



ST. STEVEN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

24827 S. DOBSON RD, SUN LAKES, AZ | 480-895-9266 | [HTTP://SAINTSTEVENS PARISH.ORG](http://SAINTSTEVENS PARISH.ORG)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2020

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. - Jn 1:6-7

SUNDAY'S READINGS

FIRST READING:

I rejoice heartily in the LORD,
in my God is the joy of my soul. (Is 61:10a)

PSALM:

My soul rejoices in my God. (Is 61:10b)

SECOND READING:

May the God of peace make you perfectly holy
and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body,
be preserved blameless for the coming of our
Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thes 5:23)

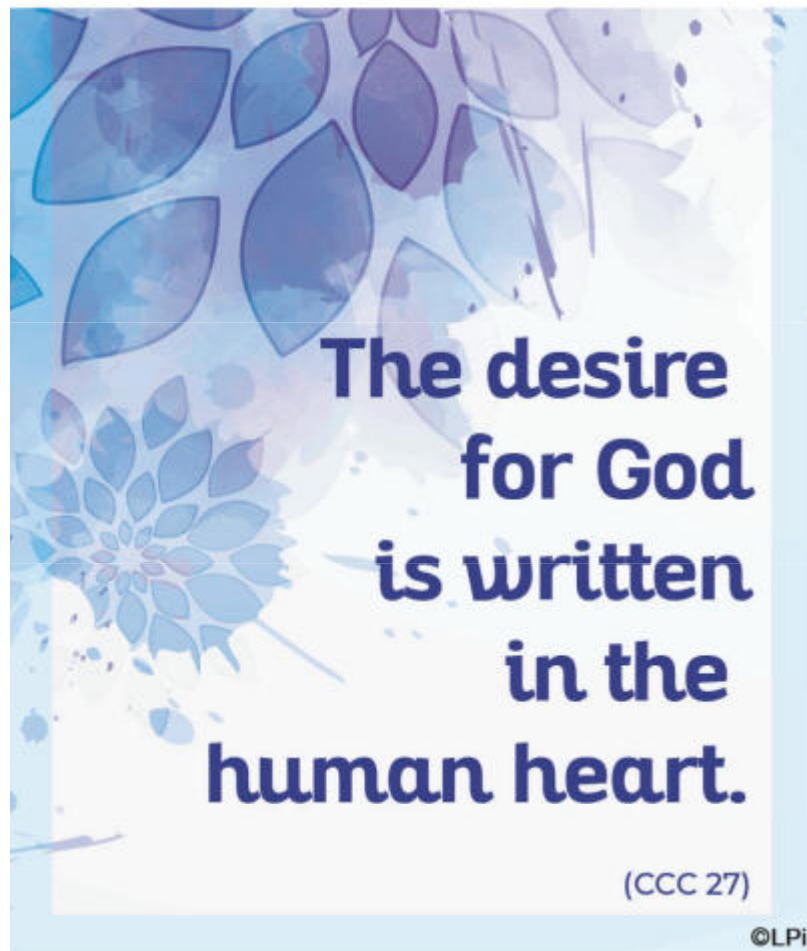
GOSPEL:

"I am the voice of one crying out in the desert,
'Make straight the way of the Lord.'" (Jn 1:23)

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.
The English translation of Psalm Responses from Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International
Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 13, 2020

Sunday: 3rd Sunday of Advent
Monday: St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church
Next Sunday: 4th Sunday of Advent



REFLECT

FIRST READING

Isaiah shares his understanding of his prophetic call and his experience of the Lord as a God of justice and compassion. As we continue in the season of Advent, what new spiritual insights are you discovering?

SECOND READING

Paul encourages the Thessalonians to be thankful to God and be active in their newly found faith in Christ by following his moral imperatives. How are you putting your faith into practice during this Advent?

GOSPEL READING

John tells us that the religious leaders in Jerusalem questioned the identity of John the Baptist, wondering if he was the Messiah, Elijah, or the Prophet who Moses prophesied would come. John the Baptist responds in humility, with a clear sense of his own call. Do you humbly accept God's call in your life?

A CONSTANT COMPANION

As Christians, we are called to a life of prayer. This is not just during seasons like Advent, but all year long. When we talk about being prayerful everyday stewards, we are speaking about cultivating an awareness of God being with us at all times. Each day we begin by offering God the entirety of our day. Each night we rest in Him and hope that the hours that passed gave Him glory.

During this busy time of Advent, it is hard to cultivate this life of prayer, but without it we can too easily lose sight of the reason for the season. It is during this time of year we need to heed the words of St. Paul more than ever when he wrote to the Thessalonians, "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing." This is how we will be able to avoid the pitfalls of consumerism and secularism and keep our

eyes fixed on Jesus.

Bring Jesus with you into the office Christmas party. Take him with you shopping for gifts in the department store. Be aware of him when you sit down to watch television specials you have seen every year of your life. Give him all your time and let his presence fill your every moment. By striving to be connecting with Jesus at all times, you will bear greater fruit and the joy you experience will be much greater than you could imagine. You might even spend a few less dollars and spend more time with those you love, particularly the one who loves you the most, the Incarnation himself.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

ARE CATHOLICS OBLIGATED TO ATTEND MASS EACH SUNDAY, OR RECEIVE COMMUNION EACH SUNDAY?

The questions about Mass attendance and the reception of Holy Communion are clearly outlined in what are traditionally called the "Precepts" of the Church. These specific teachings are intended to stand alongside the Ten Commandments as fundamental practices for Catholics and are outlined in the *Code of Canon Law*. The obligations related to Mass attendance and receiving Communion are outlined in the first and third precepts, which we find quoted in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (no. 2042):

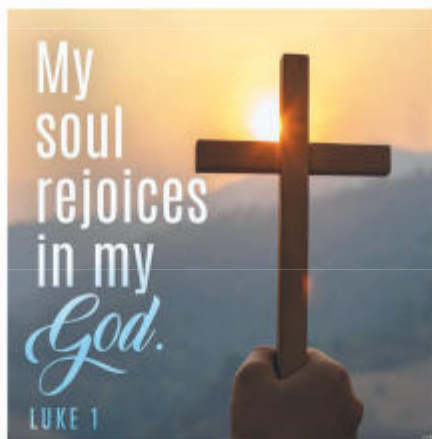
The first precept ("You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor") requires the faithful to sanctify the day commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord as well as the principal liturgical feasts honoring the mysteries of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the saints; in the first place, by participating in the Eucharistic celebration, in which the Christian

community is gathered, and by resting from those works and activities which could impede such a sanctification of these days.

The third precept ("You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season") guarantees as a minimum the reception of the Lord's Body and Blood in connection with the Paschal feasts, the origin and center of the Christian liturgy.

Rather than seeing these as obligations that are simply to be fulfilled out of a sense of duty, Pope Saint John Paul II reminds us of the grace that is made available to us when we gather for Sunday celebrations of the Eucharist:

"Sunday is the day which is at the very heart of the Christian life... Time given to Christ is never time lost, but is rather time gained, so that our relationships and indeed our whole life may become more profoundly human" (*Dies Domini*, no. 7).



LIVE THE LITURGY

INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

What gives you joy? Joy is discovered when we connect with something or someone very deeply and experience a dimension of ourselves that material or secular possessions cannot bring. Joy is stumbled upon when we see our newly born child for the first time, get caught up in the vastness of a mountain landscape, and are led out into infinity gazing at an ocean's horizon, or being lovingly present with someone when they are vulnerable and in need. Joy is a profound experience that in its uniqueness grounds us in ultimate truth. Did you know that all authentic, profound, and memorable moments of joy mirror the eternal joy we desire from God? We can have glimpses of this eternal Divine joy as we embark upon our earthly journey, mirrored in our human connections with joy, but experienced directly during moments of deep prayer. God is the joy of my soul. Ponder those intense words! You will know moments of true and real joy by paying attention to your response to the experience. You will find yourself rejoicing and saying thank you.

**Those
whose hearts
are pure are the
temples of the
Holy Spirit.**

— St. Lucy

PLEASE CONSIDER ONLINE GIVING

Our parish is grateful for your continued support at this time. Thank you!



3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



GOSPEL MEDITATION

ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

Did you ever stop and realize that there is no earthly gain that can ever really satisfy us? Think of winning the Lotto. On this side of the winning ticket, it's all about the money, the new car, house, vacations, bank accounts, and infinite pleasures. The possibility of acquiring all of these earthly securities brings us back again and again to the purchase of a ticket. Then, one day we win! Our dreams are fulfilled, and happiness is on the horizon. Then one day, we wake up and realize that nothing has really changed, and I am not as satisfied as I thought I was or would be. I find myself living in my incompleteness and with my profound sorrow and grief. I did not find joy.

Glimpses of joy are possible but not by material means. They are brought to us through incredible experiences of connection that bring us face to face with real and authentic faith, hope, and love. And, they are glimpses and do not last. The moment we find ourselves looking back at them, they are gone, and we find ourselves remembering the moment in memory. To carry joy within us is to realize that it is not something I create, manufacture



or even acquire. It is not able to be purchased. It is a gift. My need for joy mirrors my need for eternity, for a Creator who has a claim on the very essence of who I am and desires a home within me. As C. S. Lewis discovered, joy is a surprise that speaks to my very soul and is given as gift by the God who loves me.

The beauty of Advent is found in discovering the beauty of the gift of joy. God has visited his people for no other reason than to show them where and how to find joy! All of our human and earthly joy experiences are always only glimpses. They

never satisfy us, sustain us or fulfill us. It is only God who is the joy of my soul. Real, Divine experiences of joy catch us off guard, make us stop and become aware, bring a feeling of awe and rightness and have an eternal Otherness about them. Nothing created by humans can ever come close to this. We probably will not fully realize the truth of all of this until we actually meet God face to face in heaven one day. Then, in that sacred moment when our hearts leap for joy we will understand what we have been tirelessly searching for all along. Intense gratitude will most surely follow.

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. - Jn 1:6-8

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

Local businesses and sponsors that advertise on bulletins need you now more than ever before. Please encourage and remind others to show their support during this time.

3 EASY STEPS

TO KEEPING YOURSELF & OTHERS HEALTHY!

We are cautioned to be especially careful during the Coronavirus outbreak. Here are some simple ways to keep sickness away.



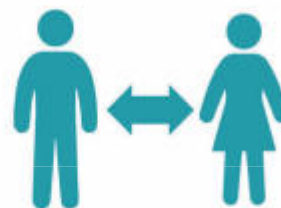
WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water. If you can't wash your hands, use hand sanitizer frequently.



DON'T TOUCH YOUR FACE

Especially around the eyes, nose and mouth. If you must sneeze, use a tissue or your arm.



KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

Practice social distancing during this epidemic and stay away from large groups. Instead, call, email or check up on family and friends using social media.



Kids Corner

READ THE
GOSPEL &
COLOR



People noticed John the Baptist. He loved God, and he used words honestly. He really wanted to help people change and grow closer to God. He stood out as someone really different and special. People came from all around to hear him and learn about him. When people asked him questions, he pointed them to Jesus.

PRAYER

Jesus, help me to be different because I love you.

MISSION FOR THE WEEK

Ask a friend if he or she is ready to meet Jesus.

Monday, Dec 14, 2020
Memorial of John of the Cross, Priest,

We have so many options in our modern world that it's easy to walk away from any organization or community that we struggle with and simply join ones that are more agreeable to us. But what if we stayed and worked to make them better instead? Saint John of the Cross did exactly that and reformed his Carmelite order, despite imprisonment for his efforts. When you feel disillusioned with institutions you love, be guided by John's writing—considered among the greatest in all of Spanish literature—about darkness leading to the light.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a;
Matthew 21:23-27*

Tuesday, Dec 15, 2020
Advent Weekday

Two days ago we celebrated Gaudete Sunday with refrains of rejoicing. Two days from now, we'll begin to pray the O Antiphons—seven days to laud the fast-approaching Messiah. What to make of this in-between time, when scripture shows Jesus chiding religious leaders and Old Testament prophets preach fire and brimstone? "The day in which we now find ourselves is still night," wrote Saint Augustine. But the promise of salvation is sure. "Keep your attention closely fixed on it, as you would on a lamp shining in a dark place until the first streaks of dawn appear."

*TODAY'S READINGS: Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13;
Matthew 21:28-32*

Wednesday, Dec 16, 2020
Advent Weekday

This Advent season is so different from any other in our lifetimes, and the holidays may not allow for worship in person with our faith communities or celebrations with beloved families. For many of us, this brings sadness to these Advent days as we mourn the loss of familiar rituals. The poetic words of theologian, educator, and civil rights leader Howard Thurman remind us that the work of Christmas is to "find the lost, heal the broken, feed the hungry . . . rebuild the nations and bring peace among others." Let us pray for the grace to overcome any disappointment we feel and focus on feeding the hungry, having compassion for the broken, and rebuilding the relationships around us. In such practices, we will find Advent hope and peace.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25;
Luke 7:18b-23*



*Invest just five minutes a day,
and your faith will deepen and grow
a day at a time.*

Thursday, Dec 17, 2020
Advent Weekday (O Wisdom)

Today is the first of the O Antiphons, an Advent tradition from the seventh century whereby for a week the church's evening prayer salutes the coming Messiah by different names each evening. Tonight monasteries, parishes, and ordinary Christians will sing or recite "O Sapientia" (Wisdom). Reading about the loveliness of this prayer is no substitute for hearing it. Let the ethereal sound of this ancient tradition uplift your prayer today. is "O Sapientia" sung by Dominican friars in Oxford, England.

TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 49:2, 8-10; Matthew 1:1-17

Friday, Dec 18, 2020
Advent Weekday (O Sacred Lord)

The calamities that piled up in 2020 point surely to the longing of today's O Antiphon. A wave of global pandemic, quarantine, massive unemployment, fires, floods, and protest for racial justice crests, resonating with the yearning for freedom. More than ever, we yearn for the Leader who will restore justice and rescue us with mighty power. And at a time when more people are exiled from their homes than ever before in human history, we commemorate Migrants Day with a plaintive call: Come, Lord Jesus to our human mess. We need you as we have throughout the centuries.

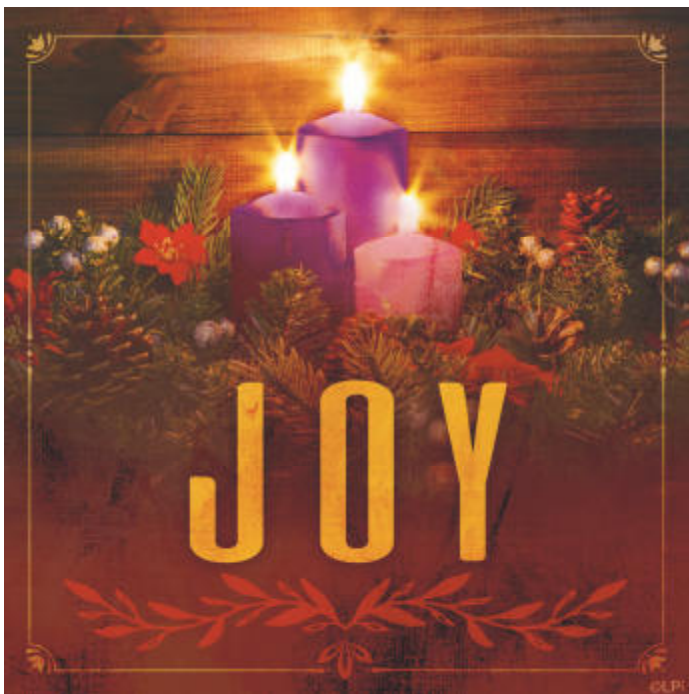
TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 23:5-8; Matthew 1:18-25

Saturday, Dec 19, 2020
Advent Weekday (O Flower of Jesse's Stem)

The image of "Jesse's Stem" in today's O Antiphon comes from the Book of Isaiah. Using the image of a tree much like we use a family tree to trace our lineage, Isaiah traces the lineage of the kings of Judah forward from Jesse, the father of King David, to the hoped-for Christ, the new king who might restore the monarchy to its former greatness. But like the birth of John the Baptist, the actual coming of the Christ would be a surprise, a new revelation of a heavenly Kingdom. Reflect on the various ways God has surprised you in your life.

TODAY'S READINGS: Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a; Luke 1:5-25

©2017 TrueQuest Communications. TakeFiveForFaith.com; All rights reserved.
Reprinted with permission from TakeFiveForFaith.com.
Scripture citations from the NAB Rev. Ed.



MASS INTENTIONS

Weekend of December 12th & 13th
3rd Week of Advent

✝ John Zweifler

✝ Janice Marie Brown

✝ Diane Brass

✝ Anthony Narducci

For the People of St. Steven's

Monday December 14th

✝ Frances Mancuso

Tuesday December 15th

✝ Holy Souls

Wednesday December 16th

✝ William Davies

Thursday December 17th

✝ Frank Robert Panarotto

Friday December 18th

✝ James Calabrese Sr.

Weekend of December 19th & 20th
4th Week of Advent

For the People of St. Steven's

✝ Janice Marie Brown

✝ Jim Kiefer

✝ Donald Linstrom

✝ Diane Brass

**Turn Your Arizona Tax Dollars
into Future Leaders!**

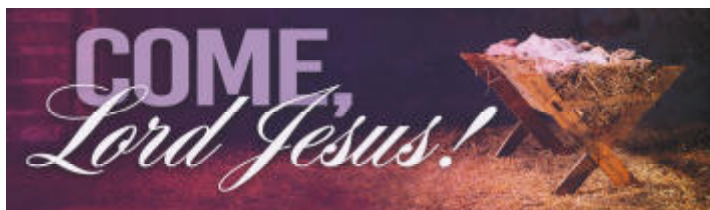
CELEBRATING 23rd CEA
Est. 1998

**Catholic Education
ARIZONA**
Changing lives one scholarship at a time.

It's Quick. It's Easy. Ask Us How!

602-218-6542 OR WWW.CEAZ.ORG

Catholic Education Arizona is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization and has never accepted gifts designated for individuals. Our state law, a school tuition organization cannot accept, initiate or reserve scholarships solely on the basis of donor recommendation. A taxpayer may not claim a tax credit if the taxpayer agrees to swap donations with another taxpayer to benefit either taxpayer's own dependent.



St. Steven's Gift Shop

ADVENT, CHRISTMAS & GIFTS FOR ALL OCCASIONS



Special Gift Shop Times Available

December 19th-20th

Saturday 4:30—*After Mass*

Sunday 10:30—*After Mass*

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

480.895.9266

<http://saintstevensparish.org>



ANNUITY

A gift through the Vincentian Annuity will give you the security of a fixed income over your lifetime and provide support for St. Vincent de Paul that will last forever.



**THE SOCIETY OF
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL**

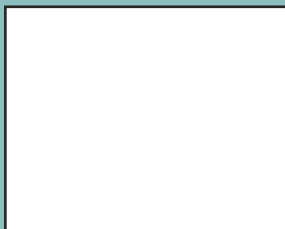
TO SEE IF AN ANNUITY IS RIGHT FOR YOU
visit svdplegacy.org.

Take a look at our planned giving tools, including our benefits calculator. To discuss giving options or to request your **free** Estate Planning Guide, contact Donna Rodgers at 602-261-6884 or drodgers@svdpaz.org. P.O. Box 13600 Phoenix, AZ 85002 | svdplegacy.org

**AVAILABLE
FOR A LIMITED TIME**

**ADVERTISE YOUR
BUSINESS HERE**

Contact **David Ramirez** to place an ad today!
dramirez@4LPi.com or **(800) 950-9952 x5829**



SPREAD THE WORD
A Thriving, Vibrant Community Matters

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

**ADVERTISE
YOUR BUSINESS
HERE**

*Your Community
is Looking!*

Call LPi today
for advertising info
(800) 950-9952

HOUGH
LAW OFFICES, PLLC

Michael H. Hough
Notre Dame '90 • Denver Law '94

Jacqueline D. Hough
USD '92 • USC Law '96

**WILLS • TRUSTS • PROBATE
ESTATE PLANNING**

(480) 396-4949

2500 S POWER RD, STE 114, MESA, AZ 85209
WWW.HOUGHLAWOFFICE.COM

Mike's Body Shop

MIKE R. BALDENEGRO, OWNER

- American & Foreign Cars • Insurance Work Welcome
- Paint Jobs and Body Work • Auto Glass Replaced
- Color Matching • Fiberglass Work • Frame Repair

Self-Employed Since 1970 480-963-5144
890 E. Chandler Blvd, Chandler

40 Years of Conquering Your Electric Needs

EGAN ELECTRIC

BOB EGAN
(480) 855-9375
eganelectric@msn.com
Bonded - Insured
Uniformed Technicians

PROBATE IS COSTLY
Protect your spouse Reduce taxes Stay in Control

**WILLS LIVING TRUSTS
POWERS OF ATTORNEY**

25% Parishioner Discount Simple Easy Fast
We help with existing or out-of-state docs!

Call Us First
toll free: **1-844-637-0514**
www.SpiritWestEstate.com

The Schaefers;
Kevin, Amelia, Hank, Wes
and Violet.

Visit our website for a FREE estate planning checklist

**dh CHANDLER
Dental Health**
Healthy smiles. Happy patients.

L. Grace Giacobbi, DDS
Thomas J. Giacobbi, DDS

Accepting New Patients
Thank you for your support.

480.899.6677
1035 W. Queen Creek Rd. • Suite 206 • Chandler
www.ChandlerDentalHealth.com

Queen Creek Rd.
Alma School Rd.

NEVER MISS A BULLETIN !

Sign up to have our weekly parish bulletin
emailed to you at www.parishesonline.com

**catholicmatch®
Arizona**

CatholicMatch.com/AZ

**ONLINE GIVING
By WeShare**

St. Steven's
ststevenaz.weshareonline.org

**FREE
AD DESIGN
WITH PURCHASE
OF THIS SPACE.**
— 800-950-9952 —



For ad info. call 1-800-950-9952 • www.4lpi.com

St. Steven, Sun Lakes, AZ

B 4C 05-0404

Assisted Living Referral Service



I will help you find the best assisted living home or apartment for your loved one.

KAY FISCHER • (480) 688-6954 NO CHARGE

SPREAD THE WORD

A Thriving, Vibrant Community Matters



SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

ANGELICA'S HOUSE CLEANING SERVICE

25 Years Experience
FREE ESTIMATES

Cell: 602-999-6726
Home: 480-821-1689

**AVAILABLE
FOR A LIMITED TIME**

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS HERE

Contact **David Ramirez** to place an ad today!
dramirez@4LPi.com or **(800) 950-9952 x5829**

SCHEDULE A TOUR TODAY

CALL 480.883.2000



Renaissance is an award-winning **Independent, Assisted, and Memory Care** community in Sun Lakes.



RENAISSANCE
LUXURY LIVING AT SUN LAKES
Independent • Assisted • Memory Care

RenaissanceRetirement.com | 480.883.2000
9508 E. Riggs Road Sun Lakes, AZ 85248

All residences must be occupied by at least one resident 55 years of age or older. Services provided are limited to those described in the Lease or Residency Agreement. The community is not a hospital or nursing home. Terms are subject to change without notice. 10/19



**The Charles Company
and Associates, Inc.**

www.thecharlescompany.com
(480) 895-0611

alice@thecharlescompany.com

9666 E. Riggs Rd. Ste 136 • Sun Lakes, AZ
Karl & Alice Schroeder Parishioners of St. Stevens

CHASTON TAXES & ACCOUNTING

Chris J. Scoggin | CPA & Parishioner

Maricopa's first CPA firm since 2004.

Specializing in Real Estate and Cross-Border Tax

(520) 568-3303 | ChastonCPA.com
info@chastontax.com

24/7 EMERGENCY SERVICES WITH NO EXTRA FEES

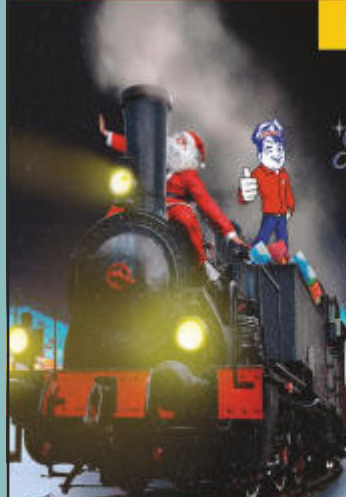
**WE'RE TAKING ALL THE STEPS
NECESSARY TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE!**

**Family Package for
2 adults and 2 kids**

**Polar Express
Train Ride**

**Overnight stay
at the Railway Hotel
with Dinner
& Breakfast
at Fred Harvey Restaurant.**

***All Service Calls from
Nov 1 thru Dec 15th
will be entered to win.**



Mr. Rooter **(480) 648-0505**
may not be combined with any other offer

\$57 OFF
ANY FULL
DIAN SERVICE

Dignity®

Susan Chapple
Preplanning Advisor
(480) 365-8938

susan.chapple@dignitymemorial.com
VALLEY OF THE SUN
MORTUARY & CEMETERIES

Mention This Ad for your
FREE Personal Planning Guide

**UPGRADE TO A
VIBRANT ad**

Contact us for details • 800-950-9952

Too Sick for Mass?

SUPPORT OUR PARISH NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE!

*Sign-up to get your bulletin delivered
right to your inbox!*

www.parishesonline.com



Call us today for a **FREE ESTIMATE!**

SSR ROOFING
480-242-5346

Quality Work at Fair Prices

\$1000 OFF a re-roof with coupon

Bonded & Insured / ROC #294680 Expires 3/31/21

**CITADEL®
LAW FIRM**

**Living Trusts • Wills • Probate
Family-Mediation**

FREE Initial Consultation

CALL TODAY (480) 565-8020

www.CLFUSA.com



For ad info. call 1-800-950-9952 • **www.4lpi.com**

St. Steven, Sun Lakes, AZ

A 4C 05-0404