

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 23, 2018

“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.”

— Luke 1:42

MEMORIES AND DREAMS

Throughout our lives, we retain the language and habits of our native region and family of origin. Should we return to our home after a long absence, we quickly revert to its familiar speech and practices. Our deep memory is reflected in old stories and words and speech patterns. This familiarity runs like an underground river and accompanies us wherever we go.

Not only do we remember, we are incorporated into and made part of a greater memory. In remembering and recollecting, we are in turn gathered up and re-collected.

Today we remember Mary, a small figure travelling the country roads to visit Elizabeth. All the great pronouncements and dreams of the prophets point to this time when the Lord's words to Mary would be gathered and fulfilled. The memories of her people are alive in her, and memories of her nourish our own living faith. Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co., Inc.

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — From Bethlehem-Ephrathah shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel (Micah 5:1-4a).

Psalms — Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved (Psalm 80).

Second Reading — We have been consecrated through the offering of the body of Christ once for all (Hebrews 10:5-10).

Gospel — Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken by the Lord would be fulfilled (Luke 1:39-45).

OUR GIFTS RECORD

	Offertory	Development
Last Week's Collection	\$2,039.00	\$1,220.00
Number of Families contributing	85	60
Total Pledge for 2018	\$118,199.00	\$167,136.00
Pledged to Date (48 Weeks)	\$160,737.00	\$156,705.00
Received to Date	\$160,305.00	\$123,872.00
Envelopes Outstanding	\$431.80	\$32,836.00

LADIES OFFERTORY RECORD

Amount given last week	Amount given to Date in 2018
\$171.00	\$9,291.00

Twenty-three ladies made a contribution last week.

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL WEEKLY REPORT

2018 Parish Goal	\$25,705.00
Amount Received to Date	\$14,928.94
Amount Outstanding	\$10,776.06

Two people made a B.A.A. contribution last week.

PARISH LIFE CENTER HALL FUND WEEKLY REPORT

Amount given last week	Amount given to Date in 2018
\$6,080.00	\$90,280.00

Twenty-four people made a P.L.C. contribution last week.

PARKING LOT totaled \$2.00.

31 **CHILDREN** contributed \$156.00.

POOR BOX totaled \$7.00

The **ATTENDANCE** for last Saturday 4:00 p.m. Mass was 110, 7:00 P.M. Mass was 130 and Sunday 10:00 a.m. Mass was 105.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

In his book *Gracias*, writer and theologian Henri Nouwen shared the following insights on the meaning of Christmas:

“God came to us because He wanted to join us on the road, to listen to our story, and to help us realize that we are not walking in circles but moving towards the house of peace and joy. This is the great mystery of Christmas that continues to give us comfort and consolation: we are not alone on our journey.”

“The God of love who gave us life sent His only Son to be with us at all times and in all places, so that we never have to feel lost in our struggles but always can trust that He walks with us. The challenge is to let God be who He wants to be. A part of us clings to our aloneness and does not allow God to touch us where we are most in pain.”

“Often we hide from Him precisely those places in ourselves where we feel guilty, ashamed confused, and lost. Thus we do not give Him a chance to be with us where we feel most alone. Christmas is the renewed invitation not to be afraid and to let Him —whose love is greater than our own hearts and minds can comprehend— be our companion.”

I am with you always. —Matthew 28:20

I accept your invitation to be my companion, Jesus.

FLOWERS IN THE CHURCH ARE OFFERED BY:

1. Jude, Valerie, Tommy Touch and John Damon in thanks for Middleton on her 4th Birthday,
2. Scott, Mercedes, Harvard and Harper in thanks for Thomas Scotson on his 7th Birthday,
3. the Gallons in loving memory of Jett on his 7th Birthday;
4. Tommy Newman in loving memory of Popeye's Kate on the 15th Anniversary of her death;
5. and a Parish Family Member in thanks to St. Expedite.

Merry Christmas from Father Chertan

With heart brimming over with love and joy, let me wish all members of St. Edward's Parish family the Blessings and Joys of Christmas. May Christ come to you with the gift of Love, the Blessing of Hope, and the Promise of Peace. I will remember you all and your loved ones in the Christmas Mass.

CHRISTMAS 2018 MASS SCHEDULE

Monday, December 24th — 5:00 P.M. — Children's Mass

Monday, December 24th — Midnight Mass

Tuesday, December 25th — 10:00 A.M. — Christmas Day Mass

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

The Church Office will be closed this Monday, December 24th and Tuesday, December 25th in observance of the Christmas Holiday. It will reopen Wednesday, December 26th.

MASTER'S TABLE

The Youth Group is scheduled to prepare and serve a hot meal to the clients of the Master's Table in Augusta on Thursday, January 3rd. If you would like to participate in this very rewarding opportunity please contact Jack's Mary Rita.

THANK YOU to two members for their donations in thanks to St. Expedite.

INTERESTING CHRISTMAS QUESTIONS

What do sheep say to each other at Christmas?

Merry Christmas to ewe.

What happened to the thief who stole a Christmas calendar?

He got 12 months.

What color Christmas candle burns longer, red or green?

Neither — candles always burn shorter.

What Christmas carol do parents like most?

Silent Night.

Where does Christmas come before Thanksgiving?

In the dictionary.

What do you call a greedy elf?

Elfish.

JOKE OF THE WEEK

A lady dropped her handbag in the bustle of Christmas shopping. An honest, little boy noticed her drop the handbag, so he picked it up and returned it to her. The lady looked into her handbag and commented, "Hmmm...That's funny. When I lost my bag there was a \$20 bill in it. Now there are twenty \$1 bills."

The boy quickly replied, "That's right lady. The last time I found a purse, the owner didn't have any change for a reward."

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Monday: Vigil of Christmas
Tuesday: The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
Wednesday: St. Stephen; First Day of Kwanzaa
Thursday: St. John
Friday: The Holy Innocents
Saturday: Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord; St. Thomas Becket

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday: In honor of the Holy Spirit and Precious Blood for a special intention.
Tuesday: In honor of the Infant Jesus and Precious Blood for a special intention.
Wednesday: In honor of the Holy Souls and St. Joseph.
Thursday: In honor of the Sacred Heart and Precious Blood for a special intention.
Friday: In honor of the Holy Souls and Precious Blood.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

***I heard the Lord on Christmas Day;
These words to me He did say,
"Look for Me in the candle's glow,
In the softly falling snow.***

***See My joy in a child's happy face,
Feel My love in a friend's embrace.
See My hope in aging eyes,
As Christmas light within them rise.***

***Hear My voice in the carols sung;
My gentle peace as bells are rung.
In giving, loving, I'll be there,
All My goodness with you to share."***

READERS

Sat. Dec. 22nd, 4:00 P.M. Cathy Lisa & Karen	Sat. Dec. 22nd, 7:00 P.M. Jay & Mary Melissa
Sun. Dec. 23rd, 10:00 A.M. Theresa Maria Cat & Jimmy Joseph	
Christmas Eve, 5:00 P.M. Ivana & Ritz	MIDNIGHT Mass Jay & Blue
Christmas Day, 10:00 A.M. Jimmy Joseph & Tommy Mack	
Sat. Dec. 29th, 4:00 P.M. Rita Riley & Grace	Sat. Dec. 29th, 7:00 P.M. Jay & Carolyn
Sun. Dec. 30th, 10:00 A.M.	Jimmy Joseph & Mary Cat
New Year's Eve, 5:00 P.M. Christina & Julie Ann	New Year's Day, 10:00 A.M. Jimmy Joseph & Theresa Maria

READERS – WEEKDAYS

Monday	-	Reed
Tuesday	-	Melissa Gallon
Wednesday	-	Skylar
Thursday	-	Christina Apple
Friday	-	Fallon

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS – WEEKEND

Saturday 4:00 P.M.	December 22nd
Front	Bridget Ann
Left Cup	Winnie Ann

Sunday 10:00 A.M.

December 23rd	December 30th
Pete Man's Nora	Pete Man's Nora
Rose Marie	Rose Marie

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS - WEEKDAY

Monday	Mary Cat
Tuesday	Pete Man's Nora
Wednesday	Rosie Cat
Thursday	Betty Jo
Friday	Rose Marie

RELATIONS

***Sweetest of relations are like pillows,
When you are tired you relax on them,
sad you drop tears on them,
angry when you punch them,
and when happy you hug them.***

~~~~~PRAYER CORNER~~~~~

Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise You for the great wonders You have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise You for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold His glory, and are bathed in its radiance.

Be with us when we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the word asunder. We kneel before You shepherds, innkeepers, and wisemen. Help us to rise bigger than we are. Amen.