

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

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

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(Altar Flowers Donated by the Conaway-Petroni Family)

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4-5:30 PM: High School Youth Ministry

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6 PM: Women's Gregorian Chant (*Schola*) Rehearsal
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10 AM-NOON: Food Pantry
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8 AM: MASS
NOON: Soup Kitchen

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8 AM: MASS
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SAINTS TO REMEMBER

12/17	St. John of Matha
12/18	St. Malachi the Prophet
12/19	Blessed Urban V
12/20	St. Dominic of Silos
12/21	St. Peter Canisius
12/22	St. Chaeremon
12/23	St. John of Kanty

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5 PM: Vigil MASS (4th Sunday of Advent)

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11:30 PM: Latin Christmas MASS

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(There will be a second collection today for Catholic Charities) (Parish Offices are closed today)

8:30 AM: MASS
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8 AM Sandy (Paul Savoie)
5 PM Katherine (Paul Savoie)

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8:30 AM †Peter Colo (Marlene Wood)
11:00 AM Members of our Parish

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 †Lyda Brown Sorgini (Stephanie Gartner)

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Wednesday, December 20

NOON Christina (Paul Savoie)

Thursday, December 21

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Romans 16:25-27

Paul praises God for making his revelation known.

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Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel visits Mary to announce the birth of Jesus.

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Dominique Faust and her family would like to thank all of you who have prayed for her through her dangerous times. May God reward you abundantly and Mary protect you always. Joyeux Noel and a Very Blessed 2018 to all of you.*

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CHRISTIAN FORMATION CLASSES will **NOT** meet on **Sunday, Dec. 24 or Sun. Dec. 31**. Classes will *resume* on Sunday, January 8, the Feast of Epiphany!

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5 PM: Vigil Mass

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

(Sunday 12/31)

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11 AM: Mass

Mary, The Holy Mother of God (Monday 1/1)

NOON: Mass

7 PM: Mass

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1/5 NOON-2 PM: Mass and Adoration

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The Epiphany of the Lord (Sunday 1/7)

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11 AM: Mass

The Baptism of the Lord (Monday 1/8)

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Those hoping to participate in the joy and excitement of the Jan. 12 Mass of Installation for the Catholic Diocese of Richmond's new Bishop may enter a lottery. Seating for the 2 PM event at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart will be limited. To enter the drawing for admission tickets please visit by Friday, December 29, 2017: richmonddiocese.org/installation-mass-details

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Our **Bible Study on the Gospel of Mark** concludes this Sunday with a grand finale summary! You are most welcome to join us even if you have not attended previous sessions, as there are many "take aways" to be gleaned from God's Word through Mark!

Stay tuned for details of our next adult study using Bishop Robert Barron's "**Catholicism**" study!

ADVENT REFLECTIONS

Make your Advent season meaningful by beginning each day with a reflection on the joy of anticipating the celebration of the Birth of Christ in us and in His coming again. Many online resources are available that come directly to your email. In addition to Dynamic Catholic's "Best Advent Ever," dynamiccatholic.com/best-advent-ever/advent-reflections-2017, here are some others:

Sacred Space-Ignatian Spirituality:

pray-as-you-go.org/prayer-resources/messengers-of-joy-advent-2017 and Loyola Press:

www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/prayer/daily-inspirations

CHRISTMAS CHILDREN'S MASS AND NATIVITY PLAY

The annual presentation of the Nativity by the children will take place during the **Family Christmas Mass on Sunday, Dec. 24 at 4:00pm**. Children ages 4 and older are invited to participate. If you are interested in having your child take part in the play, please email Sue Dougherty, CRE at cre@holycomforterparish.org as soon as possible.

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Our High School Youth will meet this Sunday afternoon at 4:00 pm for a Christmas social, including a Christmas movie and pizza. You may bring a \$5.00 "Secret Santa" gift if you wish. It should be wrapped *without* a name on it.

SOCIAL MINISTRIES

HAITI

St. Michel Clinic: Is seeing about 10 patients a day. Please keep the doctor and medical personnel in your prayers. **School:** Student sponsorship and donations fund school costs. Please help by sponsoring a student—see notebook on the Haiti Table. Please keep St. Michel students, families and teachers in your prayers.

Bi-Parish Haiti Committee Meeting: Next Meeting is February 4, 2018. All are welcome. For more information, contact Anne Knasel anne@stagebridge.net or Ginny Zeller ginnyannzeller@gmail.com.

"Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel." (3rd Week)



"And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other." (Mt.24:31)

"We rejoice in hope" sums up the message for the third Sunday of Advent. You can endure hardships cheerfully (James 5:7-10) only when the anticipated reward makes it all worthwhile. When you are a kid on a long trip and your parents say you are half-way there, do you rejoice? Probably not! You would think the Church would have Gaudete Sunday on the fourth Sunday of Advent - then Christmas would be less than a week away (or, as it is this year, just one day away) that would be something to rejoice about. For some reason the Pope at that time didn't ask for our opinion on this, or anything else for that matter which is good - the Church is wisely guided by the Holy Spirit, so let's just remain patiently waiting and rejoicing in hope.

I would think the Church calls the third Sunday of Advent Gaudete Sunday to remind us that the journey is just as important as the arrival. Hope is as important because it is the key to joy. And Even though Christmas is still two weeks away, we are to rejoice. We have to remember that the Old Testament prophets spoke of Jesus coming hundreds of years before he actually came. In Isaiah, one of the prophets, we hear of hope. **"Hope that in the future the steppe will be full of flowers in bloom; that the glory of the Lord will be seen; that because of God's presence, there is no need to fear; the blind will see, the deaf will hear, and the mute will speak."** (Isaiah. 35:1-10) Isaiah says there will be much rejoicing and singing among those whom God has ransomed and saved. What we see foretold in Isaiah, we see that Jesus has made a reality.

One of the great Spiritual writers, St. Bernard of Clairvaux said, **"We know that there are three comings of the Lord. The third lies between the other two. It is invisible, while the other two are visible. In the first coming he was seen on earth, dwelling among men; he himself testifies that they saw him and hated him. In the final coming 'all flesh will see the salvation of our God, and they will look on him whom they pierced.'** The intermediate coming is a hidden one; in it only the elect see the Lord within their own selves, and they are saved." In his first coming our Lord came in our flesh and in our weakness; in this middle coming he comes in spirit and in power; in the final coming he will be seen in glory and majesty. We firmly believe and rightly say the great Prophet who will build the New Jerusalem will come, the one who makes all things new. We rejoice, then, with that inexpressible joy. **(To be continued...)**

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