



Gospel Reflection
Dec. 17-18, 2016
4th Sunday in Advent
Matthew 1:18-24

Can we find the Presence of God in all events, even the most unexpected? Saint Joseph, a simple, relatively uneducated man, but a man whose life was steeped in an awareness of God, did.

Joseph was not only a just and chaste man; he was a quiet man. His quiet, as first we see it in today's Gospel, is the silence of profound charity. A righteous son of David, he would need to be obedient to the Law. Becoming aware of Mary's pregnancy, he had, as it were, no choice but to divorce her. Any other response would run contrary to the demand of justice, but he made plans to divorce her quietly or "in all secrecy" as some translations phrase it. His quiet is first a silence of profound love. He had absolutely no intention of exposing her or discrediting her. More often than not, we may be quicker to speak than to bear the demands of love secretly. Joseph's first response to the disquieting circumstance of Mary's pregnancy reflects a man capable of keeping peace in his heart. In advance of the Gospel teaching, he knew that "Love never wrongs the neighbor, hence love is the fulfillment of the law" (Rom. 13:10).

With the appearance of the angel in a dream, Joseph, just like Mary, must consent to God's plan. He had probably envisioned the birth of several children in his marriage and all the comforts and rights of marriage. Now, in a dream, he sees that God has called him to another vocation. On his own, he could never have envisioned how sublime the mutual chastity of him and his betrothed would be. His abstinence in no way whatsoever diminished his masculinity. A man weak of will and feeble of strength could never consent to a vocation such as Joseph's. God had provided the answer; He would also provide the grace to respond. Joseph responded. He was obedient to the plan of God, as was Mary.

Can we not see in this silently loving, chaste, and obedient man a model for our own response to God's call in the most unforeseen circumstances of our lives? Our lives can find inspiration in Joseph's life. Let us not tempt God by asking for a sign, but rather *be* that sign of God-with-us still.

~Fr. Victor Scooco, O.S.S.T.

WANT TO HELP DECORATE THE CHURCH & HALL?

If you still have some decorating energy in you, you are welcome to help us adorn the Parish Center and Church for Christmas. **We definitely could use the help!**

The decoration will begin after the 9:00am Mass on Thursday, December 22nd.

COMMUNION SERVICES

There will be a Communion Service rather than Daily Mass on Monday, December 19th.

CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

For everyone who chose ornaments, all gifts are due back no later than this Monday!

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve – Saturday, Dec. 24, 2016

4:15pm Musical Prelude (Parish Center)
 4:30pm Children's Christmas Mass (Parish Center)
 6:30pm Musical Prelude (Parish Center)
 7:00pm Vigil Mass (Parish Center)
 11:30pm Musical Prelude (Church)
 12:00am Midnight Mass (Church)

Christmas Day - Sunday, Dec. 25, 2016

8:30am Mass (Church)
 10:00am Mass (Church)
 11:30am Mass (Church)

Holy Day: Mary, Mother of God - Sunday, Jan. 1, 2017

Regular Sunday Mass schedule

YOUNG ADULT EVENTS - BIBLE STUDY & POTLUCK

Attention Young Adults! Join us **Tuesday, December 20th from 7:00-9:00pm for a Christmas Potluck Dinner** and Socializing! Then, we'll help organize the presents for our Christmas Giving Tree recipients!

We have started a regular **Bible Study for Young Adults**. The next class will meet on Thursday, December 29th at 7:00pm in the Sacristy (area behind the altar).

Starting in 2017, Young Adult Ministry will meet on the second and fourth Fridays of the month, starting at 7:00pm. Watch the bulletin for more information!

CHILI COOK-OFF IS BACK! – JANUARY 15TH

Dust off those Chili recipes! Life Teen will be organizing a Chili Cook-Off Fundraiser on Sunday, January 15th from 2-4pm. If you would like to participate for the chance to win cash prizes, fill out an entry form, and drop the entry in the collection basket or mail to the Rectory. The entry fee is \$10, and we ask that you bring enough to provide around 100 small samples.

For those who would like to sample some tasty chili, the entry fee is \$4.00 and you'll be able to place two votes for your top choices for mild and spicy.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The last Religious Education class this year will be on Dec. 18th. In January, the classes will be January 15th and 29th. First Eucharist classes begin with an Inscription Mass on January 22nd at 8:30am, followed by a parent/child class.

If you have any questions, please contact Val Magnuson: val@saintlawrencemartyr.org or call 410-799-1970, ext. 54.

Mass Intentions

Saturday, Dec. 17th: 4th Sunday of Advent

5:00pm + James Prisco III req by Jim Prisco Jr.
 6:30pm For the Trinitarians & Trinitarian 3rd Order
Sunday, Dec. 18th: 4th Sunday of Advent
 8:30am + Barbara Murphy req by Jon & Valerie Magnuson
 10:00am Mass for the People
 11:30am + Adelaide A. Melgar
 req by Elnora Guzman & Family

5:30pm + Michael J. Mead Sr. req by the Stegmaiers

Monday, Dec. 19th:

9:00am* Communion Service – no intention

Tuesday, Dec. 20th:

9:00am** + Katherine Eggerl Peters req by the Henline and Mangubat families

Wednesday, Dec. 21st:

9:00am*** + Deceased members of the Trinitarian Order req by the Trinitarians

Thursday, Dec. 22nd:

9:00am* + Deceased members of the Nguyen family

Friday, Dec. 23rd:

9:00am* + Colin Barrett req by Joe & Cathy Stegmaier

Saturday, Dec. 24th: Christmas Eve

4:30pm + Roy G. Lamb, Jr. req by the Lauth family
 7:00pm Mass for the People
 Midnight + Deceased members of the DeBell family req by Joe & Cathy Stegmaier

Sunday, Dec. 25th: Christmas Day

8:30am + Alex Stewart req by Grandma Judy Kurtz
 10:00am John, Bolanle, & Anthony-Mary Edet
 11:30am Philomena Onwuegbule & family for thanksgiving & blessings req by Mr. & Mrs. Edet

*Rosary following Mass ** Rosary and Novena to St. Agatha

*** Rosary and Novena to St. Michael of the Saints

MASS INTENTIONS

Offering Mass for a Special Intention is a long-standing tradition in the Catholic Church. Masses are offered for many reasons: in remembrance for the deceased, or for the living, in honor of a birthday or other special occasion.

If you'd like to have a Mass celebrated for someone, contact the Parish Office at office@saintlawrencemartyr.org or call 410-799-1970. It is a free will offering, but typically people donate \$5 to \$10 a Mass.

Dec. 24th – 25th Christmas Ministry Schedule					
Time	Servers	Lector	EM	Ushers	Greeters
Saturday 4:30pm	Hannah L Emily R	Mary J	Larry B Tom L Deacon John		
Saturday 7:00pm	Cassie B	Joan M	Donna F Kathy F Help Needed		
Saturday Midnight	Katie B Timmy B	Jim L	Deacon John		
Sunday 8:30am	Help Needed	Ken W	Rocco D		
Sunday 10:00am	Daniel P	Mike J	Deacon John		
Sunday 11:30am	Christian C Angel G Rhea G	Bob S	Lola R		

Additional volunteers still needed.

Sign-up sheet can be found in the Sacristy.

CHURCH SUPPORT- DECEMBER 10-11, 2016

Category	This year	Last year
Envelopes: Regular Weekly	\$3,681.50	\$4,302.00
Loose: Regular Weekly	1,285.00	1,285.00
E-giving: Regular Weekly	1,798.50	1,360.00
Poor Box:	323.50	551.00
Retired Religious:	1,358.00	1,192.00
TOTAL	\$8,446.50	\$8,690.00

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SENIOR RELIGIOUS

A sister from Indiana writes, "Because of your kindness, our elderly sisters will have the comfort, security, and joy of living out their remaining years here in their home. You truly honor them and their many years of service by your generosity." Religious across the United States offer sincere thanks for your generosity to last week's collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious.



Dec. 17th: 2nd Collection: Restoration & Maintenance
 9:00am Breakfast with Santa (Parish Ctr)
 7:30pm Feast of John DeMatha and 10th Anniversary of 3rd Order

Dec. 18th: 2nd Collection: Restoration & Maintenance
 9:30am Rel Ed Classes PreK-3rd (Parish Ctr)
 11:15am Rel Ed Classes 4th – 8th (Parish Ctr)
 11:15am Prayer Ministry (McKennas)
 3:30pm Confirmation Class (Parish Ctr)
 6:30pm Life Teen Christmas Social (Ctr)

Dec. 19th: 7:00pm RCIA
Giving Tree Packages are Due

Dec. 20th: 11:00am TLC Lunch (Golden Corral)
 6:00pm Divine Mercy Chaplet (Church)
 6:30pm Women's Bible Study (offsite)
 7:00pm Parish Pastor0al Council
 7:00pm Young Adult Christmas Potluck

Dec. 22nd: 9:30am Decorate Church & Parish Center

Dec. 24th: 4:15pm Musical Prelude
 4:30pm Children's Mass (Parish Ctr)
 6:30pm Musical Prelude
 7:00pm Christmas Eve Mass (Parish Ctr)
 11:30pm Musical Prelude
 12:00am Midnight Mass (Church)

Dec. 25th: 8:30am Christmas Day Mass (Church)
 10:00am Christmas Day Mass (Church)
 11:30am Christmas Day Mass (Church)
 No 5:30pm Mass



LOOKING FOR THE LONGEST MARRIED COUPLE

Worldwide Marriage Encounter is searching for the longest married couple. One national winner and winners from each of the 50 states are recognized each year. This project is held to honor the commitment of married couples and to give hope and inspiration to younger couples that they too can have long and lasting marriages. Nominations must be received by January 10th, 2017. To nominate a couple you know, please visit us at <http://wwme.org> or contact us directly at 321-804-2310.

FORMED RECOMMENDATIONS

Dec. 18th: Fourth Sunday Of Advent

- Program: Advent, Session 4: The Gift
- YDisciple Advent, Session 4: The Gift

Dec. 25th: Christmas

- Movie: The Story of the Nativity
- Audio: The True Meaning of Christmas

NEW! No time to read the Bible? Listen on FORMED! Now you can experience the Gospel the way the early Christians did—by listening—anytime, anywhere!

The award-winning Truth and Life Dramatized Audio Bible is now available on FORMED.

To Access: Go to www.formed.org and click “Register”, located in the lower right hand corner. Then enter both the Parish Code, which is ed1783, and your email address. You’ll need to fill out some basic information and then click “Submit”. Formed will send an email for verification to your email. Go to & open your email received from “Formed” and click on the word “Verify”. It will then take you to the Formed site.

KNOTT SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED

KNOTT SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS announce the availability of four-year, full-tuition scholarships for the 2017/2018 academic year. These scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic achievement. Catholic students now in grade 4 or grade 8, living in Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford or Howard counties may apply.

Scholarships may be used to attend a Catholic parish elementary school or a Catholic high school within these geographic areas of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Information regarding qualifications and an application form describing eligibility requirements and deadlines may be obtained from our web site at: www.knottscholar.org. For additional information, please call 443-325-7884 or write to us at knottscholars@gmail.com.

SIT-UATION

The SIT St. Lawrence Ministry focuses on our fellow Christians who suffer persecution because of their commitment to Christ and His Church.

The three pillars for SIT St. Lawrence are prayer, action, and awareness. In order to facilitate awareness of persecuted Christians, we will be informing everyone of persecution around the world as well as awareness events.

“As Faith McDonnell of IRD explained at last week’s vigil, Christians in Sudan have been facing horrific persecution. Please pray for south Sudanese pastors Rev. Hassan Abduraheem and Rev. Kuwa Shamal whom were arrested in the Islamic majority country and face possible death. You can sign a petition with ACLJ that demands their release at www.aclj.org.”

A LIFELINE FOR MARRIAGE

Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-vi with a long i) helps couples through difficult times in their marriages. It is designed to provide the tools to help get your marriage back on track. It will give you the opportunity to rediscover each other and examine your lives together in a new and positive way. This program has helped tens of thousands of couples experiencing marital difficulty at all levels including disillusionment and deep misery. Our next local weekend is **January 27 - 29, 2017**. Register or obtain information, visit our website at: www.HelpOurMarriage.com, call (443) 400-7017, or email: 3015@Retrouvaille.org.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SERVE IN MINISTRY?

We welcome volunteers, and since we are committed to protecting the safety of our children and our volunteers, and in compliance with the Archdiocese of Baltimore, St. Lawrence Martyr Catholic Church requires ALL who volunteer at St. Lawrence to complete Shield the Vulnerable (STAND) training.

In order to do so, please go to www.shieldthevulnerable.org and sign up as a St. Lawrence/Hanover volunteer after selecting *First-Time*, then *Catholic Dioceses*, then *Baltimore Archdiocese*, then select *Confirm*. Please follow the directions afterward.

If you have any questions, go to our website at www.saintlawrencemartyr.org, choose the STAND page under the Service tab, and follow the step-by-step directions. For more information, call Valerie Magnuson, our screening coordinator, at 410-799-1970, ext. 54.

GABRIEL NETWORK – HELP PREGNANT WOMEN

St. Lawrence Parish Gabriel Network program, which supports practical, emotional, and spiritual care to pregnant women in crisis situations, is going strong. We have an immediate need for newborn size diapers and newborn girl’s clothing. Thanks!

If you’d like to help with the program, contact Joe Toher by email at joetoher@gmail.com or call 443-850-6207.

JOIN FLOCKNOTES!

As the bad weather begins this weekend, we encourage everyone to join Flocknotes so they can be instantly alerted on any cancellations. You can either go online to:

www.flocknote.com/saintlawrencemartyr
or text SLM to the number 84576

from your phone to subscribe to updates. Regular texting rates apply.

Once you sign up, please follow the steps to complete the sign-up process. You can also sign up for various ministries in which you are interested or active.

NEEDED: SOCKS

The Trinitarian Third Order is looking for new white tube socks to give to the homeless in Baltimore and Glen Burnie.

They will be collecting these items until March. The donations can be placed in the container in the Parish Center.



CHRISTMAS SHOEBOX PROGRAM – THANK YOU

The Knights of Columbus #12180 and the 4th Degree #3245 Assembly wish to thank everyone for their generosity in providing items for the Christmas Shoebox Program for the Apostleship of the Sea.

ALTAR SERVERS NEEDED

Being an Altar Server provides our female & male youth (*Grade 3 or above, received First Communion*) with an opportunity to participate in the Liturgy, serve the Lord, and develop leadership skills.

The primary role of the altar server is to assist the priest in the celebration of the Liturgy. Altar servers help the priest and the entire congregation praise God through active participation in the Liturgy.

Please contact Diane Baldwin at 443-679-6241 or dnboct4@hotmail.com for more information and so a training session can be arranged.

PASTORAL PARISH COUNCIL OPPORTUNITIES

The Pastoral Parish Council is seeking parishioners to serve on the Parish Council. Parishioners in good standing with the Catholic Church and interested in serving should contact the Parish Office at 410-799-1970, in order to have their names included on the ballot.

RETIRED FLAG COLLECTION



The 4th Degree Assembly #3245 is collecting retired US flags for proper disposal. If you have flags that you need to retire, please drop them in the box in the Parish Foyer. At the end of January, all that have been collected will be disposed of properly.

ACCEPT CHRIST INTO YOUR MARRIAGE

“When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.”



Let us learn to accept each other and Christ in our marriages by participating in a Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend on April 21-23, 2017 or October 27-29, 2017 in Gaithersburg, MD. For more information and to apply online visit welovematrimony.org, or call 301-541-7007, or email at applications@welovematrimony.org.

PRAYERS TO ST. AGATHA OF SICILY

St. Agatha is the patron saint for those who suffer from breast cancer, those who suffer from sterility, and of rape victims and nurses. Please join us as we pray a perpetual novena to St. Agatha on Tuesdays after our Daily Mass.

ST. LAWRENCE TRIVIA

Last week’s answer: Tradition holds that each of the four candles on the Advent wreath represents 1,000 years. Added together, the four candles symbolize the 4,000 years that humanity waited for the world’s Savior—from Adam and Eve to Jesus, whose birth was foretold in the Old Testament.

This week’s question: Since Christmas is next week, we’ll move on to Christmas trivia, right in time for the church to be beautifully decorated, including a Nativity scene. But which major saint was believed to put together the first Nativity scene?

LIFE TEEN

This Week In Youth Ministry: Tonight is our White Elephant gift exchange! We hope you plan on joining us for a festive evening to wrap up the year. Bring a fun, unique \$5 gift. Come hungry; we’re ordering Chinese food!

Also we would like to invite any parents for a cup of hot chocolate and a meet and greet with AnnaMarie, the new youth minister, before the gift exchange begins.

Upcoming Events:

Dec. 18th: White Elephant Gift Exchange
Jan. 15th: Chili Cook-Off (*from 2-4pm*)

We are always looking for volunteers to help with Life Teen. Please feel free to email AnnaMarie Link at annamarielink@gmail.com or call 410-799-1970!

Be sure to follow us on Twitter and Instagram! @SLMLifeTeen

Secular Quote of the Week:

“Maybe Christmas, the Grinch thought, doesn’t come from a store.” ~ Dr. Seuss