Saint George Church - Worcester and Holden

December 24, 2023 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

40 Brattle Street Worcester, MA 01606 Parish Office: 508-853-0183 Ext. 110 www.saintgeorgesparish.org

Parish Staff: It is our privilege to serve you.

Rev. Edward D. Niccolls, Pastor Ext. 112

Rev. Thomas H. Hultquist, Res. Sr. Priest Ext.122

Deacon Paul T. Audette Ext.113

Annie Doyle, Pastoral Outreach annie@saintgeorgesparish.org Ext.111

Patty LaBonte, Parish Admin Assistant office@saintgeorgesparish.org Ext.110 Fax 508-854-0864

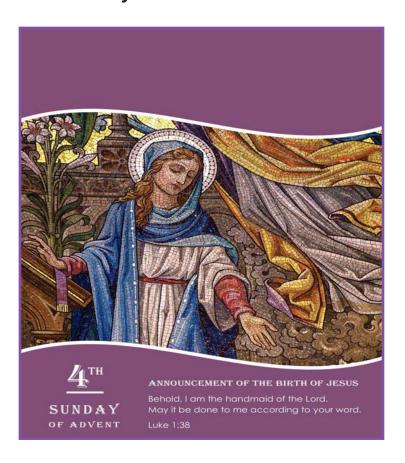
Current Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Online Giving: Kathy Hessel at:

mkhessel@aol.com

For information regarding Pastoral Care of the Sick, Marriage Preparation, Confirmation, and Ministry Involvement, we invite you to call the Parish Office.



St. George Catholic Church

Baptism Information:

Please contact Susan Pacek at 508-856-9960 or email: st.geobaptism@gmail.com

Eucharist Celebrated:

Saturday 4:00 PM Sunday 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM Live-Streamed Mass is offered on our parish website each Sunday at 10:00 AM.

Weekday Masses:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8:00 AM

and Thursday at 5:30 PM

Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM and 5:30 PM **Christmas Day:** 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Confessions are heard inside the church 2:30 PM - 3:15 PM on Saturdays.

Taxish Mission Statement

We, the parish community of St George, celebrate the welcoming presence of Christ in our lives. Together with the universal Church, we are nourished and sustained through the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist, and we are inspired by the proclamation of the Word, guided by the Holy Spirit. We continually seek to grow in a deeper understanding of our faith, to respect the sanctity of human life, and respond to what Jesus asks of us in our time by sharing our gifts and participating in parish activities and outreach to others.

A Community of Ministries, December 24, 2023





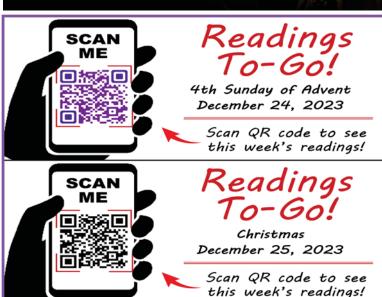
We extend to you & your loved ones our prayerful best wishes for a Blessed & Merry Christmas!

Tomorrow we will celebrate the awesome mystery of Christmas Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, reminds us that "Christmas is an event which is renewed in every family, parish and community which receives the love of God made incarnate in Jesus Christ. Like Mary, the Church shows everyone the 'sign of God: the child whom she bore in her womb and to whom she gave birth, yet who is the son of the Most High, since he 'is of the Holy Spirit' (Mt. 1:20). He is truly the Savior, for he is the Lamb of God who takes upon himself the sin of the world (cf. Jn. 1:29). With the shepherds, let us bow down before the Lamb, let us worship God's goodness made flesh, and let us allow tears of repentance to fill our eyes and cleanse our hearts...He alone can save us. Where God is born, hope is born. He brings hope. Where God is born, peace is born. And where peace is born, there is no longer room for hatred and for war."

This year our holiday open house at the rectory will take place after the 8:00 & 10:00 A.M. Masses on Sunday, December 31st. You are most welcome to come.

Fr. Niccolls





Mass Intentions

Saturday, December 23, 2023

4:00 PM In Memory of Robert J. Sr. and Virginia M. Reidy Requested by the Family

Sunday, December 24, 2023

8:00 AM For the Community of Saint George 10:00 AM For the Community of Saint George

Christmas Eve Masses

4:00 PM For the Community of Saint George **5:30 PM** For the Community of Saint George **Monday, December 25, 2023**

Christmas Day Masses

8:00 AM For the Community of Saint George 10:00 AM For the Community of Saint George

Tuesday, December 26, 2023 No Mass

Wednesday, December 27, 2023

8:00 AM In Memory of Helen T. Pacek

Thursday, December 28, 2023

5:30 PM In Memory of Stuart C. Leroy, Jr., 3rd Anniversary Requested by the Leroy Family

Friday, December 29, 2023

8:00 AM In Memory of Byron J. Kingsley

Saturday, December 30, 2023

4:00 PM In Memory of Elizabeth Brosnihan, 1st Anniversary Requested by her daughter, Susan Pedone

Sunday, December 31, 2023

8:00 AM For the Community of Saint George **10:00 AM** For the Community of Saint George

Deacon Paul Audette <u>James Martin</u>

(Perhaps the favorite topic of Fr. Martin's writings is the personal quest for holiness in life and the communion of saints who are ever present to help us in that quest, whether through intercession or example.)

"St. Aloysius Gonzaga...is someone else who is usually depicted as a sort of delicate flower, but who, in reality, was pretty tough. Coming from a noble family in Renaissance Italy, he told his father that he would be turning down his inheritance, renouncing his title and entering the Jesuits. This prompted his father, the Duke of Mantua, to fly into a rage and threaten to have Aloysius whipped. When that didn't work he sent Aloysius on a trip to meet the crowned heads of Europe, to show Aloysius what he would be giving up. Finally, worn out after an 18-month battle of wills, his father gave up, and sent the Jesuit superior general a letter saying, 'I merely say that I am giving you the most precious thing that I possess.' After a few years as a Jesuit, Aloysius died, at age 21 after caring for plague victims in Rome. Today he is often invoked not just as the patron of youth but as the patron of people with AIDS."





Diocese of Worcester Office of the Bishop 49 Elm Street Worcester, MA 01609

Christmas, 2023

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." (Romans 15:13)

The Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth involve a disparate group of people---the sinless virgin, the upright Joseph, an indifferent innkeeper, Jewish shepherds, pagan magi, the ruthless Herod, incurious scribes, and murderous soldiers. Among this radically varied group, there was one thing in common. They were all---each one of them---loved by God. They were each the reason Christ was born. To each He would call. For each He died.

What was true that long ago night in Bethlehem remains true this day in our world. God loves each one of us. He loves those in the pews each week, twice a year or not at all. He loves those who have just come from the confessional and those who have not yet made it there. He loves those who acknowledge and worship Him and those who do not recognize Him and are far off.

Jesus Christ is the one savior of the world. He loves us all and He calls us all. As people whose freedom God respects, our response is critical. It determines if we find peace in this life and in the next. His peace is a gift. We do not earn it. We can only accept it. We accept it by believing in Him and what He has revealed, by striving to follow Him with our lives, and, by our repentance, accepting His freely offered, limitless mercy for our failures.

I pray that, whatever our situation and circumstance this Christmas, we may all be deeply moved by the wondrous love of God who so loved the world that He sent His Son as our Savior. May we turn anew to Jesus Christ, find a welcome place in His Church, and with it the joy, peace and hope God intends for us all.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Robert J. Mc Manus

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus Bishop of Worcester

Parish Calendar

Saturday, December 23, 2023 8:00 PM AA Meeting

Sunday, December 24, 2023

10:00 AM Toddler & Children's Liturgy

Monday, December 25, 2023 Tuesday, December 26, 2023

Wednesday, December 27, 2023 Thursday, December 28, 2023

11:00 AM Faith Sharing Room 108

6:00 PM Family Prayer Night

Friday, December 29 2023

Saturday, December 30, 2023

8:00 PM AA Meeting

Sunday, December 31, 2023

10:00 AM Toddler & Children's Liturgy

Church Hall

Church Hall

Parish Center Church

Church Hall

Church Hall



Regular Offertory Donations, Special collections and donations are available through Online Giving.

Access is available through our website: click on the icon like the one pictured here. Kathy Hessel is happy to assist you, email with questions at mkhessel@aol.com Many thanks to our online givers who help to provide faithful & consistent financial support to our parish during this time.

2023 Parish Contribution Statements

Contribution Statements will be available for parishioners who wish to have a record of their 2023 contributions by contacting our Administrative Assistant at the Parish Office at 508-853-0183, extension 110 to request one.

Mailed upon request.

Join us for Coffee Shop Club After 8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Masses

December 24 - No Coffee Shop January 7 - Robert Gray and Team January 14 - Jim Moughan and Team

January 21 - Kathy Hessel and Team

Coffee, donuts, bulkies, and fellowship! We NEED TEAM MEMBERS! Each team serves once every 10 weeks. All teams need help. Sign up at the Coffee Shop, come to find out more about how you can help, and help a team!

Coffee Shop Meeting January 7th at 9:30 AM Church Hall

Contact Andy Fish: andy@andyTfish.com or 508-901-7813



O Antiphons of Advent

O Emmanuel (December 23)

"O Emmanuel, kin and lawgiver, desire of the nations, Savior of all people, come and set us free, Lord our God."

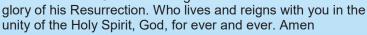
Bulletin Item Due Dates:

Bulletin Postings are due 10 days before the Sunday Bulletin. Please submit items at least 10 days before the Bulletin date. E-mail our Parish Administrative Assistant, Patty LaBonte, at office@saintgeorgesparish.org or call: 508-853-0183.

Delayed Collection Totals due to Publisher's deadline.

Prayer Before or After Mass

Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the



Notice from the Diocesan Office of Healing and Prevention

If you have been abused or victimized by someone representing the Catholic Church, please believe in the possibility for hope and help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out. Contact Judith Audette, Diocese of Worcester: Victim Assistance Coordinator, call her at (508) 929-4363.



Saint George Saturday Rosary Group

You are invited to attend our once a month Saturday morning Rosary Group.

First Saturday of every month.

Currently, we are meeting in the

Church at 8:00 AM January 6, 2024



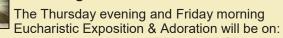
If interested, please contact Jim Hachey at 508-579-9623



St. George Family Prayer Night Thursdays starting after the 5:30 PM Mass

In the Church, there is a gathering of people who pray for all families. The Divine Mercy Chaplet and the Rosary are prayed. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn to pray the Rosary. Eucharistic Adoration is also a part of this wonderful time of prayer on the first Thursday and Friday of each month. Come Pray the Rosary with us.

St. George Church Eucharistic Adoration



<u>Thursday, January 4, 2024</u> 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM and <u>Friday, January 5, 2024</u> after 8:00 AM Mass - 10:00 AM. Come and join us spending time with Jesus. All are welcome.



Handbell Concert in Shrewsbury
St. Anne Parish
130 Boston Turnpike, Shrewsbury
Saturday, January 6th, 2024
Starts at 7:00 PM

St. Anne Parish is hosting a handbell concert by the Merrimack Valley Ringers on Saturday, January 6th, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the Church. Concert is open to the public. Appropriate for all ages. Free-will offering at the end of the concert, all proceeds go to the Merrimack Valley Ringers. All are welcome! Hope to see you there.

For more information contact St. Anne's Parish at 508-757-5154



Catholic Men's Conference Returns to DCU Center 'You Shall Know the Lord'

Men (of all ages, including teens and college students) are invited to this important conference. Scheduled to take place at Worcester's DCU Center on: **Saturday, March 16, 2024** Adult tickets are \$50 until March 4, 2024; afterwards \$60. Student tickets are always \$30. Tickets will not be available at the door this year because of advance planning for the luncheon.

Visit the conference website: www.catholicmenworc.org for information and to purchase tickets online.

Come and hear dynamic talks from Catholic leaders: Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers, James Wahlberg, Michael Nicholson, Bishop Robert McManus, and Mgsr. Thomas Sullivan. Adoration will be available all day. Closing Mass at 4:00 PM.

For further information you can email <u>cathmenworc@gmail.com</u>



Visitation House, Inc.

A welcoming home for women with V Unplanned pregnancy in Worcester, MA

Visitation House in Worcester provides housing and support for pregnant women who need assistance, support and kindness. St. George's Community has helped with contributions to Visitation House through the Baby Bottle Drive. The drive this year will be during the season of Advent. Instead of filling a baby bottle with spare change your can donate in 2 ways:

Donate online: www.visitationhouse.org or send a check to Visitation House, Inc. 119 Endicott St., Worcester, MA 01610 Please indicate in the Memo on your check that the donation is from St. George's Church.

Please keep Visitation House in your prayers. Call the Parish Office with any questions at 508-853-0183.

Thank you for your prayers and generous support!



Religious Education "Growing Together in Faith" Sarah Kelly, Administrator Phone: 508-852-1784 sarah.kelly@saintgeorgesparish.org

Schedule Online: The schedule for all religious education classes, grade one through confirmation, can be found on the parish website. Please check the website for updates.

Emails, Website & Remind App: All important updates are typically sent out through email. We also post any changes to the schedule, or important updates on the parish website. A 3rd way, and often the quickest, of getting information out to families is through the Remind App. Simply text the code @397b76 to 81010. You can also follow the link on the parish website to sign up for the Remind App.

Confirmation: The next class for Confirmation I & II will be on January 21st, 2024. Make sure to check our website for updates.

Volunteers Needed: We are still in need of volunteers, especially those willing to be called as substitutes. Please prayerfully consider donating your time and talent to the young people of our parish. All curriculum and lesson plan materials are provided, as well as teaching support. Please email Sarah.

Word of Life: Intercessions for Life

Inspired by the example of the Blessed Mother, may we, like Mary, gave the courage to say "yes" to God's gift of human life;

We pray to the Lord:

"O Blessed Mother, at the angel's word you went in haste to the aid of your cousin Elizabeth. Although pregnant yourself, you placed her needs before your own. By your example of radical solidarity, teach us to reverence and protect those in need, without conditions or expectations...obtain for us the grace to bring Christ to any expectant mother who is alone and afraid."

USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities Prayer for Solidarity.

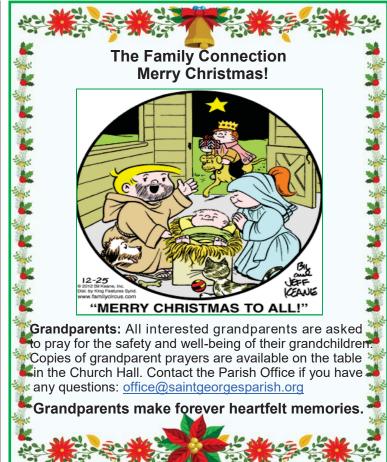
Bottle and Can Drive
American Heritage Girls Scout Troop 0716
Saturday, January 6, 2024
from 9:00 AM to Noon
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and Loreto at
33 Massasoit Road, Worcester

Come support the Girls Scout Troop! Bring your redeemable bottles and cans to this drive. Help support their troop.



Hope Peace Joy Love





Youth Ministry Contact Jay Guillette for next gathering in the Church Hall



Youth Ministry is open to grades 7-12. Come find out more about Youth Ministry and what we will be doing this year! Contact Jay with any questions at jguillette@charter.net

Baptisms in the Church Family

If you, a family member, or friend is interested in receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, we invite you to contact us today. Please contact:

Susan Pacek by either phone 508-856-9960 or email st.geobaptism@gmail.com



Job Opportunity - Parish Administrator St. Christopher Church 950 West Boylston Street, Worcester

St. Christopher's Parish is currently accepting applications for the position of Parish Administrator. This is a (21-24) hour per week position. Responsibilities include: answering phones, maintaining parish website, creating parish bulletins, preparing and scheduling daily and Sunday Mass intention, mailing periodic information to parishioners, ordering and maintaining office supplies. The successful candidate must have an appreciation for the Catholic faith and knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite, including Word, Excel, and Publisher is preferable. Experience in Flocknote or ParishSoft is a plus.

If you are interested, please contact the Pastor at 508-853-1492 or submit your resume by email to: parish@stchristopherparishworcester.org

A Community of Ministries





St. George Parish Outreach

Ann Doyle 508-450-4134 annie@saintgeorgesparish.org

Folks at our three Food Pantries Still Need Help

Special Needs for December are:

Jelly, Cereal and Healthy Snacks



Some of these are items that are not available at the Worcester County Food Bank. Due to currently desperate food needs we now make weekly trips to WCFB to increase the food which we are able to share with families in need. Thank you.





Hope For Housing Cards Help Prevent Family Homelessness



Hope for Housing is a non-profit program developed by our parishioner Matt Ryan. Matt has left us with this legacy which utilizes the collective buying power of 30 congregations to raise money for the prevention of family homelessness.

These Gift Cards for local retailers, including Big Y, CVS, Dunkin' Donuts, Hannaford, Panera, Shaws, Stop & Shop Target, Starbucks, and TJ Max are purchased in bulk, which in turn are sold to members of participating congregations who receive the full value of the card. The retailers donate 2-10% of all sales to the Hope for Housing program. By purchasing gift cards for **your use** at local retailers, you can help to stabilize families by providing counseling and support.

Gift Cards Make Great Christmas Gifts! Helping Prevent Homelessness & Giving to Others!

Please buy "**Hope for Housing Cards**" available after all Masses. See Dave and Sue Genereux in the Church Hall after Mass. Any questions call them at: 978-833-0306



Dear Parishioners and Friends.

Pope Francis recently said, "What the poor need is our hearts open to love...we are called to find Christ in them."

It has been my experience that your hearts are amazingly open to love of the poor! You certainly help me to see Christ in them: Christ the homeless child born in Bethlehem, Christ the refugee in flight to Egypt, Christ who fed the hungry, Christ the teacher and friend.

You make Christ the Homeless Child visible:

 This past year, your donations helped to give 13 families a place to live and learn at our IHN Shelter. The 23 of them were children who enjoyed summer camp and a music program, learned how to ride and repair a bike, and could rest comfortably and securely within their own family.

You show us the face of Christ the Refugee:

 It never totally occurred to me that Christ and his young parents were once refugees. Your donations to Parish Outreach has put me in contact with the lives of our now three refugee families from Afghanistan. Just recently a young mom experienced the sad loss of her own mom still living far away in Afghanistan. While there is great joy for them now living here in America, there is also sadness

We see Christ who fed the hungry through you:

 This year we served 900 meals at the Mustard Seed and you shared food with hundreds of others who came in need to our three food pantries. The struggles of so many folks are lessened because you shop, carry, cook, prepare and share.

Thanks to you, Christ the teacher and friend is present among us:

 So many of you volunteer at our Religious Education Classes, and join our voices together to lead us in praise and worship. You lovingly reach out to family, friends and neighbors in need. You pray for and comfort the sick as well as those who grieve. You listen and share your faith quietly and gently. And so much more! Your kindness and love is Christ present among us.

Gratefully Yours, Annie Doyle



Eucharist and Prayers for the Sick

Especially during these difficult times, please call to let us know if a family member or neighbor is hospitalized, homebound or ill. Call Ann Doyle at 508-450-4134. We want to be with you in prayer and support. We can perhaps arrange a visit and possibly bring Eucharist. Remember that due to HIPAA regulations, unless you allow the hospital or health care institution to release information and list St. George's as your religious affiliation, we are not informed that you are a patient. Thank you.

Our Parish Vision: To welcome all, build connections to Christ and one another, and live our faith as true disciples of Jesus.





To our Priests and Fellow Parishioners
During this Holy Season of Christmas, we pray
in thanksgiving for each of you who have so
generously given of your time, talent and
treasure for the Emmaus Ministry.

We have been greatly blessed in the programs offered. Because of your support and participation, many new programs have been presented, such as "Soup and Stations", a Mardi Gras celebration, a delicious Italian dinner (catered by Dino's Restaurant) and Karaoke, "Caroling, Cookies and Cocoa", Be Our Guest/Bring a Guest to Sunday Mass and An Evening of Reflection on the Emmaus Gospel (Luke 24:13-35). These are just some of the many programs initiated to socially and spiritually enrich our Parish Community here at St. George!

The Emmaus Ministry is thriving because of your support and the hard work of our parishioners and by the Emmaus Committee (Patti Walsh, Wendy Babola, Vivianne Ouellette, Janice Toole, Sue Pacek, Maria Parker and Mike Savino) and CoChairs:

Andrea Svagdys-Gumbrell and JoAnn Nally.

Thank you and may you and your family experience the peace, love and joy of Emmanuel, God With Us,



Spiritual Growth Ministry Corner
Ministry Leader: Bonnie Moran
Saintgeorgespiritualgrowth@gmail.com

The time of "waiting" is coming to a close. We are on the brink of Christmas. During Advent we have been encouraged to be alert, to sharpen our awareness of the God who is to come-to welcome Him into our lives, our hearts and our relationships.

Joyce Rupp in her book 'Fresh Bread' writes about preparing a dwelling place for Christ in our lives. She invites us to become more aware of how He dwells among us as we live our lives. Joyce suggests that each morning we pray a simple prayer of "Come Lord Jesus, dwell with me this day". In the evening she encourages reflection of how God has been in our life that day. This a practice which can easily become an ongoing habit.

God dwells in our midst through the people around us. As we prepare for holiday celebrations we ask ourselves, "Lord when did I bake cookies for you? When did I get a Christmas tree for you? When did I shop for you? When did I reach out to those in need?" If we have been open to God we may hear, "Whenever you welcomed these, you welcomed me."

The openness we have nurtured with our morning and evening prayer leads us to appreciate a portion of Joyce Rupp's prayer at the conclusion of Advent.

And Lord, when it is time to say:
this is Christmas day,
I pray that you will be warmly be welcome
in the Bethlehem of my heart.

Opening our heart to the arrival of Him with us has been the work of Advent. Can we continue to keep our deepened awareness as the new year unfolds?

Spiritual Growth Committee members: Bonnie Moran – Chair; Deacon Paul Audette, Joan Talbot; Patti Walsh; Helen Hurley, and Kyle Lewandowski. Fr. Niccolls as ex officio member.







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"God is Love" 1 John 4:8

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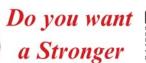
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100 Worcester Road, Sterling 978-422-0100

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