

**Christmas: A Message of Hope and Love!**

On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 23, we lit the fourth candle "Love" of the Advent Wreath and we knew that Christmas had almost arrived: our Advent journey was coming to an end just 24 hours later... with Christmas' Eve celebrations. In last week's bulletin, I wrote to you extensively about the names on each of the four new Advent banners hanging in the church:

**Hope, Peace, Joy and Love!** Several of you had made earlier comments, including why "Faith" was not mentioned. In preparing for this Christmas message to you, I have given some further thoughts.

I also benefited from some insightful comments made at our weekly Scripture Prayer Group (Tuesday morning after 9am Mass/Friday Faith and Fellowship 7pm). Sr. Rosario also told me how at Sunday's Children Liturgy, she explained to the children a simple meaning of our new Advent banner identifying each of the words with the **name of Jesus: Jesus is Hope. Jesus is Peace. Jesus is Joy. Jesus is Love.**

This simplicity makes it easy for children to understand not only the meaning of the Advent Journey but also the meaning of **Christmas**. I believe it is also helpful for adults. It is all about our own **Relationship with Jesus!** We believe that **God is Love and Love is God!** We also believe that at Christmas, for the first-time ever in the history of the world, **God** becomes **Man** on earth and this changes the whole world once for all and brings all of us the **Hope of Salvation: Jesus** (Joshua in Aramaic which means **Savior**) is both **God** (as second person of the Holy Trinity) and **Man** (as the son of Mary and the Holy Spirit). **Jesus is God. God is Love.** So we can affirm too that **Jesus is Love!!** Like children, we too can relate more easily with Jesus, both man and God, than with God alone. Like children, we can say at Christmas: we too can relate more easily with Jesus, both man and God, than with God alone. Like children, we can say at Christmas: Jesus is my Hope, my Peace, my Joy, and my Love.

The lighting of each of the four candles of the Advent Wreath reminds us also of the lighting of the Pascal Candle at Easter. As Jesus told his disciples: **"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life"** (John 8:12). Jesus became man so that he could die for us on the Cross to save us. From the moment of his birth, through his Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension **Jesus remains our light and our salvation!** These are the mysteries of Incarnation and Resurrection that we celebrate at **every Mass** when as promised, Jesus returns to us as the Bread of Life: **"I am the Bread of Life... Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has Eternal Life"** (John 6:48 and 6:55). Every Mass in Heaven on Earth, as Heaven is to be with God and God comes at every Mass as the Body and Blood of Christ become really present at the time of Consecration of the

bread and wine. **Christmas is Christ's Mass.** At every Mass we celebrate both Christmas and Easter.

**Today the Angel of the Lord announces to each of us,** as he did 2018 years ago to the shepherds keeping night watch over their flock near Bethlehem: **"Behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David, a Savior has been born who is Christ and Lord."** (Luke 2:10-11). At every Christmas Mass, like at every Mass, we recall this amazing birth of our Savior. Yes, God sent His only son to all of us so that we can be saved. "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but has eternal life.: (John 3:16). **This is the Christmas message of Hope and Love!** I trust in you Jesus. I believe that you are my savior. I believe that you are my light and my salvation. **I hope to be with you forever, both on earth and in heaven. Jesus, you are my hope, my only hope! Jesus, you are my love forever: I know that you love me and my greatest desire is to love you as you love me!**

To paraphrase Bernadette Farrell's lyrics of the beautiful son "Christ be our light", in a world where there is so much darkness, we are longing for **light**; in a world where there is so much despair, we are longing for **hope**; in a world where there is so much hatred, we are longing for love! Christmas is a special time every time every year when we can find out that hope and love we are longing for and that we can recognize that without Jesus, we are nothing, and that with Jesus, everything is possible.

**May we find Hope and Love on Christmas Day! Come Lord Jesus, fill my heart with your hope and love!**

May God bless each one of us and may we all have the best-ever Christmas!

*One in Christ,  
Fr. Alain*



# Fourth Sunday of Advent

## Religious Education

### Important Dates:

**Dec. 23/24**– No classes– Christmas Break  
**Dec. 30/31**–No classes– Christmas Break  
**Schedule Change! Jan. 6/7**– CCD Classes  
**Jan. 13/14**– CCD Classes



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**\*Attention Sacramental Preparation Families (CCD and Catholic School Families):** Workshop dates for First Reconciliation/ Communion (10 am) and Confirmation Year 1 and 2 (2:30pm): Jan 27, Feb 24, Mar 24, & Apr 28.

Questions? Please contact Therese Thiedeman, DRE



**FIAT: Children in Elementary**  
**EDGE: Middle School Youth**  
**Life Teen: High School Youth**

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For most current Youth and Evangelization events,  
 please see our website: [www.olhoc.org](http://www.olhoc.org)

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### Note to the Pastor,

To you, your staff, and the entire Our Lady Help of Christians Parish community I offer my sincere appreciation for your generous response to the 2018 Annual Appeal. Your efforts have resulted in reaching and exceeding your parish goal.

Our Lady Help of Christians Parish family's recognition of the needs of others throughout the Church of Washington is inspiring. The kindness that has been expressed significantly helps the archdiocese to continue to provide pastoral, charitable, educational and social service ministries to all our brothers and sisters in need.

With thanks for your goodness and with a pledge of continued prayers for you and the parish of Our Lady Help of Christians.

Donald Cardinal Wuerl  
 Apostolic Administrator

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### Stop By For a Visit!

Our Lady Help of Christians has a new arrival—the beautiful statue of Our Lady of Fatima in the Sanctuary. She was blessed on Her Feast Day of The Immaculate Conception on December 8th. Please feel free to visit Her and Our Lady of Guadalupe in the opposite grotto. Our Blessed Mother is always here to listen to Her children!

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### Your Church: The Lord's House

Continue to please respect your church, the Lord's house, and **refrain from taking any food or beverage into the Church.** If your children need food or beverages, please use the cry room. Please care for your building investment by not walking on kneelers or using them as footrests.

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## OUR LADY'S LITTLE CHRISTIANS

Preschool openings (3 and 4 year olds) at OLHOC! Full and half-day programs. We include children's chapel services and many opportunities for family involvement!



For more information send an email to [preschool@olhoc.org](mailto:preschool@olhoc.org) or call the office and ask for Nieda, Preschool Director.

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### OLHOC Community Outreach

Our next **Shepherds Table** is Thursday, Feb. 21 at Good Shepherd Church on Smallwood Drive.

The next Outreach Committee meeting is Thursday, **January 3 at 7:00 pm in Father Alain's office.** New members and ideas are always welcome!

The **Holiday House** will be in the Narthex until December 23 for those who wish to donate for the Christmas food packages for those in need.



**We are in need of volunteers to help deliver Christmas packages following the 10 am Mass on Dec. 23. Thank you in advance!!**

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The parish office will be closed **December 24-26, and Dec. 31-Jan. 1** for the Christmas / New Year's holidays. We wish you all a Happy and Holy Christmas season!

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### Friday Faith & Fellowship Group

*Join the group every 2nd Friday of the month for  
 Movie Night (watch for update)  
 and for bible study and music each 3rd, 4th, and  
 occasional 5th Friday. 7:00 PM*

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### Prayer Requests

We are asked to pray for: K.D. Dillard, Josephina Knapp, Crystal Beauregard, Sheryl Carter, Alex Leon, Shar-keter Butler, Chloe, Harris Family, Dennis Wick, Richard Dunham, Edward Krevey, Scott Anderson, Rebecca "Tess" Franch, Connie Miller, Russell Dickens, Fr. Pittman, Christopher Berger, Christine Proctor, Margaret Reeves, Bonnie Croston, Melody Hudson, Thomas Kennane, Joseph Albritten, Lam Family, Urrutia Family, Darren Williams, Mary Delores Proctor, Pat Fisher, Antonio Torres, Chris Goldhammer, Trinidad Mercedes Santos, Shirley & Jerry Barrett, June Swann, Elsy Canare, Martone Family, Maria Mora, Nadia Toledo, Cielo Quintero, Oscar Marin, Maribel Colindres, Zynae Green Family, Anthony Rodriguez, James Thompson, Doris Chesley, Laura Flaim, and all our military and civilians serving in harm's way.

\*Names will remain on our list for 3 months. Please call the parish office to re-request a name after 3 months or to remove a name when the person has regained health.



### Mass Intentions this Week

Saturday, December 22, 9:00 AM: Briana Ballesteros  
Saturday, December 22, 5:00 PM: OLHOC Parishioners  
Sunday, December 23, 8:30 AM: Bill Bryner (+)  
Sunday, December 23, 10:00 AM: K D Dillard  
Sunday, December 23, 11:30 AM: Abigail Strawberry  
Sunday, December 23, 7:00 PM: Luz Alba Alfaro  
Monday, December 24, 5:00 PM: Roberto Urrutia  
Monday, December 24, 8:00 PM: Peter Nikolai(+)  
Monday, December 24, 9:30 PM: Laura Flaim  
Monday, December 24, 12:00 Midnight: Delia Lagman(+)  
Tuesday, December 25, 8:30 AM: Nancy Walsh (+)  
Tuesday, December 25, 10:00 AM: Gil & Bonnie Castro  
Wednesday, December 26, 9:00 AM: Jose Antonio Galvan  
Thursday, December 27, 9:00 AM: Raymond & Mireille Obas  
Friday, December 28, 9:00 AM: K D Dillard

### Note

Please take a copy of our OLHOC Church Calendar for 2019 as you leave Mass today. (One copy per family, please.) The calendar has all Catholic religious Holy Days and secular holidays as well, and is bi-lingual. Some parishes have ceased offering the calendars, but OLHOC will continue as long as our parishioners utilize them. Thank you.



*During this Christmas Season, we wish you and your family Peace, Joy, Love, and Happiness. Please remember those in need— the poor, the sick, the homeless, and those serving in harm's way.*

*God Bless You!*

### Mass Readings for December 30, 2018

*The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph*

#### \*First Reading

1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28

#### \*Second Reading

John 3:1-2, 21-24

#### \*Gospel

Luke 2:41-52

[www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org)



## 2018 Advent at Our Lady Help of Christians

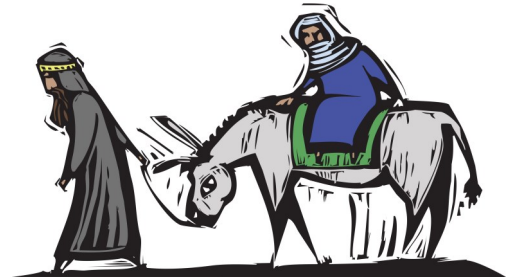
### December 23 – Christmas Novena Mass

The Novena will conclude this evening Sunday, December 23, with the Mass at 7:00 PM. Please join us for our Parish celebration!

### Dec. 23-Christmas Posadas (Reenactment of Mary & Joseph's journey to Bethlehem)

The last night of the Posadas (Dec. 23) will take place at OLHOC at 6:30 PM. Don't miss out!

*Many thanks to all who were a part of the planning and presentation of the Posadas and the Christmas Novena Masses; well done, all! And thanks to all of you who participated in these joyous celebrations!*



#### **www.FaithDirect.net**

Faith Direct provides our parishioners with the ability to give electronically. To simplify your Sunday mornings, visit Faith Direct and consider enrolling using our **parish code: MD614**. Applications can also be found in the narthex. Thank you for your kind donations and to all those already enrolled in this cost effective measure for our church.



#### **Altar Guild Memorial Flowers**

The Altar Guild is asking for donations **in memory of loved ones**, to help defer the cost of the poinsettias used to decorate the church for Christmas.

Please use the special donation envelope included in your weekly offering envelopes or pick one up in the narthex. **Please write your information clearly** and place in the collection basket at the Sunday Mass you attend.

#### **Social Hall Under Renovation**

The Social Hall is closed while under construction. The kitchen remains available. We strive to be finished as soon as safely possible. **Dick Potter, OLHOC Project Manager's update:** All steel is complete and enclosed. All framing and drywall complete. Painting started. All ceiling HVAC ductwork, lighting and sprinkler heads relocated for the 3 rooms. New ceiling tiles and closet and closet doors due this week. Folding partitions in manufacturing for January delivery. All county inspections to date approved.

If you have any questions regarding this important Capital Campaign step, please contact the office at 301-645-7112. Concerns will be forwarded to the Project Manager.

