

Parish of St. Sylvester

Third Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2016

Those whom the LORD has ransomed
will return
and enter Zion singing,
crowned with everlasting joy. —Isaiah 35:10a



Liturgies and Intentions for the Week

Dec. 10 - Vigil for 3rd Sunday of Advent

4:00 p.m. = Anna Makar



Dec. 11 - 3rd Sunday of Advent

7:30 a.m. = Donald J. Bennett

10:00 a.m. = Michael O'Donnell (*happy birthday in heaven*)

12:00 noon = Anne D'Amato

Monday, Dec. 12 - OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

8:30 a.m. = Virginia Olivares



Tuesday, Dec. 13 - St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

8:30 a.m. = Andrew and Emmanuel Udom

Wednesday, Dec. 14 - St. John of the Cross, Priest and

Doctor of the Church

8:30 a.m. = Anthony Scipione

Thursday, Dec. 15 - Advent Weekday

8:30 a.m. = Teresita Flormata

Friday, Dec. 16 - Advent Weekday

8:30 a.m. = Expectacin Braza and Isaac Santillan

Saturday, Dec. 17 - Late Advent Weekday

9:00 a.m. = Josè Lumbreras

Dec. 18 - Vigil for 4th Sunday of Advent

4:00 p.m. = Nickolas Foremsky



Dec. 18 - 4th Sunday of Advent

7:30 a.m. = Francesco Brascia

10:00 a.m. = Robert Fogliano

12:00 noon = deceased members of the
McCoy family and Mary Bhatia

Weekly Collections Our Parish Family's Support on . . .

December 4, 2016

1st collection - \$4,775.00

Reserve Fund - \$1,283.00



Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands, especially those from our parish family and community . . .

Seaman Daniel Brennan - USN

SR Francis S. Cummings - USN

SR Michael J. Cummings - USN

Col. Jeffrey N. Davila, MD - USAF

Francesca DiSimone-Biggins - US Army

Lucia DiSimone-Biggins - USMC

Ryan Foley - USMC

Lt. Col. Jay Le Pore - USAF in Japan

Col. Patrick J. Mahaney, Jr. - US Army

Prescod Montgomery - US Army in Iraq

Ensign II Steven Pasignajen-Trimble - US N/Persian Gulf

Samuel Rios - USAF

Darrin Sack

Major Michael Volpe - US Army

PLEASE PRAY . . . for those anticipating a hospital stay, recuperating, the homebound in our parish, and in our families. Please keep this list near the place where you pray each day so that you remember them throughout the week.

Victor Andrea, Antonia Carlino, Lucille Chatznoff, Frances Cirincione, Dr. Nicolas C. Lansigan, Jr., Stephen Cucci, Jean De Santis, Robert Forlenza, Thomas Galvin, John and Connie Garbarino, Connie Gorrasi, Agnes Jennings, Bridget Kehley, Frank Labano, Rose Marchese, Louis Matos, Delia Murguia, Amy O'Donnell, Joseph Palumbo, Lee Poyntz, Carmela Rogan, Annette Scardigno, Louise Stanley



Rite of
Reconciliation

Monday, December 19

Confessions heard
4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Be prepared to welcome the Christ Child

Have you tried **FORMED** [*The Catholic Faith On Demand*] yet? With our 1 yr. subscription we have been gifted with what amounts to a Catholic "Netflix-on-demand". This is a new service, just beginning, so its content selection is still small, but it has an idea and purpose that we should support so that the content will increase. Formed.org is a website where you have a collection of catholic lessons which include Programs (like info. on the sacraments & Bishop Robert Barron's "Catholicism"), Catholic movies (stories of saints), Audio (CDs of talks from Lighthouse Catholic Media), and even books to read (writings of the Pope)! They even have content in Spanish! Go to FORMED.org; enter our Parish Code: RH2YY4; create your personal acc't.; start enjoying!

St. Sylvester Parish - 854 Targee Street - Concord - Staten Island, NY 10304



Join us

as we journey

toward ***Christmas***

December 11 – Parish Christmas Dinner Dance

3:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall

December 18 – Lessons and Carols

After the 10:00 a.m. Mass in the Church

December 19 – Reconciliation Monday - in the church

Confessions heard 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

December 24 – Christmas Eve of the Nativity - all in the church

- **Vigil for Christmas Mass** – at 4:00 p.m.

- **Christmas Carols with the Choir** – 11:00 p.m.

- **‘Midnight’ Mass** – 11:30 p.m.

December 25 – Christmas Day of the Nativity - in the church

Masses at 7:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 noon

December 31 – Vigil for Sunday/Feast of Mary, Mother of God

Mass at 4:00 p.m.

January 1 – Sunday/Feast of Mary, Mother of God

usual Mass schedule: 7:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 noon

Christ is in our midst!

THE ADVENT WREATH GETS ITS START

Long ago in northern Europe, the growing dark and winter weather in Advent forced people to remove the wheels from their carts and replace them with snow runners.



The wheels were hung high in the rafters of the house, fitted out with lanterns, and wound tightly with evergreen boughs. The first wreaths were windows into heaven, a source of light, a comforting sign of the victory of the light of Christ over our world's dark wildernesses, its mountainous obstacles, its valleys of need.

The Advent wreath started in the home, and only later appeared in church. Its four candles represent the four Sundays of our journey: typically three purple, one rose. Why not set a wreath in your own home as a place for Advent prayer?

Don't let a shortage of purple candles discourage you: some use a deep blue, others have white candles and weave blue and purple flowers, seashells, and pine cones into the green. When the sun sets tonight, light three candles, sing a verse of a well-loved Advent hymn, and, in your heart, name a 'mountain' to be leveled, a 'valley' to be filled for the Christ Child's coming.

December 12 - OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE—
Her words to Juan Diego:

"Let not your heart be disturbed. Do not fear that sickness, nor any other sickness or anguish. Am I not here, who is your Mother? Are you not under my protection? Am I not your health?

Are you not happily within my fold?

What else do you wish?

Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything."

AN ADVENT TREASURE FROM OUR TRADITION

When the ties of affection and authority that bound Europe's Catholics unraveled in the sixteenth century, many cultures lost time-honored customs of faith. Some customs proved to be especially difficult for the reformers to wrest away from the people, especially those celebrated in the home. This week in Sweden, a country where the Catholic Church was disestablished four hundred years ago, a Catholic martyr from Sicily is the most beloved figure. St. Lucia, Lucy, is celebrated on December 13.

The long-story-short is that Lucy was a Christian whose father wanted to marry her off to a pagan fellow, and she rejected her father's authority. To make an example of her, her father had her killed. In the course of the brutal martyrdom, Lucy lost her beautiful eyes, but her vision was miraculously restored.

The candles worn today by the eldest daughter of the family are tokens of the fire that refused to harm the saint. So this patroness of light and clear vision is revered on the shortest, darkest days of the Nordic winter. Before the reform of the Gregorian calendar in the sixteenth century, December 13 was the winter solstice.

Today, young girls appear in the morning wearing lighted candles on their crowned heads (battery-operated now after many mishaps), and serve sweet rolls and coffee to everyone in the house. For the



Swedes, who are not churchgoers, the "Lucias" are the official heralds of the holiday season and a sign of everyone's yearning for more light in this world. Europe once abounded with customs like this; the survival of this custom in Scandinavia is a sign of God's grace, and how fertile the soil is to receive the true message of Advent.

—Rev. James Field, ©J. S. Paluch Co.

Next Sunday, December 18
in the church
after 10 o'clock Mass

**Lessons
& Carols**

presented by
The School of Religion C.C.D.



**Pastor's
Corner**

My Dear Parishioners,

Today is **Gaudete Sunday**, which means "**rejoice**." For three weeks now we have been preparing for Christmas and, one hopes, enjoying some peace to pray and anticipate the coming of the Lord, not just as a baby two thousand years ago, but also in the end-times, the parousia, when the Lord will come again in glory.

This is the Sunday when the rejoicing begins. Advent, unlike Lent, is not a penitential time, but a time of waiting and anticipation for the fulfillment of God's promises. "[We] will see the glory of the LORD, / the splendor of our God" (Isaiah 35:2). So, "*Be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord . . . Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand*" (James 5:7, 8).

Today we can bask in the imagery that the Mass readings offer us. In particular, Isaiah's vision of a parched land that blooms with abundant flowers holds a message for each of us. Too often we are just like that parched land. We allow ourselves to become absorbed in the waves of consumerism that grip so many. We look for fulfillment in the things that money can buy. Unfortunately, this leaves us like parched land, thirsting for something that money can't buy. This holy season has much to offer to quench our thirsts. In a word, this season offers hope. We are told that those who are ransomed by God will know joy and gladness. For them, sorrow and mourning will be no more. Let us place our hope in these promises.

Were you able to join us for our Christmas Tree lighting and caroling? The new tree is splendid and the Youth Group caroled us right on into the Parish Hall for refreshments! I must confess to a bit of envy for the neat amplifier with mikes that Mr. and Mrs. Campbell lent for the occasion. Everyone seemed to enjoy it all; we finally finished up a bit before 7 o'clock. Much appreciation is due to the Women's Group for the splendid double duty/overtime they put in. Keeping the refreshment tables full for Hospitality Sunday, and then coming back in the evening for a *repeat performance* for our Tree Lighting party is surely above-and-beyond duty's call! AND, they always remembered to . . .

Keep smiling,

Fr. Jacob

You are invited to the
farewell reception
honoring
Fr. Bala
on
Sunday, December 18
at one o'clock
in the Parish Hall



Saint Francis Catholic Singles (SFCS)

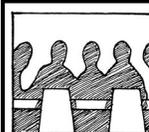
Saint Francis Catholic Singles, for those in their 30s, 40s, and 50s, will meet on **Sunday, Dec. 18th, 6:30-9:30 p.m.** for **CHRISTMAS DINNER**. (Please bring a new unwrapped toy for a child 3-14 yrs. of age.) Join us as we celebrate Christ's birth—St. Francis' favorite holy day—for our 16th annual Christmas Dinner at the West Shore Inn, 3955 Victory Blvd., S.I. 10314. *and, for those of us who do not have to be up again at dawn: stay on for 9:30 p.m. Karaoke!* All payments must be received by Thurs., Dec. 15 (sorry—no exceptions and NO paying at the door). Mail CHECKS made out to CASH (put SFCS CHRISTMAS DINNER in memo box) with your name, phone #, and e-mail to: Holy Family Parish, ATTN: Singles Christmas Dinner, 366 Watchogue Rd., S.I., NY 10314. For more info. find us on Fb: StFrancisCatholicSingles, e-mail: sfcssi@gmail.com, or check our website: www.sgspsi.org

from the **Apostleship of Prayer:**

Pope Francis' Prayer Intentions for December

Universal: END OF CHILD SOLDIERS: *That the scandal of child soldiers may be eliminated the world over.*

Evangelization: EUROPE: *That the people of Europe may rediscover the beauty, goodness, and truth of the Gospel which gives joy and hope to life.*



MEETINGS

A.C.A., A 12-step program for adults who grew up in a dysfunctional home, meets every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in Rosary Hall. Call Larry at 718-619-5545 for more information.