

FOCUS: REJOICE WITH JOYFUL SONG...HERE IS YOUR GOD...HE COMES TO SAVE YOU.

Advent is a season of preparation. It's not uncommon to hear the word "preparation" and think of the decorations, parties and presents. Advent can be a whirlwind of "to-do lists" and events to attend. We may have passing thoughts of the Incarnation – the birth of Christ. But taking time to really reflect on the implications of Advent demand that we be intentional about making time for this. We must be attentive to what the Holy Spirit is revealing in our hearts and minds about a God who loves us so deeply that he humbled himself to become one of us born as a baby in Bethlehem.

Today is one of those intentional days. Today we celebrate Gaudete Sunday –Rejoice Sunday. The pink candle on our Advent wreath, signifying joy, burns bright as we fill this sacred space in joyful song because our God draws near.

Both the first reading and the Gospel provide us with the reason for our rejoicing – *GOD IS COMING TO SAVE US*. When Jesus comes, as he said in the Gospel, the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. These acts are miraculous not only in their physical healing, but in their ability to be a healing balm in our deepest need.

Even if we do not have any of the physical manifestations Jesus mentions, we are blind, lame, deaf, impoverished and in need of cleansing in our heart and spirit. These words of sacred Scripture are talking about our liberation.

They are speaking to each of us – life in Christ is a life lived in liberation from that which is hindering us from being fully alive – fully aware of God's grace, mercy and gift of life offered to each of us every day.

Our deepest needs can be summed up in the four candles we light as we progress through Advent: hope, love, joy and peace.

These needs are attended to as we gather as a community of believers – as we offer our songs, our prayers and our gifts. Our deepest needs are soothed and satisfied as we come forward to receive holy Communion, and are nourished and strengthened by Jesus himself. We are charged to leave Mass to "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord." Ultimately, these needs are fulfilled when we place our trust, first and foremost, in Christ. In doing so, we seek guidance and inspiration from the Holy Spirit, not in our capacity to buy things that we think will make others happy.

Offer the gifts of hope, love, joy or peace in the form of a visit, a call or a helping hand. And let this Advent season be a time of dedication and attentiveness. As Saint Paul reminds us, *make your hearts firm, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.*

NATIVITY CATHEDRAL CONCERT (CORRECTION)

The University of Southern Mississippi Civic Choral will perform on **Sunday, December 18th at 3:00 p.m.** We welcome this extraordinary musical group to our Cathedral and encourage you to attend this free performance.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

| | | |
|------|--------|---|
| Mon | Dec 12 | Zec 2:14-17, Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, Lk 1:26-38, Lk 1:39-47 |
| Tues | Dec 13 | Zep 3:1-2, 9-13, Mt 21:28-32, 2 Cor 10:17-11:2, Mt 25:1-13 |
| Wed | Dec 14 | Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21b-25, Lk 7:18b-23, 1 Cor 2:1-10a, Lk 14:25-33 |
| Thur | Dec 15 | Is 54:1-10, Lk 7:24-30 |
| Fri | Dec 16 | Is 56:1-3a, 6-8, Jn 5:33-36 |
| Sat | Dec 17 | Gn 49:2, 8-10, Mt 1:1-17 |
| Sun | Dec 18 | Is 7:10-14, Rom 1:1-7, Mt 1:18-24 |

YOUR SUNDAY TITHING AND CONTRIBUTIONS

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Regular Collection | 13,251.00 |
| Capital Improvement | 225.00 |
| Nativity Elementary School | 295.00 |
| Nativity Miscellaneous | ...933.70 |
| Christmas Flowers | 175.00 |
| TOTAL COLLECTION | 14,879.97 |
| CASH NEEDED | \$14,400.00 |

SPECIAL APPEAL – MAINTENANCE FUNDS

Our original goal of \$150,000 has been met. However, payments, as scheduled on current pledges, will not be completed until January, 2017. Please continue to use the orange envelopes for these payments. Likewise, many of you who did not pledge are participating by weekly or monthly gifts through the orange envelopes. Please continue your generosity. The response from you, our parishioners, has been extremely gratifying and will enable us to complete all the maintenance items delineated in our original appeal letter in January 2016. After our original survey of maintenance items, additional needs have developed. We assure you all funds received will be prudently expended.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| TOTAL GIFTS AND PLEDGES TO DATE | \$163,986 |
| PAYMENTS TO DATE | \$152,684 |
| BALANCE TO COMPLETE PLEDGES | \$ 11,302 |

RCIA

This week the RCIA class will be getting ready for the birth of Our Lord and celebrating Christmas. Please continue to pray for the Catechumens, Candidates and Sponsors. If you would like further information, please contact Greg or Penny Payne 228-365-6348.

ALTAR SERVER PARTY

Our Altar Server Party on December 16th, led by Fr. James and Frank Goloforo, for altar servers and parents is rapidly approaching! A bus will pick up children from Nativity School at noon, proceeding to Cypress Lanes Bowling Alley in D'Iberville, where we will meet for food, bowling and the arcade. The bus will return to the SHC at 4:00 p.m. so parents can pick up the children. You must fill out and submit the permission form, available at the school or rectory.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS IN MEMORY/HONOR

Sunday, December 18th our Second Collection will be for Christmas flowers. Make a donation in memory of a deceased love one which will be mentioned in the Christmas bulletin.

SCHEDULED LAY MINISTERS FOR NEXT WEEKEND

| EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS | LECTOR | ALTAR SERVERS |
|---|--|--|
| DEC 17 4:00 p.m. 1 Deacon Ben 2 Rhonda Clark 3 Rocky Greathouse 4 Andrea Gilich 5 Gayle Mavar | DEC 17 4:00 p.m. Rose Anne Kimbell | DEC 17 4:00 p.m. Clayton Stoddard Ava M. Stoddard |
| DEC 18 7:00 a.m. 1 Deacon Ben 2 Vicki Howard 3 Marcia Mayfield | DEC 18 7:00 a.m. Richard Skripek | DEC 18 7:00 a.m. Bernard Skripek Teresa Skripek |
| 9:00 a.m. 1 Deacon Ben 2 Linda Welter 3 Barbara Ziz 4 Judy Trahan 5 Linda Bourgeois | 9:00 a.m. Steve Theobald | 9:00 a.m. Morgan R. Newman Rhys Newman Rush Newman McKinzy Mathis |
| 11:00 a.m. 1 Deacon Ben 2 Deacon Mike Gilly 3 Mary Wimberly 4 Judy Steckler 5 Sandy Steckler 6. Susan Toche | 11:00 a.m. Michael Kessler | 11:00 a.m. Michael Pfarrer |
| 5:30 p.m. 1 Deacon Ben 2 Tricia Creel 3 Roland Creel | 5:30 p.m. Youth Ministry | 5:30 p.m. Greysen Ross McRae Ross Aidan Tarrant |
| | CANTORS | |
| | DEC 17 4:00 p.m. CHOIR | |
| | DEC 18 9:00 a.m. John Welter | |
| | 11:00 a.m. Nicholas Radofich | |

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Dec 12 Women of Mary 5:00 p.m.
 Dec 13 - Men of St. Joseph Prayer Group, 7 a.m. – SHC RCIA at 6:00 p.m., SHC BINGO at 5:30 p.m.
 Dec 14 Mass at Seashore Retirement Home, 3:00 p.m.
 CCD classes at 5:30 p.m.
 Advent Penance Service at 6:00 p.m.
 Dec 15 Mass at Greenbriar Nursing Home, 10:00 a.m.
 Dec 18 USM Civic Choral at 3:00 p.m.

THIS WEEK'S CLEANING TEAM IS "A"

CCD INFORMATION

CCD classes are held on Wednesdays, from 5:30-6:30 p.m., in the Sacred Heart Center.

BINGO MANIA

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday. The following families are scheduled for **December 13th**: Baxter (Brandon & Nicole), King (Lee & Dannette), McHarg (Norman & Melissa), Randall (Amy, Stewart (Darrin & Linda), Adams (Robert & Robin) and Vo (Tiffany). **Parents: please remember, if you are unable to attend, it is your responsibility to find a replacement.** Thank you for your dedication and hard work.

HOLY LAND GIFTS- OLIVE WOOD CARVINGS

Saida & George Rashmawi, who are volunteer members from the Roman Catholic Church in Bethlehem in the Holy Land, are in our parish this weekend. They are speaking to us about the Christian struggles in the Holy Land. They also have some beautiful Olive Wood carvings which are all handmade by the Christian people in Bethlehem, for sale after all the Masses this weekend.

MASS INTENTIONS

| | | 6:30 a.m. | 8:00 a.m. |
|------|--------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mon | Dec 12 | Thomas Edward Connell | Joshua Bozeman |
| Tue | Dec 13 | Sonny Ross | Gabe & Doris Kasovich |
| Wed | Dec 14 | Dan Williams | Chester Balius Fly. |
| Thur | Dec 15 | Collins-Sims Fly. | Andrew & Jackie Gilich |
| Fri | Dec 16 | Glenn & Joyce Pisarich | Stanley Dellenger |
| Sat | Dec 17 | 8 Jerry O'Keefe | 4 Thomas Andrews |
| Sun | Dec 18 | 7 Collins-Sims Fly. | 9 For Parishioners |
| | | 11 Trudy & Noel Obert | 5:30 Gary Francis Gollott, Sr. |

PLEASE KEEP OUR SICK IN YOUR PRAYERS

Tiffany Whitehead, Lena Marchioni, Anna Jo Wentzell, Kay Lawson, Jeanie Harbison, Helen Ross, Mickey Roberts, Holly Hill, Georgia Bellais Dominick, Maxine Kiddinger, Marie Manning, Lisa Walker Kirkman, Raymond Egers, Barbara Kridle Maynard, Betty Hilton, Walter Blessey, Mary Lancaster, Joe Powell, Patsy Smolcich, Danny Boney, Sr, Beverly Hammond, Kathleen Hebert and Claire Sekul Hornsby.

NATIVITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*The annual Nativity School Christmas program, written by Mrs. Colleen Kavanagh, will be presented on Wednesday, December 14th at 1:15 (dress rehearsal) and Thursday, December 15th at 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Following a long-standing tradition, all Nativity Students will be participating in the program. All are welcome to attend. *As part of our final day of school before the Christmas holidays, our Nativity Arts Alive group will provide an Advent/Christmas reflection, using sacred movement and the song, "Mary, Did You Know?" This prayerful reflection will take place in the school gym at 9:00 a.m., followed by caroling and the annual 6th grade "snowball fight." All are welcome to attend! *Although school will be closed for the Christmas holidays from December 19th through January 2nd, Nativity School will offer Holiday Child Care on December 19, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 30. For more information, please call the school office at 432-2269.

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY MASS

SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve - 4:00 p.m. in the Chapel
 Christmas Eve - 4:00 p.m. in the Cathedral
 Christmas Eve - 7:00 p.m. in the Cathedral
 Christmas Eve - 11:00 p.m. in the Cathedral
 Christmas Day - 10:00 a.m. in the Cathedral

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE

Please invite family and friends to our Parish's Advent Penance Service, which will be offered December 14, 2016 at 6:00 p.m., in the Cathedral. Several confessors will be available. Confession is an ideal way to prepare our hearts for Christ's birth.

ADVENT LITURGY OF THE MOURS

Every weekday morning before the 8:00 a.m. Mass, Nativity Cathedral celebrates Morning Prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours. This is a wonderful way to pray the Advent Season. Come and join us at 7:50 a.m. right before the daily Mass.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS - "BREAKFAST WITH SANTA"

The Knights of Columbus will host a "Breakfast with Santa", on Saturday, December 17th, at 9:00 a.m., at the KC Hall at 717 Water Street. All are invited to join in this fun event!