

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

SATURDAY (12/2)

8 AM: MASS
3:30: Dante's *Inferno* Book Study (*Lower Level*)
3:30-4:30 PM: Reconciliation (*Chapel*)
5 PM: Vigil MASS

SUNDAY (12/3) FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

(Altar Flowers Donated by Zane Jones)

7-7:45 AM: Reconciliation
8:30 AM: Children's MASS
9:45-10:45 AM: RCIA (*CRE Office*)
9:45-10:45 AM: Christian Formation (*Lower Level*)
9:45-10:45 AM: Gospel of Mark Study (*Chapel*)
11 AM: MASS
12:45-1:30 PM: Reconciliation
1:30 PM: Latin MASS
4-6:30 PM: High School Youth Ministry
5 PM: St. Nicholas Celebration

MONDAY (12/4)

NOON: MASS
6 PM: Lawyers Helping Lawyers (*Lower Level*)
6 PM: Women's Gregorian Chant (*Schola*) Rehearsal
7 PM: Men's Gregorian Chant (*Schola*) Rehearsal

TUESDAY (12/5)

10 AM-NOON: Food Pantry
NOON: MASS

WEDNESDAY (12/6)

10 AM-NOON: Food Pantry
NOON: MASS
NOON: AA Meeting (*Lower Level*)
6:15 PM: Rosary Prayer Group (*Chapel*)
6:30 PM: Sung Vespers (*Church*)
7 PM: Choir Rehearsal (*Loft*)

THURSDAY (12/7)

NOON: Soup Kitchen
7 PM: Vigil MASS

FRIDAY (12/8) IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

10 AM-NOON: Food Pantry
NOON: MASS
NOON: AA Meeting (*Lower Level*)
7 PM: MASS

SAINTS TO REMEMBER

12/3	St. Francis Xavier
12/4	St. John Damascus
12/5	St. Sabbas
12/6	St. Nicholas
12/7	St. Ambrose
12/8	Immaculate Conception
12/9	St. Juan Diego

SATURDAY (12/9)

8 AM: MASS
3:30: Dante's *Inferno* Book Study (*Lower Level*)
3:30-4:30 PM: Reconciliation (*Chapel*)
5 PM: Vigil MASS
6 PM: Adult Formation A Sacred Walk: Dealing with End of Life Issues (*Lower Level*)

SUNDAY (12/10) SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

(Altar Flowers Donated In Memory of All Who Served in World War II by Joanne Mackey)

7-7:45 AM: Reconciliation
8:30 AM: Children's MASS
9:45-10:45 AM: RCIA (*CRE Office*)
9:45-10:45 AM: Christian Formation (*Lower Level*)
9:45-10:45 AM: First Sacraments Preparation (*Lower Level*)
9:45-10:45 AM: Gospel of Mark Study (*Chapel*)
11 AM: MASS
12:15 PM: Sanctuary Renovation "Town Hall" Meeting (*Church*)
12:45-1:30 PM: Reconciliation
1:30 PM: Latin MASS
4-5:30 PM: Confirmation Preparation
4-5:30 PM: High School Youth Ministry

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 2

8 AM Mary Nguyen (Vu Nguyen)
5 PM †David Drucker (Jaylene Drucker);

Members of our Parish

Sunday, December 3

8:30 AM Thi Thanh (Vu Nguyen)
11:00 AM †Ralph Marra (Barbara Marra)
1:30 PM Mary Nguyen (Vu Nguyen)

Monday, December 4

NOON †Shirley Bush †James Paitzel (Jill Paitzel)

Tuesday, December 5

NOON The McAdams Family (Patricia McAdams)

Saturday, December 9

5 PM Members of our Parish

Sunday, December 10

8:30 AM Members of our Parish
11:00 AM †Clyde Pax (Jeanne and John Chamales)
1:30 PM Members of and Visitors to our Parish

K OF C COATS FOR KIDS

After all Masses next weekend, December 9-10, parish members of the Knights of Columbus will be collecting money for COATS FOR KIDS. Checks should be made payable to Knights of Columbus #3670. Thank you.

**NEXT WEEKEND'S READINGS
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

First Reading

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Isaiah tells the people to prepare a way for the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 85:9-14

The Lord's salvation is near.

Second Reading

2 Peter 3:8-14

Peter teaches that we must always be holy because the return of the Lord cannot be predicted.

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:1-8

John the Baptist preached repentance and baptized the people, in preparation for the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit.

GIFTS FROM GOD

NOVEMBER 19, 2017

Offertory (plate)	\$4,317.50
Weekly Offertory Budget	<u>\$7,403.00</u>
<i>Below Weekly Budget</i>	<i>(3,085.50)</i>

NOVEMBER 26, 2017

Offertory (plate)	\$3,809.50
Offertory (online)	\$2,603.00
Weekly Offertory Budget	<u>\$7,403.00</u>
<i>Below Weekly Budget</i>	<i>(\$990.50)</i>

Next weekend we will have a second collection for Outreach.

YEAR END REMINDERS

We appreciate the generosity of our parishioners, and offer Online Giving, a safe and secure way for you to contribute via the web. Funds are transferred directly from your account to ours, and when you login, you'll be able to view a report of your transactions that shows your total tax-deductible contributions. Look for the link on our website: holycomforterparish.org

VESPERS

A sung Vespers service (evening prayer) will be celebrated regularly on Wednesdays at 6:30pm in the church starting on December 6. The psalms will be sung to Gregorian psalm tones, which are easy to learn and contemplative, allowing the participant to focus on the words while raising the voice to God in praise. This is what St. Augustine meant when he famously said that singing is praying twice. Please come and join in the universal prayer of the Church!

PARISH NEWS

PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS

Kindly notify us if you would like a name added to or deleted from this list, office@holycomforterparish.org. To arrange to receive Holy Communion or a visit by Fr. Joseph Mary, please call the parish office 434.295.7185.

THE ILL & HOME BOUND

Parishioners: Amber Eros, Dominique Faust, Colette Hall, Kay Colo, Raymond Painley, Jack Valloric, Mildred Dudley, Pam Heron, Herman Ortmann, Kay Russo, Mary Griffin, Mike Charlie, Frances Charlie, Jack Andrews, Eileen Foster, Tam Nguyen, Joe Murray, Helen Edwards, Betty Jane Prufer, Fran Cannon Slayton, Michael Ludgate, Frank Pologruto, Al Bracuti, Rose Bowker, Charley Moore.

Friends and Relatives: Claudia Hartland, Aileen Green, Teresa Hall, Heather Johnson, Joann Walker, Christine Fitzgerald, Mary Dominicis, Daniel Moore, Katie George, James Worley, Father Gerald Fogarty, Mary Ann Kline, Beatrice Stack, Thomas Johnson, Brenda Gayle Johnson, Sue Newman, James Worley, Carolyn Ann Davis, Andy Gillespie, JoAnn Fox Klein, Susan Steeby, Suzanne Lank, John Lank, Susan Straub Martin, Josephine Nampijja, Christine Bentéjac, David Rumpf, Kimberly Hasenfus Hulick, Kristin Fagan, John Patrick Dennison, Christine Russo Carpenter, Benedict Pax, Residents of Albemarle County Regional Jail, Residents of Blue Ridge Juvenile Detention.

MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY

Jeffrey Jaeger, Pete Bakke, Michael Eiermann, Tom Logan, William Murray, Trey Linebrink, Jeff Woodside, Charles G. Ellison, and Matthew Mickiewicz.

ROSARY PRAYER GROUP

We gather on Wednesday in the Chapel at 6:15. All are welcomed.

ANGEL TREE PROGRAM 2017

Holy Comforter is participating with the Salvation Army Angel Tree Program again this year to spread the joy of Christmas to children in our community. Please take a tag from our tree, [attach the tag to your gift](#) and return it **UNWRAPPED by December 8th** to Holy Comforter or to the Salvation Army Office at 207 Ridge Street. Angel Tree gifts will be distributed to the children on December 12. Thank you for reaching out in the name of Jesus to those in our community who are in need.

SECULAR ORDER OF DISCALCED CARMELITE COMMUNITY

The Secular Order of Discalced Carmelite Community of Saint Elizabeth of the Trinity meets at St. Francis in Staunton on the 2nd Sunday each month from 11:30-4:00PM. If you are interested in learning more or feel called to a Carmelite way of life, please consider visiting us Sunday, December 10, 2017. You may pick up a flyer in the vestibule or contact Patricia McAdams at 286-4055 or pamcadams@yahoo.com.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION**ADULT FORMATION**

Our **Bible Study on the Gospel of Mark** resumes THIS Sunday, Dec. 3 following the 8:30 Mass. Join us for the final two sessions on Dec. 10, and 17 even if you have not attended the previous sessions. Stay tuned for a new series after the first of the year!

A SACRED WALK: DEALING WITH END OF LIFE ISSUES:

Please join us on **Saturday, December 9 following the 5:00 pm Mass** for this encouraging and informative presentation by Hospice volunteer and writer Donna Authers, as well as Hospice CEO, Ron Cottrell. All of us will face death and many of us will be called upon to be caretakers to the dying. Learn how we can plan for death and then go on living! Catered refreshments will be provided. Please see the bulletin insert for more details.

FIRST SACRAMENTS PREPARATION

Parent Orientation for all children preparing for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion will take place on **Sunday, Dec. 10 at 9:45 AM** on the lower level. This session is for parents only; children will attend their regular religious education class. Preparation classes for the children begin on Sunday, January 8, 2018.

ST. NICHOLAS CELEBRATION

A family **St. Nicholas Celebration** will be held on **Sunday, Dec. 3 at 5:00 pm** in honor of the Dec. 6 Feast of St. Nicholas. Children in their stocking feet will hear stories about St. Nicholas from our pre-k catechist, Mrs. G. while their shoes await surprises outside the sanctuary. A celebration including potluck dinner, crafts, and games will follow. Please plan to join us for this fun celebration. *(NOTE: Morning Religious Education classes will be held as usual).*

HIGH SCHOOL YM

This **Sunday, Dec. 3**, high school students will assist with the St. Nicholas Celebration. Please plan to be here from 4:00-6:30 this Sunday. **Next Sunday, Dec. 10**, we will meet at our regular 4:00-5:30 time.

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

Our next Confirmation preparation class will meet on **Sunday, Dec. 10 from 4:00-5:30 pm**. Also, students preparing for Confirmation will be presented to our church family at the 11:00 Mass on that Sunday. If at all possible, all Confirmation candidates are asked to be present at this Mass.

PARENT BOOK STUDY GROUP

Church of the Incarnation has invited all parents, particularly of teens, to join them for the first meeting on **Wednesday, December 6 OR Sunday, December 10 from 6:30-7:30 pm** in the Parish Library. We will be using the book *Hurt 2.0: Inside the world of today's teenagers*. Chapters in the book cover topics like peers, school, family, sports, sex, busyness and stress, and much more. **While we'll be using the book as a discussion starter, you do NOT have to have read the chapter in order to participate.** Feel free to invite any other parents who may be interested. This group is ideal for parents of teenagers or pre-teens but open to anybody. The group will be facilitated by Incarnation's Coordinator of Youth Ministry, John Kronstain, a local school counselor who has worked with pre-school through college aged students. If you have any questions, please email John at john.kronstain@gmail.com.

SOCIAL MINISTRIES**SOCCER BALLS FOR UGANDA**

Message from Seamus Allen: "The fundraising for soccer balls to send to St. Bernard's School in Kiswera, Uganda, was a great success. Thank you to everyone who contributed to my Eagle Scout Project. The generosity of the Holy Comforter community is amazing."

Last Monday, Fr. Joseph Mary drew the names of the winners for the autographed UVA men's and women's soccer balls. You can see a video of the drawing at <https://youtu.be/zWvnDCV7jho>. The Manka family won the soccer ball signed by the women's soccer team and Helen Harris won the ball signed by the men's team. Congratulations to them.

HAITI

Singing Rooster Coffee will be available for sale at Holy Comforter this weekend after all Masses. Thank you for supporting our St. Michel Parish in Saltadere.

Bi-Parish Haiti Committee Meeting: 1:30 PM TODAY December 3 at St. Thomas Aquinas. All are welcome. Contact: e-mail Anne Knasel at anne@stagebridge.net or Ginny Zeller at ginnyannzeller@gmail.com.

"Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel."



"Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news, Lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; Lift it up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!'"
(Is. 40:9)

IS ADVENT BUSINESS AS USUAL?

Is it not a season focused on expectation and anticipation of Christ's birth leading up to Christmas? Yes, this is part of the story, but there's more to Advent. *"ADVENTUS"* (Latin), meaning "coming," is a translation of the Greek word *"parousia."* Scholars believe that during the 4th and 5th centuries in Spain and Gaul, Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the January feast of Epiphany, the celebration of God's Incarnation represented by the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus (Mt. 2), his baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist (Jn. 1:29), and his first miracle at Cana (Jn. 2:1). During this season of preparation, Christians would spend 40 days in penance, prayer, and fasting to prepare for this celebration. Originally, there was little connection between Advent and Christmas. By the 6th century, however, Roman Christians had tied Advent to the coming of Christ. But the "coming" they had in mind was not Christ's first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but his second coming in the clouds as the judge of the world. It was not until the Middle Ages that the Advent season was explicitly linked to Christ's first coming at Christmas. Today, the season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. Since that time, the new Christian year begins with the twelve-day celebration of Christmastide, which lasts from Christmas Eve until Epiphany on January 6. (Advent begins on the Sunday that falls between November 27th and December 3^d each year).

Advent symbolizes the present situation of the Church in these "last days" spoken about in Acts. 2:17, as God's people wait for the return of Christ in glory to consummate his eternal kingdom. The church is in a similar situation to Israel at the end of the Old Testament: in exile, waiting and hoping in prayerful expectation for the coming of the Messiah. Israel looked back to God's past gracious actions on their behalf in leading them out of Egypt in the Exodus, and on this basis they called for God once again to act for them in their challenging circumstances. In the same way, the church, during Advent, looks back upon Christ's coming in celebration while at the same time looking forward in eager anticipation to the coming of Christ's kingdom when he returns for his people.

While Israel would sing Psalms in expectation of Christ's first coming (Psalms 21, 97, 132 etc.) the church now sings the songs in commemoration of that first coming and in expectation of the second coming in the future. During this season, we live in anticipation and hope. We have specific symbols for the season like the color purple, the advent wreath, and light and candles, all of which convey a significant message. What Jesus is asking of us in this season is not easy. Says the Catechism: "According to the Lord, the present time is the time of the Spirit and of witness, but also a time still marked by 'distress' and the trial of evil, which does not spare the Church, and ushers in the struggles of the last days. It is a time of waiting and watching" (672). St. Paul puts it this way: **"You are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ."** It isn't easy. The dread we feel is appropriate — it is called "fear of the Lord," one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. But the Christian life must be understood as a labor of love, preparing for a Master who wants to enrich us in every way, "with all discourse and all knowledge." So we are right to see the sweetness of the Lord's coming. (to be continued...)