

SCRIPTURE READINGS

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14

Ahaz receives from Isaiah a prophecy that he will be successful in war and is urged to ask for a sign that the prophecy is true. The sign is "The virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel."



Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7

Paul greets the Romans by pointing out that Jesus is the Christ who was promised to them in Scripture. He, Paul, is the apostle favored with the task of spreading the name of Christ to all.

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-24

In a brief, straightforward, simple narrative, Matthew recounts the events leading to Jesus' birth. He details the appearance of the angel in a dream to Joseph and stresses that "All this happened to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophets."



For the Week of December 18th through
December 24th

Sunday

Is 7:10-14; Rom 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24

Monday

Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Lk 1:5-25

Tuesday

Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38

Wednesday

Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a; Lk 1:39-45

Thursday

1 Sm 1:24-28; Lk 1:46-56

Friday

Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Lk 1:57-66

Saturday

Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Lk 1:67-79



The US Council of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) provides a full listing of the Sunday and Daily Readings, in print and audio format, on its website, <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings>.

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 17th

4:00 p.m. Anita Gelderman

Sunday, December 18th

8:00 a.m. Ray Brilz

10:00 a.m. Sue Kolsun

Monday, December 19th

8:30 a.m. Parishioners, living and deceased

Tuesday, December 20th

8:30 a.m. Ross & Peg Lyons

Wednesday, December 21st

8:30 a.m. Jack DePoulter

Thursday, December 22nd

8:30 a.m. (SH) Communion Service

Friday, December 23rd

8:30 a.m. Communion Service

Saturday, December 24th

4:00 p.m. (SH) For the People

6:00 p.m. (SJ) For the People

Sunday, December 25th

10:00 a.m. (SH) For the People

REMEMBERING THE SICK OF THE

PARISH: Remember in
your prayers the sick of

the parish: *John*

Troffo, Valerie

Lindyberg, Patricia

Dana, Bob Dunn,

Elizabeth Montague,

Angela Wilmer, Faith King, Jennifer Willis, Joe

Fick, and Delores Carmen, and all those whose

names appear in the PARISH BOOK OF

INTENTIONS located in the front foyer.



MAY THE ANGELS LEAD THEM INTO PARADISE:

Please remember in your prayers Aileen Howard and our deceased parishioners, loved ones, and benefactors. Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

*In Loving
Memory*

PREP

Parish Religious Education Program



Bringing the Gospel Home

December 18, 2016

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Matthew 1:18-24

Light the fourth candle on your family's Advent wreath. Ask each person to recall one time during this Advent season when they were confused, unsure, or frightened about something. Encourage each person to share how Jesus helped them . . . or how they will call on Jesus the next time they're in a frightening situation.

Discussion Starters:

1. I remember one time when I was afraid but knew that God was with me . . .
2. It's important to me that my children know I'll be there when they call me because . . .
3. This week I heard a news story that made me know God is with us. The story was about...

Question of the Week:

Adults: What would Jesus see to praise about you right now?

Children: What good thing have you done so far during Advent to be like Jesus?



MASS TIMES FOR CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR'S

WEEKENDS:

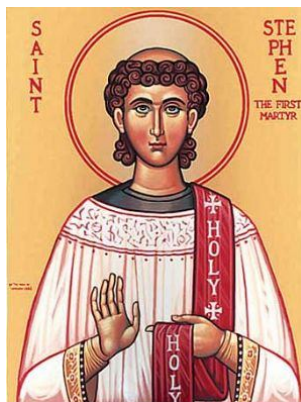
Saturday, Dec. 24	Sacred Heart St. John's	4:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 25	Sacred Heart	10:00 a.m.
Saturday, Dec. 31	Sacred Heart St. John's	4:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, Jan. 1	Sacred Heart	10:00 a.m.

SAINTS OF DECEMBER

STEPHEN THE MARTYR

Feast Day: December 26th

Canonized: Pre-Congregation



On Christmas Day, we celebrate the birth of Jesus. The next day we celebrate the birth of Stephen. But this is a different kind of birth. It is the birth of Stephen into eternal life. Death brought life for him. He is the first martyr of the Christian Church.

In the beginning of the Church, its members were Jews. Many of these Jews lived in Palestine. But others lived in distant cities around the Mediterranean Sea. We call them "Hellenized" Jews. As adults, many of them came to Jerusalem to live.

Among these Hellenized Jews was Stephen. (He may have come from Alexandria in Egypt). Hearing the preaching of the apostles in Jerusalem, he came to believe in Christ Jesus.

As the early Church grew, the apostles made an important decision. Preaching kept them busy. But many of their followers needed food and clothing. So the apostles selected seven people to collect and distribute these necessities. Stephen was one of the seven, who were known as deacons.

God filled Stephen with grace and power. He did good, just as Jesus had done. But around the year 34-35 A.D. some Hellenized Jews felt that Stephen rejected God when he accepted Jesus. So they dragged Stephen out of Jerusalem and began to stone him.

As he died, Stephen said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Praying for those who were stoning him, he said, "Lord, do not hold this against them." With these words, Stephen died. In life as in death, he truly followed Jesus.

St. Stephen is the patron saint of stoneworkers.

PARISH NEWS

Offertory - Week Ending 12/11/16 - Week 24

Thank you for your offering. It is with your continued support and the sharing of your time and talent that the ministries, programs and activities at Sacred Heart and St. John's are made possible. "Whatever you give to the Lord, He will return to you a hundred fold."

	Received	ACH	Budgeted	Diff.
Offertory 12/11-Wk.24	\$5,149	\$775	\$6,346	-\$422
YTD Wk. 24	\$126,835	\$ 24,715	\$152,304	-\$754

ELECTRONIC GIVING: It is possible to make your weekly financial commitment to the Parish using Electronic Funds Transfer. We are encouraging everyone to consider using this contribution method. Contact Senta Burton with any questions at 410-778-3160, or senta.burton@sacredparish.org. Sign up forms are available at the doors of the Church.

Salvation Army Bell Ringers Needed - Last year the Salvation Army distributed over \$15,000 in aid for 289 residents of our community who were in need. We are gearing up now for our Christmas Kettle Campaign, and we really need your help. Along with mail solicitations, this is how we collect money to help people in our community. Volunteers are needed for 1 ½ hour shifts outside of Redner's, and Acme or Downtown Chestertown through **December 24th**. If you can help with a shift on a Saturday or Sunday, please call Pat McDonald at 410-928-5160 or email her at Pat_eieio@yahoo.com. Students can earn community service hours and we welcome families. So grab your coat, hat and gloves and join in a very worthy cause! It's a great way to put our faith into action and enjoy the true Spirit of Christmas.

OFFERTORY ENVELOPES: The offertory envelopes for 2017 are at the back of the Church.

2017 CALENDARS ARE AT THE DOORS OF THE CHURCH.

GIVING TREE: All gifts are needed by **THIS Sunday, December 18th** for distribution on the 19th. Gifts received after this weekend will not be able to be distributed. *Thank you to everyone who participated in our Giving Tree this year – your generosity is greatly appreciated.*

LET'S DANCE for fun, smiles and exercise!! Zumba Gold[®] is being offered at Sacred Heart - for the active, older adult/beginner. There is no fee to our Sacred Heart & St. John's parishioners. The class is led by a certified Zumba Gold[®] instructor. **Classes are every Thursday morning at 9:30 a.m.** in the Church Hall. Please contact Sharon Burritt at 410-708-8048 with any questions.

NEW TO THE PARISH: Please be sure to register with the Parish Office and introduce yourself to Father Grasing after Mass. Registration forms are available at the doors of the Church, the Parish Office, or online. For additional information, please call 410-778-3160, or go to sacredparish.org.

CHURCH OFFICE: Church Offices will be closed **December 23rd through December 27th** in observance of the Christmas Holiday. Offices will also be closed **December 30th through January 2nd** for the New Year's holiday.

COAT DRIVE: Thank you to all those who gave winter coats to the collection Sacred Heart had. Forty-eight coats, jackets, and vests as well as a small bag of hats, gloves and scarves were donated. The Food Pantry GREATLY appreciated your generosity.



ADD YOUR CREATIVE TOUCH TO CHRISTMAS AT SACRED HEART AND ST. JOHN'S:

Want to learn how to prepare a Christmas floral arrangement? Here's an opportunity to create (with help from the Art and Environment group) arrangements for the entrances and chapel. When: **Thursday, December 22.** Where: Sacred Heart Church

Hall. How: Fresh cut flowers, all materials, design ideas and a mentor will be available to each volunteer. *You can do it!* And will see your creation on display to greet everyone at the Christmas Masses! *Please RSVP to Becky at the church office.*

