

# Saint Nicholas Catholic Church

*His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo*

*Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston*



**Pastor: Rev. Fr. Eliseus Ogbonna Ibeh, MSP**

<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<i>9am – 4pm</i>	<i>9am – 4pm</i>	<i>9am – 4pm</i>	<i>9am – 4pm</i>

2502 Clay (Church) 2508 Clay (Rectory) Houston, Texas 77003- 4498

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<i>Cassandra's Office Hours</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
	<i>9:00am – 3:00pm</i>	<i>9:00am – 3:00pm</i>	<i>9:00am 3:00pm</i>	<i>9:00am –3:00pm</i>

<b>Pastoral Staff</b>	<b>Fr. Eliseus Ogbonna Ibeh, MSP Pastor</b>	<b>stnichpastor@gmail.com</b>	<b>(979) 661 -0834</b>
Cassandra Edmondson	Administrative Assistant	2508clay@sbcglobal.net	
Ester Angafor Sanosi	DRE Director		
Anita Dubie Sendze	Sacristan		
Alvin Gabriel	Finance Council President		

## **Parish Mission Statement**

*At St. Nicholas, we are a welcoming Community guided by the Holy Spirit and we celebrate the presence of Jesus Christ in our lives, in prayer, in liturgy, in religious education and in scripture. Joyfully we reach out to everyone and invite them to serve the Lord in the spirit of love. Join us in working for peace, justice and in building a community that welcomes and accept all people as children of GOD.*

## **DECEMBER 24, 2023– FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

### **MASS SCHEDULE AND DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS**

**Sunday:** *Rosary – 8:30am and 10:30am*

*Mass Schedule: Sundays at 9:00am 11:00am and 1:15pm*

*Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: Holy Hour 7:00am-Mass 8:00am*

*Reconciliation: Saturdays 10:00 – 11:30 am or by request*

### **Tuesday Mass**

*Tuesday – Holy Hour 5:00pm Mass 6pm; Legion of Mary Devotion 5:00pm*

### **Sacraments Information**

**Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick**

Please call the Parish Office (713) 223 – 5210

#### **Baptism**

Registered parishioners must contact the Parish Office for an interview with the Pastor. Pre-Baptism classes are required before Baptism.

#### **CCC Education**

Classes are available for children who need preparation for First Communion and Confirmation. Classes are held on Saturdays from September through May.

#### **Funeral Services**

In the event of the death of a parishioner, please contact the Parish Office before finalizing any arrangements with the Funeral Director

#### **Sacrament of Holy Matrimony**

Registered engaged couples must call the Parish Office at least one year before their expected wedding date. Six to eight months are required for marriage preparation. Pre-Cana or Engagement Encounter is required.

***Sick and Homebound - Stewardship of Time***  
***Please pray for the sick and homebound of our parish and all who have asked for our prayers:***

Mary Broussard, Gardenia Champ, Wilmer John Champ, Wilmer John Champ Jr., June Cushingberry, Diane Elkins, Preston Reed, Anita Garvey, James A. Garvey, Geneva LaFleur, Gladys Njiti, Kourtney Njiti, Elise Richmond, Marie Southern, Lillie Taylor, Eleanor Williams, Velocia Ulmer, Peggy Castenda, Benjamin Petteway, Elaine Mullone, Diele Ekaney, Catherine Fombang.

**Prayer for the Sick**

Dear Lord, Thank you for the lives of everyone in our church parish. We pray that you heal the sick amongst us, taking away their sufferings. We burn all chronic and long-term illnesses with the fire of the holy spirit, help them overcome their illnesses. Give them all the power and strength to battle through their diseases. Bring them divine healing in the name of Jesus. AMEN.

**Stewardship Offering Contributions- December 17, 2023**

On Line Giving	Sunday Offerings Day	Retirement Fund	DSF GOAL 2023
<b>Bag of Gold</b> <b>\$140.08</b>	9am- \$763.00 11:00am- \$898.00 1:15pm- \$1,078.00 Total- \$2,739.00	for Religious 11:00am-\$10.00	<b>\$9,000.00</b> <b>Paid \$5,041.00</b> <b>Remaining to be paid \$3,959.00</b>
<b>Mass Intentions</b> <b>\$15.00</b>	<b>Bag of Gold</b> <b>\$272.000</b>		
<b>Sunday Offerings</b> <b>\$ 450.75</b>			

**Weekly Readings**

**Dec 25:**Isaih 52:7-10;Heb 1:1-6; John 1:1-18  
**Dec 26:**Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Matthew 10:17-22  
**Dec 27:** St John 1:1-4; John 20:1a, 2-8  
**Dec 28:** St John 1:5-2:2; Matthew 2:13-18  
**Dec 29:** St John 2:3-11; Luke 2:22-35  
**Dec 30:** St John 2:12-17; Luke 2:36-40

**LECTORS**

	9am	11am	1:15pm
<b>December 24</b>	Cassandra/Sharon	Jackie/Nicholas/Nayah	Agnes/Nicholas
<b>December 25</b>	Sheila/Cassandra	Maggie/Marylee/Dorothy	Jean Paul/Laura
<b>EXTRA ORDINARY MINISTERS</b>			
<b>December 24</b>	Theresa/Jackie	Dorothy/AI/Clement	Japhet/Egide
<b>December 25</b>	Theresa/Jackie	Clement/John/Emmerencia	John Paul/ Japhet
<b>December 24</b>	<b>ALTAR SERVERS -11am-Sameer/Gima/Gilbert/Fokwang</b>		
<b>December 25</b>	<b>Sammuel/Alexis/Francine/Gima</b>		

**Mass Intentions**

**9:00am** Birthday blessing for Wilmer Champ-by Champ family

**11:00am** For the repose soul of **Yah Mary Yefon Sendze**- by the Sendze family

For the repose of the souls of **Tchadjui families**- by Pamela Sinju

For the repose of the soul of **Rev Samuel Igbafe, MSP**- by the Esther Intercessors.

For the peaceful repose of our father, **Pa Joseph Atia Asong** and all deceased family members -by the Asong children

Thanksgiving to God for **Marie-Noel Fokwang** on her birthday and all blessings received-by Francis Fokwang

In thanksgiving for God's healing of **Ma Tgina Esung, Ma Mado** and all sick members of **CWA** - by CWA ICB

For repose of the souls of her husband **S.K. Kilo** and her son **Charles Kilo** and all deceased members

and friends of the **Kilo family** -by Johana Kilo

For the repose of the souls of the deceased family members of **Ma Bertha Etta, Ma Sidonie Ambe, Ma**

**Jackie Atang, Mami Samson and Ma Marie Njowo** -by CWA ICB

For the repose of the souls of all deceased family members of **Ma Agnes Chuba, Ma Helena Nki, Ma Beatrice Tangeh, Ma Johana**

**Kilo & Ma Mariam Kilo Chindo**-by CWA ICB

For the repose of the soul of **Handel Njodzeka**, may he find repose alongside his sister-by Fonlon family

For the repose of the soul of **Mami Emerentia Fonlon Finiakiy, Amabel Njodzeka Ngochi & Bernard Ngafin**

**Fonlon**-by Fonlon family

For the repose of the souls of **Yamah Crecencia Nkwa, Honorine Ngeneveu and Isabelle Achu**-by Valeria Awah

For the repose of the souls of **Manyi Grace Kah Tangwa** and all deceased family members of the **Tangwa & Wando family**-by Gilbert Tangwa

For the repose of the souls of **Edna Akpan, Magdalene Welashey, Helen Wamey, Aloysius Welahey and Mami Mary Njowo** and all members of the **Youdjeu and Mafiamba families**-by Alida Welahey

For the repose soul of **Debora S. Wara, AMarie Njowo and Therese Fonji**-by Prisca Nelson

**1:15pm** For the People of the Parish

**Zelle Account for St. Nicholas is:**  
**Stnichpastor@gmail.com**

*From the Pastor's Desk*  
*'Merry Christmas'*

*My dear Parishioners, Compliments of the Holy Season of Christmas.*  
*Glory to God on high and peace to men and women of good-will, was the message and song of the Angels on Christmas night. May this message always abide in your hearts and homes.*  
*The whole purpose of God becoming like us-which we call the INCARNATION is that we might become like God.*  
*Christmas is a love story, the greatest love story-the story of God super-abundant love for us. For God so loved the world that in the fullness of time He sent his only begotten son. May the birth of this child brighten your way today and all the days of your life. Merry Christmas.*

*I am, your brother and your Pastor,*  
*Rev. Fr. Eliseus Ogbonna Ibeh, MSP*

#### **Advent Wreath Prayer Week 4-Love**

Heavenly Father, the whole meaning of Christmas can be explained in one little four-letter word...LOVE. You sent your gift of pure love to us that first Christmas. Love descended from heaven to be born of a virgin. Love lay in the scratchy hay of a manger in a meager barn in Bethlehem. All of your love, God, was robed in the delicate skin of a baby and wrapped in swaddling clothes. This final week of Advent helps us to reflect on the magnitude of love that was made manifest in Jesus.

There is no greater gift than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends. You willingly gave the gift of your life because of your love. Your righteous blood covered our sin. You redeem and restore us when we confess you as Lord and Savior of our life. At that moment, you give us the gift of your love for all eternity. We receive grace upon grace and mercy upon mercy at that moment.

Father, this final week of Advent, fill our hearts and minds with the significance of that truth. Thank you, Lord, for loving us enough to send Jesus. In Jesus' precious name we pray. Amen.



#### **Dr. Martin Luther King Birthday**

Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston 39<sup>th</sup> Observance of the Annual Celebration:

##### **"A MASS OF REMEMBRANCE"**

Honoring the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mass of celebration will be held on Sunday, January 14, 2024 at 3:00pm at the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart 1111 St. Joseph Parkway Houston, Texas 77002. Principal Celebrant Most Rev. Daniel Cardinal DiNardo and Homilist Rev. Martins C. Emeh, J.C.L. Please plan to attend and celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King. Reception to follow in the Cathedral Centre.

#### **SAINTS OF THE WEEK**

December 26 SAINT STEPHEN, THE FIRST MARTYR

December 27: SAINT JOHN, APOSTLE, EVANGELIST

December 28: THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS

December 29: Saint Thomas Becket, Bishop, Martyr

#### **BAG OF GOLD**

On December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023, we will be celebrating our 136<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and we are asking all parishioners to donate \$1 for each one of these years. The funds will be used for the renovation of the church for its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on December 15, 2024. Thank you in advance!!

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Dec 24- Christmas Eve Mass at 7pm**

**Dec 25-Christmas day Mass 9am, 11am & 1:15pm**

**Dec 26- Office closed**

**Dec 27- Fr. Ibeh, MSP leaves for his annual vacation**

**Jan 1-New Years day Mass 9am**

#### **Cleaning Schedule**

**Next week cleaning for December 30th will be done by members from the 1:15pm Mass.**

The holidays are filled with images of home. In Hallmark movies especially, home is a beautiful house in a country village with a wide front porch where rocking chairs and blankets invite close family members to sit outside in the frosty air with a cup of steaming hot chocolate cradled in mittened hands. Neighbors call out cheery greetings, inspiring spontaneous singing of Christmas carols in perfect harmony.

I suppose there are truly places like that, but where I live in Seattle, home can take on a very different image. Only a few miles from my condo there are rows of tents and dilapidated mobile homes and campers where people live with no heat and no running water. They sleep on cold concrete. They live with the uncertainty of where their next meal will come from or if they will be safe during the night. For those living in tents, the Hallmark image of home might as well be from a different planet. And yet, there are always signs of the tent residents trying to make their tent and their surroundings more home-like for themselves. A blanket, a pet, a flowerpot, maybe even a Christmas tree.

Today, Mary is invited to make a home for Jesus in a unique and special way. To carry the spark of the light of the world in her womb, a place of warmth and darkness and secrecy and protection. A place where the heartbeat of the savior of the world is in harmony with the heartbeat of the Blessed Mother.

By her willingness to say yes to the invitation, Mary models the way of making a home for Jesus, and not only Jesus, but all who follow him. Even though she did not know where her “yes” would lead, she trusted the message of the angel and opened her heart to the ark of God—the ark of the covenant, God’s promise to be present to all who believe. Once Mary had said yes, she was also offering a welcome to all those who follow Jesus.

Once we learn how to welcome Jesus, who else do we welcome inside? Do we gaze upon homeless encampments and come to the same realization that King David did? “Here I am living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God dwells in a tent!” Can we imagine those experiencing homelessness as home for the ark of God? Perhaps God would more readily be found there than in Hallmark houses.

The invitation of Mary and the Christ child is to make our home where we are most likely to encounter God. We do not need to be afraid to respond to this invitation. From the *Pastoral Letter of the Synod*, we find encouragement: “Mary, Mother of the Church, the first on the journey, accompanies our pilgrimage. In joy and in sorrow, she shows us her Son and invites us to trust. And He, Jesus, is our only hope!” Emmanuel: God with us.