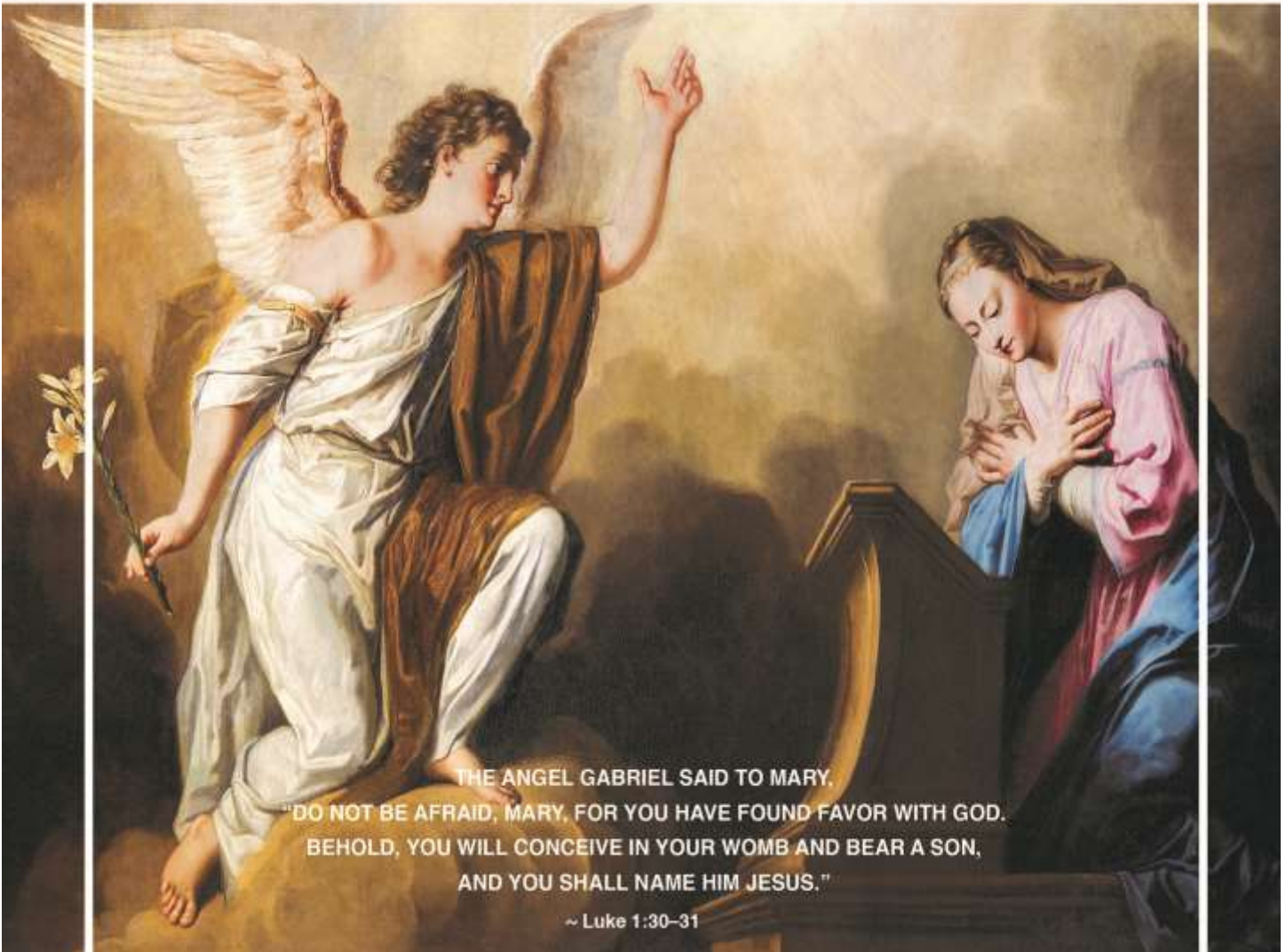


St. Joseph Parish

ADVENT

DECEMBER 20, 2020 | FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



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Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Closed Noon - 1:00 for lunch)

<https://stjosephlb.org>

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(Brother/Sister)

Mass Schedule

Saturday

5:00 p.m. Vigil

Suspended till further notice

Sunday

Mass on the Grass

8:30 a.m.

Daily Mass (M-W)

8:00 am

Come Join Us

Reconciliation

Saturdays

4:00-4:45pm

**By the East Church Door
parking lot**

Eucharistic Adoration

**No Adoration till
further notice due to church
being closed due to
Covid-19**



Fourth SUNDAY of Advent



December 20, 2020

The angel Gabriel said to Mary,
"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.
Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son,
and you shall name him Jesus."
Luke 1:30-34

Luke 1:30-34

GOD IS PRESENT

"Where does God dwell?" is a question on the minds of many as we continue to adjust to the pandemic. David wanted to build an ornate dwelling for the Ark of the Covenant, but God said, "No, that's not what I had in mind!" The reading from Romans teaches us that God is present in the Word, and in Luke's Gospel passage today, Jesus is residing in the womb of Mary. We know that Jesus is present in the assembly gathered, the Koinonia, as well as within the Eucharistic species. But no matter how one experiences the presence of Jesus, these days are challenging. In many places, only limited numbers continue to be allowed in church, while others are only able to worship via live stream. None of the pat answers to where God dwells really fit. We need to try and answer this with new eyes and ears and heart.

A CLASSIC IMAGE

When we think of today's Gospel, the image of this meeting between the Angel Gabriel and Mary by Fra Angelico (1440-1445) likely comes to mind. In this fresco, Gabriel and Mary are outside sitting among the columns, and Gabriel, with his big wings and hands crossed, gazes upon Mary and gestures towards her. She is well dressed in a traditional blue garment, and though her face shows shock, her folded hands model submission and humility. This work of art is so beautifully executed that we can miss some of its finer details. Similarly, because the Gospel scene is so familiar, we can forget to take in its small details. A few years ago, this author found a children's book called "The Nativity" illustrated by Julie Vivas. Because her drawings were so fresh and charming and simple, she invited new perspective on the story.

LOOKING AGAIN

Luke says that Mary "was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be." She asks, "How can this be?" These questions don't fit with how Fra Angelico positioned Gabriel and Mary. In the Vivas illustrations, the Angel Gabriel sits down with battered wings and a balding head and has a cup of coffee with Mary as the two of them try to figure it out together. The text is the same, but the message conveyed is different. There is a different degree of comfort and familiarity to these illustrations.

This "having a cup of coffee" is something we need to learn to do with the scriptures and with our lives. After this event, pregnant Mary traveled into the hill country to be with Elizabeth; an older, wiser, mentor—a mother figure. She spent three months there reflecting and preparing for the birth of her child. In this final week of Advent, take a few moments to find a Gabriel/Mary or an Elizabeth/Mary moment and read the Christmas readings again to see what you might have overlooked, and to find a new way for Christ to dwell in you.

TODAY'S READINGS

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16
Psalm 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

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Dear Parish Family,

Advent Peace and Greetings to all! As we celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our four lighted **Advent Candles** remind us that the celebration of Christmas draws near. In today's Gospel the Angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she is to conceive and bear a Son, the Anointed One, the Messiah named "Jesus". The invitation of Mary this week, is to make the Blessed Mother's "Yes," our "Yes," so that God can find an entry point into our lives.

Our Christmas Masses will be celebrated virtually and in person.

Thursday, December 24, Christmas Eve:

- Virtual Christmas Mass on You Tube at 2:00 PM.
- 2:00 PM - Christmas Eve in person Mass outside in the courtyard.
- 4:00 PM - Christmas Eve in person Mass outside in the courtyard.

Friday, December 25, Christmas Day

- 9:00 AM – Christmas Mass in person outside in the courtyard.
- 10:30 AM – 11:00 AM – Drive through Holy Communion Service in the parking lot. If you're staying at home and would like to receive Holy Communion on Christmas Day, come on by! All should wear a mask.

I'll be available to hear Confessions outside Monday and Tuesday this week from 11:00 AM to 12:00 noon and 4:00 PM to 4:45 PM. I'll be sitting outside the East door of the church, facing the parking lot.

For all in person Christmas Masses, please bring your own chair, wear a mask and all the current safety protocols are in place.

Thank you for remembering your Parish Family with your sacrificial Christmas Donation/Gift. May the Lord reward and bless your generosity!

I look forward to seeing you in person or on YouTube during Christmas. You and your families continue to be the focus of my daily prayers!

Advent Peace and Hope,
Msgr. Kevin



Ministries

Did you know?

Next Sunday, December 27, is the Feast Day of the Holy Family

We have been living in unprecedented times with COVID changing many aspects of our lives. These changes have caused many challenges to families, but they have also affirmed our commitment to safeguarding our children and young people. As the year comes to an end we are reminded of the resiliency exemplified by the Holy Family in their Advent journey – the love Mary and Joseph had for their son, Jesus Christ, and the many ways in which they nurtured His Spirit as a model for our families. Join the Holy Family's call by taking time next Sunday on the *Feast Day of the Holy Family* to nourish your own family's spirituality.

Activities to Do As a Family

- * Use the Feast of the Holy Family (December 27) to plan a family date. Discuss what makes **your family "holy" and what you each** admire about the Holy Family.
- * Look for ways to extend Christmas charity to families in need through programs/ministries that provide resources and services especially during this time.
- * Spend some time with God and tell Him your fears during this pandemic and then ask Him to calm your fears and know he is with you.
- * Attend Sunday Mass (Virtually/In-Person) to celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family and embrace this special day.
- * **Reflect on Sunday's Scriptures readings** as a family in your home or nature and how what they speak to your heart to stay grounded.

Movement for a Better World

"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." Mt 25:40

Thanksgiving, Christmas Food & Gift Drive :

We DID it!! Amid the crescendo of closed, closed, cancelled, cancelled, the courage, heart, and soul of our St. Joseph Parish was marvelously displayed this Thanksgiving and Christmas season. Our warmest congratulations, gratitude, and best wishes for a Merry Christmas. *You earned it!*

Together we served 79 families, 350+ people, 225+ children served (twice); 250+ blankets; 425+ children's Christmas presents; 40+ teen gift cards; \$2,500+ gift card and special needs donations, 2 School food drives, \$11,000 Skip-a-Meal food and grocery gift cards.

Too many to list, our heartfelt gratitude for parish donations, about 15 leads, and 75 core volunteers: family referrals, Family Adoptions, telephone group, food and gift delivery drivers, "lost sheep" shepherds, mail communications, Blanket Drive, Christmas Present Drive and online child gift selection, food shoppers, food transporters, School Food Drive leads AND PARENTS!!, food box and delivery preparation, welcome and evangelization items, Msgr. Kevin and our pastoral leadership.

May the miracle of Christ dwelling among us fill your heart with joy and peace,
Movement for a Better World Leadership

A WAY TO GIVE / A WAY TO RECEIVE— As we approach year-end, you may wish to note the following tax information as you consider additional charitable contributions to St. Joseph Church.

NON-ITEMIZERS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION DEDUCTION— Previously, charitable contributions could only be deducted if taxpayers itemized their deductions. However, taxpayers who do not itemize deductions may take a charitable deduction of up to \$300 for cash contributions made in 2020 to qualifying organizations. The law changed in this area due to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.

TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF LIMITS ON CHARITABLE DEDUCTIONS— Individuals who itemize their deductions may deduct cash contributions made in 2020 to a qualifying organization up to 100% of their adjusted gross income. Previously, the amount of charitable cash contributions taxpayers could deduct on Schedule A as an itemized deduction was limited to 60% of adjusted gross income.

IRA CHARITABLE TRANSFERS— Although Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) are waived for the tax year 2020, IRA charitable transfers to a qualified organization may still be made without recognizing the distribution as taxable. The distribution must be from an IRA owned by an individual who is age 70 1/2 or over that is paid directly from the IRA to a qualified charity.

This is intended to provide general guidance and is not intended to be tax or legal advice. Please consult with your tax advisor concerning special rules and limitations that may impact your particular set of circumstances.



Amazon Smile – is a simple and automatic way for you to support St. Joseph Church every time **you shop, at no cost to you. You'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to St. Joseph Church as your favorite charitable organization.**

All you have to do is designate us -
St. Joseph Catholic Church of Long Beach
- Please remember to shop at
smile.amazon.com

YEAR END CHARITABLE DONATION

Thank you for being an active and faithful member of the St. Joseph Catholic Church community. As 2020 comes to a close we would like to ask each of you to consider giving a year end charitable gift. By doing so you are showing that your parish has a meaningful place in your heart. Your gift will support our mission of fostering the formation and enrichment of parishioners in spirituality, worship, education, and sharing ourselves in service to others – your generosity will benefit many. During Advent we hold you and your family in our hearts and wish you a blessed and Merry Christmas.

Your Parish Finance Council:
George Zuluaga
Charleen Lawrence
Stan Lawrence
Tim McBride
Mike Roide