

# Church of Saint Monica Saint Elizabeth of Hungary Saint Stephen of Hungary

413 East 79<sup>th</sup> St. New York, NY 10075  
**Church Offices and Parish Center:**  
 406 East 80<sup>th</sup> St. New York, NY 10075  
 (212) 288-6250 Fax: (212) 570 - 1562

**Fourth Sunday of Advent– December 23rd, 2018**

## Office Hours

*Our Offices are open:*

**Mo. 9am – 5pm**  
**Tu.-Th. 9am – 7pm**  
**Fri. Closed**  
**Sat. 10am -2pm**  
**Sun. Closed**

*Our offices close for lunch:*  
**1pm – 2pm daily**

## Parish Staff

*Pastor*

**Rev. Donald C. Baker**

frdcab@stmonicanyc.org

*Associates:*

**Rev. Msgr. Leslie J Ivers**

msgrlivers@stmonicanyc.org

*Deacon*

**Rev. Joslin K. Jose**

frjoslin@stmonicanyc.org

*Pastoral Associate:*

**Mr. Kevin Byrne**

kbyrne@stmonicanyc.org

*Parish Manager:*

**Ms. Maryann Tyrer**

mtyrer@stmonicanyc.org

*Music Director*

**Mr. Michael Ward**

mward@stmonicanyc.org

*Cantor:*

**Mr. John Zupan**

jzupan@stmonicanyc.org

*Wedding Coordinator:*

**Mr. Joseph Neal**

**Ms. Debbi Burdett**

DBweddingsnyc@gmail.com

## Mass Schedule

**Saturday: 12:00pm Saturday Vigil: 5:30pm**

**Sunday: 7:30am 9:00am 10:30am 12:00pm 5:00pm**

**Monday – Friday: 7:30 & 12:00pm**

**Confessions:**

**Saturday 5:00 – 5:30pm and by appointment**

**Our church is open: 7am – 4pm daily for private prayer**



## St. Stephen of Hungary School

**Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Catholic Parochial School**

408 East 82<sup>nd</sup> St., New York, NY 10028

(212) 288-1989 Fax: (212) 517 – 5788

*Principal:*

**Ms. Kelly Burke**

**www.saintstephenschool.org**

Interested in admissions to our parish school?

**admissions@saintstephenschool.org**

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Roman Catholic Parish of St. Monica, St. Elizabeth of Hungary and St. Stephen of Hungary opens its doors to welcome and embrace all in our community. We strive through worship, hospitality and service to receive those seeking a spiritual home. In the midst of diversity of thought, life style, nationality, economic status and age, we endeavor to live as a community of faith and invite you to join our family - a family seeking to know and love Jesus Christ.

## TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading -- From Bethlehem-Ephrathah shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel (Micah 5:1-4a).

Psalm -- Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved (Psalm 80).

Second Reading -- We have been consecrated through the offering of the body of Christ once for all (Hebrews 10:5-10).

Gospel -- Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken by the Lord would be fulfilled (Luke 1:39-45).  
The English translation of the Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass (c) 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday:	2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29; Lk 1:67-79
Tuesday:	Vigil: Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 [18-25]Night: Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-3, 11-13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2: 1-14Dawn: Is 62:11-12; Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12; Ti 3:4-7; Lk 2:15-20Day: Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 [1-5, 9-14]
Wednesday:	Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc, 17; Mt 10:17-22
Thursday:	1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a, 2-8
Friday:	1 Jn 1:5 -- 2:2; Ps 124:2-5, 7b-8; Mt 2:13-18
Saturday:	1 Jn 2:3-11; Ps 96:1-3, 5b-6; Lk 2:22-35
Sunday:	Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28; Ps 128:1-5 or Ps 84:2-3, 5-6, 9-10; Col 3:12-21 [12-17] or 1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24; Lk 2:41-52

## Mass Schedule

<b>SATURDAY</b> 5:30PM	<b>December 22nd Vigil</b> <i>Mary &amp; Matthew Tscherne &amp; Family</i>
<b>SUNDAY</b> 7:30AM 9:00AM 10:30AM 12NOON 5PM	<b>December 23rd Fourth Sunday of Advent</b> <i>William &amp; Mary Mitchell</i> <i>Matthew Anderson</i> <i>Jozsef Tomahatsch</i> <i>All Parishioners</i> <i>Helen &amp; John Flack &amp; Family</i>
<b>MONDAY</b> 7:30AM 5:30PM 12MN	<b>December 24th Late Advent Weekday</b> <i>Ann Muhm</i> <i>All Parishioners</i> <i>All Parishioners</i>
<b>TUESDAY</b> 7:30AM 9AM 10:30AM 12NOON	<b>December 25th The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)</b> <i>All Parishioners</i> <i>All Parishioners</i> <i>All parishioners</i> <i>All Parishioners</i>
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> 9AM	<b>December 26th St. Stephen</b> <i>Edward Perry</i>
<b>THURSDAY</b> 9AM	<b>December 27th St. John</b> <i>Anna Cora</i>
<b>FRIDAY</b> 9AM	<b>December 28th The Holy Innocents</b> <i>Dr. Maria Litrenta (Living)</i>
<b>SATURDAY</b> 12NOON	<b>December 29th Fifth Day within the Octave Day of Advent</b> <i>Sheila Foley Crane</i>

## SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sunday:	Fourth Sunday of Advent
Monday:	Vigil of Christmas
Tuesday:	The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
Wednesday:	St. Stephen
Thursday:	St. John
Friday:	The Holy Innocents
Saturday:	Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord, St. Thomas Becke

*If you wish to add the name of a loved one to the prayer list, please notify the parish center:  
(212) 288-6250*



## **K-8 Religious Education**

- **Upcoming dates:**

- ◇ **No Religious Education or Adult Faith Formation or RCIA/Adult Initiation on December 23 or 30** – enjoy your Christmas Break! All sessions resume on Sunday, January 6. (**Religious Education for K-8** meets in the Parish Center, 10:15-11:45)

## **Adult Faith Formation – open to all adults!**

- **Sunday Morning Scripture Discussions**, 10:15-11:45am – join us for coffee and conversation every Sunday that Religious Education is in session! No charge, no registration needed. (Resuming on January 6)
- **Evening Prayer in the Parish Center Chapel each Friday at 5:10pm. All are welcome!** It is a simple prayer service, lasting 15-20 minutes, consisting of psalms, readings, and pauses for quiet prayer. It is a lovely way to end your work week. Please consider joining us!
- **Save the Date!** Fr. Baker will be leading a three-week book club in February on John Boyne's *A History of Lonliness*. Put this incredible novel on your Christmas list, and join us for this discussion.

## **Adults who are thinking about becoming Catholic, or**

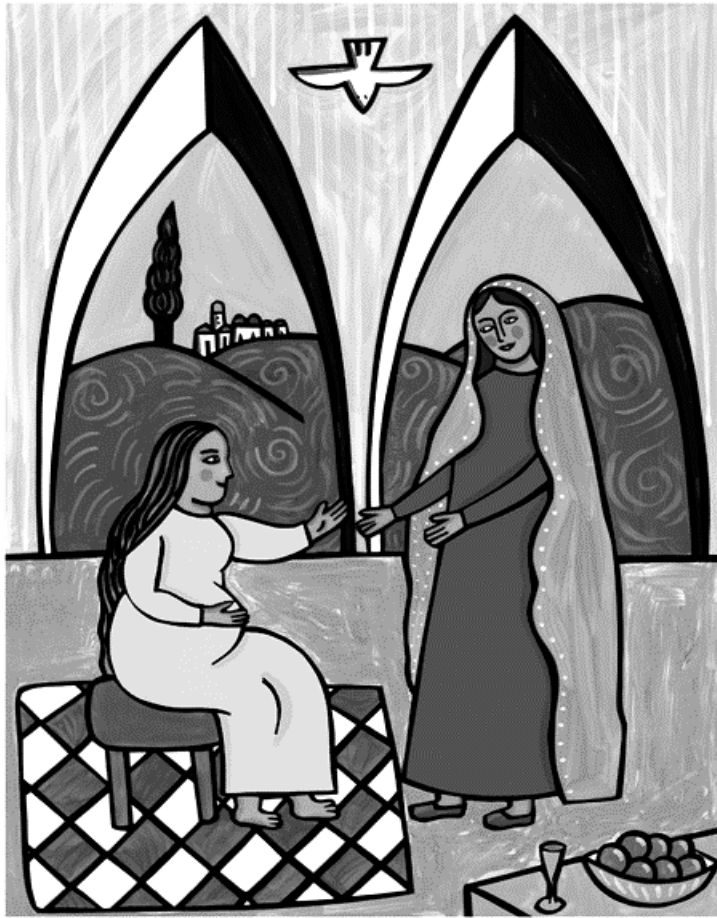
### **Catholic adults who have missed First Communion and/or Confirmation It's never too late!**

- contact Maryann Tyrer, Pastoral Associate, to discuss our adult initiation process. You can begin the process any time throughout the year.

**Want to volunteer?** Yes, we need more volunteers, please! Many different opportunities are available, with various time commitments – Contact Maryann to discuss how your gifts might meet our needs.

**Please remember:** The Christmas Season (in the Church's liturgical calendar) runs from Christmas Eve until the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (January 13 this year)! So leave those decorations up, and keep playing Christmas music throughout the season! On January 14, we go back to Ordinary Time. Wishing you and your loved ones a Christmas Season filled with joy and peace

# FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



## The Abundant Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit,  
Lord and giver of life,  
you spoke through the prophets,  
and they foretold the coming of the Savior.  
You came upon the young virgin,  
and she conceived in her womb the Son  
of the Most High.  
You gave Elizabeth your gift of knowledge,  
and she called Mary “the mother of  
my Lord.”  
You filled John the Baptist with joy at  
the sound of Mary’s greeting,  
and he leaped in his mother’s womb.  
We, too, desire your transformative  
power in our lives.  
We ask you to fill us to overflowing  
so we may  
boldly proclaim the coming of Christ,  
give birth to him each day in our hearts,  
know his presence in all we meet,  
and rejoice in the sure knowledge that  
he has come among us.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, December 23, 2018  
The Spirit Speaks through Elizabeth

*Today’s Readings: Micah 5:1–4a; Psalm 80:2–3, 15–16, 18–19; Hebrews 10:5–10; Luke 1:39–45.* When we meet Elizabeth in today’s Gospel, she is caught up in astonishing events. She is carrying a child in her old age while her husband, Zechariah, has been rendered mute after questioning an angel who gave him a message that the child would be conceived.

When her relative from Nazareth comes for a visit, Elizabeth grasps that something even greater is now happening. Her baby leaps in her womb; and Elizabeth, bursting with the Holy Spirit, knows at once the news that Mary has come to tell her. She is overwhelmed that her relative has been chosen to bring to birth the promised Messiah, and she recognizes God’s abundant blessing in both Mary and this child.

Mary, who had shared the news from the angel Gabriel with Joseph alone, now hears Elizabeth’s words echoing the words of the angel. Gabriel had called Mary “favored one”; Elizabeth calls her “blessed among women.” The angel had said the child to be born would be “holy, the Son of God”; Elizabeth calls him “Lord” (Luke 1:35).

Both Gabriel and Elizabeth echo Micah’s long-ago prophecy of the Messiah: “his greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth: he shall be peace.”

With Christmas nearly here, let us welcome Christ into our hearts with the same joy that Elizabeth did, and pledge to be instruments of his peace in our families and our world.

## SPECIAL DEVOTIONS

After all weekday masses

### Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Every Friday after the Noon Mass to 3 PM, with Benediction following the Divine Mercy Chaplet

### Devotions

Miraculous Medal on Mondays after each Mass

### Divine Mercy

The Divine Mercy Chaplet is prayed each Friday afternoon at 3 PM

### Sacrament of Reconciliation:

5:00 PM on Saturdays Anytime by appointment

## BAPTISMS & MARRIAGES:

Please call the rectory office for more information.

## COMMUNION FOR THE HOMEBOUND:

If you know of anyone who cannot attend church because of illness or age, and would like to have communion brought to them, please contact the parish office, so that we can arrange for a Eucharistic Minister to bring communion to them.

## PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

### Please remember in your prayers

*CHARLES MASSON,  
WALTER & IRENE BORNHEIMER,  
TOM TERRONE, BRIAN KRAMER,  
HELEN BERNIGHAN & MARYLIN ATKIWSON*

### ALL VICTIMS OF MILITARY ACTIVITY

## PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED

*Please pray for our deceased parishioners and family members*

*President George H.W. Bush,  
Jose Rafael Gutierrez,  
Thomas James Elsasser & Blake Murphy*



## TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

In ancient pagan Rome, these days in mid-December were a time for general slacking off at work and far too much rejoicing. The period of leisure after the harvest and a whole cluster of pagan festivals were a force for the church to reckon with. The Saturnalia, breaking out on December 17, was a time of high living and loose morals. Christians were advised by their bishops to drop out of the mayhem and do some serious fasting. A famous church council at Saragossa in Spain made a season of fasting mandatory from December 17 to December 23, exactly coinciding with the Saturnalia. The bishops at that time were perhaps less concerned with preparing for Christmas than with resisting the kind of loose living going on.

Modern times have restored a bit of the Saturnalia spirit to our culture, so that a general period of partying with a vague connection to religion is now upon us. How does a Christian keep balance? The practice of charity by remembering the poor in our gift-giving, of hospitality in finding a place at our holiday tables for the poor and lonely, and of daily prayer in the home and at church are great helps. Although Advent is not a penitential season like Lent, it is a time for making room in our lives for what matters most.

--James Field, Copyright (c) J. S. Paluch Co

## Bread & Wine



This Week's Bread & Wine Intentions for Maria Litrenta

Offered By Maria Litrenta

## Sanctuary Lamp



This Weeks' Sanctuary Lamp Intentions for Maria Litrenta

Offered by Maria Litrenta

## Parish Center-Christmas Schedule



Our Parish Center will be closed Monday, December 24th through Friday, December 28th.

We will re-open Saturday, December 29th @10AM

Have a Merry & Blessed Christmas





# Just a word

*From your Pastor December 23rd, 2018*

It is a question I love to ask the kids in school. “What day was Jesus born on?” Unanimously they all reply, “December 25<sup>th</sup>!” because after all, the celebration of Jesus’ birth is what the day is all about. Imagine their surprise when I correct them by saying that we do not know what day Jesus was born. But it is true. We celebrate his birth on the 25<sup>th</sup>, but we do not know what day that birth was.

We are not sure why December 25<sup>th</sup> was chosen. Some believe it was to counter and coopt a Roman pagan feast called Saturnalia, which took place right around that time. Indeed, people see that feast as the root of the gift giving and merry making that have marked the celebration of Christmas. However, others argue that Christmas is where it is because of the sun. The 25<sup>th</sup> is just past the shortest day of the year. The sun is already rising a little earlier and setting a little later each day and in the midst of winter darkness, the world is already heading towards the brightness of spring. Thus, it made sense to place Jesus’ birthday just as the sun begins its return, for in the midst of this world’s darkness the birth of Jesus means the light is returning.

We might wonder what a birth two thousand plus years ago could have to say to our world in 2018. Except for the fact that it does not take a rocket scientist to recognize how dark our world has become. The political order is cracking as allies become adversaries and adversaries, enemies. Civility and morality are washed away by waves of emails, texts and tweets. Organized religion, which formed the moral backbone of American culture has been broken by its own scandals and failures. Conflict has become more important than collaboration, and winning is all that matters. The world has grown dark indeed.

Which is why Christmas is more important than ever. For in a world filling with enemies, wallowing in coarseness, mired in scandals and more divided than ever, the celebration of Christmas is important not because of the child who was born but because of the man he would become. Jesus offered a vision of a world called the Reign or the Kingdom of God. We often equate that with some pie in the sky future. But we are wrong. Jesus was consistent in saying that whenever we followed him and put his words into practice that kingdom was present. Here and now, shining like a light in the midst of the darkness. And like lights in the darkness, Jesus’ vision of the kingdom can guide us. Through the darkness. To become the people, the nation the Church HE would have us be.

As the day lengthen, my hope for all of us is that the one whose birth we celebrate as the light returns can be a light to guide us. It might seem silly to hope for such things, but it is not. Jesus – his mission and his message - still have the power to challenge and change us. It has happened again and again throughout history. They are undying and so is he.

Merry Christmas!  
Father Baker