of Penance is celebrated every Saturday afternoon from 4:00 until 4:45pm. At any time, it can be celebrated by making an appointment with one of the priests. Extended opportunities for celebrating the Sacrament will be available on Wednesday, December 11, beginning at 6:30pm until all have been heard, and on Saturday, December 21, from 9:00-11:00am.

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**Our Lady of Guadalupe**

December 12

This Feast provides important opportunity to contemplate Our Lady’s appearance to St. Juan Diego at Tepeyac in Mexico. It is under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe that the Blessed Mother is Patroness of all the Americas and it is under this title that her intercession is sought, in particular, for the causes of Life. This feast bears particular significance for our Hispanic brothers and sisters.

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**Adopt-a-family weekend**

December 14 & 15

The Miracle on McClay lives on at the campus of St. Charles Community College. Lend a hand or at least come and see the tremendous outpouring of Christian generosity and Christian service that makes the human dimension of Christmas possible for so many who would otherwise be without. God Bless our Care Service for this and all the good they do!

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**Advent Reflection**

December 15

*The Word Was Made Flesh and Dwelt Among Us* highlights the meaning and significance for each of us of the Incarnation, the reality of the Word of God being made flesh in the Virgin Mary’s womb and living among us. Christ our Redeemer died and rose to lead us all back to the Father. Through the Holy Spirit we now have fellowship with one another in Christ. By Baptism, we Catholics are joined to Christ and to the Father and the Holy Spirit. What are the consequences of this sharing in the Divine life? What does it mean, very concretely, to be one with Christ and thereby made members of His Body, the Church? “Put flesh upon the reality” of our union with one another in the Body of Christ through participation in this Advent reflection, held at All Saints Church Annex on December 15, at 5:00pm. Speaker: Fr. Don Wester. The evening will include a meal, a conference, and an opportunity to participate in an outreach offering to our local sisters and brothers in need.


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**Carols and Scripture**

December 19

Come sing carols and hear the story of Jesus’ birth with the full-time school children on Thursday, December 19, at 1:30pm in Church, and enjoy a Christmas concert at 6:30pm in the Parish Center.

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**Church Decorating**

December 22

Please join the effort to get our Church ready for Christmas by helping with trees, the crèche, and other large scale decorating after the 11:30am Mass on Sunday, December 22. Many hands make light work!

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**Christmas – the Nativity of the Lord**

December 24-25

- **Vigil Mass of Christmas on Christmas Eve**
  - 4:00pm & 6:30pm

- **Midnight Mass of Christmas on Christmas Eve**
  - 11:00pm

  *A Festival of Scripture & Song will begin at 10:30pm led by our Choir.*

- **Mass at Dawn on Christmas Day**
  - 7:30am

- **Mass during the Day on Christmas Day**
  - 11:00am

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**Feast of the Holy Family**

December 29

Let the example of Jesus, Mary and Joseph become an inspiration for your own efforts to fashion the domestic church that is every Christian home. The Feast falls on a Sunday this year. It is an opportunity to pray together as a family and spend the day celebrating the blessing that family life affords us by doing something special as a family at home.

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**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**

January 1

This feast falls on a Wednesday this year. It is a holy day that bears with it the obligation to participate in Eucharist. We will gather to celebrate on Tuesday, December 31 at 5:30pm and on Wednesday, January 1 at 9:00am. Let Mary, the First and Greatest Disciple be your guide in your resolution-making for the new year.

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**The Epiphany of the Lord**

January 5

The risks taken by the Magi as they search for the Christ Child challenge us to trust that the Savior we have been given is sufficient for all our needs.

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**The Baptism of the Lord**

January 12

This Feast brings the celebration of Christmas to a close. Instead of joining society in tearing down your Christmas decorations on the day after Christmas, bask in the joy of the Season all the way through this Feast!