

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH - DECEMBER 26, 2021



# SAINT PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

21650 W. 115TH TER. • OLATHE, KANSAS 66061

Phone 913-764-0323 • Fax 913-764-1584 • Website [www.spcatholic.org](http://www.spcatholic.org)



[facebook.com/spcatholic](https://www.facebook.com/spcatholic)

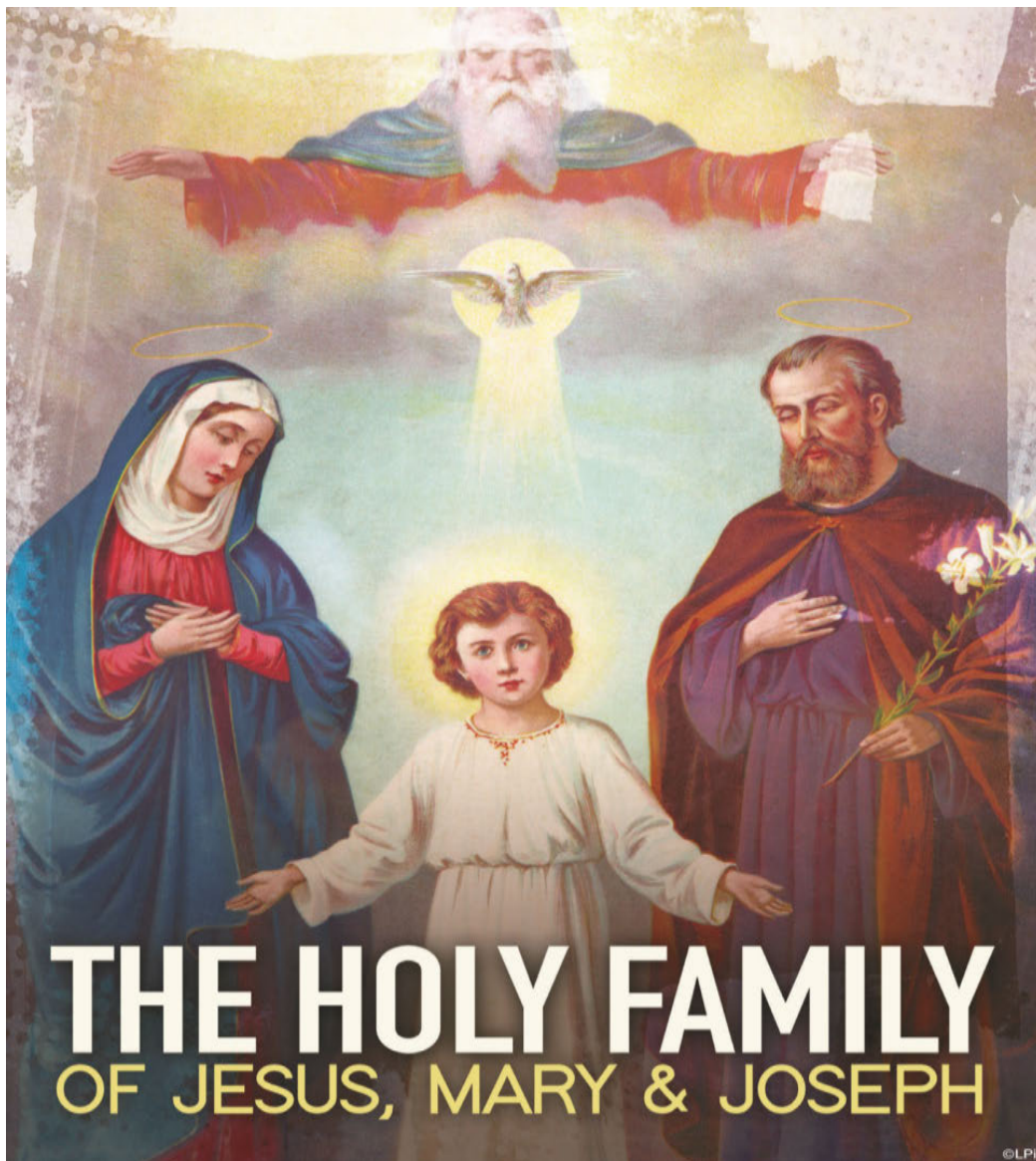


[@spcatholic](https://twitter.com/spcatholic)

Pastor Fr. Michael Hermes

Parochial Vicar Fr. Agustín Martínez

Deacon Mike Moffitt, Ph.D.



*"St. Paul Parish is a welcoming diverse community that loves and serves God through our worship, faith formation, sacramental participation, and service to others. We embrace the generous pioneer spirit that founded our parish, helping to make missionary disciples, and witnessing to Christ by our words and works of mercy."*

~ St. Paul Vision Statement, 2020

## Parish Directory

### Parish Office

**Phone** .....913-764-0323  
**Pastor**, Fr. Michael Hermes.....ext. 108  
Email.....frhermes@spcatholic.org  
**Parochial Vicar**, Fr. Agustín Martínez .....ext.102  
Email .....frmartinez@spcatholic.org  
**Pastoral Assistant**, Claudia Ramirez.....ext. 105  
Email.....pastoralassist@spcatholic.org  
**Parish Secretary**, Michelle Cabrera.....ext. 101  
Email.....michelle@spcatholic.org  
**Accountant**, Amy Moritz .....ext. 107  
Email.....amoritz@spcatholic.org  
**Director of Religious Education**, Karla Melgar.....ext. 103  
Email.....kmelgar@spcatholic.org  
**Coordinator of Youth Ministry**, Cayleigh Heron.....ext. 111  
Email.....cheron@spcatholic.org  
**Deaf Ministry**, Katie Locus.....(VP) 913-324-5378  
Email.....deafministry@archkck.org  
**Parish Bulletin Communications**, Ana Angeles.....  
Email .....communications@spcatholic.org  
**Parish Office Fax Number**.....913-764-1584  
**Parish Website**.....www.spcatholic.org  
**Archdiocesan Website**.....www.archkck.org

### Parish Office Hours

**Monday thru Friday**.....9:00 am-5:00 pm

### School Office

**Phone**.....913-764-0619  
**Principal**, Dr. Ann Connor.....ext. 116  
Email.....aconnor@stpaul.eduk12.net  
**School Office Fax Number**.....913-768-6040  
**Website**.....www.spcatholic.org/school

## Parish Registration



We invite all those who are new to the area or have not yet registered to visit [www.spcatholic.org/Register](http://www.spcatholic.org/Register) or stop by the Parish Office to complete a registration form. Please contact the Parish Office with questions at 913.764.0323 and welcome to St. Paul Parish!

## Parish Ministries



Please visit our parish website at [www.spcatholic.org/ministries](http://www.spcatholic.org/ministries) for ministry schedules and information on joining a ministry at St. Paul Parish. There are many wonderful opportunities for our parishioners to become involved and share your time and talents within our community.

MANY THANKS TO OUR ADVERTISERS

## Mass and Confessions Schedule

### Daily Mass Schedule

**Daily Mass:** Tuesday - Friday 8 a.m.  
**First Saturday of the Month:** 8 a.m.

### Weekly Mass Schedule

**Saturday:** 5 p.m.  
**Sunday:** Masses in English: 8 a.m. 10 a.m. (Signed) and 4 p.m.  
Masses in Spanish: 12:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

### Holy Day Schedule

Visit [www.spcatholic.org](http://www.spcatholic.org) for times and dates of Holy Days of Obligation.

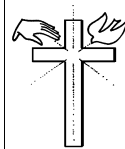
### Confessions Schedule

**Wednesday:** 6-7 p.m. (English/Spanish)  
**Saturday:** 3:30-4:30 p.m. (English/Spanish)  
**By appointment:** Contact Fr. Michael to schedule

## St. Paul Legacy Society

The St. Paul Legacy Society is for parishioners and friends of our parish who include the Parish Endowment Fund, the School Endowment Fund or the Parish Relocation Fund in their estate plans. Whether you are single or married, with children or not, visit [CatholicPlannedGiving.org](http://CatholicPlannedGiving.org) for planned giving news, helpful videos, detailed brochures, an estate planning guide where you can make a list of bequests, and much more. Please contact Fr. Michael at [frhermes@spcatholic.org](mailto:frhermes@spcatholic.org) or 913.764.0323 to be listed in the St. Paul Legacy Society.

## Receiving the Sacraments



**Baptism:** Parents are asked to take the required prep class prior to the baptism of the child. Godparents are asked to attend this class as well. Please contact the Parish Office to enroll in the class and schedule the Baptism.

**Marriage:** Couple is asked to contact the office at least six months prior to the projected date of ceremony to begin their marriage preparation.

**Anointing of the Sick:** Administered quarterly (January, April, July and October) during the First Saturday Mass at 8:00 AM. If a person is in need of this sacrament at any other time, please notify the parish office.

### Lost and Found

Personal belongings that have been left behind may be located at the Parish Office. Please contact the office if you have misplaced an item. Items not claimed within 30 days will be donated to charity.



## Parish and Community News

### Parishioners Congratulations

#### Baptism

This past weekend we had the pleasure and honor of welcoming those who have entered into the Catholic faith through the waters of Baptism:



**Aleo Pedroza**, son of Oscar & Laura  
**Bryon Perez**, son of Ignacio & Josefina

#### Quinceañera

Congratulations to  
**Xitlaly Papalotzi & Evelyn Perez**  
on celebrating their Quinceañera!

#### Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations to  
**Oswaldo & Magda Cisneros**  
who celebrated 50 years of marriage!



### Aquila & Priscilla Group

This group is for all St. Paul couples from newlyweds to married for 10 years. We meet on the second Friday of each month for prayer, faith formation and friendship.

Our role models are Sts. Aquila and Priscilla, a first century Christian missionary married couple who lived, worked and traveled with St. Paul, who described them as his "fellow workers in Christ Jesus" (Romans 16:3).

For more information contact Joe & Annalise Tinker at amoffitt94@gmail.com.

### Moms of St. Paul

The Moms of St. Paul Group invites parish moms of young children to join as we share the joy and struggles of motherhood while we grow in our Catholic faith. Events include weekly playdates, monthly faith formation, and monthly moms only social events.

For more details about upcoming events, join our email list by submitting the form at <https://www.spcatholic.org/moms> or emailing [mospolathe@gmail.com](mailto:mospolathe@gmail.com). To stay connected via Facebook, please "Like" our page "Moms of St. Paul" at <https://www.facebook.com/spcatholicmoms> and request to join the private group for more details about events.

### Project Rachel

You are loved... After abortion. Maybe you don't love yourself but that is not God's way. Divine Mercy loves unconditionally, everyone. Let Project Rachel show you the many ways of healing. FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL. Private classes or group support. Call or email Patricia at 888-246-1504 or [projectrachelkc@archkck.org](mailto:projectrachelkc@archkck.org). Project Rachel is a ministry supported by Call to Share.

**We wish a Happy New Year's to everyone at St. Paul!**

## Noticias de la Parroquia

### Felicitaciones a los Feligreses

#### Bautismo

La Parroquia de San Pablo recientemente tuvo el placer y el honor de dar la bienvenida a aquellos que han entrado en la fe Católica a través de las aguas del Bautismo:



**Aleo Pedroza**, son of Oscar & Laura  
**Bryon Perez**, son of Ignacio & Josefina

#### Quinceañera

Felicitaciones a  
**Xitlaly Papalotzi & Evelyn Perez**  
al celebrar sus Quinceaños!

#### Aniversario de Bodas

Felicidades a  
**Oswaldo y Magda Cisneros**  
al celebrar 50 años de matrimonio!



### Caridades Católicas y eBay

¿Sabías que Caridades Católicas de El noreste de Kansas tiene un grupo de voluntarios que enumeran y venden tesoros en eBay? El inventario proviene de artículos de calidad donados a nuestra tienda de segunda mano, TurnStyles. Diariamente se agregan cosas nuevas y pueden ¡Incluye coleccionables, artículos vintage, productos de diseño y más! Lo mejor de todo es que las compras en eBay ayudan a respaldar los programas y servicios para los necesitados en nuestro 21 condado. Área de servicios. Visite [www.stores.ebay.com/shopturnstyles](http://www.stores.ebay.com/shopturnstyles).

### Campaña de Capital de San Pablo

Gracias a todos por continuar haciendo sus pagos a su compromiso de la Campaña de Capital. Agradecemos su continuo apoyo.



### Objetos Perdidos

Las pertenencias personales que se han olvidado en el espacio múltiple pueden ubicarse en la Oficina Parroquial. Comuníquese con la oficina si extravió un artículo. Los artículos no reclamados dentro de los 30 días serán donados a organizaciones benéficas.

### Centro Comunitario de Sangre en Olathe

Hay una necesidad de emergencia de donantes de sangre, especialmente durante la pandemia. Haga un acita: [www.savealifenow.org](http://www.savealifenow.org) o llamando al 877.468.6844. Use el código ED92 para la parroquia de San Pablo.



**!Deseamos un Feliz Año Nuevo a todos en San Pablo!**



# Family Faith Formation Program

## Programa de Formación Familiar en la Fe

**Office Hours:**  
**Monday to Thursday**  
**from 10:00 am to 3:00**

**Horario de la Oficina:**  
**Lunes a Jueves**  
**de 10:00 am- 3:00 pm**

### FAMILY FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM GR. K-12

#### A message from the Director,

Today is the feast day of the Holy Family, but also every family's feast day since the Holy Family is the patron and model of all Christian families. Today should be a huge family feast since it is devoted entirely to the Holy Family.

This Sunday, we remember and celebrate Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. It might be true to say that the focus of attention leading up to and during the celebration of the Nativity is Jesus. This Sunday, we acknowledge the whole family!

There is often a sense of nostalgia and romance about the birth of Jesus. This can be heard in the best of our much loved Christmas Carols and even seen in the worst of our Christmas cards! These cards show us a crisp winter night, stars in the sky, and snow on the manger. That is not to say that they are not helpful, but we need to look beyond them, particularly on this great and important feast.

Mary was called personally by her name and asked to take on what would seem to be an impossible task. However, she was not expected to do what she was asked by herself or to rely on her own efforts or strength. On hearing that she was to be the mother of Jesus, 'she was deeply disturbed and wondered what the greeting could mean.' Told not to be afraid, she was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. She was strengthened and encouraged by God to do what was asked of her. Joseph too was called to take on a role he did not ask for. Like Mary, he too heard the message, 'do not be afraid.' God who called both of them would not ignore or abandon them as they became the parents of Jesus. Jesus too in his own life and ministry was guided and led by God. He said, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, I have been called to bring the good news to the poor.' Even Jesus does not rely on his own efforts!

On this feast of the Holy Family, it is good to pray in gratefulness and thanks for our own parents and family. No one's family is perfect. All our family members, including ourselves, have made mistakes and gotten things wrong. We have all done and said things that we have later regretted. Regardless of this, we owe our family everything and for this we thank God.

May the Holy Family of Nazareth bless, guide, and protect all our families, now and always.

Karla Melgar

**Director of Family Faith Formation**

[kmelgar@spcatholic.org](mailto:kmelgar@spcatholic.org) (913) 764-0323 ext. 103

### PROGRAMA DE FORMACIÓN FAMILIAR GR. K-12

#### Un mensaje de la Directora,

Hoy es la **fiesta de la Sagrada Familia**, pero también la fiesta de todas las familias, ya que la Sagrada Familia es la patrona y modelo de todas las familias cristianas. Hoy debería ser una gran fiesta familiar, ya que está dedicada íntegramente a la Sagrada Familia.

Este domingo recordamos y celebramos a María, José y Jesús. Podría ser cierto decir que el foco de atención antes y durante la celebración de la Natividad es Jesús. ¡Este domingo, agradecemos a toda la familia!

A menudo hay una sensación de nostalgia y romance sobre el nacimiento de Jesús. ¡Esto se puede escuchar en el mejor de nuestros queridos villancicos e incluso se puede ver en la peor de nuestras tarjetas de Navidad! Estas tarjetas nos muestran una fresca noche de invierno, estrellas en el cielo y nieve en el pesebre. Eso no quiere decir que no sean útiles, pero debemos mirar más allá de ellos, particularmente en esta gran e importante fiesta.

Maria fue llamada personalmente por su nombre y se le pidió que asumiera lo que parecería ser una tarea imposible. Sin embargo, no se esperaba que hiciera lo que ella misma le pedía ni que confiara en sus propios esfuerzos o fuerza. Al escuchar que iba a ser la madre de Jesús, se sintió profundamente perturbada y se preguntó qué podría significar el saludo". Cuando le dijeron que no tuviera miedo, se llenó del poder del Espíritu Santo. Dios la fortaleció y la animó a hacer lo que se le pedía. José también fue llamado a asumir un papel que no pidió. Al igual que María, él también escuchó el mensaje, "no temas". Dios, que los llamó a ambos, no los ignoraba ni los abandonaría cuando se convirtieron en los padres de Jesús. Jesús también en su propia vida y ministerio fue guiado y dirigido por Dios. Dijo: "El Espíritu del Señor está sobre mí; he sido llamado a llevar las buenas nuevas a los pobres". ¡Incluso Jesús no confía en sus propios esfuerzos!

En esta fiesta de la Sagrada Familia, es bueno orar con gratitud y agradecimiento por nuestros propios padres y familia. Ninguna familia es perfecta. Todos los miembros de nuestra familia, incluidos nosotros mismos, hemos cometido errores y nos hemos equivocado. Todos hemos hecho y dicho cosas de las que luego nos hemos arrepentido. Independientemente de esto, le debemos todo a nuestra familia y por eso le damos gracias a Dios.

Que la Sagrada Familia de Nazaret bendiga, guíe y proteja a todas nuestras familias, ahora y siempre.

Karla Melgar

**Directora de Formación Familiar en la Fe**

[kmelgar@spcatholic.org](mailto:kmelgar@spcatholic.org) (913) 764-0323 ext. 103

# St. Paul School News

Dear St. Paul Community,

The teachers and students have gone home for a much anticipated Christmas break. As I reflect on this semester, I can't help but reflect on the lyrics of the Christmas song, O Holy Night.

**"A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices".**

This semester has certainly had its challenges. Both teachers and students alike have endured much together as a community. Worn though we may be, however, we end this Advent season with great hope for what is to come.

**"Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming; With glowing hearts by his cradle we stand"**

In our beautiful tradition of the Las Posada celebration, students reenacted Mary and Joseph searching for a place for Jesus to be born. The students processed throughout the school, knocking on each door, ultimately ending up at our Nativity scene where they presented their gifts to the Christ Child. This was a beautiful, powerful experience for all who participated.

**"Sweet hymns of joy, in grateful Chorus raise we; Let all within us praise his Holy Name"**

St. Paul Catholic school is an incredible place in many ways. What a gift it is to be able to share the love and joy of the birth of our Savior with one another.

**Wishing you and your families a very blessed and Merry Christmas!**

Joyfully,  
Dr. Ann Connor  
Principal, St. Paul School



## Knights of Columbus

**Council 1913 Website:** [www.koc1913.org](http://www.koc1913.org)  
**4th Degree Website:** [www.kofc2260.org](http://www.kofc2260.org)  
**Facebook Council 1913:**  
[www.facebook.com/kofc1913](http://www.facebook.com/kofc1913)



We are offering FREE Online Membership. This gift of free first-year membership to all potential members between now and December 31, 2021. Interested prospects should visit [kofc.org/joinus](http://kofc.org/joinus), complete the membership application, enter St. Paul for Parish and enter code MCGIVNEY2020.

**Merry Christmas  
and Blessings in the New Year!**

Please contact Doug Svatos at 913-991-8127 or [dsvatos@outlook.com](mailto:dsvatos@outlook.com) if you have questions.

## Stewardship of Treasure: December 11 to December 16th

**STEWARDSHIP**  
Whatever you have – has been given.  
Whatever you give – will be returned.

Envelopes & Plate .....	\$30,360.48
Building Maintenance Fund.....	\$380.00
Special Collections:	
Catholic Charities .....	\$70.00
Christmas .....	\$270.00
Immaculate Conception .....	\$373.00
Leaven .....	\$73.00
Retirement Fund for Religious .....	\$1,105.00
Solemnity Offering .....	\$45.00
St. Mary's Food Kitchen .....	\$25.00
Tuition Assistance .....	\$25.00

### THANK YOU FOR GIVING!

Thanks to all who donate through online giving. We also want to thank each and every one of you who give each week in the pews for your continued support. Whether you give online or by the envelope, you are a blessing to our parish and we thank God for you. If you would like to enroll in online giving, please visit [spcatholic.weshareonline.org](http://spcatholic.weshareonline.org). If you have any questions or would like help setting up your account, please contact Amy Moritz at 913.764.0323 x107.

## St. Paul Capital Campaign Update

THANK YOU to all for continuing to make your payments on your Capital Campaign pledge. We appreciate your continued support. If you have not yet pledged, or would like to extend your pledge, please contact Amy Moritz at [amoritz@spcatholic.org](mailto:amoritz@spcatholic.org) or 913.764.0323 ext. 108



## Youth Ministry

### ANCHOR MEETING SCHEDULE (Grades 9-12)

**ANCHOR REMIND  
GROUP FOR PARENTS**

**ANCHOR REMIND  
GROUP FOR TEENS**



### EDGE MEETING SCHEDULE (Grades 6-8)

**EDGE REMIND  
GROUP FOR PARENTS**

**EDGE REMIND  
GROUP FOR TEENS**



**Volunteer today!**  
[catholiccharitiesks.org](http://catholiccharitiesks.org)

# Mass Intentions for the Week

Week of December 14 thru December 19, 2021

**Tues. 12/28** 8:00 am †Mary Margaret Grove & Debbie Reifschneider  
**Wed. 12/29** 8:00 am †Maria Tran Thi My Dung & †Maria Tran Thi Mem  
**Thurs. 12/30** 8:00 am For Priests & Religious  
**Fri. 12/31** 8:00 am †Luci Sullivan & †Jesus Fierro-Nunez  
**Sat. 01/01** 8:00 am †Dennis McGuire & Janet Day  
 10:00 am Pope Francis  
 5:00 pm People of St. Paul Parish  
**Sun. 01/02** 8:00 am †Josefina Mendoza Inigo & Lee Orrison  
 10:00 am †Paul Jacklevich & †Melanie McKenzie  
 12:30 pm †Juan Santoyo & Altagracia De Luna  
 4:00 pm †George Heiman & †Paul Walker  
 6:00 pm All Souls

## Blessed Sacrament Chapel



### Blessings Received

- \* Our Savior has been born.
- \* May we all rejoice.

Please call one of the Division Leaders below:

Midnight - 6:00 am	Nancy Cariglio	816.456.3817
6:00 am - Noon	Gina Sanchez	913.710.1086
Noon - 6:00 pm	<b>Open</b>	
6:00 pm - Midnight	Janice Cartwright	913.558.6020
Hispanic Liaison	Arturo Morales	913.544.6635
Head Coordinator	Michelle Leoni	925.519.9116

There are currently no unassigned hours.  
 However, many hours could use a second volunteer.

A Division Leader is needed for the Noon to 6PM hour time block.

## Liturgical Ministers

If you would like to assist in a Liturgical ministries during Mass, please contact the coordinator of the ministry for details.



### Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist:

	Janice Cartwright	913.768.1125
<b>Lectors:</b>	John Martin	913.205.5404
<b>Servers:</b>	Crystal Steinlage	913.375.7183
<b>Ushers:</b>	Bob Hamilton	bobhlel@gmail.com
<b>Greeters:</b>	Jim and Janice Steinlage	913.393.3966
<b>Music:</b>	Joe Heron	913.238.1675

## PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE ILL

Thomas Aberle	Jose Andazola	Steve Basile
Donna Berry	Dennis Bobbitt	Roman Bobbitt
Maria Buszek	Ed Cisek	Joanne Crowley
John Ernst	Mandy Long	Maria Macedo
Ed Nuessen	Angel Núñez	Diane Quinn
Sarah Riekema	Kevin Rockers	Jane Schulte
Dennis Shaffer	Rodrigo Sandoval	Raymond Tigerina
Judy Waitzmann		

### Those who have died...

Michaela Barry  
 Scott Thomas  
 Bob Tully  
 Paul Walker

Please help keep the Prayer List updated. Contact the Parish Office at [communications@spcatholic.org](mailto:communications@spcatholic.org) or 913.764.0323 to add or remove a person from the list.

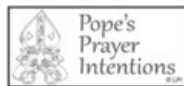


The bulletin includes only the names of St. Paul Parishioners as part of our Homebound and Visiting the Sick Ministry. Those outside of the parish in need of prayer may receive support and prayer through our Prayer Chain ministry, however their name will not be listed in the bulletin. Please notify the Parish Office if you would like to request prayers for yourself or another due to illness.

## Readings of the Week

**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

## The Pope's Prayer Intention for December



### Catechists

Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Give gifts from our advertisers this holiday season!



## CURRENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Chancery Employment Opportunities

The Chancery Offices currently have several employment opportunities:

- Administrative Assistant, Office of Marriage and Family Life
- Administrative Assistant, Office of Human Resources
- Consultant, Office of Human Resources
- Consultant for Student Services/Special Education, Schools Office
- Housekeeper (Temp), Prairie Star Ranch

Please encourage any qualified candidate to visit our website ([www.archkck.org/jobs](http://www.archkck.org/jobs)) for more information.

### Teachers Wanted

Are you looking for rewarding work in Catholic education? The Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas is looking for faith-filled Catholic school teachers at all levels from Pre-K thru 12th grade in our Catholic schools. The diocese has 36 elementary and 6 high schools. We have positions available for the right candidates. Applicants should hold a Kansas teaching, or be eligible to obtain a license.

For questions contact the school office at 913-721-1570.

To complete the application, go to [www.archkck.org/catholicschools/employment](http://www.archkck.org/catholicschools/employment)

### "SEEK: Recognizing a Need for God."

#### High School Retreat

Are you looking for a way to go deeper? Do you want to start the New Year off with a bang? Join students across the Archdiocese on January 7th and 8th at Forest Park Retreat Center in Topeka for "SEEK: Recognizing a Need for God."

The cost of the retreat will be \$20 and includes overnight lodging and food. Friday night, beginning at 6:00 PM, is open to any high school student wanting to make it an overnight retreat, including confession, adoration, and a time of prayer. If you cannot make it Friday, you are still welcome to attend! Come Saturday starting at 9:30 AM. Sign up here: [www.archkckyouth.org](http://www.archkckyouth.org) under "trips and retreats." Please RSVP by Jan 5th, 2022.

### Catholic Charities and eBay

Did you know that Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas has a group of volunteers who list and sell treasures on eBay? inventory comes from quality items donated to our thrift store, TurnStyles. New things are added daily and may include collectibles, vintage items, designer products and more! Best of all, eBay purchases help support programs and services for those in need throughout our 21 county service



### Struggling after an abortion?

*Free, Caring, Confidential Help.*

**Project Rachel**

Call/Text 913.621.2199 • [www.ProjectRachelKC.com](http://www.ProjectRachelKC.com)

## GOSPEL MEDITATION

December 26, 2021

### The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Families can be very difficult things to negotiate. This is true not only of our families of origin, the current family of which we are a part, the family of our Church, our society, and our global family as well. Everything human can be found in family stories. Those stories speak of wonderful life-giving successes as well as painful spirit-robbing abuses. Our greatest joys and our greatest wounds are usually connected with the experience of family. Our needs, experiences, and unresolved baggage often color what we bring to our familiar relationships. They contribute to our level of defensiveness, how guarded and protected we become, and what prejudices we believe.

In order to break the cycle of dysfunction we have to remember that it is not only by human effort that we negotiate the difficult and challenging events of our lives. There is a Divine Effort at work as well. For sure, the human effort can create quite a mess and easily destroy lives. This is true of any family with which we are associated. Today's Feast of the Holy Family serves to help us understand that there is a Divine Story being told as well. It is a story of perseverance in the face of hardship, determination in the face of despair, healing when we see nothing but wounds, and light where there is darkness.

Do we believe that God is always working, guiding, restoring, and leading? Unless we do, we will never be free from the imperfections and wounds that bind us and never be able to understand what it really means to forgive. Pope Francis tells us that the "light which comes from the Holy Family encourages us to offer human warmth to other families." While this is most certainly true, we can only really begin to do this when we realize that we are still works in progress, not anchored to the wounds and sins of our past, and still a leading star in God's continually unfolding story of love. The Holy Family persevered and radiated warmth because they knew they were not alone. We can too.

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