

December 11, 2011

Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday)



SATURDAY, December 10

4:00PM Walter Theriault by Elizabeth & Don Roussel
(Birthday remembrance)

SUNDAY, December 11

8:00 AM Gilbert L. Mello & Manuel O. Amaral by their family
(Birthday remembrances)

9:30 AM John Viveiros by his wife & family
(Birthday remembrance)

11:00 AM Lucille Reis by her children & grandchildren
Jeannette Attar Halliwell by the Attar family

Joseph & Maria Azevedo by their daughter & grandchildren
Joey Gonsalves, 3rd, by his parents (birthday remembrance)

MONDAY, December 12

9:00 AM James Furness by his sister Natalie

TUESDAY, December 13

9:00 AM Charlotte Holik by Phyllis & Conrad Fortier

WEDNESDAY, December 14

9:00 AM Nancy Faria by her family (birthday remembrance)

THURSDAY, December 15

9:00 AM Edmond & Celine Girouard by daughter & son-in-law

SATURDAY, December 17

4:00PM Elaine Gadbois by her family
John Carvalho by his family

Paul Boulay by Mr. & Mrs. James Daugherty & family
Helen, Alfred, Joey & Al Gadbois & Richard Brochu by family

SUNDAY, December 18

8:00 AM Guy Touchais by his sister (birthday remembrance)

9:30 AM Angelo Colucciello by his family (3rd anniversary)

11:00 AM James Sousa by his family (birthday remembrance)

December Memorial Candles

Sanctuary Lamp in memory of the Seery & Mascarelli families

Tabernacle Candles in memory of Robert Peloquin by his wife and family

Altar Candles in memory of Henry & Adele Dion by their daughter, Jeannine Moss

Crucifix Candles in memory of Philippe Parent by his wife, Lorraine.

December 4, 2011 Collections:

Budget.....\$ 3,733.14
2nd Collection: Monthly I.M.E. Expense.....\$ 1,600.15

“Thank You” to all who continue to support our parish.

Mass Book for 2012 is available to schedule masses for January thru June, 2012. Mass dates can be scheduled by calling the parish office at 508-673-2808. In order to accommodate everyone, we must limit the number of masses scheduled to 3 weekend masses and 3 weekday masses. Requests for the Sanctuary Lamp, Tabernacle Candles, Altar Candles, and Crucifix Candles for January thru June can also be scheduled.



Gift Bearers - If you are a family member or friend who would like to bring the gifts to the altar at a loved one's Mass, we would be happy to have you do so. Just stop by the Sacristy before Mass and tell Fr. Michael you will be gift bearer that day. Thank you.

Christmas Flowers & Decorations Donations



An envelope has been included in your budget packet for your memorial donation towards the purchase of Christmas flowers and decorations. If you do not use budget envelopes, we invite you to consider making a donation in memory of a deceased loved one. Mark the front of your donation envelope:

Christmas Flowers /Decorations Offering
In memory of.....

Donations should be received by **Sunday, Dec. 18th**. All envelopes/names will be placed before the altar Christmas weekend.



Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve (Saturday)

4:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m. (Children's Choir)

12:00 Midnight

Christmas Day (Sunday)

8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m.

Advent is a good opportunity to celebrate the **Sacrament of Penance**. This Sacrament is available on Saturdays from 3:00 pm - 3:40 pm, or by calling the rectory for an appointment.



We welcome into our faith community the following children baptized at St. Francis of Assisi on November 20, 2011:
Mya April Doyle, daughter of John & Marianne Doyle
Andrew Jay Gonsalves, son of John & Maria Gonsalves
Landon Thomas Silva, son of Jordan & Megan Silva

50 WEEK CLUB DRAWING – Congratulations to the December 4th winner.....Anthony Casey
December 11th winner.....Pauline Treloar



Classes for grades 1 – 7 are held from 4 p.m. – 5 p.m. as follows:
TUESDAY – GRADES 4 & 5
WEDNESDAY = GRADES 6 & 7
THURSDAY – GRADES 1, 2, & 3
Confirmation 1 and 2 classes will be held today, Dec. 11th and on Dec. 18th.

THANK YOU to Dave Dumaine for the **outstanding** retreat held last Sunday for the young men and women in this year's Confirmation program. Also **THANK YOU** to each and every one who volunteered, cooked, set up, served food, and cleaned up. Awesome job by one and all.

Knights of Columbus News



The Grand Knight's Facts You Didn't Know

Fact: GOING, GOING, GONE!!! The chance to win and incredible TRIP TO ROME OR \$3000.00 will be but a mere thought as of

Dec 31st. Are you going to be the one clapping for the winner because you have not bought the winning ticket yourself? Don't be the one saying to yourself that you should have bought that ticket as a GREAT STOCKING STUFFER. Don't be the one sitting in that pew when we present a check to Father Michael saying to yourself I should have helped out.

ACT NOW!!! The WINNER will be selected at our "KNIGHT IN ROME" Pasta Dinner on Sat. Jan. 21st at 5:30. Tickets for this incredible evening will be \$8.00 for adults and \$20.00 for a family of 4 and have started going on sale. **SEATING WILL BE LIMITED!! Our next gathering will be on Dec. 19th at 7:00 in the parish hall.** You can also call Stephen Amaral at 508-567-1900 for further information. **MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!!**

Prayer Shawl Ministry – We will take a short vacation during the month of December and will resume workshops in January.. We would like to alert our parishioners that if any of our shawls, lap robes or chemo caps are needed during this Holy Season, you may call Claire Morissette at 508-672-0104 and we will see that your needs are met. Have a Holy and Happy Christmas Season.



GIVING TREE - Our parish "Giving Tree" is back! Please take one, or more, of the gift tags hanging on the tree. **All wrapped gifts should be placed under the tree by Sunday, Dec. 18th.** Thank you for continuing to help those in need.

St. Francis of Assisi Youth Group

The next Youth Group meeting will be held in the church hall **today, Sunday, December 18th, from 6 to 8 p.m.** All Grades 8-12 students are welcome. Bring a friend! If you have any questions, contact Fr. Michael at 508-673-2808.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Watch the TV Mass Online - The Television Mass airing each Sunday at 11 a.m. on WLNE-TV, channel 6, is now available online! For nearly 50 years, the Fall River Diocese has sponsored the Mass for those unable to attend a parish Mass because of age or infirmity.

Sung Vespers During Advent - Sunday, Dec. 11th at 7 pm at St. John the Baptist Church, 945 Main Rd., Westport, MA. All are welcome to join in the singing of Vespers as a special way to observe Advent. St. John the Baptist Parish will be singing the Liturgy of the Hours each Sunday during Advent at 7 p.m. Contact St. John the Baptist Parish 508-636-2251 for more information

Theology on Tap – The next Theology on Tap will be held on **Tuesday, Dec. 13th** at Olive Garden (Rte 140) Taunton. The topic, "Praying the Songs of Advent" will be presented by Dan Couet. Theology on Tap is a discussion series for **young adults in their 20s and 30s**, married or single. The evening begins at 6:30 p.m. with fellowship; the presentation starts at 7 p.m. and ends at 9:30 p.m. For more information please contact Crystal-Lynn Medeiros, Assistant Director Youth & Young Adult Ministry, at 508-676-2828.

The Power of Kindness –the last mini-retreat in the fall series "Spirituality for Everyday Living" will be held on **Wednesday, December 14th** from 10:00AM to 12:30PM at Sacred Hearts Retreat Center in Wareham, MA. The program will be led by Peggy Patenaude of Taking Time Out. Cost is \$20. Pre-registration required. Fr. Stan Kolasa, Will celebrate Mass at 9:00AM. To register, contact Peggy at 508-548-9149 or timeoutretreats@comcast.net. The winter-spring series will begin on January 11, 2012.

Healing Mass -Thursday, Dec. 15th at 6:30 p.m. at St. Anne Church, 780 So. Main St., Fall River. This Mass will be preceded by a recitation of the rosary, beginning at 6 p.m. Benediction and healing prayers will follow the Mass. Contact St. Anne Parish 508-674-5651 for more information

St. Vincent de Paul



In Need of Assistance? Are you facing utility shutoffs and or high food bills? If you are a family in need of assistance, please contact the St. Francis Vincent de Paul Society at 508-673-2808.

THANK YOU to everyone who donated food items and/or monetary donations, to help provide families with a basket filled with the fixings for a Thanksgiving meal! It would not have been possible without your generosity.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter *I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, make straight the way of the Lord.* Are we taking time to put the way of the Lord in our marriage? The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekends in New England are January 13-15 and February 10 - 12. For more information call Ralph & Jane Becker at 1-800-710-WWME or visit our webpage at www.wwme.org



Congratulations to Mark Kirkman and Diana Raposa who were married at St. Francis of Assisi on Oct. 22, 2011. May their marriage be blessed with faith, love, and joy.

Family Life Committee

Cookie Exchange – Next Sunday Dec. 18th at 12 noon.

Please don't hesitate to attend this event, even if you don't consider yourself a good baker. We have wonderful time and enjoy the company of fellow parishioners more than the treats themselves! This event has grown over the years and is a great way to get a variety of cookies the easy way! For those of you who have never attended a "cookie exchange", the premise is that you arrive with 3 dozen of the same cookies. During the event, we enjoy a sampling of each and the remainder is laid out on a table for each to fill a plate with a variety of delicious, homemade cookies to take home.

December 11, 2011 Third Sunday of Advent

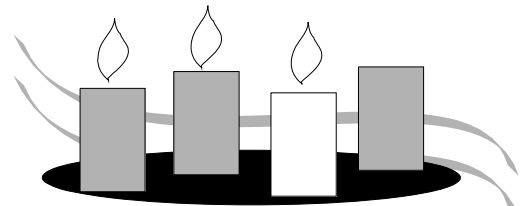
In the generations that followed the return of the exiles from Babylon, Jerusalem was rebuilt and its Temple was rededicated. But, those events did not stop the many local people from returning to the ways of their sinful ancestors. Some people began to mix religious practices, offering YHWH sacrifice in the Temple, while practicing the private rites of foreign gods. The faithful reacted with horror, fearing God's wrath as before. What would happen next? The words of the so-called "Third Isaiah," today's First Reading, answered those concerns. "Our God is great! Greater than any other dreamt by man," third Isaiah seemed to say. "He could not be contained by a Temple or a city. Yet, because of our God, the city and its holy place will be a sign of his power. So take comfort in the city." Our God is great. Greater than the signs and symbols we use to worship him. Yet, he uses these things to communicate his presence. Hence we should take comfort in them, but not use them to limit God. What ritual, prayer, or sacrament gives you comfort? Can you see the power of God beyond those activities? How?

The Magnificat, today's Responsorial Psalm, stands as one of the most beautiful songs of praise in Scripture. A lowly Palestinian girl became an instrument of God's plan. In response to Elizabeth's greeting, she proclaimed the Good News. What would Mary's pregnancy mean to Israel? Her song listed two results: a sign of the faithfulness to the people and justice. Jesus' life would mark the beginning of the end

time, when divine justice would reign and God would bless even the forgotten among the people. In the end, God would keep His promises. So, Mary had reason for joy. Her status was not based upon local opinion, but upon her place in God's plan. She was the first to accept the Good News at the Annunciation. Now she was an instrument of God's will and power. For that reason, her reputation would spread from generation to generation. She would be the mother of the Savior. And, the Mother of God! How does the Magnificat express your personal praise to God?

We should take Paul's words from the Second Reading, to heart. Be open to God and pray always. Be honest, but live with hope. And thank God for all we have. That should keep us busy for a long time. Think about this week. What has made you hopeful? What have you thanked God for? How have you been open to God's Spirit in practical ways?

Today's Gospel speaks of John the Baptist. There are aspects of John's character that we could all start to develop in our hearts during Advent: John the Baptist dwelt in the desert like a rock, immovable in the midst of all the waves and tempests of tribulation. We, on the other hand, change according to time and season. When the weather is fine, nothing can equal our joy. But when adversity storms in on us, we become disheartened. We sometimes get upset even for the littlest thing that is contrary to our liking. We are spiritually fickle, not knowing what we want. One minute we are light-hearted. The next minute we are harsh and bitter. We are reeds, tossed about in every direction by every mood and humor. John the Baptist tells us that we need to even out these ways for Our Savior's coming, our path to wholeness. All the saints to a degree did this but none perfectly. In each of them something marred the perfection of their equanimity of spirit. This was true even for John the Baptist. We must look into our actions, reforming those that are not of good intentions and perfecting those that are. Our goal is to act with only one intention: conforming ourselves to the true image of God in us. We must remember God's grace is never lacking, and if we are faithful in cooperating with the first grace God gives us, we will receive many more. For this God reminds us in Scripture, to be faithful in following our good impulses, insights and inspirations. When we do this the greatness of God's infinite mercy will surely shine through.



Rejoice in God