



THE CHURCH OF SAINT BONIFACE

817 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE
LUNENBURG, MA 01462



DECEMBER 3, 2023



THE LITURGY OF THE DAY

DECEMBER 3, 2023 / FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 63:16b–17, 19b; 64:2–7/1 Corinthians 1:3–9 /Mark 13:33–37

A few weeks ago we heard the parable of the ten virgins waiting for the bridegroom, five who foolishly brought no oil with them for their lamps. The lesson from that Gospel can be applied to today's as well. Be prepared. Be patient. Plan ahead because delays happen. The wise servants in today's Gospel do exactly that, accomplishing their work so they are ready whenever the master returns, but waiting patiently because it may be a while. May we be reminded that our period of preparation does not end on December 25, for the Lord comes in different ways to different folks, not just as an infant child on Christmas Day. Let us make ourselves ready, whether it's today or years from now.

Question of the Week: What will I do this week to prepare for Christ's coming, knowing that it may happen at any time?

"Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come." (Mark 13:33)

We all take things for granted. In particular, we take time for granted. We make our lives too busy. We plan our days, weeks, months, even years in advance. Remember, our time on earth is a gift. None of us knows how long we will be here. Start today and begin thanking God for each and every day. Take time in silence, every day, and listen to how God is calling you right now to help build His kingdom on earth.

Breakfast in Bethlehem

Please join CCD Grades 1-5 for their annual performance on Sunday, December 17th at 9:00 am in the Parish Hall.



Family Connection

In family life, we try to prepare ourselves for many future things: our next vacation, our children's education, our retirement. We are careful not to allow ourselves to be caught by surprise so that we can handle any challenges our family may face. Today's Gospel reminds us that we are called to be just as attentive and alert to the coming of the Son of Man so that it will not catch us unprepared. This means attending to our family's spiritual life as carefully as we attend to other important family matters.

As you gather as a family, talk about a time when you received surprise visitors at your house, perhaps a neighbor who stopped by or a relative who arrived unannounced. Was your household prepared to receive this unannounced guest? What might your family have done differently if you knew ahead of time that this visitor was going to arrive? Jesus told his disciples that no one knows when the Son of Man will return, except the Father. Read with your family what Jesus told his disciples in today's Gospel, Mark 13:33–37.

During Advent, we not only prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of Jesus, we also check to see if we are doing all the things that will keep us ready to receive Jesus when he comes again. Talk about how your family can recommit to daily prayer, reading Scripture, and staying faithful to God's commandments. Pray together that through this Advent season your family will be more prepared to receive Jesus when he comes again. Read as a concluding prayer Paul's words to the Corinthians found in today's second reading, 1 Corinthians 1:3–9, or pray the Lord's Prayer

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MASS INTENTIONS

DEC 2	4:00	PM	ELAINE CHARPENTIER
DEC 9	4:00	PM	OTTAVIO & ANTONIA ANGELINI
DEC 16	4:00	PM	BERNARD J. ROBARGE
DEC 23	4:00	PM	ANGELINA ARRUDA
JAN 13	4:00	PM	PETER CHARPENTIER
JAN 21	8:00	AM	THOMAS COTTER
JAN 27	4:00	PM	MICHAEL MARCIL
FEB 4	8:00	AM	WESLEY LAFORD
FEB 11	10:30	AM	MICHAEL BRISSON

Prayer of the Rosary

Every Saturday at 3:30 pm in the church, led by members of the St. Boniface Knights of Columbus.

Food Donations for the months of November and December will go to Catholic Charities of Leominster. Donations can be placed in the rear of the church. Thank you for your continued generosity.

The Montachusett Chorale will present its Holiday Concert, "Sounds of the Season", on Sunday, December 3rd at 2pm in Tata Auditorium at Leominster City Hall, 25 West St. The concert will benefit The Leominster Flood Relief Fund. Tickets are \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door and under 18 admitted free. Tickets are available in the Mayor's Office at Leominster City Hall or on Venmo under charities at: @The Montachusett Chorale.

The Knights of Columbus will be having a meeting on Wednesday, December 6th at 7pm in the Parish Hall. Any men of the parish who want to learn more about the Knights are invited.

Our annual **Giving Tree** is once again up at the rear of the church. We hope you will consider taking a tag and making a young person's Christmas extra special this year. All gifts should be returned to the church wrapped and labeled no later than December 10th.

Thank you! to all who took a Rest Home resident name for gift buying! Please remember to return wrapped gifts to the labeled bins in the back of church no later than Sunday, December 10.

Baked Goods—Some parishioners have inquired about baking some Christmas treats (cookies, etc.) for us to deliver with the gifts. These are most welcome! Please leave them in the kitchen on Thursday, December 14th between 9:00 and 4:00. (You can enter at the side door.) We are delivering gifts and treats to the Rest Homes on Saturday, December 16. Thank you once more for supporting this longstanding tradition of sharing Christmas love!

Once again the Parish is participating in the Diocese tradition of providing gift cards to the **Seminarians**. Gift tags can be found on the windows in the rear of the church. One gift card goes along way for these dedicated young men. Please consider taking a gift tag.

STEWARDSHIP

Nov 18/19

Sunday: \$2,193.00
 Maintenance/Fuel: .. \$180.00
 Human Development \$342.00
 Holy Day :..... \$10.00
 Flowers \$85.00
 TOTAL..... \$2,810.00

Nov 25/26

Sunday: \$2,567.00
 Maintenance/Fuel: \$65.00
 Human Development .. \$21.00
 Holy Day :..... \$15.00
 Flowers \$153.00
 TOTAL..... \$2,836.00

Thank you for your continued, generosity and support



Christmas Mass Schedule

4th Sunday of Advent
 12/24 9:00 am

Christmas Eve
 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm

Christmas Day 9:00 am

New Year's Day 9:00 am



SAINT BONIFACE CHURCH

817 Massachusetts Avenue, Lunenburg, MA 01462
Parish Office: 978-582-4008 email: stbonifaceparish@verizon.net

Discover St. Boniface ~ Visit our website: www.StBoniface-lunenburg.org

Parish Office Hours

Monday / Wednesday / Thursday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

The Celebration of the Eucharist

Sunday: 8:00am and 10:30 am | Saturday Vigil: 4:00 pm
Holy Hour of Adoration: last Wednesday of the month 5:30-6:30 pm
Weekday Masses: 6:30 pm Wednesday | 8:00 am Thursday & Friday

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (Confession) Saturday 3:00 - 3:30 p.m. or by appointment.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM Adults are baptized at the Easter Vigil as part of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). Infant and child Baptisms are by arrangement.

FIRST EUCHARIST Preparation begins in grade one and includes classes, retreats, and home instruction. Children receive First Eucharist in grade two.

CONFIRMATION Our Confirmation program begins in the 9th grade; students are confirmed in the spring of the 10th grade. For young adults who have been baptized but not yet confirmed, contact the parish office.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY It is the policy of the Diocese of Worcester that a couple should contact the parish at least one year prior to the anticipated date of their wedding to allow sufficient time to carry out the various steps of the marriage preparation process. It is important that arrangements be made with the church before plans are made with reception halls, caterers, etc.

ANNOINTING OF THE SICK Please call the parish office 978-582-4008, or email Fr. Omolo at stbonifaceparish@verizon.net or Louise Nadeau at dinalou1@comcast.net to arrange these visits.

PRAYER LINE MINISTRY If you or someone you know needs prayers or if you would like to be a part of this ministry of those who pray for the needs of neighbors, please contact the parish office at 978-582-4008, email stbonifaceparish@verizon.net or contact Louise Nadeau at dinalou1@comcast.net.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #16480 In Service to One. In Service to all. Members meet in the Parish Hall on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 pm. Any Catholic men over 18 who are interested in joining the Knights should contact Grand Knight Peter Bak (978-403-5119) or Deputy Grand Knight, Thomas Bodkin at tbodkin@bodkinmason.com or (508-363-3422), or email kofc16480@gmail.com.

PARISH STAFF:

Rev. Charles Omolo, Administrator
Heather Sroka, Administrative Assistant
Lucy Marcil, Religious Ed Coordinator (Grades 1-5)
Terry Stramowski, Religious Ed Coordinator (Grades 6-10)
Judit Ernst, Music Ministry
Louise Nadeau, Sacristan
Ministry Schedule
Nina Charpentier, Director, Preschool

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Newcomers to St. Boniface are invited and encouraged to formally register as members of the parish so that we may stay in touch with you with faith formation news, notices of special events, volunteer opportunities, and more.

Registration forms are available at the doors of the church, the parish office, or on our website.

Please note that you must be registered for at least six months before we can issue any verification of your status as a parishioner for godparent or sponsor letters.

TODAYS GOSPEL

Background on the Gospel Reading

Today we begin the season of [Advent](#), which marks the start of a new liturgical year for the Church. The readings for Sunday Mass are arranged on a three-year cycle. Each year features a different Gospel—Matthew, Mark, or Luke. Readings from the Gospel of John are interspersed throughout all three years. With this year's first Sunday of Advent, we begin Cycle B of the Lectionary, which focuses our attention on the Gospel of Mark. This week and next week, our readings from Mark's Gospel present two important Advent themes: the Lord's return at the end of time and John the Baptist's preparation for Jesus.

Today's Gospel is taken from the end of Mark's Gospel, the chapter that immediately precedes Mark's account of Jesus' Passion. Having been questioned repeatedly by the scribes and the Pharisees, Jesus is now questioned by his disciples—Peter, James, John, and Andrew—who want details about his prediction of the destruction of the Temple. Jesus answers with many warnings about the difficulties that the disciples will face.

Today's passage comes at the conclusion of Jesus' warnings to his disciples. Jesus emphasizes the need for watchfulness. The Son of Man will come without warning; only the Father knows the exact hour. The disciples must not be caught unprepared when this time comes.

Scholars believe that Mark's Gospel was written around the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. Mark's audience consisted of Christians who were living in difficult social and political times, times of conflict. They were likely beginning to face persecution as followers of Jesus. In this difficult time, it helped to recall that Jesus had foretold of such difficulties. Early Christian communities took courage from Jesus' warning to remain alert and watchful, and they found in his words a way to persevere through suffering.

Today's Gospel reminds us that Advent is about more than our preparation for the Church's celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas. Advent is also about preparing ourselves for Christ's return in glory at the end of time. Like the disciples and the faithful in Mark's community, we must also stay alert and watchful. Our faithfulness to God, through the good times as well as the difficult times, shows us to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man.

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