

Ste. Rose de Lima Church, 600 Grattan St., Chicopee, MA
Tel. 413-536-4558 ~~~~~ Pastor: Rev. William A. Tourigny

+++

Fourth Sunday of Advent +++ December 20, 2020

Readings: + 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 +Romans 16:25-27 +Luke 1:26-38

STE. ROSE de LIMA MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Dec 19 – Saturday	4:00 PM Janet Bergeron (4 th Ann) by her husband & children
Dec 20 – Sunday	7:30 AM Paul & Yvette Samson by Marielle Kwiatkowski
4 th Sunday of Advent	9:00 AM Manuel Oliveira (12 th Ann) by Ormindia Oliveira & family
	11:00 AM Raymond Desorcy by his wife, Dee & family
	4:00 PM Raymond Hebert by his family
Dec 21 – Monday	7:00 AM Souls in Purgatory by Jeannette
Dec 22 - Tuesday	7:00 AM Guy Tremblay (2 nd Ann) by his Mom
Dec 23 – Wednesday	7:00 AM Paul DesRosiers by Rev. Denis A. DesRosiers
Dec 24 – Thursday	7:00 AM Marietta Chapdelaine by Mildred Chapdelaine
Christmas Eve	4:00 PM Don, Scott, Stephen, & Patrick Justice by their wife and mother, Lorraine
	6:00 PM Florestine Belanger by her estate
Dec 25 - Friday	Midnight Mass: 12:00 PM Parish family of St. Rose de Lima
Nativity of the Lord	7:30 AM Umberto Manno by his family
	9:00 AM Frederick Lawrence by his daughters
	11:00AM Cosimo & Maria Teresa Pisano by Contabile family
Dec 26 – Saturday	4:00 PM Leo & Bella Constant (Wdg. Ann Rem) by Peggy & family
Dec 27 – Sunday	7:30 AM Jean Noel & Guy Tremblay by Jeannine Tremblay
Holy Family	9:00 AM Arthur & Reina Mayotte & Mayotte & Ploof families by Armand & Gloria
	11:00 AM Yvonne Lepage Rondeau by family
	4:00 PM Irene, Adrienne & Paul Nolette by Jeannette

PARISH STEWARDSHIP: Immaculate Conception \$864.00
Religious Retirement \$579.00 and 12/13/20 Offertory \$7,998.50 ~~~ Thank you!

Dear Parishioner...Around & About Ste. Rose,

Sacrificial Offering

The Sacrificial Offering for Sunday, December 13, 2020 totaled \$7,998.50. An additional \$917 for flowers – a total of previous and future flower money will be published. Thank you for your spiritual and financial support during this pandemic.

Christmas Mass Schedule

With the COVID pandemic still raging on, the Christmas Mass schedule will be as follows:

Christmas Eve: Thursday, December 24th Mass at 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM.

Christmas Day: Friday, December 25th Midnight Mass at 12:00 AM; 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, and 11:00 AM.

The added Mass of 6:00 PM is to divide the 4:00 PM Mass congregants into two groups. The traditional “over packed” 4:00 PM Mass **must be socially distant.** Should the church be filled from the “new normal” capacity, the doors will need to be locked in order to observe all pandemic protocol.

In order to accommodate as many as possible, *please keep the 4:00 PM reserved for families who live in common.* So please take advantage of the second Mass at 6:00 PM *especially for those single individuals.* The seating pattern at the 6:00 PM Mass will be what is presently in practice: *family seating on the left side* and *individual seating on the right side* of the church, thereby enabling social distancing to be observed. Midnight Mass is “traditionally” very well attended which would exceed the “new normal” seating capacity. Again, at Midnight Mass, *family seating will be on the left side and individual seating on the right side.* Please take advantage of the Christmas morning Masses which, normally on Christmas Day, are compliant to the pandemic protocol of social distancing.

Remember if you have not been attending Mass since the inception of the COVID 19 pandemic, please consider remaining vigilant by staying home. The dispensation from Mass attendance given by then Bishop Rozanski and ratified by Bishop Byrne is still in effect. Your good health and safety are my top priorities. With a vaccine just weeks/months away, please be prudent in your decision making.

Christmas Mass Schedule – condensed:

CHRISTMAS EVE: 4:00 PM – families living in one household & 6:00 PM families living in common and individuals.

CHRISTMAS DAY: MIDNIGHT (12:00 AM) 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, and 11:00 AM families living in common and individuals.

=====

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

2Sam. 7: 1-5, 8b-12, 14-16

Rom. 16: 25-27

Lk. 1: 26-38

Theme: We need to recognize God’ presence in the church and that in turn, should help us to become aware of God’s presence in us and in others.

In the first reading, we see David planning to build a house (temple) for the Lord. His intention was something good. When he was living in a palace, the ark of the covenant, which was the symbol of God’s presence, was still in a tent. So his intention was to build a house for the Lord. However, the response of God to this initiative of David was something different. There were two things which God tried to communicate to David through Nathan.

First of all, it is God who builds the houses. The paradoxical thing that we see in the first reading is that on the one hand, David wanted to build a house for the Lord. But, on the other hand, the Lord explained to him how He was building up David's life in the past (vs. 8 & 9) and told him that He would make his house in the future too (Vs. 11).

Secondly, God was telling David that people are his abode; people are his temples: "Wherever I have moved about *among all the people of Israel*, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?' (2 Sam. 7: 7). Here God seems to be very contented to be in the midst of the people and does not seem to be very keen to move to a temple.

Even though David's intention was something good, still we see an unconscious manifestation of human tendency in him. That is, all through human history we witness a sort of human tendency to objectify and exteriorize God's presence from their lives. We always tend to believe that God has got His own place to live such as heaven, temple, etc., which are, to certain extent, away from where the humans live. Even if God wants to be in the midst of people, we try to build a temple and restrict His presence there.

God's orientation and tendency is to be always in the midst of people. By being in our midst, God tries to uplift our lives, helps us to overcome our problem, and be the very basis of our lives. In short, God tries to build up our houses. The purpose of God's presence in our midst is not find fault with us, but to elevate our lives to greater heights, to deepen our perception and to open up unfathomable mysteries and riches of life. However to co-operate with God demands a lot of openness, humility and much more perseverance on the part of the human beings. So we always try to exteriorize His presence and shut Him in the churches and temples. Today's craze for building up churches may be communicating the message that we are very keen

on objectifying God more and more from our lives, so that God may not much interfere with our lives and that we can have our own way.

In fact, it has to be kept in mind that Solomon built temple for the Lord in order to distract people from the heavy taxation that he had imposed upon people (It is like the politicians who raise some sensitive and sentimental issues such as Ayodhya temple, in order to divert their attention from the real problems such poverty, casteism etc.). We do know that at the end of life of Solomon, people came to his son and told him that his father had levied heavy taxes on them (1Kg. 12: 4). His intention was not as pure as that of David. In fact his focus was more on his palace than God's temple. To build his palace, he had taken 13 years, whereas for temple he had taken only 7 years (1Kg. 6: 38: 7:1).

Incarnation was a giant step on the part of God to tell the world that He enjoys being in the midst of people than being somewhere in heaven. St. Paul calls this giant step, in today's second reading, as the 'gospel'. It was the message that the whole life of Jesus communicates to us. During the annunciation, the angel announced that Jesus would be called as 'Emmanuel' (which means 'God is with us' – Mt. 1: 23). Once again before ascension, Jesus affirmed the message by saying, "Lo! I am with you till the end of the world" (Mt. 28: 20).

Becoming aware that God is in our midst involves a lot of self-introspection, a constant renewal of oneself, a continuous purification and going beyond all sorts of mediocrity. In order to avoid this painful process of growth, we try to safely objectify God's presence from our lives. But God, in order to enhance our lives, constantly reminds us that He is in our midst, in our hearts.

The above reflections should not make us surmise that God does not reside in the temples and churches. The point is that the churches (are supposed to) create an ambience so that we gradually become aware of God's presence *which is already in us*. Sugi Sivam, a famous speaker in Tamilnadu says, "Naam aalayathirku povadhu aanmeegathin mudhal nilai; Naame aalayamaaga maaruvathu aanmeegathin irudhi

nilai.” (“To go to the temple is the first step of spirituality; The final stage is that we ourselves become the temple.”)

Prayer:

Loving Father, help us to realize the purpose of the coming of your Son is to make us aware every more deeply and personally of your presence in us, Amen.

=====

Merry Christmas!

The Advent season has prepared us for the great celebration of the Miracle of the Incarnation ~ The Word made Flesh ~ who dwells among us. As we remember that first Christmas with awe and wonder let us be mindful of its true meaning. The birth of the Messiah was a long awaited promise finally brought to fulfillment. Generations of people of the Jewish faith lived in hope of this magnificent event. The Incarnation is that moment when God intervened in human history and brought about the gift of salvation. May we never lose sight of the significance of this blessed event. As Jesus grows into adulthood and inaugurates the Kingdom remember that it came with a cost. The gift of eternal life came at the price of Calvary. Calvary however could not claim dominion over life. Calvary reveals the triumph of the Cross over sin and death through the glory of Easter. Christmas and Easter are eternally linked as one-saving event. As we gaze upon the Christ Child wrapped in swaddling clothes we should also remember the shroud rolled-up in the tomb. May this Christmas prayer renew the call to discipleship:

*Open our eyes, O Lord,
To behold the rising dawn;
Open our hearts, O Lord,*

*To receive the life of your Son;
Open our lives, O Lord,
To be filled with
Your glory and peace. Amen.*

May the joy of Christmas be with you throughout the whole year!

Merry Christmas! Joyeux Noel! Happy New Year 2021! Bonne, Heureuse et Sainte Annee!

-Fr. Bill

=====

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS the souls and families of: Roger Burns, Gerald Larose, Marion Plasse and Jeannette Brodeur. May they rest in God’s eternal peace.

SJA BOOSTER CLUB Winner for 12/13/20 #113 Pauline Gendron

Congratulations to the SJA BOOSTER CLUB Grand Prize Winners:

\$1,000 #138 Martha Paul // \$800 #139 Jeannette Beaulieu // \$600 #115 Pauline Gendron // \$500 #23 Marc Gonneville // \$400 #111 Patrick Fecteau // \$300 #26 Kathleen Przybycien // \$200 #99 David & Paula Albertowicz // \$200 #46 Mairin Bresnahan // \$200 #70 Nancy Picard // \$100 #43 Jeanne Zabarano // \$100 #41 Rose Kotfila // \$100 #77 Claire Ringuette. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all who participated in this Club. All proceeds benefit St. Joan of Arc School.

New Club: A new club will begin the week of December 20th. Numbers are available for anyone interested in joining the next Booster Club; proceeds go to support St. Joan of Arc School. The club will run from December 20, 2020 to May 3, 2021. Dues are \$5.00 per week for 20 weeks: \$100.00 total. There is a weekly \$100 winner. The final week's drawing has multiple winners with prizes ranging from \$1000.00 to \$100.00. If interested, please contact Sandy and Joe Chessey at (413) 592-6256.

CALENDARS FOR THE YEAR 2021 courtesy of **St. Pierre-Phaneuf Funeral Chapels** will be available at church this weekend, December 19th and 20th. We thank St. Pierre-Phaneuf Funeral Chapels for making them available to the Parishioners of St. Rose de Lima Parish.

LITURGY OF THE WORD FOR CHILDREN has resumed at the 9:00AM Sunday Mass. We meet, as usual, in the Sacristy. If more than 8 children participate, because of social distancing, we will instead proceed to the Church Hall using the stairwell. We look forward to seeing the children at Sunday Liturgy.

2020 HOLIDAY COOKBOOK SALE The Ste. Rose de Lima Parish Family Cookbook Committee is again offering the Parish Cookbook for sale during the holidays. The cookbook which originally sold for \$15.00 is now available for \$10.00. Both Ste. Rose and St. Joan will benefit from the proceeds with \$5.00 going to the church and \$5.00 going to the school. Make checks payable to Ste. Rose de Lima Church and send to St. Rose de Lima Pastoral Center, Attn: Georgianna Adams, 15 Chapel St., Chicopee, MA 01020. Please include your name, address and phone number. Either Georgie or Sandy will contact you to determine whether you would prefer your cookbooks to be delivered or mailed to you.

~~~~~