

December 20, 2015

## Advent

### Fourth Sunday of Advent



#### *The Threshold of Fulfillment*

On this Sunday we stand on the threshold of fulfillment, filled with anticipation of the Lord's coming, while we celebrate his presence in our midst. The future God has prepared for us is open before us, even though we have not yet stepped out into it. Today, we are invited to pause at the treshold and gaze for a moment into this future as with joy and hope Mary and Elizabeth meet.

An invitation is extended to us today so that we can appreciate the gift being given to us.

Today's Bulletin is sponsored Jeanette Lackey  
in memory of Evelyn & Erwin Albrecht.

#### MASS INTENTIONS

Thursday, December 24

**4:30 p.m.** Youth of the Parish

Friday, December 25

**Midnight** Our Parish Family

**6:30 a.m.** Benefactors of the Parish

**10:00 a.m.** The Welfare of All Parishioners

Saturday, December 26

6:30 p.m. Lillie & Henry Dornak

Sunday, December 27

6:30 a.m. Fred Welfl Jr.

9:30 a.m. Margaret & Alphonse Simper

#### PREPARING FOR SUNDAY LITURGY

Next weekend is *The Feast of the Holy Family*. Prepare for the liturgy by reflecting on these passages from your Bible.

**First Reading: Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14**

**Responsorial Psalm: 84**

**Second Reading: Colossians 3:12-21**

**Gospel: Luke 2:41-52**

Remember the sick in your prayers this week,  
especially Gene Hrcir.

The Sanctuary Light  
will be lit this week  
in memory of Victor Schoenfeld.

#### 2015 DIOCESAN SERVICES APPEAL

2015 Assessment ..... \$17,015.00  
Contributions So Far ..... \$13,891.00  
Amount Yet to be Contributed ..... \$ 3,124.00  
No. of Families Who Have Contributed ..... 49  
No. of Families Yet to Contribute ..... 265

We thank the following for their recent contributions:

*Mary Lou Dierschke  
Karin & Kenneth Filipp  
Niki & Chad Chaloupka  
Lisa & David Rothbauer*

*Our parish quota to the Bishop should be paid by the end of the year. We are behind in our contributions this year. We thank those who have contributed and we ask those who have not done so yet to consider making a donation so that we can meet our quota. We are almost there! You can help!*

#### ORIENTATION -4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

##### Maranatha!

Today we light the fourth candle (violet) on the Advent wreath. The fullness of the lit wreath reminds us of the coming celebration of Christmas and our commemoration of the incarnation. The rhythm of Advent differs from that of Lent. It rises in a steady crescendo towards the full light of Christmas. The crescendo of Advent is reflected in the liturgical readings, which, beginning with the prophecies of the prophet Isaiah and John the Baptist, find their culmination on this Fourth Sunday of Advent in a series of readings that focus on the Blessed Virgin Mary and the annunciation of Jesus' birth. The readings bring together the major themes of the first three Sundays of Advent. Namely, promise, repentance, transformation and joy. We now stand on the threshold, eager for the doors to be opened so that we can step inside and enjoy the marvels prepared for us there.



#### Mass At Raphael's Refuge, Dec. 28, 10:30 a.m. Feast Day of the Holy Innocents

Bishop Cahill will celebrate Mass. Rosary will begin at 9:30 a.m, followed by announcements and introductions. The Monument is located at 2715 W. Hwy 90 (two miles west of Flatonia). For more information contact Midge Elam at 361-258-1514.

#### THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY – No Gold Star Club Meeting

WEDNESDAY – No Champions Club Meeting

– Christmas Pageant Dress Rehearsal, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY – Christmas Eve. See Mass Schedule.

Parish Office Closed.

FRIDAY – Christmas Day. See Mass Schedule.

Parish Office Closed.

## REFLECTION

### Standing on the Threshold

Today's readings open a crack and we are amazed that everything inside seems so ordinary. The readings get us ready for the imminent future, giving us glimpses into the mysteries we are about to celebrate.

Through the crack, we see Bethlehem, an unsophisticated little village that is but a stone's throw from the thriving capital, Jerusalem. If we look further through the crack in the door, to the side we will see a young pregnant woman hastening to help an older relative who is also with child. There is nothing extraordinary about this either, especially in a society that is family oriented. Young women acted in this way. Catching these glimpses of ordinary life we might ask: Just what is God up to? Why does God choose what is ordinary to carry the radiance of the divine? Is it possible that we overlook the unpretentious through which God is revealed and mistake what is loud and flashy for what is truly marvelous?

God's choices recounted in today's readings insist that the mystery of the incarnation comes to ordinary people living ordinary lives. All that is required is an openness to do God's will, a willingness to respond to God's call.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Dec. 21 – Edith Beran  
Dec. 22 – Gregory Holub  
Dec. 23 – Steve Machart  
Dec. 24 – Allen Barta, Edward Nieto, Kenneth Schoenfeld  
Dec. 25 – Allison Drabek  
Dec. 26 – Steve Fojtik, Steve Martinez

## YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

**Today** – No C.C.D. (Christmas Holidays)  
**Dec. 21** – No Gold Star Club (Christmas Holidays)  
**Dec. 23** – No Champions Club (Christmas Holidays)  
– No 9<sup>th</sup>- 11<sup>th</sup> C.C.D. (Christmas Holidays)  
– Christmas Pageant Dress Rehearsal  
**Next Sunday** – No C.C.D. (Christmas Holidays)  
**Jan. 3** – C.C.D. Resumes

### Christmas Pageant Dress Rehearsal

**Dec. 23, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.** All participants, parent helpers and choir members must attend the dress rehearsal.

**Pageant:** All participants should meet in the Family Room at 4 p.m., be dressed in

your costume. The pageant is during the 4:30 p.m. Mass.



**New CDs in the CD rack at the back of Church.**  
Scott Hahn *The Healing Power of Confession.*

## CHRISTMAS COLLECTION FOR THE POOR

In the spirit of sharing blessings with our less fortunate brothers and sisters, a collection will be taken up at the Christmas Masses. *We encourage you to be generous.*

***In the Past Our \*Collection Has Helped Many Charities Including:***

Shady Oaks Christmas Gifts for Residents  
Lavaca Assistance Ministry Body (L.A.M.B.)  
Bluebonnet Youth Ranch, Yoakum  
Crisis Pregnancy Center, Victoria  
Family Crisis Center, Bastrop  
Catholic Relief Services (Stop Ebola)  
Moulton 4-H Clubs, FFA Chapter & Fire Department  
& many others in need

*\* Includes funds from the proceeds from the Fish Fry.*

## ADVENT/CHRISTMAS BULLETIN BOARD



Advent is the season when we stand on the threshold of fulfillment. However, it is the fulfillment of an event that has already taken place. We remember it; we ritually reenact it so we never take it for granted, so we never forget that it is in and through history that the marvelous deeds of God are accomplished. Each year we pause to celebrate these events, not because they have not yet occurred but because they *have* happened and are happening now before our eyes. The celebration of anticipation is also the celebration of fulfillment, fulfillment of the promises made, fulfillment of our redemption, fulfillment of our transformation. Blessed are we who believe that what was spoken to us by the Lord has been fulfilled!

***Communion to the Homebound*** – All homebound parishioners who want to receive Holy Communion on Christmas Day do please contact Hattie Olle by Dec. 21.

***Christmas Day Songs of Praise*** - Contact Sharon Etlinger.

***2016 Religious Calendars*** have been placed at the church entrances. One calendar per family please.

***St. Joseph's Altar Society Raffle Tickets*** make great stocking stuffers. Tickets for sale after Mass, at the Parish Office and at local businesses.

***Christmas Altar Flower Fund Donors*** - See Insert.

## A BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO EVERYONE

My dear friends,

May you have a blessed Christmas. May Christ's coming among us bring happiness and peace to all families.

God bless,

