

St. Rita Catholic Church



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THE NATIVITY of the Lord

"For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you
who is Christ and Lord." - Lk 2:11

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

December 25-26 The Nativity of the Lord And The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Fr. Brian Grady
Pastor

Fr. James C. Canova
Associate Pastor

Deacon Robert Collins
Deacon Kevin Hunter
Deacon John Huntley

MASS TIMES

Weekdays

Monday – Saturday8:15am

Weekend

Saturday (Vigil)4:30 pm

Sunday ...8:00, 9:30 & 11:00 am

Confessions

Tuesdays6 - 7 pm

Saturdays 8:45 - 9:30 am and
3:30 - 4:15 pm

Adoration

M - F 3 - 8 pm (Chapel)

Tuesday 6 - 7 pm (Church)

Holy Days: Mass schedule may vary.

Please check bulletin,
website or call the Church Office

Baptisms/Weddings

Please call the parish office to
arrange baptisms and weddings.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday thru Friday 9 to 5 pm
CLOSED for lunch 12:30-1:30pm

.....and the Word was made Flesh, the God-Man, Our Lord Jesus Christ



My dear St. Rita family, let us rejoice ... for the expected day has finally arrived! The angels sing out in their Heavenly triumph: *Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.* (*Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to people of good will.*) How blessed are we that with our own eyes we are able to behold the glorious Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ – the Feast of Christmas. The promise and proclamations of the prophets and laws of the Old Covenant are fulfilled in the great mystery of the Incarnation – the Word made Flesh, the God-Man, Our Lord Jesus Christ. This day – this beautiful birthday of Our Lord – is the day that was truly made by the Lord ... and it was and is a day made for us, a day in which we can take God Himself into our arms and into our souls.

St. Josemaría Escrivá (1902-1975), in his *Meditations on the Holy Rosary*, wrote this meditation on the third Joyful Mystery – the Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

A decree of Caesar Augustus has been proclaimed, ordering the whole world to be enrolled. For this purpose, every person must go to the city of his ancestors. Since Joseph is of the house and family of David, he goes with the Virgin Mary from Nazareth to the city called Bethlehem, in Judea (Luke 2:1-5).

And in Bethlehem is born our God: Jesus Christ! There is no room at the inn: He is born in a stable. And His Mother wraps Him in swaddling clothes and lays Him in a manger.

Cold. Poverty ... I am Joseph's little servant. How good Joseph is! He treats me like a father. He even forgives me if I take the Child in my arms and spend hour after hour saying sweet and loving things to Him! ...

And I kiss Him – you kiss Him too! – and I rock Him in my arms, and I sing to Him, and I call Him King, Love, my God, my Only-One, my All! ... How beautiful is the Child and how short the decade!

The birth of Christ was and continues to be truly a gift from our Father in Heaven. God was born into the world out of love for you and for me. At this time, the greatest gift we can give back to the Father is to allow His Infant Son, Jesus, to find a place of rest ... most especially a place of rest in our hearts and souls. We are so blessed for the Savior will be given to us in Holy Communion today. We will receive Christ Himself – His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity – and we will receive Him into ourselves. This Christmas, let us respond to Our Lord's invitation of love by allowing Him to fully enter our hearts. Let us allow St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary to place the Infant Savior in the manger that was our heart. May He sleep there in Heavenly peace all the days of our life so that when we go to the Father in Heaven, He will know us because He sees the Presence of His Son in us. In seeing His Son in our hearts and the love we have for Him, our Father then will give us the greatest gift imaginable – eternity with Him.

May this Christmas be a holy and blessed one for you and your loved ones. May the Infant Savior pour out His choicest graces upon you during this Christmas season and into the New Year, and may He bless you with His love and His grace.

Merry Christmas!

Mass Schedule and Intentions



STAY TUNED FOR EXCITING NEWS REGARDING EUCHARISTIC ADORATION!

We are in the process of transitioning how we do Eucharistic Adoration here at St. Rita's! This is exciting news!

The old Pre-K room is in the process of being converted to a Perpetual Adoration Chapel.

Our hope is to have the Chapel up and running in the New Year. Please stay tuned to the bulletin in the weeks ahead for more information.

PRAYERS FOR OUR SICK AND HOSPITALIZED

The current list of our sick and hospitalized are as follows:

Jim & Rosemary Hillmer, Kermit Nyen, Bob & Sandy Harms, Larry McConnell, Gloria Martelin, Valerie Guyer

To add or remove the name of a sick person, please call the parish office at: **(815) 398-0853** or email:

parishoffice@stritarockford.org. To protect everyone's privacy, only names emailed or called in by family members will be added. To keep our list more manageable and open to all, names submitted will remain on the list for one (1) month. If you would like an extra month, please call the parish office so that we may add it back on.

The **2022**, St Rita Liturgical Calendars are on their way. They will be available for pick up Christmas weekend in the new Narthex and the Devotional areas. You may also pick one up in the Church Office after the 20th of December.



MAGNIFICAT SUBSCRIBERS

Your **JANUARY** issue of the Magnificat is available for pick-up in the Church Narthex. They are in the black box which is on the wooden bench. All issues are labeled and organized alphabetically by last name.



IN MEMORY OF

Ed Linkenheld
(husband of Karen)

Monday, December 27 • St. John, Apostle & Evangelist

8:15am † James Davey (Mary Kinney)

Tuesday, December 28 • The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

8:15am † Russell Costello (Denise Costello)

Wednesday, December 29 • St. Thomas Becket

8:15am † Edna Struthers (Honzel Family)

Thursday, December 30 • 6th Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord

8:15am † Jack Finley (Honzel Family)

Friday, December 31 • St. Sylvester

8:15am † Rose Osborne (Family)

Vigil for The Solemnity of Mary

12:00am † Melendre Aquino (Reyes Family)

Saturday, January 1 • Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

8:15am † Kathy Fitz (Marietta Henry)

Vigil for Epiphany of the Lord

4:30am † Encarnacion Alimbuyao (Esther Sy)

Sunday, January 2 • The Epiphany of the Lord

8:00am People of St. Rita

9:30am † Victor Manali (Family)

11:00am † Theresa Ditzler (Hochstetler Family)

SANCTUARY LAMP MEMORIALS

Memorial candles are located near the tabernacles and in front of the St. Rita icon. Consider offering a candle in memory of someone special or as a special intention. Candles for the week of **Dec. 26 – Jan. 1** are being offered for:



Chapel:

Church: † Sr. Mary Balkus (Dorothy Cieskus)

St. Rita:

Readings for the week of December 26, 2021

Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 [cf. 1]/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Lk 2:41-52 or 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28/Ps 84:2-3, 5-6, 9-10 [cf. 5a]/1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24/Lk 2:41-52
Monday: 1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 [12]/Jn 20:1a, 2-8
Tuesday: 1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8 [7]/Mt 2:13-18
Wednesday: 1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6 [11a]/Lk 2:22-35
Thursday: 1 Jn 2:12-17/Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10 [11a]/Lk 2:36-40
Friday: 1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13 [11a]/Jn 1:1-18
Saturday: Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 [2a]/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21
Next Sunday: Is 60:1-6/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13 [cf. 11]/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12

NEED PRAYER ?

Please call our Prayer Line
(815) 226-4376



How can I repay the Lord for His goodness to me?



Tuesday Rosary

DECEMBER - MONTH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

As we prepare for the birth of Jesus, this Advent, bring your family and join us Tuesday evenings, at 5:30 pm, in the Church, as we pray for Mary's intercession to bring us closer to her Son, Our Lord. Prayers will include all those affected by the Coronavirus.

During this time we pray the Angelus, the Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet. We'll also be praying for Pope Francis's intention for the Month of December.

...

"... For the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: that they may be its witnesses. With courage and creativity in the power of the Holy Spirit."

We will continue to wear masks.

Consider staying after and spend some private time of prayer with our Lord in Adoration from 7 – 8 PM.



For help call 815-398-6060
svdp@stritarockford.org
All calls are confidential

Today is the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. We can celebrate that we all belong to the holy family of God which makes us brothers and sisters to each other.

Through your continued donations to St. Vincent de Paul we have been able to bring joy and hope to our "brothers and sisters" here in our city. In October and November we assisted 41 households comprising 60 adults and 39 children. We were able to provide temporary lodging, rent, utilities, household items, and food which amounted to \$16,770.00. Without your generosity this could not have happened. Thank you.

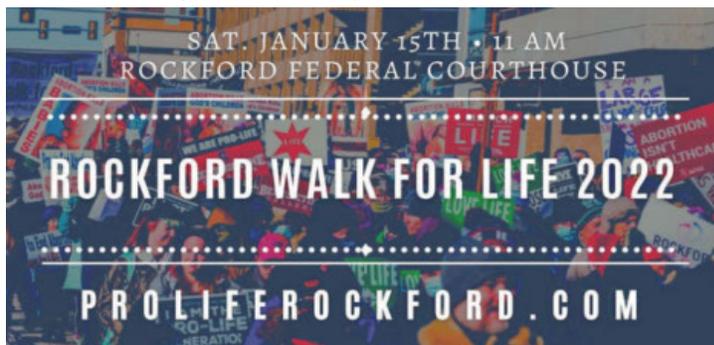
Our meetings in January are Tuesday, January 11 and Thursday, January 27. They are held in the lower level meeting room at 6:30. Please join us.

Bishop Lane Retreat Center is hiring!
We are looking for housekeeping and kitchen staff. No experience necessary, but welcomed. Hours vary between daytime and evening. High schoolers welcome for kitchen staff. Call 815.965.5011 or email bishoplane@rockforddiocese.org for more info. Hiring immediately!



On the Feast of the Epiphany we will be following the example of the Magi when they brought the Christ Child precious gifts. Next Sunday, the Feast of the Epiphany, January 2, on the altar will be baby baskets for you to put your baby blocks or bottles that you have been collecting coins in during Advent. This year the money will be donated to Rockford Crisis Pregnancy Care Center Thank you for your generosity,

If you forgot your bottle or box you can drop it off in the office or bring it next Sunday, January 9.



Join fellow Pro-Lifers and St. Rita parishioners at the Rockford March for Life January 15, 2021 at 11AM
Start the day with **8:15 Mass** at St. Rita
Followed by **coffee and rolls** in Wahl Hall
Wear your beanie from last year or pick up a matching beanie to identify us as a group.
You may carpool if you want to minimize parking issues.

RESPECT LIFE A BIG THANK YOU

The Respect Life Committee would like to thank all of the St. Rita parishioners for their generosity in 2021. The 2020 Advent Bottle/Box collection raised over \$3,000 that was donated to the Madonna Renewal Center in Freeport, the September Spiritual Adoption helped new mothers with clothes, diapers and 2 pack-n-plays. During both 40 Days for Life campaigns through your prayers and fasting saved close to 1,000 babies from Abortion. Also, thank you for your participation in the Life Chain and Coast to Coast Rosary during Respect Life Month. Thank you for your spiritual and corporal help. Have a Blessed 2022.



The cup of salvation I will raise; I will call on the Lord's Name.

RISE UP
YOUTH MINISTRY



**TUESDAY
HANG OUT**

**MIDDLE
SCHOOL**



**3PM - 4:30PM SNACKS & DRINKS,
GAMES, AND FELLOWSHIP!**

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RISE UP
YOUTH MINISTRY

**HIGH
SCHOOL**



**TUESDAY
HANG OUT**

**7PM - 8:30PM SNACKS & DRINKS,
GAMES, AND FELLOWSHIP!**

BL. CHIARA ROOM

BOYLAN



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HIGH SCHOOL PLACEMENT EXAM

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22 / 8:00AM- 11:30AM
CHECK-IN: 7:45AM @ STUDENT ENTRANCE (DOOR D)

Incoming freshmen for the 2022-2023 school year can register now for Boylan's High School Placement Test to help determine best course placements.

REGISTER AT BOYLAN.ORG/HSPT

Questions? Contact Emily Schubert at eschubert@boylan.org or by phone at 815-877-0531 x226

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Your servant, Lord, your servant am I.

Glory to God in the highest!

The celebration of the glorious birth of Christ the Lord has begun...Merry Christmas!

Try to put yourself in the shoes of these shepherds. Little excitement would have regularly come their way. They were poor, simple shepherds who spent their days and nights tending the sheep of the fields. That night, a group of them had gathered together for camaraderie. It's easy to imagine the scene of normal talking, laughing and being together. Little did they realize what was about to happen.

As they were gathered, an angel of God appeared to them announcing "good news of great joy!" They must have been stunned. But that's only the beginning. The angel announced that the Savior of the World had been born and then, much to their surprise, they witnessed the whole host of heavenly angels singing praises:

"Gloria in Excelsis Deo!" "Glory to God in the highest!"

These humble shepherds were the first to be called by God to go and greet the newborn King. What's amazing is that God did not first call the "important" of the age to come worship. He called these poor shepherds.

One thing this tells us is that, in the eyes of God, all are equal. God does not pick favorites from among those who are seen as important in the eyes of the world. No, He sees the great value and dignity of each and every person and desires all of us, rich or poor, powerful or weak, to come to Him in adoration and love.

Christmas is a time filled with many exciting things. Often there are gifts and gatherings, food and good times. But more than anything else, Christmas must be seen as a time for us to step back and take in the deep and rich meaning of this sacred event. We must see, first, that God entered our human condition and, in doing so, is able to identify with all that we experience in life. God understands human life! He lived it.

Second, we must understand that the birth of the Savior of the world and His appearance to shepherds reveals that each and every one of us is invited to come and meet Him. God humbled Himself in the most profound way so that we could come to know Him and His perfect love for us. "Do not be afraid," as the angel said, to come and behold the Christ who came as your Savior. Do not be afraid to come to meet Him, love Him, adore Him and get to know Him. God is given to us, today, as an infant. Small, weak, fragile and innocent. Do not be afraid to gaze upon His humble presence and to give glory to God for His blessed coming.

Lord, I love You and adore You. I thank You for the unfathomable gift of Your divine presence among us. I thank You, especially, for the invitation You offer me to join the poor shepherds as they come to adore You. May this Christmas celebration be one in which I understand, more deeply, the incredible love You have for all Your children. May I know that You came for me, to save me and to invite me to worship. May I, this day, enter into that worship and adoration with all the Heavenly Host. Jesus, I trust in You.

(quoted from Catholic Daily Reflections)

St. Rita Calendar Raffle 2021

December 6	Keith & Monique Johnson	\$25
December 7	Kevin Tallacksen	\$25
December 8	Joe & Michelle Peterson	\$250
	<i>(Feast of the Immaculate Conception)</i>	
December 9	Bill & Daina Osborne	\$25
December 10	Josephine Hardin	\$25
December 11	Ed & Lori Wick	\$25
December 12	Marlene Gilszmer	\$50

The Church Office will be closed for the Christmas Holiday from December 24 thru January 2. Normal office hours will resume on January 3, from 9 to 5.

There will not be Adoration in the chapel on those dates as well.



TITHING THANK YOU'S

The following organizations have extended notes of thanksgiving for the donations received from St. Rita in our role as a tithing parish:

Carpenter's Place	\$1,000.00
1. Generous amount of wearable articles from the sewing ministry	
Catholic Extension	\$1,000.00
Catholic World Mission	\$1,000.00
Cornucopia Food Pantry	\$500.00
Rock House Kids	\$500.00
Rockford Rescue Mission	\$1,000.00
1. 200 Christmas Stockings	
Shelter Care	\$1,000.00
St. Elizabeth's Center	\$1,000.00
1. Over \$2300.00 in Christmas gift cards	
2. Countless articles of clothing, coats, household items, shoes, socks, school supplies, miscellaneous	
3. Abundant amount of non-perishable food items and paper/plastic bags	
The Pregnancy Care Center	\$1,000.00
1. \$2,000.00 Gift-in-Kind (diapers, baby items,	

SAINT RITA DIRECTORY

PASTORAL STAFF

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Carrie Petrak..... 815-398-3466 x220
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PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

Athletics, Joe Sutherland..... 815-222-7808
Catholic Women's Fellowship, Janine Pigue..... 815-262-4813
Finance Council, Todd Hughes..... 815-670-1654
Knights of Columbus #7624, Jason Sturges.....
grandknight7624@gmail.com
Pastoral Council, Mike Peck 815-494-8968
Respect Life, Mary Kinney..... 815-519-7066
Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Laura Ortiz..... 815-262-0206

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