

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH

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Second Sunday of **Advent**

December 9, 2018

**Up, Jerusalem! stand upon the heights;
look to the east and see your children gathered
from the east and the west at the word of the Holy One,
rejoicing that they are remembered by God.**

Baruch 5:5

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Mission Statement

Called to be disciples of Jesus Christ, we strive to live His Gospel by answering daily, "Yes, here I am Lord". Strengthened by the sacraments and trusting in God's saving grace, we joyfully commit ourselves to sharing our gifts for the continual renewal of our parish and the Maplewood community.

From Deacon John:

PREPARE YOURSELF TO REJOICE IN GOD'S BLESSINGS

Advent: time of waiting

As a child I was not patient. It was hard to wait for dinner to be ready, hard to wait for summer vacation, hard to wait to open presents at Christmas. As I got older I began to realize that usually when I am waiting it is for something good. That makes the time spent waiting has a kind of joyful anticipation.

For example: I enjoy the smells of Thanksgiving as the turkey is cooking knowing it will be good to gather around the table as we eat. I enjoy planning a vacation even before we leave. And when we went to visit our son in Minneapolis I also enjoyed the drive to Minneapolis. The destination was our final goal, but the journey was also enjoyable. Our journey can be done in space and measured by distance traveled towards our destination.

Advent is like that journey. It is not static. Every day we are getting closer and closer to our destination. Some have an Advent Calendar...every day has a new door to open or a surprise until we reach Christmas. Last Sunday many of us built Advent wreathes and each new candle we light is another week closer to Christmas. Our journey can be done in time and measured by calendars and candles until we arrive at Christmas day.

Advent is our spiritual journey. If we feel separated by distance from God it is a time to realize God left the heaven and became man to get closer to us by becoming one of us. Jesus is Emmanuel, "God-with-us". If we feel separated in time from God, then Advent is a time to draw close to God.

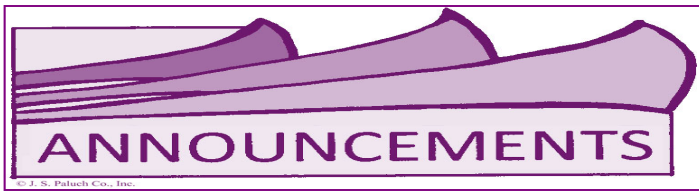
Advent: a time of Preparation

A key person in the Advent readings is John the Baptist, the fore-runner of Jesus. John quotes Isaiah, the prophet, who says "*Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.*" I used to think this referred to how far we had to travel to reach the Lord. But there is another way to interpret the "*prepare the way of the Lord.*" One of the mysteries of Christmas is that we didn't go to God. The mystery is that GOD BECAME MAN...GOD CAME TO US. When we "*prepare the way of the Lord*" we need to remove the obstacles we put in the way of Jesus coming to us.

Advent: a time of Hope and Love

The Good News is that God knows you. (After all, God helped to make you who you are!) God loves you as you are. God wants to be even closer to you and has wonderful plans for you. In the words of St. Paul to the Philippians (our 2nd reading) "*I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.*" This is God's blessing.

May God bless you in a special way,
Deacon John



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Mark your calendar as you are out shopping for the season, the "Annual Sock Drive" will be throughout the month of January for Good Shepherd Home in University City.

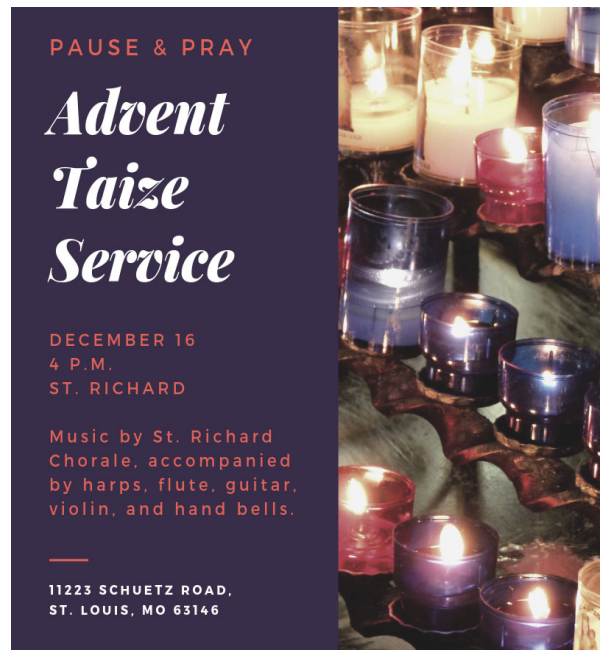
Just a note that the **Women's Annual Retreat** will be March 8th-10th.

Please stop and take a gift tag or two from our "Giving Tree" in the back of church, for several of our Maplewood-Richmond Heights school families. All gifts and monies will be due back by Sunday Dec 16th, so we can deliver everything that week. Your support and generosity is always much appreciated by these families each year.

Put a smile on some of our **Special Seniors**, by sending them a Christmas card this season, with perhaps a little note or so about who you are and your family. Tags are available on the little Christmas tree in the back of church.

The **Welcoming/Marketing Committee** will be gathering at the home of Teresa Lunte on Dec 21st to assemble the cookie lollipops we hand out our Christmas Masses. If you would like to join in this easy project, enjoy a few holiday stories, sip a bit of cheer, then come on over at 7:00 PM.

Our Committee has been busy. Please take a minute to look at the remodel of the vestibule and Confessional at church. There is a "Welcome" table where you can check for current events/sign up sheets, and hand outs. Our hope is to create a one stop spot for this type of information. We added shelving (thanks to Bill Elliot's Company) for general information from the community, and a set of shelves as a Lending Library from our Parish. You will see a comfortable seating area allowing a place to pray, rest, gather, or calm a child. (Design Today donated these new furnishings.) If you haven't stepped into the Confessional recently, you should. That space has had a big change as well. Deacon wants this to be a joyful experience. We hope you find it all very Welcoming. As a Parish community, we continue to do what we do best. "All Are Welcome in this Place."



PAUSE & PRAY

Advent Taize Service

DECEMBER 16
4 P.M.
ST. RICHARD

Music by St. Richard Chorale, accompanied by harps, flute, guitar, violin, and hand bells.

11223 SCHUETZ ROAD,
ST. LOUIS, MO 63146



An Evening for the Divorced & Separated

FINDING COMFORT AND PEACE DURING THE HOLIDAYS

THURSDAY
DECEMBER 13
6:30-8:30 PM
FREE EVENT
PLEASE RSVP
melssakeating@archstl.org
314.792.7173

CARDINAL
RIGALI CENTER
20 ARCHBISHOP MAY DR.
ST. LOUIS, MO 63119

PRESENTED BY
GREG DENEAL
LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR

SPONSORED BY
OFFICE OF MARRIAGE
AND FAMILY LIFE



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Whether you're in the courts now or divorced for many years, you CAN find hope and healing. The **Surviving Divorce** series is a 12-week DVD program featuring Catholic experts, and lay men and women on the journey to healing. Topics include denial, anger, grief, guilt, forgiveness, money, the kids, the ex-spouse, spirituality, annulment and much more. Immaculate Conception-Dardenne Prairie Parish is hosting the program beginning January 10th through April 4, 2019 from 7-9 PM. For more information or to sign up, please contact Debi JonesOrf, 314.276.3859 or email debijo@att.net.

The Maplewood-Richmond Heights High School Choir will be performing at IC on Sunday, December 9 at 3:00 p.m

Schedule For The Week

Sunday, December 9

8:30 a.m. Mass
9:45-11:00 a.m. PSR
3:00 p.m. MRH Middle & High Choir Concert

Monday, December 10

10:30 a.m. Senior Exercise

Tuesday, December 11

7:00 p.m. Choir

Wednesday, December 12

Thursday, December 13

9:00 a.m. Small Faith
9:30 a.m. Quilting

Friday, December 14

8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Adoration

Saturday, December 15

4:00 p.m. Mass
5:30 p.m. James L. Howard III Baptism



Sunday, December 16

8:30 a.m. Mass
9:45 a.m. PSR

Stewardship

In the name of the encouragement you owe me in Christ, in the name of the solace that love can give, of fellowship in spirit, compassion, and pity, I beg you: make my joy complete by your unanimity, possessing the one love, united in spirit and ideals. Never act out of rivalry or conceit; rather, let all parties think humbly of others as superior to themselves, each of you looking to other's interests rather than his own. Philippians 2:1-5

Preparing to write this bulletin article, and reading further into St. Paul's letter to the Philippians, Chapter 2, titled "Imitating Christ's Humility, came through as inspiring reading for the season of Advent. Being "Christ-like" is all that we are being asked to do in this time of preparation and anticipation. Putting the interests of others before our own will take us in directions that we never knew we could venture. Jesus IS the reason for the season, so take the words of St. Paul to heart and embrace a "Christian Attitude!"

Weekly Offering



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December 1st/2nd:

1st Collection: \$3,136.88

2nd Collection: \$1,181.22

Online Giving: \$847.25

For online giving to: <https://www.osvonlinegiving.com/1357>

Parish Nurse Note

Holiday parties and all the goodies can certainly trigger acid reflux symptoms like chest pain, a cough and trouble swallowing, especially when you lie down. Sometimes bits of food or sour liquids can come up into your mouth. When this happens often and doesn't get better you may be told you are dealing with GERD, (GastroEsophageal Reflux Disease) GERD is a result of stomach acid flowing the wrong way back into the esophagus. Foods like chocolate, alcohol, red meat, onions and acidic foods tend to trigger symptoms.

Foods That Help Fight GERD:

Chicken breast - is easy to digest and packed with protein. Take off the skin and bake or sauté.

Water – your best bet for a beverage if you have acid reflux. Sugary drinks, alcohol and acidic drink can irritate the esophagus.

Ginger – can help calm an upset stomach. Try hot ginger tea without caffeine.

Watermelon, cantaloupe & honeydew - are low acid fruits.

Brown Rice – takes longer to digest which helps GERD.

Oatmeal with fresh fruit - fills you up with energy for hours.

Potatoes & other root vegetables like carrots, turnips & parsnips without onions & garlic.

Olive oil – to replace butter or margarine.

Lettuce & celery – low calorie, easy on the stomach, and doesn't cause gas.

Fennel – has a mild licorice flavor that is low in acid and can help soothe an upset stomach. You can roast or sauté it as a side dish, or slice raw fennel into a salad.

Blessings, Kathleen O'Reilly, Parish Nurse

Scripture Reflection Questions

1. Where is the hope for the refugee suffering in exile today? Can you help God lower "the lofty mountains" or "fill the depths and gorges" for them in any way? How?
2. God gave Jerusalem the name "the Peace of justice, the glory of God's worship." How does this name fit the Church today? If poorly, what would you do to make it fit? What would you like God to name your parish, your community, you?
3. If you were to look back at your paths of faith, how straight would they be? What *rough ways* still need to be made *smooth along your path*?
4. How have you helped another straighten his/her path toward God?

PARISH PASTORAL STAFF

Deacon John Flanigan, Parish Life Coordinator
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 Father Peter Blake, Sacramental Minister
 314-644-2144
 Deacon Clyde McEntire, Deacon (Retired)
 Tim Cleary, Music Ministry
 Kathleen O'Reilly, Parish Nurse, 314-644-6805
 Father Michael Esswein, Pastor 314-962-5955

PARISH STAFF

Eva May, Administrative Assistant, 314-645-3307 Ext. 202
 Colleen Eichler, Campus Manager, 314-645-3307 Ext. 206
 Daniel Jenkins, Maintenance Assistant

PSR

Karen Lightfoot, PSR Coordinator, psricmaplewood@gmail.com

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Tim Yohe, Chair	Mary Bankston
Nikki & Todd Bircher	RJ & Suzee Irwin
Deacon John Flanigan	Becky Konersmann
Laura Miller	Ken Amend

Confessions are held on Saturday's
 from 3:15 p.m.-3:45 p.m., or by appointment.

Schedule

Saturday Mass: 4:00pm Sunday Mass: 8:30am
 Daily Mass: 8:00am
 SVDP Food Pantry: Saturdays from 9:30-11:00am

Ministry Schedule for December 15th/16th

Saturday EM's: TBD
Saturday Lectors: Sandra Marks
Saturday Servers: TBD
Saturday Usher Captain: TBD
Saturday Gifts: TBD
Sunday EM's: TBD
Sunday Lectors: E. Lencz & D. Nations
Sunday Servers: TBD
Sunday Usher: TBD
Sunday Greeters:
 A. Arias, K. LeClerc, K. LeClerc, J. Alexander
Sunday Gifts: TBD

Readings For The Week

Monday:	Is 35:1-10; Ps 85:9-14; Lk 5:17-26
Tuesday:	Is 40:1-11; Ps 96:1-3, 10ac, 11-13; Mt 18:12-14
Wednesday:	Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Jdt 13:18bcde, 19; Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47, or any readings from the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, nos. 707-712
Thursday:	Is 41:13-20; Ps 145:1, 9-13ab; Mt 11:11-15
Friday:	Is 48:17-19; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Mt 11:16-19
Saturday:	Sir 48:1-4, 9-11; Ps 80: 2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19; Mt 17:9a, 10-13
Sunday:	Zep 3:14-18a; Is 12:2-6; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3:10-18



Monday, December 10, 8:00a.m.
 Communion Service

Tuesday, December 11, 8:00a.m.
 For the people of the parish

Wednesday, December 12, 8:00a.m.
 Al Caffey

Thursday, December 13, 8:00a.m.
 For the people of the parish

Friday, December 14, 8:00a.m.
 For the people of the parish

Saturday, December 15, 4:00p.m.
 For the people of the parish

Sunday, December 16, 8:30a.m.
 Bertha Case

Please Pray For:

Deborah Lee, Becky Yohe, Paul Rygelski, Mary Johnston, Rose Campbell, Helen Frazier, Ed Langhammer, Mary Bailey, Jim White, Mary Anne Leavy, Everleigh Lauber, Jack Warner, Pam MacDonald, Nancy Maurer, Linda Amend, Helen Koyne
 Carl & Susan Case (brother and sister in law of Pat Curtis)
 Keith Houston (brother of Gary Gray)
 Mary Lucas (friend of Al & Maureen Daniels)
 Joan Held (cousin of Jim Higgins & former parishioner)
 Drew Becker (son of Paul Becker)
 Matt Durney (former parishioner)
 Cornelius Carroll (brother of Peggy Carroll)
 Janet Bircher (mother of Todd Bircher)
 John Biondo (brother of Maria Gray)
 Jim Deimeke & Stephanie Droege (brother/niece of Joan Deimeke)
 Richard & John Graves (brothers of Karen Bish)
 Lisa Hanley Blake (daughter of Celene Hanley)

March for Life 2019 - Registration Now Open MISSOURI LIFE CARAVAN is now accepting registrations for our bus trip to the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. **Th-Sat, Jan. 17-19.** Join us and thousands of others from across the U.S. for this huge pro-life gathering in our nation's capital. This trip is open to anyone ages 7 and up (chaperones not provided). We depart from several locations in the St. Louis area and we do not stay in hotels as we sleep on the buses. The cost if received by Dec. 21 is \$205. The cost after Dec. 21 is \$220. Registration deadline is Jan. 2, 2019. For registration and bus information contact us at: 434-4900 or mrl.eastern@yahoo.com. You can also download our registration form at www.easternregionmrl.org.

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Eva May

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SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS