FOURTH

# Sunday of Advent

"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home."

Matthew 1:20

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December 22, 2019

**Saint Monica Church**—12136 Olive Blvd. Creve Coeur, MO 63141...314.434.4211 Fax 314.434.5978
www.stmonicastl.org

**Pastor**—Fr. Joseph A. Weber...jweber@stmonicastl.org #336
**Regular Weekend Celebrants**—Fr. George Brennan; Fr. Don Henke; Fr. Sean Soalai, SJ; Fr. Kevin Stephens, OP, Fr. Kris Teater
**Permanent Deacons**—Jim Martin...Jim@jpmllc.com and Carl Sommer...sommer@kenrick.edu
**Transitional Deacon**—Rev. Mr. Dane Westhoff...dwesthoff@stmonicastl.org
**Retired Deacon**—Deacon Robert Birkenmaier
**Sunday Mass Times**—Saturday Vigil 5:00 p.m., Sunday 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
**Daily Weekday Mass**—6:30 a.m. Monday—Friday; 8:15 a.m. Wednesdays
**Confessions**—3:30–4:30 p.m. Wednesday and Saturday or by Appointment
**Parish Secretaries**—Patty Greaves...314.434.4211 #330.....pgreaves@stmonicastl.org
Joan Becker...314.434.4211 #331.....jbecker18@stmonicastl.org
**Parish Office Hours**—7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. **Maintenance**—maintenance@stmonicastl.org
**Liturgical Music Director**—Heather Martin Cooper...314.434.2173, option 6...hmcooper@stmonicastl.org
**Principal**—Tammi Rohman...314.434.2173...option 3....trohman@stmonicastl.org
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**Safe Environment**—Anne Coerver ...314.434.4211 # 331...acoerver@stmonicastl.org
**St. Vincent de Paul Assistance Line**—314.289.6101....Mailbox #2210
**Athletic Director**—Joe Gibson...314.504.0775.....saintmonicasports@gmail.com

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20 ARCHBISHOP MAY DRIVE
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ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

Christmas 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Rejoice! The weeks of Advent waiting are over, and Christ is born!

We rejoice in our Savior's birth—remembering the great gift of faith He has given us through the mystery of His incarnation and the saving power of His death and resurrection.

Each year, the people of the archdiocese are asked to make a special gift on Christmas Day to support our seminarians at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary. These men are responding to Christ's call to follow Him as they discern a vocation to the holy priesthood. This year, more than 140 men have dedicated themselves to living, growing, and serving in His love as they prepare for a life of parish ministry. God-willing, these men will bring the faith given to us by Christ 2000 years ago to future generations.

This Christmas, I ask you, once again, to pray for vocations and for all our priests and seminarians. I also ask you to be generous in your donation to the Christmas collection at your parish, which helps ensure that our seminarians receive the education and formation they need to grow closer to Christ each day. Your support is a source of inspiration for the seminarians and helps to build up the Church in St. Louis. Together, we can encourage our future priests to walk the path of holiness as they seek to configure their hearts to the Heart of Jesus Christ.

Please be assured of my prayers for you during the season of Christmas. May the Lord of life come into your hearts and homes in a special way during this holy time of year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Robert J. Carlson

Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson
Archbishop of St. Louis

Dear Parishioners,

**May you all have a very happy, blessed, and Merry Christmas. On behalf of all the Parish Staff, I want to wish you a Merry Christmas. The Archbishop's letter is on the previous page in this bulletin, and he sends his prayerful greetings to all as well.**

**This weekend, December 21st and 22nd,** sets the stage for Christmas, just three days to go! Even though all of us are very busy this time of year, today we are asked to focus on the true gift of Christmas: JESUS CHRIST! A virgin will bear a son, one in the line of David, who will be called Emmanuel, "God is with us." Along with preparing gifts and all the great food we will have these days, may we also prepare a pace on our hearts of God to be with us!

**Christmas, Vigil and Day, December 24th and 25th:** Christmas Eve is a time to keep watch. I know many people are very busy, but we are waiting for "justice and mercy to descend from heaven, for the fullness of life to spring up from the earth." On this holy night we wait for the Lord to appear in glory. So we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Word made flesh. Fully divine, yet fully human. He was born in a stable, not in a palace. He was laid in a manger, not in a bed. He was born in a foreign town, so greeted by strangers, not by family friends, and neighbors. He was born to a woman chosen by God. He is the one who was prophesied and longed for, now born into this world. His birth is so much more than just presents and eating (and NBA basketball). Here now, with us, among us, in us: Jesus is born! Have a Merry Christmas.

**Comites Christi:** For centuries the days after Christmas, when we celebrate the Feasts of Saint Stephen, Deacon and the Protomartyr of the Church, Saint John the Evangelist, and the Holy Innocents, were classified as "the comites Christi," the companions of Christ. Each of those saints add something to the Christmas celebration … Saint Stephen by professing the faith and dying for it (December 26), Saint John the Evangelist for explaining the faith and giving us the beautiful prologue to his Gospel, including the line "the Word became Flesh and Dwelt Among Us," (December 27) and the Holy Innocents, silent witnesses of the birth of the Messiah, the "new born King of the Jews." (December 28) So may we join with them, along with Saint Thomas Becket (December 29, although not celebrated this year) and Pope Saint Sylvester I (the Pope who baptized Constantine, on December 31) being witnesses and companions of Jesus.

**Next weekend, December 28th and 29th will be the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.** Perhaps we may think that this special family, living SO LONG AGO and SO FAR AWAY, might not be relevant for families today. But that is hardly the case. Just like families today they enjoyed times of great joy, but also suffered through terrible hardships. The delights of a newborn baby was accompanied by the feast that led them to flee to a foreign land (Egypt). Next weekend let us pray that the faith and love shown by the Holy Family may sustain us through both our joys and our struggles. As is our custom we will have the annual **Blessing of Families** at all the Masses next weekend. I hope you will be here.

**Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament will NOT happen on Christmas or New Year's.** Nor will we have Confessions at 3:30 on those two Wednesdays. We will resume both on Wednesday, January 8, 2020.

*Continue on next page……...*

**The Apostleship of Prayer: This is mainly repeated from last week, with additions!** Since my arrival here each December the registered parishioners were sent the following year's leaflet for the Apostleship of Prayer. What is the Apostleship of Prayer? On December 3rd it marked its 175th Birthday. On December 3 2019 the Apostleship of Prayer issued the following: (*Today) 175 years ago a group of Jesuit students felt frustrated because of their desire to go to the missions, but could not. Their formator invited them – on the feast of St. Francis Xavier – to be missionaries striving to be available to Christ to fulfill their daily obligations. Thus they gave a new meaning to their daily activities and established the Apostleship of Prayer, today known as the Pope's World Prayer Network. How do you live your daily activities? Do you strive to fulfill your obligations well?*

Because of costs (and modern technology!), the Apostleship of Prayer has ceased printing these leaflets. BUT, as mentioned above, the Apostleship of Prayer is in the process of "rebranding itself" to be "The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network." It is still very important that we pray and, hopefully, you would be able to pray the "Morning Offering" each day. Have a blessed remainder of this Advent Season.

**The MORNING OFFERING: (Traditional prayer):** O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, and the reunion of all Christians. I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all Apostles of Prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month.

**(An alternate prayer):** God, our Father, I offer You my day. I offer You my prayers, thoughts, words, actions, joys and sufferings in union with Your Son Jesus' Heart, who continues to offer Himself in the Eucharist for the salvation of the world. May the Holy Spirit, Who guided Jesus, be my guide and my strength today so that I may witness to Your love. With Mary, the mother of our Lord and of the Church, I pray especially for this month's intentions as proposed by the Holy Father.

The Intention for December is: **The Future of the Very Young:** That every country take the measures necessary to prioritize the future of the very young, especially those who are suffering. I will have the 2020 intentions in next week's bulletin. I encourage you to check out the Apostleship of Prayer's website: **http://popesprayerusa.net/** It has all sorts of good things, including a brief video from Pope Francis about the intention for the month.

I pray that you and yours have a very blessed Christmas celebration during the entire Christmas season, which, this year, runs until January 12.

Fr Joe Weber

**THE PARISH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25 AND REOPEN MONDAY, DECEMBER 30.**

**PARISH WEEKLY COLLECTION DECEMBER 15 WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN A LATER BULLETIN DUE TO THE HOLIDAY EARLY SUBMISSION SCHEDULE.**

## Mass Intentions—December 23-28

| | |
|---|---|
| **Monday** | Late Advent Weekday |
| 6:30 a.m. | Mary Anne & Tom Dineen, Sr. |
| **Tuesday** | Late Advent Weekday |
| 6:30 a.m. | Richard Sander, Jr. |
| **5:00 p.m.** | Special Intention |
| **11:00 p.m.** | Special Intention |
| **Wednesday** | **Christmas** |
| **9:30 a.m.** | People of the Parish |
| **11:30 a.m.** | Paul Gagliarducci |
| **Thursday** | St. Stephen, Deacon, Protomartyr |
| 6:30 a.m. | Melba Searle |
| **Friday** | St. John the Evangelist |
| 6:30 a.m. | Gene Grieco |
| **Saturday** | The Holy Innocents |
| | The Feast of the Holy Family |
| 5:00 p.m. | William Sullivan |

## Prayers for Healing. Please remember

Ruth Begnaud, Mildred Dickherber, Shirley Dunker, Estelle Flanakin, Charlotte Griffaw, Bill Guiot, Christina Hartley, Bob Huseman, Sylvia Indelicato, Ronald Kalupa, Nina Kelly, Kara Koeninger, Gloria Luca, Patricia Mohan, Lourdes Manalo, Eileen McDonough, Joan Middendorf, Rose Miller, Ann Miller, Fred Mueller, Jack Powers, Michael Reinhardt, Mary Renner, Joseph Ritacco, Helen Sander, Dennis Sarris, Jeannett Sarris, Joe Schmitz, Rose Slee, Joe Sonderman, Shirley Vien, and Fr Timothy Vowels.

## Advent Schedule

Advent Morning Prayer Mon-Fri 7:45 a.m.

Additional Confession Time
Monday, December 23, 7:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.

## Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve Tuesday, December 24
5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. Masses
Choir Presentation 4:40 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.

Christmas Day Wednesday, December 25
9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Masses

New Year's Eve Tuesday, December 31,2019
5:00 p.m. Mass

Wednesday, January 1, 2020
9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Mass

## Year End Donations

According to IRS regulations in order to credit contributions to donors 2019 charitable accounts your gift must be received in the calendar year of 2019. There are 3 ways to be sure your gift is credited to your 2019 stewardship account.

You may write a check that is received at the Parish Office or in the offertory basket at Mass by 12/31/2019. The check must be dated 2019.

You may send a check to the Parish Office in the mail. The date of the check must be 2019 and it must be postmarked no later than 12/31/2019.

You may make an online contribution through our electronic online giving system. The link is available on our Parish Website, **www.stmonicastl.org.** All gifts received by 12/31/2019 will be recorded on your 2019 stewardship statement.

## Our Sympathy to

Trish Madden and her family on the death of her father, Donald Katt. May he be living with God and may all be consoled.

## Welcome to

Michael and Gretchen Oles (Shadycreek Ln); Edward Marsh (Aramis) and Katherine Mroczkoski (Decker Ln) who joined our Parish Community.

## Weekly Calendar

| | |
|---|---|
| 12/22 | Children's Liturgy |
| 12/23 | No Children's Choir |
| 12/25 | No PSR |
| 12/26 | No Adult Choir |
| 12/29 | No Children's Liturgy |

Bulletins articles are due by 8:00 a.m. Mondays

**ST. MONICA PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION GRADES 1-8**
**DIRECTOR—**Mr. Jim Combs….314.434.2173

DEC 25 AND 31 NO SCHOOL

## CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Are all welcome to join us Monday, December 23 at 9:00 A.M. as we decorate the inside of our church for the Christmas season. Questions, contact the parish office 314.434.4211.

## MUSICAL RESOLUTIONS

Does your 2020 New Year's resolution involve your prayer life? One of the best ways to pray is by making music! Our parish is blessed with quality musical leadership at every Sunday and Holy Day Mass, and it is largely dependent upon the volunteers who serve as cantors, choir members, ensemble musicians and more. There is room for more in every area. Can you play any instrument? Our 11:30 Ensemble welcomes your membership. Are you a teen or adult singer whose bass, alto, soprano or tenor voice could enhance our adult choir? Are you able to serve as a cantor? Do you have a child in grades 3-8 who would reap the rewards of membership in our parish children's choir? St Augustine is credited with saying *the one who sings well prays twice*. This blessing extends to other areas of music as well. Won't you think about increasing your prayer life through music? If you would like more information or encouragement, please contact Heather Martin Cooper or Tom O'Brien.

## FREE EPIPHANY CONCERT

The joy of the Christmas season extends through the Baptism of the Lord on January 12/2020. One of the best expressions of Christmas joy is through music, especially the singing of a choir. To enjoy it, plan to treat yourself and your family to an Epiphany Festival. The program will include several Adult choirs from area parishes, including St Monica Choir, all singing their best Christmas music from this year. Choirs and audience sing some carols together too. It is a merry good time! The concert is always free and open to the public. A free-will offering will be accepted to support Birthright Sunday, January 5 at Sts. Joachim and Ann Parish, 7:00 PM. A reception will follow.

**SVDP PANTRY AT ST. MONICA**
The pantry needs shampoo, mac & cheese, rice and canned ravioli/spaghetti.

## ADORATION

We are seeking a new adorer from 6:30 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. time slot. Contact Robyn 573.270.5018.

## ST. MONICA 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Anyone who would be interested in helping with the parish's 150th anniversary celebration contact **mark.niesen@outlook.com**.

## JANUARY CASSEROLES FOR ST. PATRICK CENTER

The January casserole pans and recipes are available early; please be sure to sign up when you pick up a pan. We need casseroles for Wednesday, January 1 and Friday, January 3. (Yes, we checked; St. Patrick Center provides meals 365 days a year.) As busy as you all are, thank you for helping! Please sign up early, plan ahead, and make use of the freezer in the vestibule room to deliver your casserole at your convenience. Contact Vicki Westall 314.920.9749 if you need assistance getting access to the vestibule room. Thank you for your generosity!

## MEN'S ACTS RETREAT MARCH 26-29

"With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption" is our theme this year.
To our Christian brothers in Christ Jesus. If you are looking for an opportunity where you can just set aside all the chores you face everyday and want to spend a three- day weekend with other like men, then this invitation will lead you in the right direction. This retreat is lay led assisted by our parish priests. This parish- based retreat will offer the opportunity for you to renew your spirituality, to strengthen your faith and its application to your daily life, all right in the season of Lent. Won't you join us. More information about this religious event will be forth-coming. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, Fred Ward at **wardfred306toc@gmail.com.**

## HOMEBOUND

If you are unable, or know someone who is unable to participate in Sunday Liturgies because of ill health, you may call the Parish Office 314.434.4211 to arrange to receive the Eucharist in your home.

INFORMATION SHEET

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