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Mission Statement:

Established in the Spirit of Jesus Christ with an Afro-centric focus, Blessed Sacrament Chapel is committed to spreading the "Word" through fellowship and good works.

Sunday Mass: 10:00AM

Reconciliation: 1st Sunday 9:30AM

St. Stephen Cathedral Parish Office: 270-683-6525

Rector: Fr. Jerry Riney, jerry.riney@pastoral.org

Parochial Vicar: Fr. Sinoj Pynadath, HGN
sinoj.pynadath@pastoral.org

Parish Life Coordinator:
Sr. Jeannette Fennewald, SSND
jeannette.fennewald@pastoral.org



Fourth Sunday of Advent December 23, 2018

Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. — Luke 1:42

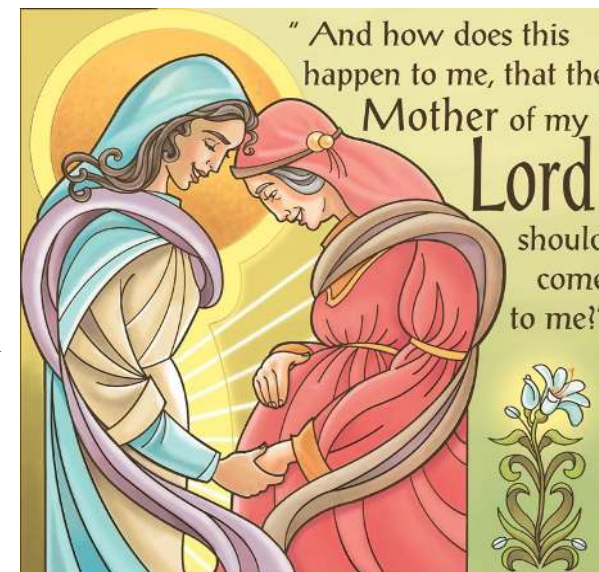
TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — From Bethlehem-Ephrathah shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel (Micah 5:1-4a).

Psalm — Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved (Ps, 80).

Second Reading — We have been consecrated through the offering of the body of Christ once for all (Hebrews 10:5-10).

Gospel — Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken by the Lord would be fulfilled (Luke 1:39-45).



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All the ends of the earth have seen
the saving power of God



From the desk of Father Sinoj

Dear Friends in Christ,

At the very outset let me thank and congratulate all of you who participated in our Soulful Christmas Concert. It was truly a great effort. I was really happy to see many visitors in our Church. Our children did a wonderful job by their live nativity scene. Congratulations to all of you. As we enter into the fourth week of Advent we are almost at Christmas, the joyful culmination of our preparations and penance. Let us celebrate Christmas with a renewed spirit and enthusiasm to believe in God, hope in God and live with God. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and blessings of the Holy Day. Hope to see you all for our Mass on the 24th at 7 PM.

The weekend Gospel passage portrays Mary visiting Elizabeth. Mary portrays a true disciple as she listened the Word of God and acted upon it. She received Christ in herself and then she set out to share that Christ to Elizabeth. Let us be filled with the spirit of Christ, allowing his rebirth within us, and thus be enabled to share his love with all whom we encounter by offering them humble and committed service, unconditional forgiveness and compassionate caring. Sharing Jesus with others is the best Christmas gift we can give. We can make a real difference in the lives of others by carrying Jesus to them. God wants each of us, like Mary, to carry to those around us the Lord of Life. Let us take the time to visit others this Christmas, to bring some inspiration into their lives, and hopefully to bring them closer to God. Let us share with them the Spirit of God, the Spirit of consolation, of courage, of peace and joy, just as Mary did. During the Christmas Season, God calls us into action as He did Mary. Is there anyone we know who is lonely, in a nursing home, ill or bedridden? Can we help him or her with a brief visit? Is there extra food in our pantry that a poor family could use?

May the peace and joy of Christmas be with us...

May the smile of Baby Jesus be our consolation and hope...

May we be filled with His Spirit to shine bright in the "darkness"...

BLESSED CHRISTMAS!!!

(☺☺☺) Always

☺☺☺(☺☺☺) Keep

(☺☺☺)☺☺ Smiling!

Fr. Sinoj Pynadath,

December Birthdays

20—Cathy Kramer

24—Susan Mutter

January Birthdays

7—Jacques Williams II



Thanks to all our participants in our Soulful Gospel Concert. A special Thank you to Gloria Adams for all her hard work and organization.



Mass Intentions:

December 23—Bernice Williams

Dec. 24 (PM)—Sandra Brown

Dec. 30—Kenneth Higgs

Dec. 31 (6 PM)—Dorothy Fulton

Jan. 6 Les Bumm

Let us remember to pray for those who have recently died or those who are in the process of dying. Remember to pray for the poor souls in purgatory.

Our thoughts and prayers are with: **SICK Martha Kramer, Ruth Coble, Carol Hatchett, Loretta Wathen, Beverly Chilton, Kathi Skidd, Larry Clark, Maggie Sheenan, Shelby Webster, Frank Adams, Rose Chapman, Father Pat Ryan, Charlene Meadows, Larry Leachman, Philip Moorman, Sr., Camilla Greer, Jim Moorman, Louise Johnson, Larry Allen, Phillip Moorman, Jr., If you know of anyone seriously ill who is in need of prayer or visitation, please notify the office.**

THE HOMEBOUND:

Ruth Coble is at Heritage Place on Buckland Square. Beverly Chilton is in her home but can no longer join us for Sunday Mass and activities. A phone call or a card can cheer the homebound if you can't visit.



Coming Events
CALENDAR



Blessed Sacrament Chapel

Dec. 24 7PM Christmas Vigil Mass and Blessing of Crib
Jan. 24—BSC Nite at McDonald’s 4-7 PM
Feb. 17—Gospel Explosion 2 PM
March 2 Italian Dinner

Diocesan Happenings

Jan. 11-13 Retrouvaille (for cold marriages) at Mount St. Joseph
Feb. 2 Diocesan Men’s Conference at Riverpark Center



Thank you for your contributions.

Dec. 9—\$638
Dec. 16—\$1422.96
Weekly Budget —\$875
Dec. \$3000.96
Dec. budget \$2625
Year to date—
\$21,328.15
YTD budget—\$21,875

Candles —\$6
Flowers —\$25



Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

When Mary, a teenager, was pregnant with a child conceived by a mysterious intervention by God, she made the difficult eighty mile journey south from Nazareth to Bethany to be with her elderly cousin Elizabeth, who was also pregnant. She would have made the difficult trip on foot, probably bare-foot. Sandals were expensive and usually kept for special occasions. Mary’s trip to be with her cousin was not just a social visit with an older cousin. They both believed their child would fulfill the prophesy of Isaiah that the God of Abraham would send a herald to proclaim the arrival of the Son of Man, who would be the Savior of the world. At the time, they could not have known everything we now know from the Gospels. But they had faith. They accepted the roles that they believed God had called them to. And their faith is a challenge to us to believe that the son of Mary is God Incarnate and our Savior and Lord. Let us celebrate His birth with great joy because *Jesus is the Reason for the Season.*

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29; Lk 1:67-79
Tuesday: Night: Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-3, 11-13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14
Dawn: Is 62:11-12; Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12; Ti 3:4-7; Lk 2:15-20
Wednesday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, Mt 10:17-22
Thursday: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a, 2-8
Friday: 1 Jn 1:5 — 2:2; Ps 124:2-5, 7b-8; Mt 2:13-18
Saturday: 1 Jn 2:3-11; Ps 96:1-3, 5b-6; Lk 2:22-35
Sunday: 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28; Ps 128:1-5 Col 3:12-21 [12-17]; Lk 2:41-52

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sunday: Fourth Sunday of Advent
Monday: Vigil of Christmas
Tuesday: The Nativity of the Lord
Wednesday: St. Stephen; First Day of Kwanzaa
Thursday: St. John
Friday: The Holy Innocents
Saturday: Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord; St. Thomas Becket



MEMORIES AND DREAMS

Throughout our lives, we retain the language and habits of our native region and family of origin. Should we return to our home after a long absence, we quickly revert to its familiar speech and practices. Our deep memory is reflected in old stories and words and speech patterns. This familiarity runs like an underground river and accompanies us wherever we go.

Not only do we remember, we are incorporated into and made part of a greater memory. In remembering and recollecting, we are in turn gathered up and re-collected.

Today we remember Mary, a small figure travelling the country roads to visit Elizabeth. All the great pronouncements and dreams of the prophets point to this time when the Lord’s words to Mary would be gathered and fulfilled. The memories of her people are alive in her, and memories of her nourish our own living faith.

O COME, LONG FORETOLD

O come, Desired of nations,
Whom priest and prophet long foretold
Will break the captive fetters,
Redeem the long-lost fold.
Dear Savior, haste; come, come to earth,
Dispel the night and show your face,
And bid us hail the dawn of grace.

—Simon J. Pellegrin (1663-1745), Tr. by Mary of St. Ph

	<u>Lectors</u>
<u>Dec. 24</u>	Jacques Williams
	Mary K. Gough
<u>Dec. 30</u>	Layson Brooks
	Barbara Bissel
<u>Dec. 31:</u>	Marsha Allen
	Connie Clary
	<u>Eucharistic Ministers</u>
<u>Dec. 24:</u>	Cindy Clark
<u>Dec. 30:</u>	Rita Moorman
	Cathy Kramer
	Charlene Meadows
	<u>Ushers/Offertory</u>
<u>Dec. 24:</u>	Barbara Hammond
	& family
<u>Dec. 30:</u>	Fulton Family
<u>Dec. 31:</u>	Volunteers
	Advent Penance Services
There seems to be a hundred things to do in December as we get ready for the holidays—plan, shop for gifts and food, entertain. If you haven’t had a chance to go to confession, there is one today.	
Dec. 23	St. Stephen’s 2 PM



Work of Christmas Begins

"When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with the flocks,
then the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal those broken in spirit,
to feed the hungry,
to release the oppressed,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among all peoples,
to make a little music with the heart...

And to radiate the Light of Christ,
every day, in every way, in all that we do
and in all that we say.
Then the work of Christmas begins.

-- Howard Thurman, adapted

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

In ancient pagan Rome, these days in mid-December were a time for general slacking off at work and far too much rejoicing. The period of leisure after the harvest and a whole cluster of pagan festivals were a force for the church to reckon with. The Saturnalia, breaking out on December 17, was a time of high living and loose morals. Christians were advised by their bish-ops to drop out of the mayhem and do some serious fasting. A famous church council at Sara-gossa in Spain made a season of fasting mandatory from December 17 to December 23, exact-ly coinciding with the Saturnalia. The bishops at that time were perhaps less concerned with preparing for Christmas than with resisting the kind of loose living going on.

Modern times have restored a bit of the Saturnalia spirit to our culture, so that a general period of partying with a vague connection to religion is now upon us. How does a Christian keep balance? The practice of charity by remembering the poor in our gift-giving, of hospitali-ty in finding a place at our holiday tables for the poor and lonely, and of daily prayer in the home and at church are great helps. Although Advent is not a penitential season like Lent, it is a time for making room in our lives for what matters most.

—James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Emmanuel God With Us

*Our prayer is that each day we realize more that God is
with us today, tomorrow, and always. He loves each of us
as no one else can. Share that love with everyone you en-
counter this Christmas season. Thank you for the many
ways you share Christ with us during the year.*

Father Jerry, Father Sinoj, HGM, Sister Jeannette, SSND