

ST. CHRISTOPHER CATHOLIC PARISH

1000 MICHIGAN AVE, MARYSVILLE, MI | 810-364-4100 |
WWW.STCHRISMI.ORG

2nd Sunday of Advent
December 6, 2020



PREPARE

"Prepare the way
of the Lord."

MARK 1:3



Pope Francis' Mission Statement: To Become a Band of Joyful Missionary Disciples.

Archdiocese of Detroit's Mission Statement: To Unleash the Gospel.

Saint Christopher's Parish Mission Statement: Transform Lives in Jesus Christ Through the Power and Freedom of the Gospel.

Parish Vision Statement: Foster a Personal Encounter with Jesus.

Pastor's Ponderings. Greetings and the Father's Blessing be upon you, my dear spiritual children. Recognizing my position as a caretaker of souls, a leader in the Catholic Church and in our community, I am pondering my unavoidable responsibility to "do something" in response to the current national and world events for which we are all experiencing even on our local scale. I therefore am undergoing a growing concern somewhat as perhaps parents experience when they are concerned for the well-being of their children – for me, a "spiritual parental worry" perhaps. Amidst all of this a nagging sensation upon my heart along with a question that continues to arise in my mind is "Lord, am I supposed to be doing something different?" – that is, on behalf of all of you, your souls, the object of my concern. Some answer has come, which I shall share with you, and maybe it is only a part of the answer. What has been brought to me in my prayer as I speak to the Lord of my concern for you are three things, namely, two different scripture passages, and an observed tactic of the devil.

Let's begin with the topic of confusion. Observing world dynamics in messaging and conflicting information bearing a striking resemblance to the same methodology used by the devil in spiritual oppression to wear down a person's will to cause them to "give up" and let the devil fully possess the person while bearing in mind two scripture passages the Lord has continually brought to my attention rattling around in my heart and mind for several months now (*Rom 12:21* and *Eph 6:12*), it is clear that our nation and world – and all of us in it – are being spiritually oppressed. Simply put, misinformation – truth and lies mixed up and repeated – causes confusion and tires a person's will to the point of giving up and then simply doing whatever they are told by whomever in the slight hope that "it will all go away if I just give in." Exorcists have clearly observed this demonic tactic when in session. This demonic tactic is the third thing God has providentially brought to my attention, which is the "glue" that brings the other two scripture verses together into a response to do something.

Romans 12:21 says *Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good.* Verse 21 is a conclusionary statement on mutual love, and certainly we will all benefit from reading verse 9 – 20 too, for which I recommend. In any event, this verse tells me that human beings should not succumb to evil or sinful methods of any kind when fighting against evil – we need to use good Christian weapons, namely prayer, specifically a consecration prayer to Our Lady and the Rosary, which I will address shortly. But alongside *Romans 12:21* is the other verse that the Lord continues to place before me, *Ephesians 6:12*, which says, *For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens.* *Ephesians 6:12* is a clear reminder that opposite party politicians, for instance, and those who vote for them are not enemies for they are all *flesh and blood* – we are fighting the

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Second Sunday of Advent

(Continued from page 1)

wrong enemies. It is the devil who sows division and discord through confusion and misunderstanding between God's children, whom we all are. Thus, we are being oppressed nationally (even globally). *Ephesians 6:12* is from the passage on the battle against evil, and verses 10 – 18 are well worth reading often.

Therefore, here is “what else” I am to do: lead you to fight with the right weapons and remind you of these scriptures. Furthermore, an exorcist's advice to help fight against demonic oppression of our country and world is to (1) be strong in God's grace, (2) use the Sacrament of Confession often (perhaps every two weeks or so), (3) receive the Holy Eucharist often, (4) pray a Holy Rosary daily, (5) take on some mortifications and fasting, (6) have a very strong trust in God's Providence and His Divine care for each of us and all, and (7) depend on Our Lady's powerful intercession by reciting the following prayer of consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary daily:

I, (Name), a faithless sinner, renew and ratify today in thy hands the vows of my Baptism. I renounce forever Satan, his pomps and works, and I give myself entirely to Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Wisdom, to carry my cross after Him all the days of my life, and to be more faithful to Him than I have ever been before. In the presence of all the Heavenly Court, I choose thee, O Mary, this day for my Mother and Mistress.

Knowing that I have received rights over all my exterior goods by the promulgation of the Natural Law by the Divine Author, I deliver and consecrate to thee, as thy slave, all of my exterior goods, past, present and future. I relinquish into thy hands, my Heavenly Mother, all rights over my exterior goods, including the United States of America, God's world, and all of His human children contained therein {can also consecrate “personal finances,” “grandchildren,” situations or circumstances, names of world leaders, bishops, etc. here}, and I retain for myself no right of disposing the goods that come to me but leave to thee the entire and full right of disposing of all that belongs to me, without exception, according to thy good pleasure, for the greater glory of God in time and in eternity.

As I now interiorly relinquish what belongs to me exteriorly into thy hands, I entrust to thee the protection of those exterior goods, the United States of America, God's world and all His human children contained therein {insert here as before} against the evil one, so that, knowing that they now belong to thee, he cannot touch them. Receive, O good and pious Virgin, this little offering of what little is, in honor of, and in union with, that subjection which the Eternal Wisdom deigned to have to Thy maternity, in homage to the power which both of You have over this poor sinner, and in thanksgiving for the privileges with which the Holy Trinity has favored thee. Trusting in the providential care of God the Father and thy maternal care, I have full confidence that thou whilst take care of me as to the necessities of this life and will not leave me forsaken. God the Father, increase my trust in Thy Son's Mother. Our Lady of Fair Love, give me perfect confidence in the providence of Thy Son. Amen.

The simple understanding is that when all is given to Mary, the devil cannot touch or influence it anymore, and this is a similar technique used in freeing a person from demonic oppression: to hand them over to Our Lady or consecrate them to her.

Another prayer one can pray is a Prayer of Command: *In His Name and by the power of His Cross and Blood, I ask Jesus Christ to bind any evil spirits, forces and powers of the earth, air, fire, or water, of the netherworld and the satanic forces of nature. By the power of the Holy Spirit and by His authority, I ask Jesus Christ to break any curses, hexes or spells, and send them back to where they came from, if it be His Holy Will. I beseech Thee, Lord Jesus Christ, to protect us by pouring Thy Precious Blood on us (my family, etc.), which Thou hast shed for us and I ask Thee to command that any departing spirits leave quietly, without disturbance, and go straight to Thy Cross to dispose of as Thou sees fit. I ask Thee to bind any demonic interactions, interplay or communications. I place N. (person, place or thing) under the protection of the Blood of Jesus Christ, which He shed for us. Amen.*

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We have to stop fighting with one another and turn our anger toward our real enemy, Satan and his minions fighting evil with good. Prayer changes everything. Pray well.

And now, on an anti-climactic note, Bishop Fisher's office received an anonymous complaint and one other signed complaint regarding my November 8 bulletin article (four weeks ago). Per his request, due to these two complaints he received, I make this following clarification: as was made clear in the writing of the article's context, I was sharing a *personal experience* that alleviated fear *for me* and was desirous to share my experience for the sake of pastoral care regarding fear experienced by my flock in hopes that they would return to the Eucharist as many are away. This statement thus satisfies the Bishop's request for a minor clarification.

Closing thought: I wonder if the refusal of civil dialogue between people who disagree leads us to succumb to Satan's spiritual oppression. Generally speaking, in our struggles we all have a choice to act in fear and misunderstanding or take it all to Jesus in prayer. I recommend the latter.

God Bless and Keep you all,
Fr. James

Readings of the Week

Readings for the week of December 6, 2020

Sunday 12/6: Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14 [8]/2 Pt 3:8-14/Mk 1:1-8

Monday 12/7: Is 35:1-10/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14 [Is 35:4f]/Lk 5:17-26

Tuesday 12/8: Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 [1]/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38

Wednesday 12/9: Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10 [1]/Mt 11:28-30

Thursday 12/10: Is 41:13-20/Ps 145:1 and 9, 10-11, 12-13ab [8]/Mt 11:11-15

Friday 12/11: Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6 [cf. Jn 8:12]/Mt 11:16-19

Saturday 12/12: Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/Jdt 13:18bcde, 19 [15:9d]/Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47

Sunday 12/13: Is 61:1-2a, 10-11/Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 51-54 [Is 61:10b]/1 Thes 5:16-24/Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

Make a Charitable Gift from your IRA

If you are over the age of 70 ½, you must take a required minimum distribution from your IRA. Normally, the amount of this distribution is taxed as ordinary income. Recently enacted federal legislation allows you to make a direct distribution from your IRA to a qualified charity that will not be subject to income tax and still counts toward filling your required minimum distribution. The Office of Planned Giving encourages you to consider making a donation to your Parish. For more information on how you and the Church can benefit from an IRA charitable rollover, contact your financial advisor or the Office of Planned Giving at 313-883-8771.

This Week

Sunday, December 6

8:00 am Mass
9:30 am RCIA
9:30 am RE Classes
11:00 am Mass
11:00 am Children's Church/Babysitting
2:30 pm QUEST Caroling
4:00 pm Confession
5:30 pm Mass

Monday, December 7

9:00 am Mass
† Bernice & Eugene Melczarczyk
by Michael & Mary Byington

Tuesday, December 8

5:30 pm Youth choir practice
7:00 pm Mass—*Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*
Parishioners & Territorial
Souls of St. Christopher Parish



Wednesday, December 9

7:00 pm Small Church Communities
12& 6

Thursday, December 10

12:00 pm Mass
† Kurt Meyers
by Karla Meyers
5:00 pm Adult choir practice

Friday, December 11

6:00 am That Man is You
9:00 am Mass
† Marvin DiLaura
by Mid's kids

Saturday, December 12

Sunday, December 13

8:00 am Mass
9:30 am RCIA
9:30 am RE Classes
11:00 am Mass
11:00 am Children's Church/Babysitting
4:00 pm Confession
5:30 pm Mass
7:00 pm QUEST Gathering

TIMOTHY

OFFICE

"Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity."
1 Timothy 4:12



Growing in Faith

Our Mom



Mother. What do you think of when you hear that word? For some people images of a nurturing, patient, selfless, wise, and loving woman come to mind while others may associate this title with adjectives such as critical, distant, or quick-tempered. For most of us a mixture of images from *both* ends of this spectrum is what rings true. This is because we are most likely to think of our human mothers and, like all humans, our moms have their own areas of brokenness and struggles with sin. Although there is deep love between most mothers and their children there can also be unmet expectations and disappointments because of our fallen human nature.

However, there *is* a perfect mother; one who is always there for each of us with an endless supply of wisdom, patience, and love. She is there to pick us up when we stumble, “kiss” our wounds and send us back into the world while always remaining by our side. This woman is of course our Blessed Mother Mary, and the Church offers us another opportunity this week to focus on her and all her goodness. The Feast of the Immaculate Conception, which is celebrated on December 8th, is oftentimes misunderstood. Many Catholics have the misconception that this feast day is meant to focus on Mary becoming pregnant with Jesus, but it actually is about Saint Anne becoming pregnant with Mary! Because Mary was conceived and born without the stain of original sin *she* is the Immaculate Conception that we celebrate on this holy day of obligation. This made her the perfect mother to bring Jesus into the world, and the perfect mother for us.



*For those who began preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation in January 2020, **Conversations with candidates (teens) are scheduled with Suzy on Jan 10 & Kristi on Jan 12.** Contact Timothy Office 810-364-4100 with any questions.

*New Confirmation Prep group first session is **January 25, 2021 from 6:30 -8:30pm** in Social Hall. Teens preparing AND their parent(s) are invited (and expected) to each session. Contact Timothy Office with any questions.

Although Mary is to be highly honored, we need to remember she is not distant from us. While he was on the cross Jesus gave Mary to each of us to be our spiritual mother (*John 19: 25-27*), and we know the best mothers are those that are concerned about all that concerns their children. There is nothing in our lives that is too small to bring to Mary in prayer. Her bravery and willingness to say “yes” to God are traits that we should strive to emulate, and her holiness is a shining example for us. For this we can call her Blessed Mother. However, we should also remember that Mary loves each of us deeply, and she wants nothing more than to hold us tightly, with all of our mistakes, weaknesses, and failings, as she continuously carries us closer to her son Jesus. For this we can call her Mom. Personally, I am so grateful that God has given us Mary who is both a glorious mother and a tender mom. He knows that I need both.



In gratitude for our beloved
Mary,
Kristi Socha
Director of Religious Education



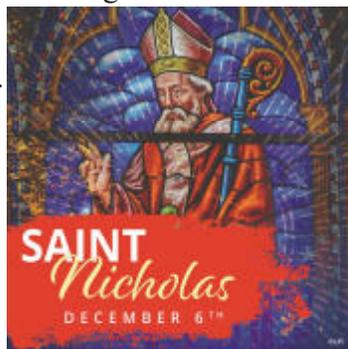
December 6, 2020

#TimothyTeens

Saint Nicholas Day

Saint Nicholas is one of the most beloved Catholic saints whose feast day we celebrate each year on December 6.

Most of us are probably familiar with the 4th century scenario of a poor father who didn't have enough money to pay dowries for his 3 daughters to marry (thankfully this tradition of transferring wealth from one family to another for marriage isn't common anymore). Without having husbands, these ladies would be bound to a life of destitution. The generous Nicholas showed great compassion on this family by secretly throwing 3 bags of gold coins through the open window of their home one night – enough for each daughter to marry. Such a great example of **caring for the poor and loving our neighbor**



What may be less familiar to us is that gift-giving has traditionally happened on Saint Nicholas Day instead of Christmas Day. Catholic Apologist Trent Horn explains, “Throughout most of Church history, **Christians did not exchange gifts on December 25**. Instead, they celebrated the Mass dedicated to Christ's birth (or “Christ-mass”). **Gifts would be given on December 6**, feast day of the fourth-century bishop St. Nicholas, who was known for his **extraordinary generosity**.” It was only during the Protestant Reformation, when certain ecclesial communities began rejecting the Catholic notion of

honoring saints, that gift-giving was moved to Christmas day. This served as a compromise for families who wanted to give gifts but did not want to be accused of honoring or recognizing a Catholic saint.

When I first learned about this, I found it fascinating! So much so that our family was inspired to change our gift-giving tradition. For several years now, my husband and I have celebrated St. Nicholas Day with our children by sacredly reserving the day for family time. We turn down other invitations or activities that would disrupt this holiday. Instead, we find ourselves slowing down, staying in our pajamas, baking cookies, playing games together and giving gifts (instead of Christmas Day). In a way, **it takes some of the pressure off having a picture-perfect Christmas Day** (which is most-likely an impossible ideal to achieve) and spreads out some of the expectations over both the Advent and Christmas seasons. This ‘set-apart’ holiday has become an oasis of slowing down early in Advent and has made it easier for us to focus on preparing for Jesus’ coming at Christmas. Chores are put on hold, naps are taken if needed, and our **domestic church reconnects**.

By the time the Christmas season arrives, we can bask in the glow of St. Nicholas Day memories and simply **focus on the Incarnation of Jesus** – by celebrating with good food, time with loved ones, and being at Christ's Mass with our parish family.

Amidst the hustle and bustle of December, **I encourage you** to find your own way to set-apart and celebrate this special day. You may find yourself better prepared to enjoy Christmas when it arrives.

Happy Saint Nicholas Day!



Suzy DeVeny

QUEST Reminders:

***Caroling for Homebound Parishioners is Sunday, Dec 6 @ 2:30-5:00pm**

***Shopping for Adopt-a-Family** will be done by individual families this year. Items should be returned to Suzy in classrooms **by Dec 12**

***Sunday, Dec 13 Christmas Gathering @ 7-8:30pm** *NOTE this isn't on original calendar – it's been added!

***Our next Teen/Young Adult Bible Study is Sunday, Dec 13 @ 9:30-10:45am** – for ages 14-24. Our final session will be Sunday, Dec 27.

Please contact Suzy 1000michiganave@gmail.com if you're interested in joining us!

Bible Study

Second Sunday of Advent



Sacred Music Ministry

As we begin the new Liturgical Year, the Church's Marian antiphon changes again. There are four liturgical Marian antiphons that are sung throughout the year at the end of evening prayer prayed by priests and religious every day.

The four liturgical antiphons are as follows:

1. Alma Redemptoris Mater – sung from the beginning of Advent to the Feast of the Presentation (Feb.2)
2. Ave Regina Caelorum – sung during Lent
3. Regina Caeli – sung during the Easter Season
4. Salve Regina – sung during Ordinary Time

During the beautiful season of Advent the Marian antiphon *Alma Redemptoris Mater* offers us a meditation on Our Lady's role in our salvation.

Alma Redemptoris Mater, quæ pèrvia cæli
Porta manes, et stella maris, succúrre cadénti,
Súrgere qui curat pópulo: tu quæ genuísti,
Nátúra miránte, tuum sanctum Genitórem
Virgo prius ac postérius, Gabriélis ab ore
Sumens illud Ave, peccatórum miserére.

Kind mother of the Redeemer,
who remain the open gate of heaven and the star of the sea:
help your falling people who want to rise,
you who bore your holy Creator, while nature marveled:
a Virgin before and after,
receiving that "Ave" from Gabriel's mouth,
Have mercy on us sinners.

On December 8th the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. In the United States there is an added note of celebration and rejoicing, as the United States enjoys her patronage. In 1846, the bishops of the United States unanimously chose Our Lady under her title of the Immaculate Conception to be the patroness of the United States, writing in their Pastoral Letter:

"We take this occasion to communicate to you the determination, unanimously adopted by us, to place ourselves and all entrusted to our charge throughout the United States, under the special patronage of the holy Mother of God, whose Immaculate Conception is venerated by the piety of the faithful throughout the Catholic Church. By the aid of her prayers, we entertain the confident hope that we will be strengthened to perform the arduous duties of our ministry, and that you will be enabled to practice the sublime virtues, of which her life presents the most perfect example."

Eight years later, Pops Pius IX made the solemn proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, writing: "The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin" (*Ineffabilis Deus*).

May the Immaculata continue her powerful intercession for the United States, and for each one of us personally.

Deidre Collins

Director of Sacred Music

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS



THOSE THAT ARE SICK

MK1 EJ Anglebrandt, U.S.C.G.
SFC Shelby Bixler, U.S. Army
Major Clayton Cruickshank, U.S.A.F.
Lt. Mark Cruickshank, U.S.A.F.
CPL Nicolas Deland, U.S. Marines
A1C Marshall Eckert, U.S.A.F.
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CPT Lt Eric Reder, U.S. Army
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Sgt Curtis Senyk, U.S. Marines
LCpl Randy Washburn, U.S. Marines

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Mary Deising
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Karen Goodmen
Rick Goodmen
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Edward Letzgun
Kim McConnell Kalvert
Mark Meier
Iris Miguel
Mike Murphy
Nadine Nowicki
Natalie Lech Parent
Greg Porrett
Chuck Roehl
Dorothy Shafran
Sonny Visga
Michael J. Ward
Robert Wawrzyniak
Sara Wawrzyniak

December 6, 2020

Weekend Liturgy for December 13, 2020

Day / Time	Sunday 8:00 a.m.	Sunday 11:00 a.m.	Sunday 5:30 p.m.
Mass Intentions	Parishioners & Territorial Souls of St. Christopher	† Lois Levandowski by Ken & Jan Hamblin † Dave Boddy by VJ & Shari Severini & family For the family of Elizabeth Bolton by Elizabeth Bolton	† Ann Biscarner by Edward & Cindy Atkins † Grace Mary Mollan by Don & Mary Lou Bacon † Mary O' Brien by Rich & Carole Kliemann
Celebrant	Rev. James F. Arwady	Rev. James F. Arwady	Rev. James F. Arwady
Lector	Mark Schwehofer	Christine Sass	Pat Berry
Hospitality Ministers	Selena Schwehofer Jacque Schwehofer	Binsfeld Family Gabrielle Hill	Kevin Hepinstall Penny Trottier
EMHC <i>*Mass Sacristan</i>	*Sue Dega	Irene Huber *Cami Armstrong	Elizabeth Moore *Kristin Tunich
Altar Server	Vincent Schwehofer	Nick Hong	Jacob Tunich

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**St. Christopher's Parish Support
November 29, 2020**

Loose\$ 311.00
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Parishioner Summary

Registered Families.....705
Envelopes Received.....118
Percentage of Supporters 17%

Thank you for your generous support!

CSA 2020 Goal \$58,354

Total Pledges.....\$95,503.95
Contributions Received.....\$82,521.45
Families Supporting CS.....169

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**Join a Small Church
Community**

Amidst all of this year's challenges, we invite you to get involved in a **Small Church Community**. Loneliness and a sense of isolation are not what Christ intends for His Church. He offers peace which the world cannot give, and as members of His Body, we share the Good News before each Sunday Mass and find counsel and wisdom with each other as we relate what the very Word of God is revealing to each of us and by extension, the larger Church. Then we can come to Mass even more ready to receive His Word and His Sacred Body and Blood in all its fullness.

God's Word speaks directly to us during this time and during all times and seasons. Let us help each other break open this Word and till the soil of our souls for God to be able to plant the seed of His Word deep within us and console us in our troubles and joy in our triumphs. Whether by meeting remotely or in person, we can be companions to each other on this journey to a deeper personal relationship with Christ and His Church. If you want to find out more about Small Church Communities, please call the parish office or visit the St. Christopher website at www.stchrismi.org/smallchurchcommunities. Fill out the form at the bottom of the page, and someone will reach out to you quickly!

Liturgy for 7pm
December 8, 2020
The Immaculate Conception of
the Blessed Virgin Mary

Mass Intention	Parishioners and Territorial Souls of St. Christopher
Celebrant	Rev. James Arwady
Lector	Joe Pavlov
Hospitality Ministers	Dave Huxhold Lorraine Frendt
EMHC	Marilynn Pavlov
Altar Server	Sophia Senyk

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