

Focusing the gospel

The Fourth Sunday of Advent begins the last week of Advent, which takes us to Christmas on Friday. The reading from Micah reminds us that of the seemingly unimportant town of Bethlehem, "from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel." Luke's gospel offers again the story of Mary's going to visit her cousin. Elizabeth understands immediately Mary's situation and praises God saying, "How does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy."

Luke's Gospel is our guide this week. On the 21st, we repeat Luke's story of the Visitation. The story continues on the 22nd with Mary's beautiful response, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord." On the 23rd is the naming of John by Zechariah. On the 24th, during the day, is Zechariah's prayer of praise after being allowed to speak again. The scenes and canticles, or songs, which are part of the story, are so well known to us that we can miss hearing them with an open heart.

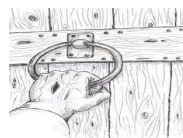
If we celebrate the Vigil of Christmas on Christmas Eve, Matthew's Gospel (though any of the gospels for Christmas may be used at any of the Christmas liturgies) offers the history of Jesus' family.

The first celebration of The Nativity of the Lord is the Mass at Midnight. The first reading is from Isaiah: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone." This powerful reading deserves a slow contemplation. The Gospel is from Luke: the journey to Bethlehem, the birth, the angels announce the birth to the shepherds. The second celebration of The Nativity of the Lord is the Mass at Dawn. The Gospel is from Luke: the shepherds visit the newborn child. "And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart." The third celebration of The Nativity of the Lord is the Mass during the Day. Here the Gospel is from the beginning of John's Gospel: "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth."

December 26th celebrates St. Stephen, the first martyr.

Weekly Guide for Daily Prayer" on Creighton University's Online Ministries Website: <http://www.creighton.edu/collaborativeministry/prayer>. Used with permission.

He is Standing at the Door. He Knocks.



"Come to me all you who labor and are overburdened and I will give you rest (Mt 11:28)" There are 20 open hours in our Perpetual Adoration Chapel. Please consider spending one hour with our Lord in His gentle oasis. For more information, call Jana Schoen at 945-5379.

Sunday - 2 a.m. & 5 a.m.

Monday - 1 a.m., 2 a.m. & 4 p.m.

Tuesday - 2 a.m., 5 a.m., & 8 a.m.

Wednesday -

Thursday - 1 a.m. & 2 a.m.

Friday - 2 a.m., 7 a.m., 6 p.m., 8 p.m. & 9 p.m.

Saturday - 1 a.m., 2 a.m., Noon, 1 p.m. & 6 p.m.

He is waiting for you.

Please Remember In Prayer:

Sr. Lucille Kerschen
Matilda Puetz
Katy Carney
Juanita Mans
Jim Ridder
Sue Warren
Regina Gaytan
Jeanne Sullivan
Nancee Scheffer
Kadie McDonough
Deannie Little
Andy Little
Ray Rancuret
Cheryl Burke Julian



Jim Monroe
Leroy Nedeau
Charles T. Morton
Gail Alcaez
Robie Campbell
Evelyn Monty
Sarah Skidd
Clair Vanzelfden

Eldon Freund
Duane Wilson
Nancy Bradley
Vernie Bloch
Joan Kandt
Jim Flanigan
Peggy Bowan
Marc Limon
Robert Range
Doug Howell
Betty Sherlock
+Leah Stepanek
+Joyce Armstrong

Prayers for Our Military

Please pray for all members of the military, especially our parishioners:

Jay Schoen Tony Jeffress Jonathan Burke
Sam Francis Matt Mork Timothy Collier
Justin Light Jeff Cranor

Weekly Readings

Mon. 12/21: Sg 2:8-14, Ps 33:2-21, Lk 1:39-45
Tues. 12/22: 1Sm 1:24-28, 1Sm 2:1-8, Lk 1:46-56
Wed. 12/23: Mal 3:1-24, Ps 25:4-14, Lk 1:57-66
Thur. 12/24: 2Sm 7:1-16, Ps 89:2-29, Lk 1:67-79
Fri. 12/25: Is 52:7-10, Ps 98:1-6, Heb 1:1-6, Jn 1:1-18
Sat. 12/26: Acts 6:8-7:59, Ps 31:3-17, Mt 10:17-22
Sun. 12/27: Sir 3:2-14, Ps 128:1-5, Col 3:12-21, Lk 2:41-52

Thank you for your gift of treasure! July 1, 2015- June 30, 2016

Weekly Collection 12/13/2015	\$23,387.53
Weekly tithe amount needed	\$12,960.77
Surplus or (Deficit) YTD	\$4,562.24

He shall be peace! The prophets delivered a message of a kingdom of peace to the people of God. The Israelites had experienced peace when the Lord was with them and turmoil when they lived without God. We likewise experience frustration rather than joy when we choose the pleasures of the world over the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Letter to the Hebrews tells us that the will of God should be our objective. The Virgin Mary, our model of stewardship, gave her full acceptance to God of the gift offered to her, bearing a son who would be our Savior. May we follow Mary in her response to the Lord: I come to do your will.

Let's Retire Our Debt

Goal: \$300,000.00

Total received: \$274,625.50

Only \$25,374.50 go!

Thank you Dear Lord,

Beloved Friends

& St. Joseph Family!!



Thank You!!!

On behalf of Our Daily Bread Food Pantry and the 13 other programs at Catholic Charities stabilizing and strengthening families in our community: THANK YOU!

Holy Mass Schedule & Intentions

Monday, December 21

Saint Peter Canisius

8:15 a.m. Mass +Louis Sittler

Tuesday, December 22

6:00 p.m. Mass +Augusta & Charles Fitzpatrick

Wednesday, December 23

Saint John of Kanty

8:15 a.m. Mass +Jeana Nguyen

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve

No 8:15 a.m. Mass

4:00 p.m. For the Good of the Seiler Family

10:00 p.m. For the Christian Refugees out of Syria

Friday, December 25

The Nativity of the Lord

10:00 a.m. Mass S.I. People of St. Joseph

Saturday, December 26

Saint Stephen, the First Martyr

8:15 a.m. Mass +Dominic Babich

4:00 p.m. Mass +Delores Eckerman

Sunday, December 27

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

8:15 a.m. Mass S.I. Mary Ann Farnik

10:00 a.m. Mass S.I. People of St. Joseph

Ministry Schedule Dec 26th & 27th

4:00 PM

(S) Mike McDaneld
(L1) Mike Irvin
(L2) Corrinna Irvin
(H) John Bolster
(C1) Johnnie Bell
(C2) Linda Bolster

(Rosary) Beverly Pieplow
(M. Server) Matthew Probst
(Candle 1) Jeremiah Epps
(Candle 2) Patrick Cooke
(GB) Brad & Andrea Seiler

8:15 AM

(S) Charlie Deitchler
(L1) Bonnie Setzkorn
(L2) Larry Setzkorn
(H) Bill Babich
(C1) Judy Shideler
(C2) Gabby Shideler

(Rosary) Alice Mertens
(M. Server) Nick Wagner
(Candle 1) Grace Bowman
(Candle 2) Thomas Kucera
(GB) Wray Kucera Family

10:00 AM

(S) Alice Johnson
(L1) Jacque McLain
(L2) Greg Sanders
(H) Doug Sublett
(C1) Kristen Allen
(C2) Cheryl Gulick

(Rosary) Florence Marx
(M. Server) Michael O'Neal
(Candle 1) Adam Orth
(Candle 2) Angela McKinney
(GB) Steve & Shellie Hamersky



Heavenly Helpers

Please join us for 8:15 a.m. Holy Mass on Saturday mornings and stay afterwards to clean Our Lord's House. There is always a need for more volunteers. Many hands make the work light! This is an excellent way to fulfill stewardship hours. Supplies are furnished. *Thank you for your generous help!*

Confirmation 2016

Confirmation classes begin on Monday, January 4th, 2016. Confirmation Mass with Bishop Kemme will be at the 8:15 am Mass on Sunday, February 14th. If you are of high school age, are not yet confirmed and would like to be, please contact the Parish Office to register for the upcoming class.



Christmas Call to Sharing

Priests of the Church minister and mediate. They help us break open and digest the Word of God week after week, year after year. Gradually, the Gospel of Jesus becomes our own mind and heart. God's Word influences the way we think, decide, and act. Priests bring us sacramental life from the waters of Baptism through Eucharist to the final Anointing. The Diocesan "Call to Sharing" collection supports our retired priests, who have fulfilled their promise of a lifetime of service, and the education of our 58 seminarians. What a promising future these seminarians represent for our diocese! A special "Christmas Call to Sharing" envelope was mailed to all registered parishioners. Please prayerfully consider participating in this voluntary offering this Christmas. Thank you for supporting our seminarians and retired priests!

*Be still and know that I am God.
Psalm 46:10*

Spiritual Life Center

New Year's Eve Marian Retreat: Our Lady of Guadalupe Thursday, Dec. 31; 7 p.m.-midnight (overnight accommodations available). Celebrate New Year's Eve by ringing in the New Year with Our Lady. Program includes conference, adoration, Mass and an indoor procession. \$20

A Great Christmas Present!! Retreat: Street Smart Saints: Holiness in the Secular World Friday, Jan. 8 - Sunday, Jan. 10. We can always learn from the saints how to live a life devoted to God in our busy modern world. This retreat focuses on saints or potential saints who received their calls to holiness "on the road." How can a man who sat on death row for murder be proposed for canonization? Join Msgr. Andrew Vaccari and Teresa Monaghan from the Pro-Sanctity Movement for this wonderful weekend of learning and discerning! Early bird rates end Dec. 28. Cmtr \$100; Sng \$145; Dbl \$120.

St. John the Evangelist Grief Support Group Winter session begins Tuesday, Jan. 12; 7-8:30 p.m. This 10-week long grief support group meets Tuesday evenings. It is open to anyone grieving the loss of someone close. With video sessions, discussions, and a helpful workbook, the program offers comfort and support. Cost is a one-time fee of \$35 and you can attend as many sessions as needed for as long as they run at the SLC.

Dinner with the Doctors: St. Hilary of Poitiers Wednesday, Jan. 13; 6-8 p.m. At this program, participants will enjoy a delicious meal and pleasant conversation in our main assembly room, surrounded by our collection of icons depicting the doctors of the Church. \$15 advance registration; \$20 week of

For more info and to register, visit www.slwichita.org, call 316.744.0167, or email: kristi@slwichita.org



Parish Directory Photo Sessions

Sign-up for the upcoming directory's photo sessions will begin after all the weekend Holy Masses December 26th & 27th. The Photo sessions will take place January 20th - 23rd & 27th - 30th. Please make plans to be part of this special historical directory. We hope you and your family will participate!

Parish Family Agreements

The 2016-2017 Parish Family Agreements were mailed to the High School Families on December 2nd. All forms need to be signed and returned to the parish office by January 4th, 2016.



Dillons Rewards Update & Re-Enrollment Reminder

We've received another quarterly statement for the Dillons Community Rewards program! To date, we have 132 families enrolled. and proceeds from July 1 - Sept 30 were \$1,433.04. It's not too late to enroll and have a percentage of your purchases at Dillon's donated to our parish. Thank you to everyone who has enrolled so far!

As a reminder, you must renew your enrollment for Dillons Community Rewards each year.

To renew your enrollment, or to enroll for the first time, visit <https://www.dillons.com/communityrewards>, log in to your account and click "Enroll Now". You can search for St. Joseph Parish, or enter organization number 29572. This program provides thousands of dollars to the parish each year, and it's a quick and easy way for you to contribute! Please spread the word to family and friends who may be interested!



Sunday Rosary Leaders Needed

Our Lady made the request at Fatima for us to pray the rosary; to pray the rosary daily for peace. As a parish, we pray the rosary before the afternoon Mass on Saturday and before each Mass on Sunday. We presently have 1 person who leads the rosary before the Sunday 8:15 a.m. Mass. We are in need of additional volunteers. Would you be willing to help lead the congregation in the Sunday recitation of the rosary? It is a beautiful prayer that we all know, and your participation would be so appreciated. Please contact Linda Bolster at 316-650-1878 with any questions and interest. Thank you, and God Bless!

Personal Directed Retreats

For more information regarding spiritual direction or personal directed retreats, you can call Sister Kathy Goetz (Dominican Sisters of Peace) at 316.267.4551, email kgoetz@oppeace.org, or write 201 S. Millwood, Wichita, KS 67213. Brochures are also available in the Vestibule of the church.



Christmas Eve: 4:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m.
Christmas Day: 10:00 a.m. only

Memorial Mass

If you have lost a loved one this past year, you and your family are invited to attend the Memorial Mass at 8:15. a.m. on Saturday, January 9th, 2016. Breakfast to follow in the Mother Teresa Room of the Parish Center. Please R.S.V.P. to Susan at 261-5812 by Wednesday January 6th.