



## *The Seasons of Advent & Christmas*

### *Solemn Vespers*

Sundays of Advent at 6:00pm

Vespers, or Evening Prayer, is part of the public prayer of the Church called the *Liturgy of the Hours*. Based on the psalms and Jewish synagogue worship, in the *Liturgy of the Hours* the Church sanctifies the significant hours of the day: matins (early morning); lauds (the beginning of the workday); terce, sext, and none (midmorning, midday and midafternoon); vespers (the end of the workday); and compline (nighttime).

### *Visits to Church and Eucharistic Adoration*

Any parishioner is always welcome to get away from the hectic nature of your schedules and stop into Church to pray in a quiet place without interruption. Contact the Parish Office for side door access information. Eucharistic Adoration with the Blessed Sacrament exposed will be available as always from Tuesday at 8:30am to Wednesday at 7:00pm and from Saturday at 6:00pm until Sunday at 7:00am.

### *Portable Advent Prayer Opportunities*

Our Sts. Joachim & Ann Music Ministers have now compiled two CD's – *I Will Bless and Sing* and *Mother of Mercy*. The first is a recording of sacred music and the second contains the praying of the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary and some meditative instrumental piano music. Use them in your car, at home, while working out and exercising. Take your Advent with you wherever you go this year! They are available for purchase in the Gathering Space of Church.

### *Women's Advent By Candlelight*

December 4

Join moms, grandmas, sisters, aunts, and friends for an afternoon of prayer, shared time in the Spirit, musical reflection, and an inspirational speaker on December 4<sup>th</sup>, from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. To register contact the Parish Religious Education Office at 636.926.0021 or [SMcCoy@stsja.org](mailto:SMcCoy@stsja.org).

### *Advent Prayer Service for Children*

December 5

Our Religious Education Department for Children will celebrate Advent Prayer Services during PSR on Monday, December 5<sup>th</sup>. Please feel welcome to join the children in prayer as we ready the way of the Lord in our hearts.

### *Sacrament of Penance for Children*

December 6 & 12

We will celebrate the Sacrament of Penance for our children in full-time school on the afternoon of December 6<sup>th</sup>. Our children in the Parish School of Religion will have opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance during their regular class time on the evening of December 12<sup>th</sup>. Please take the opportunity in your family life at home to prepare the children to celebrate God's forgiveness and mercy.

### *Honorarium to the Blessed Mother*

The east addition to the nave of our church will be set aside as a shrine for prayer to the Blessed Mother throughout the Season of Advent, which includes the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Please feel free to make a visit there for prayer before the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe throughout the Season. Come individually or come as a family. Prayer resources will be available.

### *Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception*

December 8

This Solemnity honors the Blessed Mother until the title which proclaims her as having been conceived without the influence or effect of sin in the womb of her mother, St. Ann. It is under the

title of the *Immaculate Conception* that Mary is Patroness of the Church in the United States. The Solemnity does bear the obligation to participate in Eucharist. Masses will be at 6:30, 8:00 and 10:00am and 7:00pm.

### ***Adoration for Life***

December 8

The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for adoration from the conclusion of the 7:00pm Mass until 11:00pm. Please take this opportunity to join Catholics throughout the country in spending time in prayer for the causes of Life.

### ***Adopt-a-family weekend***

December 10-11

The Miracle on McClay lives on at the campus of St. Charles Community College. Lend a hand or at least come and see the tremendous outpouring of Christian generosity and Christian service that makes the human dimension of Christmas possible for so many who would otherwise be without. God Bless our Care Service for this and all the good they do!

### ***Our Lady of Guadalupe***

December 12

This Feast provides important opportunity to contemplate Our Lady's appearance to St. Juan Diego at Tepeyac in Mexico. It is under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe that the Blessed Mother is Patroness of all the Americas and it is under this title that her intercession is sought, in particular, for the causes of Life. This feast bears particular significance in the cultures of our Hispanic Catholic brothers and sisters.

### ***Sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation) for Adults***

December 13 & 17

The Sacrament of Penance is celebrated every Saturday afternoon from 4:00 until 4:45pm. At any time, it can be celebrated by making an appointment with one of the priests. Extended opportunities for celebrating the Sacrament will be available on Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6:30pm until all have been heard and on Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup> from 3:00pm until 4:45pm.

### ***Church Decorating***

December 18

Please join the effort to get our Church ready for Christmas by helping with trees, the crèche, and other large scale decorating after the 11:30 Mass on Sunday, December 18. Many hands make light work!

### ***A Christmas Story***

December 19 & 20

All are welcome to attend as our students present *A Christmas Story*. PSR students will present on Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:45pm in Church. Kindergarten & 6<sup>th</sup> grade full-time school students will present on Tuesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 2pm in church.

### ***Christmas – the Nativity of the Lord***

December 24-25

*Vigil Mass of Christmas* on Christmas Eve 4:00pm & 6:30pm  
*Midnight Mass of Christmas* on Christmas Eve 11:00pm  
*A Festival of Scripture & Song* will begin at 10:30pm led by our Choir.  
*Mass at Dawn* on Christmas Day 7:30am  
*Mass during the Day* on Christmas Day 11:00am

### ***Feast of the Holy Family***

December 30

Let the example of Jesus, Mary and Joseph become an inspiration for your own efforts to fashion the *domestic church* that is every Christian home. The Feast falls on a Friday this year. It is an opportunity to pray together as a family and spend the day celebrating the blessing that family life affords us by doing something special as a family at home.

### ***Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God***

January 1

Since this feast falls on a Sunday this year, we will gather to celebrate Eucharist at our regularly scheduled times for Sunday observance. Let Mary, the *First and Greatest Disciple* be your guide in your resolution-making for the new year.

### ***Epiphany Choral Concert***

January 4

Enjoy a concert of Christmas Choral Music presented by several area church choirs, including our own Midnight Mass Choir, at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Maryland Heights on Wednesday evening, January 4, at 7:00 pm.

### ***The Epiphany of the Lord***

January 8

The risks taken by the Magi as they search for the Christ Child challenge us to trust that the Savior we have been given is sufficient for all our needs.

### ***The Baptism of the Lord***

January 9

This Feast brings the celebration of Christmas to a close. Instead of joining society in tearing down your Christmas decorations on the day after Christmas, bask in the joy of the Season all the way through this Feast!