

# SAINT JOSEPH CHURCH

BROOKFIELD, CT DECEMBER 19, 2021



## 4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."

- Lk 1:41-42







### Sunday, Dec 19, 2021

#### FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (O FLOWER OF JESSE'S STEM)

##### Your place on the tree

Family trees are an endless source of fascination. Whether you've explored yours through DNA tests or old photo albums and family stories, you know that a ragtag line of other people's chances and choices contribute to who you are. The Advent Jesse Tree teaches children about many risk-takers and seekers throughout biblical history who contributed to the arrival of Jesus. Folks like Jesse himself, the father of David who contributed to the lineage of the kings of Israel and, without suspecting it, the future King of the Universe. What might your legacy be, and how do you claim your place in the great story?

**TODAY'S READINGS:** *Micah 5:1-4a; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45 (12).* "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."

### Monday, Dec 20, 2021

#### ADVENT WEEKDAY (O KEY OF DAVID)

##### He's on his way

Today's Great Antiphon—the fourth of seven ancient prayers said during Advent vespers leading up to Christmas Eve—is "O Key of David, come and free us!" Each Antiphon is a call to Christ using a messianic title from prophecy, and today's reminds us that we are captives liberated by God's grace. The answer to our cries is embedded in the titles themselves. The seven titles in Latin—Sapientia, Adonai, Radix Jesse, Clavis David, Oriens, Rex Gentium, and Emmanuel—in reverse order form the acrostic ERO CRAS, which means "I am coming soon."

**TODAY'S READINGS:** *Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38 (196).* "The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever."

### Tuesday, Dec 21, 2021

#### MEMORIAL OF PETER CANISIUS, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH (O RADIANT DAWN)

##### Let the light shine

The Protestant Reformation was an age of strife and contestation, especially in Germany, ground zero of the upheaval in 1517. Into the morass stepped a learned Jesuit scholar, amazing preacher, and gifted writer—Peter Canisius, whose rational arguments in support of Catholicism proved quite persuasive. Peter's three written catechisms were so effective, German-born Pope Benedict XVI told a papal audience in 2011, that later generations of Germans simply referred to them as "the Canisius." On what's the longest night of the year for many, tap the faith of Peter Canisius to reflect upon the ways that Jesus is our Radiant Dawn.

**TODAY'S READINGS:** *Song of Songs 2:8-14 or Zephaniah 3:14-18a; Luke 1:39-45 (197).* "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

### Wednesday, Dec 22, 2021

#### ADVENT WEEKDAY (O KING OF ALL NATIONS)

##### God of surprises

God acts in ways we least expect. The long-awaited Messiah was expected to be a military leader who would lead his people, Israel, to victory and out of oppression. Instead, he was born in a stable to a young woman of the village and a carpenter who would be his foster father. Today that young woman makes a bold proclamation, "He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly." As we come closer to Christmas, ask God to help you look for him in the unexpected so that he might refashion you. After all, history is full of unexpected saints—why not you?

**TODAY'S READINGS:** *1 Samuel 1:24-28; Luke 1:46-56 (198).* "[God] has looked upon his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed."

### Thursday, Dec 23, 2021

#### ADVENT WEEKDAY (O EMMANUEL)

##### Hear our plea

What is more poignant than an expression of heartfelt longing? Today anyone taking part in the longstanding tradition of Evening Prayer, or vespers, sings, "O Emmanuel, come to redeem us!" It's a plea of yearning. For centuries on this day near Christmas, Catholics have opened their hearts and prayed for a savior. Let this vulnerable prayer of hope and desire for all that Christmas represents—light, life, salvation—be a kind of mantra as you go about your day.

**TODAY'S READINGS:** *Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Luke 1:57-66 (199).* "When the time arrived for Elizabeth to have her child she gave birth to a son."

### Friday, Dec 24, 2021

#### ADVENT WEEKDAY

##### Thanksgiving on Christmas Eve

For many Catholics, Christmas Eve is brimming with meal preparation, cleaning, wrapping last-minute stocking stuffers, and Midnight Mass. It can also be a difficult day for those missing loved ones. In whatever situation you find yourself, take a moment and join the church in praying the Cantic of Zechariah, also known as the Benedictus. As he awaited the birth of his son John (later known as the Baptist), Zechariah sang a canticle of gratitude to God for setting us free from all that binds. May this prayer bring freedom and joy to us all!

**TODAY'S READINGS:** *Morning: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Luke 1:67-79 (200).* "In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness."

### Saturday, Dec 25, 2021

#### SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)

##### The weary world rejoices

The efforts of people of goodwill everywhere in the quest for peace and justice continue, and our leader is born anew today! Spiritual author and priest Henri Nouwen put it well: "The world is not whole. . . . But it is into this broken world that a child is born, who is called Son of the Most High, Prince of Peace, Savior. I look at him and pray, 'Thank you, Lord, that you came. . . . Your heart is greater than mine.'" Our hope and our hearts increase today. Rejoice!

**TODAY'S READINGS:** *Night: Isaiah 9:1-6; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 (14); Day: Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18 (16).* "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."

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#### Father (a.k.a. "Dad") Jokes

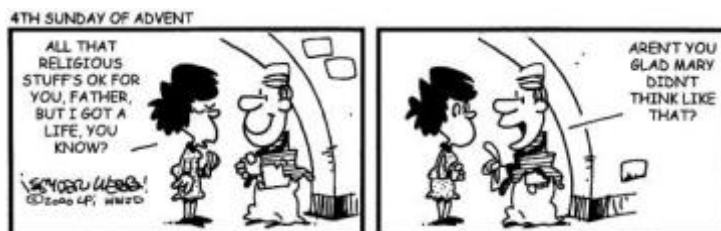
Where do cows do their shopping?  
Cattle-logs

What letters are not in the alphabet?  
The ones in the mail.

What do you call an old snowman?  
Water

Why do we put candles on the top of a birthday cake?  
Because putting them on the bottom would make a mess.

Did you hear that the inventor of the throat lozenge died?  
There will be no "cough-in" at his funeral



"HIS GREATNESS SHALL  
REACH TO THE ENDS OF  
THE EARTH; HE SHALL  
BE PEACE."  
(MIC 5:1-4)

December 19, 2021 | Fourth Sunday of Advent

Mi 5:1-4 | Heb 10:5-10 | Lk 1:39-45

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

## GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

"You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah

too small to be among the clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to be ruler in Israel;"

We do not have to go see the most recent superhero movie or binge-watch a streaming TV series that celebrates the underdog to feel the elation that comes with overcoming evil. We need only to look at our own lives, and God's plan of salvation for us, to understand what it truly means to be triumphant. From tiny little Bethlehem - a town of no consequence - would arise the Savior of the world. He would be the One who came to do God's will, and thus consecrated us to God through the offering of his own body as sacrifice, once for all. This is the One Mary carried in her womb and whom Elizabeth's unborn child - we know to be John the Baptist - recognized. He is the child-most-vulnerable who would become King of the Universe, "stand[ing] firm and shepherd[ing] his flock by the strength of the Lord." This is the God we serve: the One who became like us so that we may one day be like him. We shall soon celebrate the anniversary of his birth, while also waiting in joyful hope for his coming again. In this time of preparation, then, we pray for the grace to know the Lord more fully and to appreciate with gratitude the Savior he truly is.



NEW PROGRAMS BEING OFFERED THIS WINTER, ONLINE AND IN PERSON!

### *LIVING IN THE FATHER'S LOVE and RECLAIMING FRIENDSHIP*

Do you desire to grow in your Catholic faith? Would you like to connect with other women in our parish community? Then consider joining St. Joseph's Women's Reflection and Prayer group for one of our six-week *Walking with Purpose* (WWP) programs this winter. No previous Bible study experience is necessary. Our group welcomes women of all ages and at all stages of their faith journey.

- Tuesday nights, 7:15-9:00, beginning on January 4:  
**Reclaiming Friendship:** Encounter God personally through Scripture, letting Him reshape how you see and experience true friendship.
- Wednesday mornings, 9:30-11:15, beginning January 5:  
**Living in the Father's Love:** Discover just how much God loves you and how the Gospels are deeply relevant to your relationship with God and with those you love.

Register via email to [wwpstjosbrookfield@gmail.com](mailto:wwpstjosbrookfield@gmail.com), by December 28. Tell us whether you will be joining us on Tuesday evenings or Wednesday mornings, and, if on Tuesdays, whether you plan to join the in-person group or the Zoom (online) group. In case of inclement weather the in-person group will also meet on Zoom. (The Wednesday group will meet exclusively on Zoom).

**Order your book now!** Go to [www.walkingwithpurpose.com](http://www.walkingwithpurpose.com) > Bible Studies > Adult Women, scroll down and select the study you are interested in. If you have any questions about our program, contact Barb Roeder at (203) 740-9428.

## GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, now is the time many of us will begin to gather - as families, friends, and faith communities. What an ideal opportunity to renew our relationships with one another and with Jesus, asking the Holy Spirit to help us recognize the presence of God in our lives and in others. Micah's prophesy from today's first reading endures: "His greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth; he shall be peace." Let's do our part to share the peace and joy of Christ with those we encounter, witnessing to his saving grace in our lives, and offering others an opportunity to be a part of the greatest story, ever - of God's saving action.

**INVITE/PRAY** Invite visiting family members to your parish or faith community for a concert, worship or other Advent activity. If that's not possible, pray the O Antiphons together at home.



**Take a look at some of the heartwarming good deeds our E.D.J.E. students have been busy doing;**

"I taught my brother and sister how to use a seatbelt in their new booster seats." submitted by Lennon

"I wrote a card for the sick kids." submitted by Sophia

"I gave sympathy to my gymnastics friend because she got a boot on her foot." submitted by Anna

"I helped at church with the Thanksgiving food." submitted by Max

"When me and my family and puppy were saying grace, I prayed that my new baby cousin will feel better." submitted by Isabella

"I gave my friend my old, small clothes." submitted by Owen

"I gave my doll house to Good Will." submitted by Ally







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**THE 2021 ST. JOSEPH ANNUAL COLLECTION**

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We are very grateful for the generosity shown by so many to our **Annual Collection**. If you have not yet had an opportunity to return your gift card, please do so as soon as possible. Every gift is welcome and sincerely appreciated. Thank you!



Saint Joseph Church is seeking part-time office help, Monday-Friday, 1PM-4PM. Responsibilities include answering phones and light office work.

If interested, please contact Rita in the Parish Office at 203-775-1035.

“...Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark.” *James 3:5*



**Ignite**, our program tailor-made for 7th & 8th graders, wishes you much joy, peace, love, and hope this Christmas season.



**Curiosity Corner**

**Q:** Why do we give gifts at Christmas?

**A:** Great events in and of themselves are not tangible. They occur in life but leave no mark behind, nothing that someone could come across and know that something significant occurred. So we mark the event with monuments, holidays, gold watches or plaques, making a meaningful event tangible and memorable.

Gifts at Christmas do the same thing. They mark the occasion of the birth of Jesus, communicating a bit of the joy of the day by allowing us to be both giver and receiver. Gift-giving sets aside the day as special and different. The special foods, customs, decorations, and gifts all help focus our attention on the importance and meaning of the day and at the same time allow us to share personally in its joy and happiness.

In giving gifts, though, we can share in the meaning of Christmas in a significant way. We imitate God in sharing with others. We give a bit of ourselves to others in the gifts we give, just as God gives us the gift of his Son. No wonder we often say that the best gifts are those that come from the heart. Given in love, these presents are wrapped in the best covering of all. ©LPi



Thanks to your generous support of our Fall Candle Sale, our Respect For Life Committee was able to pay for our billboard for another month!



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United meets on Sunday evenings on the campus of St. Rose unless otherwise noted.



**Monday, December 20**

7:45 AM - Elizabeth Sarsfield, req. by The Castellano Family

**Tuesday, December 21**

7:45 AM - Intentions of All Our Parishioners

**Wednesday, December 22**

7:45 AM - Marion Baumgarten, req. by The Tharrington Family

**Thursday, December 23**

7:45 AM - Intentions of Judith McCarthy, req. by Joann Magner

**Friday, December 24**

All masses are offered for the Intentions of All Our Parishioners

**Saturday, December 25 - *The Nativity of the Lord***

All masses are offered for the Intentions of All Our Parishioners

**Sunday, December 26 - *Feast of the Holy Family***

7:30 AM - Paul Sullivan, req. by Cathi & Mike Sullivan

9:00 AM - Stanley Ganski, req. by his friends

11:00 AM - Judy Grady, req. by The Bodie Family

**PARISH MINISTRIES**

**Liturgy**

Altar Servers .....203.775.1035

Choir Director - Arianna Carlo .....203.775.1035

**Faith Formation and Sacraments**

Religious Education Coord. - Ms. Pat Smith .... 203.775.1035, ext. 107

RCIA .....203.775.1035

Scheduling Baptisms - Mrs. Rita Golaszewski. . . 203.775.1035, ext. 101

Marriage Scheduling/Prep .....203.775.1035

**Prayer & Devotion**

Men's Retreat - Mr. Peter Brady ..... 203.740.1243

Women's Retreat - Mrs. Barb Roeder .....203.470.3832

Men of St. Joseph

Jim Steffen .....203.775.8676

George Lauri ..... 203.775-1531

**Parish Councils and Administration**

Parish Council - Mr. Andy Pacuk, Chairman. .... .917.514.5974

Finance Council - Mr. Frank Cavalea, Chairman. .... .203.482.5563

**Other Ministries & Organizations**

8<sup>th</sup> Station Bereavement Ministry

Mrs. Mary Shaughnessy. .... 203-775-9138

Mr. Pat Tharrington. ....203-775-4836

Knights of Columbus - Mr. Patrick Jennings ..... .203.240.2425

Mary-Martha Ministry - Mrs. Pat Font ..... 203.775.2335

Women's Reflection & Prayer Group - Mrs. Barb Roeder . 203.470.3832

Outreach to Sick/Shut-In - Sr. Mary Ann Socha, CMGT .. 203.794.1486



**2021 CHRISTMAS Mass Schedule**

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24**  
**Advent Weekday Mass at 7:45 AM**  
*(Not a Christmas Mass)*  
**Parish Office Closed**

**CHRISTMAS EVE, DECEMBER 24**  
**Christmas Masses at**

**4:00 PM** *(Children's Mass in church, overflow Mass in the Gym)*  
**6:30 PM & 10:00 PM**

**SATURDAY, CHRISTMAS DAY, DECEMBER 25**  
**Christmas Masses at**

**7:30 AM, 9:00AM, and 11:00 AM**  
*(No 5:00 PM Mass on Christmas Day)*

**SUNDAY, FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY, DECEMBER 26**  
**Masses at 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, and 11:00 AM**

**EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP - RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS**

**Baby Jesus' Wish List**

Odds are you've got a Christmas list going by now — gift ideas for everyone from your nephew to your goddaughter to your mailman. But what about the birthday boy? What's the gift Jesus gets from you this Christmas?

If you've ever read the Book of Leviticus, you know all about the sacrifices God asks of the Israelites, referred to in the reading from Hebrews today. Leviticus can be a chore to read — a little repetitive, a little intimidating. There's a lot of very specific actions that God asks His Chosen People to complete to make up for whatever they have done wrong. In essence, it's a bit of a wish list for gifts.

But it's a wish list that can really confuse you. What's God going to do with a cereal offering? The kidneys of an animal? If you look closely, what God is doing here is beautiful. He's customized his wish list to only those things He knows the Israelites can give. It's God saying, in what amounts to theological baby-talk for folks who barely know of Him and His ways, exactly how they could be stewards. "Do this, but don't do that. If you do that, do this and you will find My mercy."

Our guide to stewardship — the Gospels of Christ — is less precise because by the time of Christ, God's people have grown in understanding of love and mercy and relationship with the divine. Through Christ, we find out that God's real wish list didn't really consist of cereal offerings and the kidneys of various animals. It's far simpler, but luckily, it's something we still have on-hand. All He wants is our whole heart.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

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**The St. Joseph Giving Tree** in our vestibule is decorated with requests for gift cards from ShopRite and Walmart.

Our prayer is that you will purchase one or more cards at either store and return your gift to the collection box next to the tree before Christmas.

St. Joseph's uses the cards at Christmas and throughout the year to assist parish families and others in the Brookfield community who are temporarily in need.

*Thank you and God bless you.*



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Psalm 91: 4  
John 11: 25  
Hebrews 12: 1-2



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