



The GOOD NEWS

of Sacred Heart and St. Matthew

Catholic Parishes
United in Christ Cluster

DECEMBER 12, 2021 | 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekend Mass

Sacred Heart | Saturday 5pm
Sunday 9:30am
St. Matthew | Sunday 8am

Daily Mass

St. Matthew | Tuesday 8am
Sacred Heart | Mon 5:30pm
Wed & Friday 8 am

Reconciliation

Sacred Heart | Saturday 3:30pm
Or by appointment

Office Hours

Open Mon-Wed 9am-4pm
Thursday 9am-4pm, Friday 9am-noon
by appointment only

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3rd Sunday
OF ADVENT

John answered them all, saying, "I am baptizing you with water,
but one mightier than I is coming." - Lk 3:16a

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

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From the Desk of Fr. Justin...



These past two weeks, we began a series on what is good about Advent and Christmas. We've gotten through three reasons so far: more overall church activity, nice winter weather, and more family time.

Thing #4 has to do with Christmas presents. Mind you, Thing #4 is not actually the presents themselves. As an adult who's not swimming in debt, I now own every material thing I want or need. In fact, it's more of a goal of mine to de-clutter and rid myself of junk that I no longer need... or never needed in the first place. The difficult thing about this goal is that my mom is constantly trying to outfit my kitchen as if I regularly cook for half a dozen people. But that personal struggle of mine is beside the point.

What I enjoy about the holidays is the chance to be generous and creative for my friends and family. Finding a classy and memorable gift is a challenge to me. Last year

I knocked it out of the park for my brother. I got him a set of stickers. Of his own face. It's every bit as amusing as it sounds. I "borrowed" the most ridiculous picture of him that I could find on Facebook (entirely without his permission or knowledge, of course).



Then it's a simple matter of cropping his face and uploading it to the custom sticker website.

In the past year, Eric has reported that the best possible use of those stickers is for putting them on the small items that everyone

owns, such as a phone charger. "Marissa, is that my charger?" "No, Eric. I'm pretty sure it's mine." "It literally has my face on it."

Through the years, there are many other instances I could name regarding the joys of generosity and creativity. Allow me to repeat myself once more, for the sake of clarity: it's not about the gift itself. It's true: it's the thought that counts. This is a chance to express our love and appreciation for one another, and that takes a bit more effort than exchanging shopping lists or buying gift cards.

Once again, thank you for reading. I've got one last thing to say on this topic, and I'm saving it for the last. Please check back next week!

-Father Justin

Christmas Choral Preludes

This Christmas, we will once again have musical preludes before our three Christmas Masses.

At 3:40 pm the Choristers and pianist Bevin Schessow will present four selections to prepare us for Mass at 4:00 pm on Christmas Eve.

At 6:15 pm the Christmas Trio at Saint Matthew will present three selections to prepare us for Mass at 6:30 pm on Christmas Eve.

At 9:10 am the Christmas Quartet at Sacred Heart will present four selections to prepare us for Mass at 9:30 am on Christmas Day.

Please join us, for joyful music and prayer as we commemorate the birth of Jesus.

WEEKLY PRAYER

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday 12/12	Zephaniah 3:14-18a / Is12:2-3, 4, 5-6 [6] / Philippians 4:4-7 / Luke 3:10-18
Monday 12/13	Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a / Matthew 21:23-27
Tuesday 12/14	Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13 / Matthew 21:28-32
Wednesday 12/15	Isaiah 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25 / Luke 7:18b-23
Thursday 12/16	Isaiah 54:1-10 / Luke 7:24-30
Friday 12/17	Genesis 49:2, 8-10 / Matthew 1:1-17
Saturday 12/18	Jeremiah 23:5-8 / Matthew 1:18-25
Sunday 12/19	Micah 5:1-4a / Hebrews 10:5-10 / Luke 1:39-45

MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS

(H-Horicon N-Neosho)

Monday 12/13	5:30pm-H	✠ Bill Philleo
Tuesday 12/14	8:00am-N	✠ Shirley Stryck
Wednesday 12/15	8:00am-H	✠ Joann Wahlen
Friday 12/17	8:00am-H	✠ Clarence & Christine Treder
Saturday 12/18	5:00pm-H	✠ Braden Vessey
Sunday 12/19	8:00am-N	✠ William & Mary Klages
	9:30am-H	✠ For the People of the United in Christ Clustered Parishes

PARISH ACTIVITIES

Sunday 12/12	10:30am	Instrument Rehearsal
	10:30am	Confirmation Parent Meeting
Monday 12/13	6:15-7:30pm	Religious Ed Christmas Program 🏠
Wednesday 12/15	7:00-8:15pm	Youth Ministry Class
Saturday 12/18	3:30pm	Reconciliation
Sunday 12/19	10:30am	Youth Choir & Instrument Rehearsal

OBSERVANCES

Sunday 12/12	3rd Sunday of Advent
Monday 12/13	St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr
Tuesday 12/14	St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church
Thursday 12/16	Las Posadas Begins
Sunday 12/19	4th Sunday of Advent

SPECIAL NOTES

There will be no Religious Education classes for all grades from December 20-January 1. Enjoy your Christmas Break!

The parish office will be closed December 24, 27, and 31. Please plan accordingly.

Christmas Eve Mass will be at 4pm in Horicon, and 6:30pm in Neosho.

Christmas Day Mass will be 9:30am in Horicon.

No reservations are needed this year.



Inclement Weather Policy

Inclement weather may force our parish to cancel services and/or programs at times.

If inclement weather should cause cancellations of church services **on weekends**, our parish will put these announcements on the WBEV AM1430 & WXRO 95.3 FM radio stations. We will also typically post the closing on our parish website, www.sheart.org and our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/sheartparish.

If you have signed up for electronic communication you may also get an email or text alert. If you wish to sign up for electronic messages you can join at

<https://sacredheartstmatthew.flocknote.com>.

Please try the "Login" button first to see if your email or cell phone number are already in our system (not your name). If not, then join up and provide your information or contact the parish office (920) 485-0694 x221 during business hours to update your contact information.

Please Note: cancellation may not occur until within the hour prior to the service.

During the week, cancellations will occur if the Horicon School District has a late start, early release or is closing due to weather conditions. The Horicon School District will announce this information on local radio and TV.

* *If school is canceled*, all church programs & services will be canceled the entire day.

* *If a late start is announced*, the morning church programs & services will be canceled.

* *If an early release is announced*, all afternoon and evening church programs or services will be canceled.

LITURGICAL LIFE

Christmas Food Pantry Needs

Now that Thanksgiving is over, the food pantry needs to restock for Christmas dinners! We distributed over 30 meals for Thanksgiving. Thank you for all your donations.



If you would like to make a donation to the food pantry for Christmas dinners, our current needs are:

- Turkeys- 12 lbs. or less, or a turkey roast or breast
- Gift Cards
- Sparkling Juice
- Gravy
- Stuffing
- Canned Cranberries

Please **NO** green beans or instant potatoes.
We have more than enough of those.



We're ALL in this



Together!

STEWARDSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

Year End Donations Deadline

This is a reminder that financial contributions for the year 2021 must be submitted to the office **before 10 am December 30** to be credited on your 2021 Church Contribution Statement for tax purposes.

Any contributions received after December 31 cannot be deducted on your 2021 taxes unless it was mailed and both the check and the postmark are dated in 2021. However, such a check would **not** appear on your Church Contribution Statement. You would need to keep track of that on your own for your taxes.

To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, please do not file your 2021 income tax return until you have received a written acknowledgement of your contributions. Your 2021 church statement will be mailed prior to 1/31/22.

If you have any further questions, contact Jane at 920-485-0694 x222 or jahsheart@sbcglobal.net

LITURGICAL LIFE



Join us for a full moon Advent hike on our beautiful trails followed by a fire, hot cocoa, Advent prayers and song, snacks and festivities.

Sat, December 18, 2021
6:30 PM – 9:00 PM
Tickets \$3-\$15

Come out to the Catholic Ecology Center for a beautiful Advent celebration on our Green Loop Trail.

The Green Loop encounters the pond, Otter Creek, the Rubicon River, the boardwalk and ends at our Ecology Yurt. The trail is approximately 3/4 of a mile and mostly flat making for a beautiful hike or snowshoe.

The hike will end at the Ecology Yurt with a fire, hot chocolate, snacks and Advent prayers and song. This is a wonderful time to get outside during the cold season and celebrate the anticipation of the Savior.

Snowshoe use free to members while supplies last. Leashed pets are welcome on trails but not allowed in the buildings.

Please bring a headlamp or flashlight

Join us for a candlelight hike or snowshoe on our beautiful Green Loop Trail, followed by hot cocoa and snacks in the Ecology Yurt.

Friday, January 14, 2022
6:30 PM – 9:00 PM
Tickets \$5-\$24

Come out to the Catholic Ecology Center for a beautiful candle-lit hike or snowshoe on our Green Loop Trail.

The Green Loop encounters the pond, Otter Creek, the Rubicon River, the boardwalk and ends at our Ecology Yurt. The trail, which will be lined with luminaries, is approximately 3/4 of a mile and mostly flat making for a beautiful hike.

The hike will end at the Ecology Yurt with a fire, hot chocolate and snacks. This is a wonderful time to get outside during the cold season and enjoy the beauty of creation.

Snowshoe use free to members while supplies last. Leashed Pets are welcome on trails but not allowed in buildings.



The Catholic Ecology Center is located at
W1468 County Road NN Neosho, WI 53059.
Just 12 minutes west of Holy Hill

catholicecologycenter.org

Please direct all inquires to the Catholic Ecology Center, ***not*** Sacred Heart.

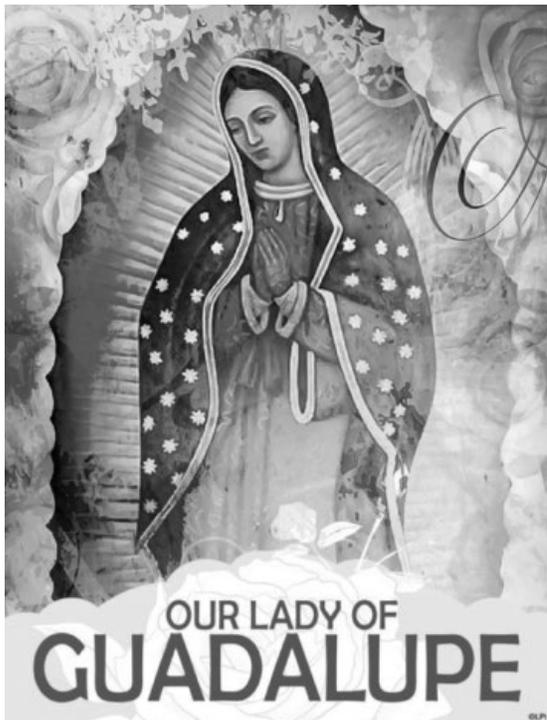
Joe Meyer

Executive Director

262-308-6641

info@catholicecologycenter.org

LITURGICAL LIFE



OUR LADY OF
GUADALUPE

Feast Day December 12

and generosity will help someone else's heart soften for Jesus. That is when real miracles can occur, just like roses growing in the winter. May the miracle of Our Lady of Guadalupe be a sign of warmth for you in the cold of winter and of Advent hope for a Christ Child that has redeemed the world.

In 1531, Our Lady appeared to a simple Aztec Indian who had converted to the Catholic faith, Juan Diego. Three days later, at Juan Diego's request, Mary provided a sign in the form of roses that grew out of the cold winter soil, and an image on his cloak so that all would believe that what he claimed to have seen was true. While there is a rich heritage originating in Mexico, the site of the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe, today Christians revere her all throughout the world. Our Lady of Guadalupe is, in fact, named the patroness of *all* the Americas, from the Chilean Patagonian mountains to the Arctic islands of Canada. This apparition inspires across lines of nationality and culture.

Some will believe without seeing but many will need some evidence before they take a leap of faith. In stewardship, we are called to cultivate our gifts and grow them to an increase. Many people will claim that they are living a stewardship way of life, but it will be through the abundance of fruits in their lives that people will come to believe. Evidence of generosity, compassion, love, and gratitude will sway others. Some will seek to live their lives in a similar fashion.

During this Advent season, we have the opportunity to provide evidence of our commitment to Christ by our actions. We must not let this season become about commercialism and material gifts. This season is about preparing our hearts to allow Jesus to touch us more profoundly in the experience of Christmas. Maybe our acts of kindness

ADVENT CUSTOMS

Nativity Scenes

Tradition has it that Saint Francis of Assisi created the first crèche in 1223 when he mounted a living nativity scene, consisting of a manger, an ox and a donkey, as part of a Christmas Eve Mass he organized while visiting the mountain town of Greccio. St. Bonaventure wrote of that night in his biography of St. Francis.

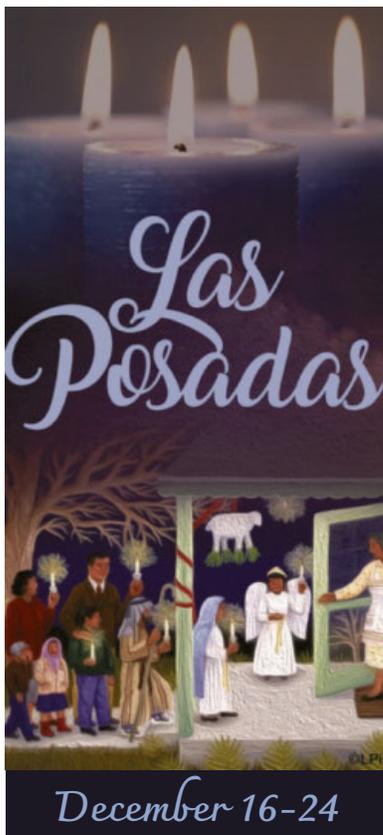
After that first nativity scene, the practice became popular and spread far and wide. Within a century, virtually every church in Italy had taken up the practice. Over time, statues, rather than living people and animals, were used, which eventually led to the in-home nativity scenes that are so much a part of Christmas today.

Crèches aren't necessarily historically accurate, given that most depict both the shepherds and the Magi as being present at the manger immediately after Christ is born—the Gospel of Matthew suggests that the Magi followed the star to Jesus's home a year or more after his birth—but believers find inspiration in see these beloved figures from the Christmas story gathered together in one place.

In his apostolic letter on the meaning and importance of the nativity scene, *Admirabile Signum*, Pope Francis encourages "the beautiful family tradition of preparing the nativity scene in the days before Christmas, but also the custom of setting it up in the workplace, in schools, hospitals, prisons and town squares."



ADVENT CUSTOMS



Las Posadas

“Posada” is the Spanish word for inn or lodging. “Las Posadas” refers to a traditional Advent custom in preparation for the birth of Jesus, beginning on December 16. For nine successive evenings, groups reenact the search of Mary and Joseph for shelter in Bethlehem.

Two children dress as Mary and Joseph, sometimes with Mary riding on an actual donkey. They are usually accompanied by children dressed as angels and shepherds along with the Wise Men. Adults accompany them as they process to designated homes where they sing Christmas songs and request lodging. Part of the group enters the home and becomes the chorus that responds to the request for lodging. In the beginning the request is rebuffed. They move to several more homes where the ritual is repeated. Eventually, at the last home, their need is recognized, and they all enter the home where a party ensues. This is repeated in different neighborhoods and homes each of the nine days.

While this custom teaches children an important aspect of the Christmas story, it also emphasizes the need for hospitality to strangers and the continual need we all have to make room for Jesus in our “posada.”

Advent Wreath

Each season in the liturgical calendar comes with its own local and regional rituals. During the Advent season, wreaths adorn church sanctuaries and family dining room tables. You may have said Advent wreath prayers in childhood or taken a turn lighting the candles. The Advent wreath is full of symbolism about Christ and his coming at Christmas. The wreath is made of evergreen boughs, reminding us that the life of grace doesn't falter with the changing seasons. It always remains fresh and new. Similarly, a circular wreath reminds us of the eternal, never-ending nature of God's love.



Candles remind us that Christ is the light of the world, the One who “shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” We use four candles to represent each week of Advent. Traditionally they come in the liturgical colors of the season. Purple has historically represented penance and sacrifice. We see the same color for the season of Lent. On the third Sunday of Advent, however, we light a rose color. The priest will wear rose vestments at Mass. This is Gaudete Sunday. *Gaudete* means “rejoice” in Latin. On the third Sunday of Advent, we're roughly halfway through the season. The Church chooses the midpoint to remind us to celebrate in the midst of our anticipation! Whatever the color and whatever the day, the Advent wreath is a beautiful practice to focus our attention on Christ's coming at Christmas.

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