



**Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church**  
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December 17, 2017

Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord,

We rejoice this weekend as we draw near to the end of the Advent Season and prepare to celebrate the joy of Christmas. As Christians, our joy comes from our faith that God's love for us is so great that He sent His only Son to become one like us in all things but sin. Born of the Virgin Mary, Jesus has come to bring peace and reconciliation to His people. Christmas gives us many opportunities to share this joy with the people in our lives. Gatherings of family and friends can be for us an opportunity to share the beauty of our faith and the joy that Christ brings us. Even in our own church we are called to be messengers of this joy.

It will be no surprise to see the number of people at Masses swell greatly during Christmas. Sometimes this can lead us to the temptation to resentment that some of our brothers and sisters do not join us every week for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. But, instead of turning away from these brothers and sisters through resentment, let us be beacons of light and faith and joy to those who join us for the liturgies this Christmas.

One of the most frequent comments that I heard at the recent coffee gatherings was that Our Lady of the Rosary is a welcoming parish—always ready to invite with open arms all those who join us. Let that be our goal in a particular way during Christmas Masses this year. May our joyful welcome help all those who join us to feel that Our Lady of the Rosary is a spiritual home for them, too. May our welcome make it easier for them to return to worship God with us on the Sunday after Christmas, as well.

Our welcome can be as simple as holding the door open for someone coming in after us or a smile or a handshake and introduction. These little acts of welcome could have a great impact on those who are seeking to believe in God's love for them.

Below you can find our schedule of Masses for the days around Christmas:

**Fourth Sunday of Advent (Sunday obligation)**

- Saturday, December 23rd - 4:00pm
- Sunday, December 24th - 9:00am, 11:00am

**Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord – Christmas (Holy Day of Obligation)**

- Sunday, December 24th - 4:00pm
- Monday, December 25th - 9:00am, 11:00am

(Continued on reverse)

### **Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (Sunday obligation)**

- Saturday, December 30th - 4:00pm
- Sunday, December 31st - 9:00am, 11:00am, 6:00pm

### **Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God (*not a holy day of obligation*)**

- Monday, January 1st - 9:00am

Please make note of the Holy Days of Obligation during this Christmas time. Christmas falls on a Monday this year and, as always, it is a holy day of obligation. This means that all Catholics are obliged to attend Mass once on the Fourth Sunday of Advent and again on Christmas Day. As always, our obligation can be filled in the evening (after 4pm) on the day before the Sunday or Holy Day. However, one Mass cannot fulfill both obligations. In other words, we cannot attend Mass on Christmas Eve and have it count for both the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent and Christmas. (This year, the Solemnity of Mary Mother of God on New Year's Day is NOT a holy day of obligation.)

Of course, our primary reason for attending Mass on Sundays and on the great feast of Christmas should be out of our love for God and our desire to worship Him with thanksgiving for all that He has done, not to fulfill an obligation. But as our Holy Mother, the Church knows that at some times, however rare, many of us need the reality of an obligation to keep us from sliding away from what the Lord desires of us.

As you make your plans for finishing Advent and celebrating Christmas with us, **these are the four possible options for fulfilling both Mass obligations at Our Lady of the Rosary:**

1. **Saturday evening** (4pm) **and Sunday evening** (4pm)
2. **Saturday evening** (4pm) **and Monday morning** (9am or 11am)
3. **Sunday morning** (9am or 11am) **and Sunday evening** (4pm)
4. **Sunday** (9am, 11am, or 4pm) **and Monday** (9am or 11am)

To Jesus through Mary,



Fr. Jonathan  
[jhemelt@arch-no.org](mailto:jhemelt@arch-no.org)

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### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

On Tuesday, December 19 from 6:00pm – 7:30pm

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Advent Evening Prayer—6:00pm; Confession—6:15pm-7:15pm;

Rosary—6:45pm; Benediction—7:20pm

On Saturday, December 23 at 8am, we will be decorating the church for the Christmas Season. Please come and join us.