

# Dear Padre,

*My family, friends, and coworkers seem to be uncomfortable when I tell them that I've been praying for them. Should I just keep it to myself?*

There is nothing fundamentally wrong with telling people you have been praying for them. Most people are probably grateful for such care and support. But it can be a little tricky. If the person believes the praying is actually a judgment and not a blessing, it may provoke a less-than-grateful response. This is where honest discernment on your part is invited. Are you coming across as prayerfully concerned, or is there some criticism or judgment in what seems to be an innocent blessing? People are able to perceive the difference.

Another consideration—and this is not at all unusual as a response in the culture of today—is that some people are very defensive about any religious expressions and do not react favorably. Think, for example, about the different reactions to “Merry Christmas” or “Happy Holidays,” which can often provoke the familiar idiom “them’s fightin’ words.” My best advice is to keep praying for everyone, as no one truly understands or fully appreciates the power of prayer. That being said, temper your announcement when you suspect it will not be well received. This demonstrates a grateful and blessed heart, which is what you intend and hope for, after all. ●



MARY LONG / SHUTTERSTOCK

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org

## Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to [DearPadre.org](https://dearpadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
December 16	December 17	December 18	December 19	December 20	December 21	December 22
Advent Weekday	Advent Weekday	Advent Weekday	Advent Weekday	Advent Weekday	Advent Weekday	Fourth Sunday of Advent
Nm 24:2–7, 15–17a	Gn 49:2, 8–10	Jer 23:5–8	Jgs 13:2–7, 24–25a	Is 7:10–14	Sg 2:8–14 or Zep 3:14–18a	Mi 5:1–4a
Mt 21:23–27	Mt 1:1–17	Mt 1:18–25	Lk 1:5–25	Lk 1:26–38	Lk 1:39–45	Heb 10:5–10
						Lk 1:39–45



## A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

*[The crowd asked John the Baptist,] “What shall we do?” By suggesting this question, the Gospel reminds us of something important: life has a task for us.... Each of us—let us not forget this—has a mission to accomplish. So, let us not be afraid to ask the Lord: what shall I do?*

ANGELUS, ROME, DECEMBER 12, 2021



© 2024 Liguori Publications. *Imprimatur*: “In accordance with CIC 827, permission to publish was granted on January 25, 2024, by the Most Reverend Mark S. Rivituso, Auxiliary Bishop, Archdiocese of St. Louis. Permission to publish is an indication that nothing contrary to Church teaching is contained in this work. It does not imply any endorsement of the opinions expressed in the publication; nor is any liability assumed by this permission.” No part of this work may be used in any form without the prior written permission of Liguori Publications. Scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible*, revised edition © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. All Rights Reserved. Printed in USA. Download our latest catalog, visit [Liguori.org](https://Liguori.org) or call 800-325-9521.

# Our Parish COMMUNITY

December 15, 2024  
Third Sunday of Advent (G)  
Zephaniah 3:14–18a / Philippians 4:4–7 / Luke 3:10–18



## The Light Side of the Dark

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

There’s something to be said for kindness. Often when we say to ourselves that something is an act of godliness, it’s when someone is kind, especially when it seems to come out of the blue. It’s what John the Baptist seemed to be thinking when he said we would be baptized with the Holy Spirit and with the sort of passionate fire that warms and gives off light. Henry James, the British novelist, once said that three things were important in life—the first, be kind; the second, be kind; the third, be kind. Long before Henry James said it, St. Paul wrote to the Christian community in Philippi: “Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near” (Philippians 4:5). God’s presence seems to be nearer when someone is kind.

It is curious how in the darkest moments of life, the light of kindness shines more brightly. Natural calamities seem to bring out kindness toward those who suffer. So too, at times of personal tragedies or disasters, when others are grieving the death of someone they love, as well as countless other times when people find themselves lost in the dark. Little wonder then how during this time of year when the days are shortest, and the nighttime dark is longest, that the days of Advent and Christmas seem to be laced with kindness for one another. Then the veil that hides God from our eyes grows thinner, and we catch glimpses of “God with us.” ●

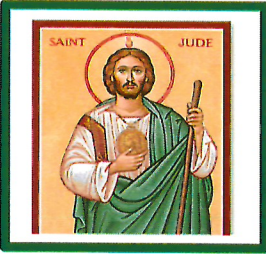


The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:7

## Reflect

*Have you made kindness a regular practice?*



**ST. JUDE PARISH**

Father Robert Creagan, Pastor, [frcreagan@stakalamazoo.org](mailto:frcreagan@stakalamazoo.org)  
Deacon Jim Bauer, Administrator, cell: (269) 655-6510  
P.O. Box 102, Gobles, Michigan 49055-0102  
Office Phone (269) 628-2219  
Webpage: [www.st.judeparishgobles.com](http://www.st.judeparishgobles.com)

For Pastoral Emergencies, Contact Deacon Jim on his cell phone  
and/or St. Augustine Cathedral at 269-345-5147 and follow the prompts.

**PARISH OFFICE HOURS:** Mon.-Thurs., 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Weds. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Office Email: [st.judeparishgobles@gmail.com](mailto:st.judeparishgobles@gmail.com)

Sacristan:	Tammy Bauer	(269) 655-6672
Administrative Asst.-Bookkeeper:	Lauren Gilbert	(269) 286-4898
Religious Ed Coordinator:	Jennifer Price	(269) 377-6734
Safe Environment Coordinator:	Jennifer Rossell	(269) 744-2582
Choir Director:	Laura Woods	(269) 628-4886

**WEEKLY MASS CALENDAR:** Confession: Thursday Mornings after Mass **CELEBRANT:**

Sunday	Dec. 15, 2024	9:30 a.m.	Mass	Fr. Schmidt
Thursday	Dec. 19, 2024	9:00 a.m./10:30 p.m.	Adoration/Mass	Fr. Creagan
Sunday	Dec. 22, 2024	9:30 a.m.	Mass	Fr. Creagan
Weds.	Dec. 25, 2024	9:30 a.m.	Mass	Fr. Creagan
Thursday	Dec. 26, 2024	NO MASS	OR	ADORATION

**WEEKLY MASS INTENTIONS:**

Sunday	Dec. 15, 2024	Judy McKenna	By: Chuck McKenna
Thursday	Dec. 19, 2024	Maudie & Harry Kalisiak	By: Don & Jan Kalisiak
Sunday	Dec. 22, 2024	The People of St. Jude Parish	Pro populo
Weds.	Dec. 25, 2024	The People of St. Jude Parish	Pro populo
Thursday	Dec. 26, 2024	NO MASS	OR ADORATION

**TODAY:** **SUNDAY, 12-15-24** **NEXT SUNDAY: 12-22-24**

Reader	Tony Karsen	Reader	Marcus Secondi
EO Ministers	Tony & Jenny Karsen	EO Ministers	Jennifer P. & Jenny K.
Servers	Alexa, Lydia, Alanah, Noah	Servers	Rocky, Daisy, Bella, Elise

Regardless Of the Challenges We Face, We Can Rejoice Because the Lord, Our Mighty Savior, Is Coming

When was the last time we stopped in our tracks, threw our arms in the air, and sang praise to the Lord, unable to contain our joy? We see joy like this after championship games, with the winners embracing one another, shouting, and dancing in complete exuberance. Or at the moment when a child is born – the parents' joy is so intense that tears replace words.

These are remarkable moments indeed, the ones we remember for the rest of our lives. But what if this kind of joy – life-altering, memorable joy – was a part of our *daily* existence, including the difficult and troublesome times? And what if we could not just find and possess it in those moments but share it?

The first two readings exemplify this kind of joy. The prophet Zephaniah gives a vibrant pep talk to the people in exile, bringing them the good news of their impending salvation. He has experienced his people bound to and oppressed by the Assyrian empire, struggling to keep their covenant with the Lord. Prior to today's passage, he offered them a stern warning to resume their religious obedience. Now Zephaniah says, *Shout for joy ... Sing joyfully ... Be glad and rejoice with all your heart ... The Lord has removed the judgment against you. He has turned away your enemies ... Fear not.* He writes that a mighty Savior is coming who will renew the Israelites with his love.

Like Zephaniah, Paul also wrote in dire circumstances. Scholars agree that he wrote this letter to the Church in Philippi while imprisoned in Rome. Yet, like Zephaniah, he instructs the Philippians to rejoice and to *rejoice in the Lord always!* His entire message exudes joy and peace, the result of trusting Christ regardless of one's circumstances. Paul knows in the depth of his soul that the mighty Savior has come.

John the Baptist instructed the people on proper life in a community: share their clothing and food, and the soldiers should stop extorting funds and be satisfied with their wages. In the midst of the difficulties of living under Roman occupation, John tells them that someone mightier than he is coming. He preaches this Good News of Christ, knowing that the arrival of Jesus was a cause for joy. The mighty Savior was coming, and this Good News trumped any negative situation one faced.

**Advent is a time to prepare ourselves for our Savior.** We may find ourselves in less-than-ideal circumstances due to health, employment, or other issues. Sometimes, these deficiencies dominate our state of mind, and we forget all too easily what we *do* have – a Lord who is *in [our] midst*, today and every day. He is our joy, and He is eternal and everlasting.

This third Sunday of Advent, we light the pink candle to remind us to rejoice, even if we face challenges like Zephaniah and Paul did. We do not need to experience something extravagant to throw our hands in the air and praise God. The Lord is coming indeed. He is here, our mighty Savior.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION						
Sunday	Dec. 08, 2024	Target	\$ 2,200	Offered	\$ 1442.00	\$ 758.00
Year to Date		Target	\$ 42,600		\$ 44,735.00	\$ 2,135.00
Attendance		102	Year To Date Attendance			2879

**FROM THE DRE:**

**December 15th** – Adoration and Reconciliation for students and parents during class time.  
**There will be no Class on December 29th.**

**PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE ILL:** Brian Laughlin, Lillian A. Wheeler, Julie Haley, Steve Klein, Pete & Barb Percival, Joan Rumery, Margie Burris, Lillian B. Wheeler, Frances Parsons, David Vana, Sonny Laughlin, Donna Murphy, Jack Secondi, Mary Heinz, Vicki Clark, Brett Middleton, and those on our prayer chain.

**WOMEN'S GUILD CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE SUN., DEC. 22<sup>ND</sup> AFTER MASS**  
**Pick up some delicious baked goods for your holiday entertaining!**

**CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE HERE AT ST. JUDE:**

**Reconciliation after Mass on Sunday, December 22 and also decorating the Church – all are welcome to help!**  
**Midnight Mass (Tues., 12/24/24) at St. Augustine Cathedral.**  
**9:30 Mass on Christmas Day (Weds., 12/25/24).**  
**9:30 Mass On (Weds., 1/1/25) Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.**  
***These are both Holy Days of Obligation***

**A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE** - Today's gospel tells us to SHARE! This Christmas resist the pressure to give token gifts. Instead, use those funds to give NESSITIES to the poor. If our impoverished brothers and sisters are not on our gift list, we've missed the point of Christmas.

*The Sanctuary Candle is lit this week in memory of **DAN GORDON**  
By request of Bill & Vi Taylor*

**FOOD PANTRY NEEDS FOR DECEMBER** – Shampoo, canned peas, canned soups, cereal, dish/laundry soap, toilet paper, paper towels. If someone is 60 years of age and over, and their monthly income is \$1580 a month for one person, they can apply to receive CSFP/Senior Commodities each month. If you have any questions, feel free to call 269-501-0224.

**ADVENT PRESENTATION at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Allegan.** Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m. **Evening Vespers by Candlelight.** A beautiful liturgy set to music emphasizing seeking light in the darkness. Join us for this peaceful time of prayer and meditation. All are welcome!

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN:** As Deacon Jim stated, our building project is on hold until after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year. We will still take any donations that anyone wants to give, as any project we want to do will take additional funds. Look for future meetings after January 1<sup>st</sup> in the bulletin and Flocknote messages.

**CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS TO VOTE "NO" ON THESE BILLS** - House: HB 6068. Senate: SB 1082 and HB 6077. Anyone who thought these bills were dead needs to think again! Planned Parenthood is holding a townhall about the "sex ed" bill. Planned Parenthood is working overtime to get these bills passed before the end of the 2024 Legislation Session! Please get the word out to everyone you know to call or email their state legislators and ask them to Vote NO on HB 6068, and SB1082 and HB 6077.

*Details for House Bill 6068 and Senate Bills 1082 and 6077 are on the bulletin board in the hallway.*

**FROM THE DIOCESE**

**2024 KALAMAZOO AREA ADVENT PENANCE SERVICES ARE POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE HALLWAY.**

**Anyone aware of child sexual abuse should report the matter to the appropriate law enforcement agency and make a report to the Michigan Department of Attorney General at 844-324-3374.**