

# Mass Intentions

## December 12 - December 18

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Monday</b> , 12/12    | 9:00 a.m. Eduardo Rivera   |
| <b>Tuesday</b> , 12/13   | 9:00 a.m. Reverend Mark W. Ervin   |
| <b>Wednesday</b> , 12/14 | 9:00 a.m. Don Smith<br>7:30 p.m. Emilio de La Cruz   |
| <b>Thursday</b> , 12/15  | 9:00 a.m. Walter J. Trail, Sr.   |
| <b>Friday</b> , 12/16    | 9:00 a.m. Antonio Montealegre  |
| <b>Saturday</b> , 12/17  | 9:00 a.m. Fr. Donald Worch<br>5:00 p.m. James Hunt   |
| <b>Sunday</b> , 12/18    | 8:00 a.m. Deceased Members of the<br>Legion of Mary<br>9:30 a.m. <i>Pro populo</i><br>11:15 a.m. Paul Lea<br>1:00 p.m. Elsie DiBartolo<br>5:00 p.m. Paul Lea |

### + In Memoriam Aeternam +

In your charity, please pray for the repose of the souls of Barbara Feeter, wife of Ross Feeter, Jacqueline Gordon, wife of Bill Gordon, Raphael Sylvesteri, brother of Ann Pierre.

*Please pray for the sick...* Catherine Franck, Tom Carrington, Bob Coyne, Maureen Ferraro, Ryan Schick, Bob Coyne, Jeni Stepanek, Robert Dax. *(Names will remain on this list for four consecutive weeks, but can be repeated by calling the Office.)*

### Readings for the Week of December 11, 2016

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Sunday:</b>      | Is 35:1-6, 10/Ps 146/Jas 5:7-10/Mt 11:2-11 |
| <b>Monday:</b>      | Zec 2:14-17/Jdt 13/Lk 1:26-38              |
| <b>Tuesday:</b>     | Zep 3:1-2, 9-13/Ps 34/Mt 21:28-32          |
| <b>Wednesday:</b>   | Is 45:6-8, 18, 21b-25/Ps 85/Lk 7:18-23     |
| <b>Thursday:</b>    | Is 54:1-10/Ps 30/Lk 7:24-30                |
| <b>Friday:</b>      | Is 56:1-3, 6-8/Ps 67/Jn 5:33-36            |
| <b>Saturday:</b>    | Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72/Mt 1:1-17              |
| <b>Next Sunday:</b> | Is 7:10-14/Ps 24/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24      |

## Scripture Corner

### BAPTIST INTRODUCES MESSIAH

John the Baptist fulfills the promise made in today's first reading. (Isaiah 35:1 6 a. 10) 'Here is your God; he comes with vindication; with divine recompense he comes to save you.' (Isaiah 35:4) The Baptist represents the climax of salvation history. He is a prophet sent by God. The Jewish people had been some 400 years without a prophet. They were so impressed by John that many saw him as the Messiah.

The Gospel writers wanted to make it clear that though the Baptist was a special person, only Jesus is the Messiah. In the Gospel of John, for example, the last words of Baptist are, "He must increase; I must decrease." (John 3:30) Jesus says of John, "Among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist." (Matthew 11:11) Our Lord identifies John as a prophet, but also as God's messenger. The prophet Malachi writes, "Now I am sending my messenger - he will prepare the way before me." (Malachi 3:1)

In today's Gospel (Matthew 11:2-11) Matthew adds a beatitude from our Lord, "Blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." (Matthew 11:6) Matthew realized that many did take offense at our Lord. In chapter 12, for example, the Pharisees object to the disciples of Jesus eating grain on the Sabbath. They even make a terrible, incredible charge against the Messiah. 'This man [Jesus] drives out demons only by the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons.' (Matthew 12:24)

John the Baptist clearly fulfilled the promise made by Isaiah, but more importantly Jesus fulfills many from the Book of Emmanuel (God is with us) to the texts concerning the Suffering Servant. "But he was pierced for our sins, crushed for our iniquity. He bore the punishment that makes us whole, by his wounds we were healed." (Isaiah 53:5)

~ Fr. Ralph

## Third Sunday in Advent

### QUESTION OF THE WEEK

*What kind of Messiah does my own life's witness to Christ proclaim? One with fire and brimstone ready at hand, or one of whose comfort and healing I am an instrument.*

### RCIA

The Rite of Acceptance and Welcoming will be celebrated at the 5:00 p.m. Mass today. This is the first of the public rites celebrated during the RCIA process. Today our inquirers become catechumens (those to be baptized) or candidates (already baptized) and move into the Period of the Catechumenate. During this important ritual, the inquirers will publicly declare their intention to continue their journey toward full initiation in the Catholic Church. All of the members of the St. Francis community, represented by the sponsors, have a vital role in this journey by offering its support, witness, and prayer to these candidates and catechumens. Please pray for our catechumens, Brandon Cao, Nala Ton, Emily Hernandez, Giselle Hernandez, Jacob Hernandez, Kimberly Hernandez and our candidates, Jamie Poperack, Karla Capellan and Juan Veloz.

### RESPECT FOR LIFE MINISTRY: SPIRITUAL ADOPTION PROGRAM

#### Month No. 8 - Developing Baby

Thank you for continuing to pray for your spiritually adopted baby. Your little baby now weighs about 4 pounds and is approximately 17 inches long, and if born now would have a 90% chance of survival. During this time, your baby sleeps most of the day. The baby will move it's hands and it's head from side to side. Pray that the Lord of Life might move the heart of your baby's mother to give the most precious gift of all--the gift of life. **PRAYER REMINDER - Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I love you very much. I beg you to spare the life of the unborn baby that I have spiritually adopted and who is in danger of abortion. PLEASE SEE YOUR BABY'S 8 MONTH PICTURE IN THE GATHERING SPACE.**

### PARISH PENANCE SERVICE

**Monday, December 19**

**7:00 p.m.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Confessions on Christmas Eve will be heard from 12:00 Noon - 1:00 p.m.**

**There will be no confessions heard at 3:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve.**

### DINNERS NEEDED

We are looking for dinners during the months of December/January (December 13 - January 12) for Fr. John on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The Parish Cook will be gone during this time. You would be asked to cook one dinner and drop it off at the Rectory anytime before 5:00 p.m. Nothing fancy, just good old home cooking. If you are able to help, please call the Parish Office, (301) 840-1407 to sign up. **Thank you!**

### THE MUSINGS OF THE PASTOR

I want to devote my columns for the next two weeks to the topic of hospitality toward our many guests at Christmas. Christmas and Easter are two times in the year in which many more people come to church than we normally expect to see on a typical Sunday. Some are family members of parishioners who are coming to Mass with the family. Others are people who don't go regularly to church anymore. But something inside them prompted them to come back to church for Christmas Mass. Some may not come from a church background but wanted to check us out with the thought of coming back if they had a good experience here. We don't necessarily know why people whom we don't normally see or don't know are here. But they are here for Mass on Christmas. The important thing for us is to make them feel welcome. Let me talk about one simple thing that we can do that would speak volumes on making people feel welcome.

We all have our favorite seats at the dining room or kitchen table. We often have to shift our seats when we sit down to Christmas dinner because there are more people. Some of these people we haven't seen for some time. Some are brand new to our table. Maybe a co-worker or school friend or one of our children who couldn't get home for Christmas will join us. It might be a neighbor who is alone for Christmas. We all have been flexible for the feast. And, we go out of our way to try to make the person feel as welcome as we can.

All of us can strive to be flexible when we come to Christmas Mass. Many of our brothers and sisters in the Catholic Family whom we have not seen for some time will be with us for the celebration. There may be some who have never been with us in our parish.

I want to encourage those who regularly attend Mass to move over as far to the center of the pew as is convenient when you come to Mass on Christmas. Your usual seat may be right on the aisle. For the sake of "company," however, I want to encourage that these seats be the last one filled. I also hope that we shall let those with mobility issues be seated in places where they can easily receive Holy Communion.

I also want to encourage those who are regular participants to acknowledge others as they themselves enter the pew and as other people enter the pew. A smile and a simple, "Merry Christmas" or "Blessed Christmas" can "warm up" the congregation. I hope that we would greet our "pew-mates" as they leave at the end of Mass.

I remember talking with several people not long ago who are now members of the parish. These parishioners had tried out several other churches in the area. No one greeted them when they came to Mass nor spoke with them either while they were there. But when they came to St. Francis they were greeted warmly and made to feel very welcome indeed. That is when they knew that they had found a parish home. They returned and are now active parishioners. Such simple gestures of kindness and hospitality can make such a big difference!

We'll continue talking about this next week.

**Fr. John Dillon**  
**Pastor**

**LAMB OF GOD PRAYER MEETING** Join the Lamb of God Prayer Group for worship and the study of Scripture on Tuesday, December 13, 7:30 p.m., St. Clare's Chapel in the Rectory. For details, please call Louise, (301) 977-5217.

**POOR BOX DONATION** – The donations for next weekend will go to UMAN (Upper Montgomery Assistance Network). *Thank you for your generosity.*

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PRAYER CHAIN** If you have a prayer request, please contact Marianne Bullen, (301) 963-3420 or [mariannebu@comcast.net](mailto:mariannebu@comcast.net) with your requests.

**ROSARY FOR PRIESTS**

Every Wednesday evening at 6:45 p.m. we pray the rosary for our priests before the 7:30 p.m. Mass.

**ROSARY CENACLE OF OUR LADY, QUEEN OF PEACE** Cenacle of Our Lady, Queen of Peace to pray for priests and vocations, 3:00-5:00 p.m. in the St. Clare's Chapel (Rectory) every Sunday. Please join us.

**HOLY HOUR FOR THE DYING**

On Thursday evenings in the St. Clare Chapel in the Rectory a prayer group meets at 7:00 p.m. to pray for the dying. This is a Holy Hour Devotion for the Dying. As a central work of our Catholic faith, we are called to pray for the dying, especially for those who may die suddenly, unprepared to face God. For additional information, please call the Parish Office, (301) 840-1407.

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS - COUNCIL 2323**

The Knights of Columbus are actively pursuing new members. Our council incorporates members from St. Francis, St. Mary's and St. Martin's. Though best known for our many charitable projects, we also have a lot of fun with dinners, fund raisers, family nights and many other fraternal social occasions. If interested in learning more, please contact Gary Palmer, (301) 412-1237 or e-mail [gtdbpalmer@verizon.net](mailto:gtdbpalmer@verizon.net).

**BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING**

Blood Pressure Screening will take place this weekend in the St. Clare Room after the Saturday 5:00 p.m. Mass, Sunday 8:00, 9:30 and 11:15 a.m. Masses. Please stop by to have your pressure checked.

**RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS**

Aging religious need your help. Senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests have offered their lives in service to others - educating the young, comforting the sick, seeking justice for the oppressed. Today, many are frail, elderly, and in need of assistance. Your gift to the Retirement Fund for Religious helps to furnish medications, nursing care, and other necessities. Please give generously to today's collection.

**CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES PARKING**

Please remember that you can use Redland Middle School for "overflow parking." If you are coming to one of the earlier Masses please try to coordinate so that your family has only one car in the parking lot. We will have Crossing Guards at the earlier Masses, but will ask everyone's cooperation and patience going in and out of our parking lot. *Remember to be considerate of the Crossing Guard who is working on Christmas Eve to ensure your safety. Thank you!*

**BUILD UP OUR CHURCH**

**New Information Monitor to Soon to Be Installed**

Get ready for something new in the Gathering Space! The new St. Francis of Assisi information monitor will soon be installed above the Social Concerns table to the right of the main entrance as you leave the sanctuary. Funded in part by an Archdiocese of Washington grant, the information monitor will display pictures, videos, announcements and upcoming events of interest to St. Francis parishioners. Other items of interest, such as the Scripture references for the readings at Sunday Mass, may also be displayed.

The parish Communications Ministry will soon be establishing a Dropbox account in which St. Francis ministry members and parishioners can move their photos and videos, so they can be viewed by all on the information monitor. For more information on the information monitor, please contact Information Desk Ministry Coordinator Chris King at [caking.home@gmail.com](mailto:caking.home@gmail.com) and Communications Ministry Coordinator Melissa Egan at [Melissa.egan74@verizon.net](mailto:Melissa.egan74@verizon.net).

**CHRISTMAS 2016 SCHEDULE**



**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup> Vigil Masses**

- Family Mass with Youth & Children's Choirs 4:00 p.m.
- Mass with Cantor 6:00 p.m.
- Mass with Cantor, Singers, Cello 8:00 p.m.
- Carols, Adult Choir, String Quarter 10:00 p.m.
- Mass with Choir, incense 11:00 p.m.

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

**Sunday, Christmas Day, December 25<sup>th</sup>**

- Mass with Cantor, instruments 8:00 a.m.
- Mass with Cantor, singers, instruments 9:30 a.m.
- Mass with Contemporary Choir 11:15 a.m.

**No 1:00 p.m. or 5:00 p.m. Masses**

**Sunday, January 1, Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God Holy Day of Obligation**

Vigil Mass, Saturday December 31 - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 1 8:00, 9:30, 11:15 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

**No 5:00 p.m. Mass**

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS/EVENTS

### CHRISTMAS STOCKING HELP LINE

Religious Education families are invited to participate in the *Christmas Stocking Help Line*, an Advent project to benefit children and families in need. Items needed will be listed on “stockings” hung in the Parish Center during RE class times. Families may choose to take one or more stockings, purchase the items listed, and return them to RE classes no later than December 13. Letters with more information about this project will be given to students in RE classes.

### CATECHESIS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Our parish offers monthly catechetical sessions specifically designed for children and youth with special needs and their families. Our next session is today, Sunday, December 11 from 3:30-4:30 p.m. in the St. Clare Room. If you would like to learn more about these sessions, or if you are interested in serving as a catechist or aide for children with special needs, please call Susan Anderson, Director of Religious Education, at 301-258-9193.

### SACRAMENT OF PENANCE FOR RE STUDENTS

The students in grades 3 - 8 will have the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation as part of their Religious Education classes in Advent. Catechists will review the Sacrament of Penance in advance, and we encourage parents to talk with their children about the Sacrament as well. Please note the date for your child's session and grade as shown below:

#### Sunday 9:20 Session:

Grade 3 - Sunday, Dec. 11  
Grade 4 - Sunday, Dec. 18

#### Monday 6:45 Session:

Grades 6, 7 & 8 - Monday, Dec. 19  
(participating in the Parish Penance Service starting at 7:00 pm)

#### Tuesday 6:45 Session:

Grades 6, 7 & 8 - Tuesday, Dec. 13

### RE CLASS SCHEDULE & CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Religious Education classes will meet on a normal schedule next week, December 18, 19 and 20. There are NO Religious Education classes on the following days:

Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, December 25, 26 and 27  
Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, January 1, 2 and 3

Religious Education classes will resume on January 8, 9 and 10.

### CATECHISTS AND AIDES NEEDED

Additional volunteers are still needed! Please consider whether you can serve as a catechist or classroom aide for our children and young people. We especially need catechists for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade on Monday and Tuesday evenings, from 6:45-8:00 p.m. If you would like to learn more about this important ministry, please contact Susan Anderson, Director of Religious Education, at 301-258-9193.

## YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS/EVENTS

### ST. FRANCIS YOUTH MINISTRY

*Upcoming Events*

**FRED  
HIGH SCHOOL**

#### DECEMBER

11/12 Bake & Bling Sale  
12 FRED - Love Wins  
15 St. Martin's Soup Kitchen  
16 Christmas Caroling  
17 Feed the Homeless Service Project  
18 FRED & FRED Jr. Christmas Party

#### FRED JR.

#### DECEMBER

11/12 Bake & Bling Sale  
15 St. Martin's Soup Kitchen  
16 Christmas Caroling  
17 Feed the Homeless Service Project  
18 FRED & FRED Jr. Christmas Party

#### GET SOCIAL

*\*Instagram "SFASusie"*

*\*FRED group on FACEBOOK: friend "Susan FRED Lea"*

*\*"St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church" page on Facebook*

### ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFT CARD SALE

Alternative Christmas Gift Card Sale after all Masses this weekend. Please stop and purchase your Alternative Gift Cards.

Need more time to decide on a gift? *Copies of the Alternative Christmas Gift Catalog can be found on the Social Concerns table.* Complete the order form and mail or drop the Alternative Christmas Catalog envelope in the baskets used for the weekly offering collection. All mail orders must reach the Parish Office no later than **December 16**. This is to allow enough time for greeting cards to be mailed prior to Christmas.

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SNOW CANCELLATION POLICY

If Montgomery County Public Schools are closed, and if schools are dismissed early, Religious Education classes, including FRED, are also cancelled. This applies to Sunday classes as well if Montgomery County Public Schools announces cancellation of weekend school activities. Cancellation announcements will be recorded on the Religious Education Office phone (301-258-9193) and posted on the St. Francis Parish Facebook page (“St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church”).

Whenever in doubt, please use your own judgment about local weather and driving conditions, and err on the side of safety when making decisions about bringing your child to class.

## YOUNG ADULTS

**Christ in the City: Holy Hour** - 12/20/16 7:30-8:30 pm; fellowship to follow St Mary's Historic Chapel (520 Veirs Mill Rd Rockville MD 20852) Join us for praise and worship, adoration, scripture reflection, silent meditation and the option of confession. For more information, click here.

**Advent Stations of the Cross** 12/17/16, 8-9pm St. Dominic's DC - Scripture Readings, Preaching, Prayer, Silent Reflection, Beautiful Singing, Candles, "Christ Our Hope" as this year's theme, preparation for Christ's Nativity and coming more deeply into our hearts now. . . confessions before hand, refreshments and fellowship afterward. . . all in one night. Come and see!

## ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

During Advent in particular, we recall Mary's Visitation to Elizabeth in her need. The Visitation is an inspiration to members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Francis parish who also visit those in need. Have you ever felt called to this ministry of love and service where we met Christ through the face of the poor? Is the Holy Spirit nudging you to join in the work of the Society? The parish St. Vincent de Paul Society focuses on the needs of the struggling and poor in the Derwood area, and we are sometimes asked to help in nearby areas of Montgomery County as well. Come see if you are called to the ministry of the Society. We meet on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the rectory Assisi Room. **Because of Christmas, our meeting in December is Thursday, December 15.** For more information, call Tony Bosnick at 301-840-1407, Ext 11.

## CELEBRATE THE GIFT OF ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Sunday, January 8, 2017  
5:00 p.m. Youth Mass

The Feast of the Epiphany  
A special Mass for Adults and Children  
with Developmental Differences  
St. Francis of Assisi Parish

Sponsored by the Up County Special Needs Ministry

## FAITH DIRECT

With the busy Holiday Season, enrolling in *Faith Direct* is a great way to take one item off your weekly to-do list. Pick up an enrollment form from the parish office today or enroll online at [www.FaithDirect.net](http://www.FaithDirect.net), our church code is **MD110**. Already using *Faith Direct*? Don't forget to add your Christmas or End of Year contributions to your account. Thank you in advance for your support and for using *Faith Direct*!

## 2016 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

To receive credit in 2016, your contributions must be dated December 31, 2016. If you are mailing a contribution, it must be received in the parish Office on or before Wednesday, January 4, 2017. As a reminder, the parish statement of contributions will not include your FAITHDIRECT contributions. You will receive a statement from them.

## Spotlight on St. Jude Regional Catholic School Catch our Spirit

### CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCES DEC. 12 & 13

The Arts come together for a year-end celebration with musical performances, as well as student art displays. Enjoy performances of seasonal favorites by Beginning and Advanced Band, class performances of Christmas songs from Pre-K through 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade musical "Twas the Light Before Christmas." Set in Bethlehem, with upbeat songs and some modern touches, it tells the story of the birth of Jesus through the eyes of Bethlehem youth running a Sunglasses stand. Performances at 2:00 p.m. on December 12 and 7:00 p.m. on December 13.

### Top Middle School Science Fair Projects 2016

**Congratulations to the students with the best science fair projects!**

#### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Chloe Coursey -- *Sterilize This: Studying the Recovery of Bacteria after DNA Damage by UV Light*  
Rosemary Sui -- *Electrolysis of Water*  
Colin Kai Valcarcel -- *What Chord Lengths Best Affect a Propeller?*

#### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

Noel Belardo -- *How Sweet Is It?*  
Joshua Hoffmann -- *How Far Can Sparks Fly?*  
Bridget Junghans -- *How the Strength of a Magnet Varies with Temperature?*  
Nagomi Myers -- *The Most Effective Substance for Neutralizing Acidity*

#### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Daniel Landry -- *Break the Plaster, Reinforce the Plaster*  
Shawn Mashburn -- *How the Length of a Pendulum Affects Oscillation*  
Andrew Rapisura -- *Which Sensor is the Best for Navigation?*

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Naomi Barish -- *Finding Density is a Piece of Cake*  
Marco Duran -- *NO Pain Lots of Game*  
Christian Patiag -- *Breaking a Fall*  
Tim Sanders -- *NO Pain Lots of Game*

## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FAMILY NIGHT

For December, we are bringing Family Night to football Sunday! We will be holding our December Family Night fundraiser on Sunday, 12/11/16 from 2:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. Come cheer on the Redskins play the Eagles, decorate gingerbread man cookies and sing in our annual funny Christmas carol contest. We will be serving all of your favorite football fare - Italian sausage w/ peppers and onions, hot dogs, chicken nuggets, french fries, salad, baby carrots, beer and soda. Feel free to bring a dessert to share. This month all proceeds will go towards helping the people of Haiti. Family Night is held at Father Cuddy Hall located at 17001 Overhill Rd, Derwood, MD 20855 and the cost is \$10/person or \$25/family. We hope to see you there! RSVPs are greatly appreciated and for more information contact Pat Gilroy [pgilroy@arlingtonasset.com](mailto:pgilroy@arlingtonasset.com) or Mike Bean [mbeanx31@gmail.com](mailto:mbeanx31@gmail.com).

## ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesday, December 21, Brooke Grove Rehabilitation & Nursing Center, 18131 Slade School Road. For further information contact Bill Neely, (301) 924-5176 or [bneely@bgf.org](mailto:bneely@bgf.org).