

“I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals.”

LUKE 3:16



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**THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
 DECEMBER 16, 2018**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15

The Mass of Anticipation for 3rd Sunday of Advent
 4:00PM George V. McKenna—Memorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16

Third Sunday of Advent
 7:30 AM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Church
 9:00 AM Joyce Honour—Memorial
 10:30AM Kate Bedard—9th Anniversary
 5:00PM Eugenia & Charles McGowan—Memorial

MONDAY, DECEMBER 17

Late Advent Weekday
 7:30AM Mariakutty Peter—Memorial

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18

Late Advent Weekday
 7:30AM George C. Jamieson—Birthday Remembrance

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19

Late Advent Weekday
 7:30AM Shirley Berlanga—Memorial

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20

Late Advent Weekday
 7:30AM Frank Almonte—Memorial

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21

Late Advent Weekday; St. Peter Canisius, Priest & Doctor of the Church
 7:30AM SouJeannine Light—8th Anniversary

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22

Late Advent Weekday
 8:30AM Fr. George Behan—Memorial
The Mass of Anticipation for 4th Sunday of Advent
 4:00PM Michael Alix—Birthday Remembrance

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23

The Fourth Sunday of Advent
 7:30 AM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy Church
 9:00 AM Albert Edward Hyde—8th Anniversary
 10:30AM Janet Fayle—10th Anniversary
 5:00PM Dina Coelho—Memorial





Dear Parishioners:

This Sunday is known as *Gaudete* Sunday. The term *Gaudete* refers to the first word of the Entrance Antiphon, "Rejoice". Rose vestments are worn to emphasize our joy that Christmas is near, and we also light the rose candle on our Advent wreath.

"Rejoice: the Lord is near." As Christmas draws near, the Church emphasizes the joy which should be in our hearts over all that the birth of our Savior means for us. The great joy of Christians is to see the day drawing near when the Lord will come again in His glory to lead them into His kingdom.

The oft-repeated *Veni* ("Come") of Advent is an echo not only of the prophets but also of the conclusion of the Apocalypse of St. John: "Come, Lord Jesus," the last words of the New Testament.

Pope Francis published his own apostolic exhortation named *Evangelii Gaudium* —the Joy of the Gospel — during Advent when we realize that the Lord is near. The heart of his message is an exhortation to spread the gospel with unrestrained joy. He writes in his opening words:

"The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew. In this Exhortation I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy...."

The joy Pope Francis is referring to is not just human

happiness, nor is it a false religious euphoria, or religious nicety. Instead joy is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 5:22) It is the result of being infused with the fire of Divine Love. This joy is the sign of a supernatural energy in a person's life. It presents as a kind of supernatural optimism.

The Divine Joy sparks evangelization because it is attractive. People see this divine happiness and peace and want it for themselves. The Divine Joy is present not only when things are going well, but especially when things are going badly.

Gaudete Sunday comes in the middle of the sober Advent season to remind us that rejoicing in the midst of hardship is not a duty but a gift. It is a gift that comes from the realization that the Lord is near. The Lord is not only near because the celebration of his birth is at hand. The Advent season reminds us that he is near right now.

We have to keep in mind that the One who is to come is, in the words of Thomas Merton, "more than a charming smiling infant in the straw." In Advent we celebrate the coming and the presence of Christ in the world. This demands a response of conversion and living lives worthy of his Kingdom.

We can also rejoice because He is present among us, even in the midst of all the problems, trials, and tragedies that seem to overwhelm our own lives at times and our world today.

So when you see the rose vestments at Mass this Sunday and see the rose candle lit for the third week of Advent, take a

moment in the midst of the hustle and bustle of these days. Calm down. Pray. "Be still and rejoice in the Lord always....and again I say rejoice!"

This is the last full week of Advent before Christmas and we have only one week left to prepare ourselves spiritually. It is not too late. That is the great truth of this season of Advent: we can start out like the Magi, or stumble into the stable like a shepherd. Either way, we are to reach the Divine destination, the Christ Child lying in the manger. We seek Jesus, and nothing less.

How can we make the most of this last final time before Christmas? Come to God and make a good confession. The Incarnation is God's promise that we are not abandoned to sin and death. We should seek to abandon sin and death in our own souls in Confession.

It's a week to be generous with what we have including our words and deeds. Think of the less fortunate, reach out to the lonely, visit the sick, offer a compliment rather than a complaint, or send a note of thanks. Give as St. Nicholas gave with generosity and charity.

Slow down this week and be vigilant for the Lord's coming. In this time before Christmas prepare room for the coming of Christ into the mangers of our hearts and homes. Let us rejoice as we cry out: "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Be well. Do good. God Bless. Go Pats!!!

Father Healey



Why is the Incarnation Important?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church lists several reasons why God became incarnate (457-460): The Word became flesh for us in order to save us by reconciling us with God, who *“loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins.”* The Word became flesh so that thus we might know God’s love: *“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”* The Word became flesh to be our model of holiness: *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.”* The Word became flesh to make us partakers of the divine nature. *“For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God.”*

At Christmas time we focus particularly on the last of these reasons: that we might become sons and daughters of God. Remarkably God took to Himself our human nature. We can meditate on this reality from the point of view of God and from the point of view of humanity. From the standpoint of God our minds are filled with awe knowing that the omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent creator of the universe, who transcends time, squeezes himself in a manner of speaking, into a tiny, helpless baby. Similar thoughts can be had about the Mass and the transformation of the Eucharist.

From the standpoint of our humanity, St. Gregory Nazianzus, one of the great Fathers and Doctors of the Church, responding to the heresy that Jesus Christ had not assumed a rational mind, said the following: *“What has not been assumed has not been healed.”* Other Church Fathers and theologians have spoken similarly. The correlation here is that whatever has been assumed has been healed and transformed. Hence, not just our rational mind, but every single inch of our humanity has been affected; even our past, present, and future. Our weaknesses and sins mask, deface, and hinder what lies below: the awesome potential of redeemed humanity. Of all the ways that God could have saved us and restored our relationship to him, he decided to take on our human nature. There is no greater gift than this!

Christmas is an exciting time precisely because we receive the greatest gift of all: the ability to become like Christ. May we inculcate that message into ourselves and everyone we meet.

Weekly Collection

December 9, 2018


Weekly.....	\$11,739.00
EFT.....	\$1,845.00
Total=\$13,584.00	
Outreach.....	\$514.00
Retired Religious.....	\$6,572.00
Immaculate Conception.....	\$2,756.50
Christmas Flowers (to date).....	\$1,876.00
Annual (to date).....	\$94,897.00

If you have been away on vacation or visiting another parish, we kindly ask you to please make up your missed budget envelopes. We depend solely upon your weekly support to meet our weekly parish expenses.

Thank You for Your Generous Support!


Please remember Our Lady of Mercy Church in your will or estate.





The flowers at the Marian Shrine are donated this week in memory of Kevin, Durnin. In your charity, please remember him in your prayers.

Christmas Flower Memorials



Christmas Flower donations/envelopes should be returned prior to Christmas. Please place the name of your beloved living or deceased relative or friend on the envelopes so they may be remembered in prayer. All donations help defray the cost of the beautiful flowers that decorate the Church at Christmas.

Thank You for your generous support.



Upcoming Events:

- **Tuesday, December 18th:** School Christmas Assembly at 8:15pm
- **Wednesday, December 19th:** Dress Down in support of McAuley House
- **Thursday, December 20th:** Half-Day Dismissal at 11:30AM

Discover the OLM Difference!

www.olmschool.org



● **OLM Food Pantry** is always in great need of non-perishable food items. Please leave items in the Food Box in the vestibule.

● **Christmas Outreach:** We are in need of gift cards to Walmart and Stop & Shop for our outreach efforts for the holidays. Please deposit in collection basket in envelope marked "Outreach".

● **OLM Bereavement Group Meeting:** Thursday, December 20th at 4pm in Mercy House. All those experiencing grief or loneliness are invited to join us for support, prayer and discussion.

● **For more information about OLM Outreach,** please contact OLM Outreach Director, Doug Green at 884-4410 or by email at outreach@olmparish.org

The Light is ON for You.



Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Confessions for Christmas at OLM

- Saturday, December 22, 2018**
2:00PM – 3:45PM *with three priests*
- Monday, December 24, 2018**
1:00PM – 3:00PM *with three priests*

OLM Rosary Makers Monthly Workshop



Tuesday, December 18, 2018
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM
OLM Cryroom
Materials and instructions provided.
Join us in making rosaries for the missions.



- **Sunday, December 16th:** All RE Classes AM & PM meet as usual time for Christmas Program
- **Christmas Break:** No RE Classes on December 23 & 30. All RE Classes resume on January 8, 2019.



OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH
 EAST GREENWICH, RHODE ISLAND
CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S SCHEDULE

CONFESSIONS FOR CHRISTMAS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22

2:00 pm - 3:45 pm · Three priests available

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm · Three priests available

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

CHRISTMAS EVE

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24

Vigil Mass of Christmas at 4:00pm

Concert of Carols at 11:30pm

CHRISTMAS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25

Mass of Christmas Night at 12:00am Midnight

Mass of Christmas Day at 7:30am, 9:00am & 10:30am

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29

Confessions at 3:00pm

Mass of Anticipation at 4:00pm

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

Masses at 7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am & 5:00pm

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Vigil Mass at 4:00 pm

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1, 2019

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Masses at 8:30 am and 12:00 pm noon



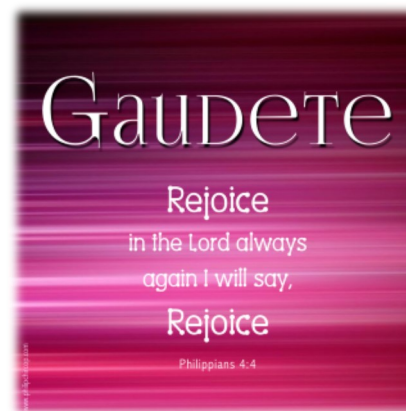
3rd Sunday of Advent



The traditional name for the Third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday. The name comes from *Gaudete in Domino semper*, Latin for “Rejoice in the Lord always,” opening words of today’s entrance antiphon (brief scriptural text that is usually replaced by an opening hymn).

Because one of Advent’s tasks is to prepare us for Christ’s return at the end of time, this season once had a penitential quality similar to that of Lent. Gaudete Sunday with its rose vestments and relaxation of austerities softened the period and gave a glimpse of its fulfillment just as its counterpart, Laetare Sunday, did at the midpoint of Lent.

Viewed now as a season of devout and joyful expectation, Advent retains very little of its old penitential focus, but we still have the option of using the liturgical color of rose today as we rejoice that Christmas is near, and Christ’s second coming is nearer than it was yesterday.



This bulletin insert was written by Marion Eagen, a liturgist and musician in the diocese of Scranton, Pa. © 2002 Resource Publications, Inc., 160 E. Virginia St. #290, San Jose, CA 95112, (408) 286-8505. All rights reserved.