

Dear friends,

Today is the fourth Sunday of Advent and the last Sunday before Christmas. The readings prepare us to witness Christ's birth by showing us how Jesus was recognized as Israel's long-awaited Messiah even before his birth. In a few days' time we will be celebrating Christmas and today's Mass prepares us for that great event.



Our Gospel reading recalls Mary's actions after the announcement by the angel Gabriel. Mary goes to visit Elizabeth, her cousin, who is also with child. Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and sings Mary's praise at the sound of Mary's voice. "Why should I be honored with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy" Elizabeth tells Mary. Surely, it is only through faith and the inspiration of the Spirit that she could recognize in her younger cousin the Mother of her Lord.

It is appropriate in this season of Advent that we consider the role of Mary in God's plan of salvation. Elizabeth describes Mary as the first disciple, as the one who believed that God's word to her would be fulfilled. Mary's faith enabled her to recognize the plan of God for humanity and in her own life. Her openness to God allowed God to work through her so that salvation might come to everyone. Because of this, Mary is a model and symbol of the Church. May we like Mary, open and cooperative in God's plan for us as individual and for the salvation of the whole world.

The beauty of what we celebrate in this Holy Season is this, what Eve destroyed by not cooperating with God, Mary restored by her obedience. She became the tabernacle of the Most High God as the Holy Spirit overshadowed her. We too are invited to cleanse our hearts to receive Jesus, thereby becoming a dwelling place for God too. St. Paul says: "Do you not realized that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you and whom you receive from God? You are not your own property, then; you have been bought at a price. So use your body for the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 6: 19-20). We pray today that Mary the Mother of Jesus will pray for us as we continue our pilgrimage to heaven.

**Christmas Mass Schedule:** This year's Christmas celebration falls on a weekend, Masses will follow the regular weekend Mass schedules, except for midnight Mass at 12 Midnight. Christmas is an exciting time of the year. Jesus came to this world for you and me; let us celebrate him in the poor, lonely, sick, hungry and dying. In that way you bring Hope, Peace, Joy and Love that this Holy Season represents. **WISHING YOU ALL A MERRY CHRISTMAS!!**

**Merry Christmas!!**

Fr. Jude Uche, MSP

## 4to Domingo de Adviento

El misterio de la Encarnación ocurrió a través de María, y a través del Espíritu Santo que nos es dado durante el Bautismo y la Confirmación, también estamos llamados a personificar la presencia de Dios ¿Hemos nosotros, como María, dicho que sí a Dios? ¿Somos como José, alimento y protección de la vida dentro de nosotros? Mientras celebramos esta temporada santa de nacimiento ¿estamos dando a luz en nuestras vidas los frutos del amor de Dios: justicia, paz, amabilidad, humildad y gozo?

## 4th Sunday of Advent

The mystery of the Incarnation occurred through Mary and yet through the Holy Spirit given to us in Baptism and Confirmation we too are called to embody the presence of God. Have we, like Mary, said yes to God? Are we, like Joseph, nurturing and protecting that life within us? As we celebrate this holy season of birth, are we giving birth in our lives to the fruits of God's love: justice, peace, kindness, humility and joy?

**CHURCH CALENDAR**

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 18**  
10 am First Reconciliation Class  
1-4 pm Confirmation Class

**MONDAY DECEMBER 19**

**TUESDAY DECEMBER 20**  
8 am Men's Group- *OLOG Room*  
6 pm TNMC

**WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 21**  
No Faith Formation

**THURSDAY DECEMBER 22**

**FRIDAY DECEMBER 23**  
Office Close  
7 pm Posada Grupo de Oracion

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 24**  
5:30 Christmas Eve Mass  
12 am Christmas Eve Midnight Mass

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 25**  
Christmas Day  
9 am English Mass  
11 am Spanish Mass



**Christmas Mass Schedule**

**Saturday, December 24**  
5:30 pm  
12:00 am Midnight  
**Sunday, December 25**  
9:00am English 11:00 am Spanish

**Monetary Stewardship**

Collection Last Week:

**Regular: \$4,536.00**  
**Online: \$ 287.90**  
**Total \$ 4,823.90**

**Immaculate Conception**  
**\$ 517.00**

**Parish Mission**  
**\$ 646.00**

**Retired Clergy & Religious**  
**1,264.00**

*... remembering the words of the Lord who said, It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).*

**Building for Our Lord Campaign**  
**Construyendo Para Nuestro Señor**

Total Pledge To Date:  
**\$1,421,876.00**

Amount Collected To Date:  
**\$810,000.00**

Pledges to be Redeemed:  
**\$526,020.00**

Paid Diocese Months of December  
**\$30,000.00**

Loan Balance to Date:  
**\$561,294.44**

Original Loan Total  
**\$800,000.00**

**Mass Intentions**

Sat.	Dec 17	5:30 pm	Roy Stermer +
Sun.	Dec 18	9:00 am	Nicholas Pritchett
		11:00 am	Zoe Villa+/Fam Arias (Anniversary)
Mon.	Dec 19	6:00 am	
Tues.	Dec 20	6:00 pm	Jerry Soto +
Wed.	Dec 21	8:30 am	Nicholas Pritchett
Thurs	Dec 22	8:30 am	Stewart Smith +
Fri	Dec 23	12:00 pm	Eva Piatek (Graces & Health)
Sat	Dec 24	5:30 pm	St. Stephen's Parishioners
Sun	Dec 25	9:00 am	Nicholas Pritchett
		11:00 am	St. Stephen's Parishioners

**Ministry Schedule for December 24-25 2016**

Mass	Lector	Altar Servers	Ushers / Greeters	Ministers of Eucharist
5:30 PM	L Arnold W Faulkner	J Young J McGregor	M Daskocil G Pritchett B Johnson	Tamara A Romayne S T Schatte Jennifer Mc P Watson
9:00 AM	L Rohaly J Canales	J Delio L Hossfield A Patten	S Starnes E Alvarez G Reihsen	Deacon Ernie G Pritchett D Alvarez A Mazoch E Mazoch
11:00 AM	R Urquiza E Olalde	F Ramirez J Perez S Perez D Arias M Hernandez K De Jesus	J Rocha B Rocha Moises V	M Ramos L Perez Oliva B Martinez J Villarreal

**Faith Formation**

**No Classes December 21 & 28 Christmas Holiday**

**Mass Intention**

If you would like to have a special mass intention simply grab a mass intention envelope fill the information in and drop it in the collection basket or call the office to schedule one.

**Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God**

**Saturday, December 31**  
5:30 pm  
**Sunday January 1**  
9:00 am English



**MEN'S BIBLE STUDY**

The men's group meets every Tuesday morning at 8 am in the OLOG Room. If you have any questions please contact Robert Michalewicz.

**Grupo de Oracion**

**Grupo de Oracion Fe y Esperanza**  
Tendra su tradicional Posada el 23 de Diciembre a las 7 pm  
Ven a celebrar con nosotros nuestras tradiciones.



**RESPECT FOR LIFE**

Stop by the Respect for Life table each mass. As we prepare for the birth of Jesus, let us remember the Serene Attention to God's Creation.

**FAITH FORMATION**

Faith Formation  
Classes will  
Resume next Wednesday  
January 4

**Office Close**

The office will be  
close December 23 &  
26 for Christmas

