

# SAINT JOHN NEUMANN PARISH

708 Milford Rd (Rte 101A), Merrimack, NH 03054 — SJNNH.ORG



## 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT December 4, 2022

**Rev. Robert Glasgow**  
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**Deacon Brian Lester**  
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### MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday (Anticipatory) ..... 5:30 PM  
Sunday ..... 8:00 AM  
Sunday ..... 10:00 AM  
Sunday (Labor Day thru Memorial Day) .... 6:00 PM  
Daily (Mon, Wed-Fri) ..... 12:15 PM

### CONFESSION

Saturday ..... 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM  
And before/after daily Mass, or by appointment.

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### BAPTISM

Parents must attend a Parent Baptism Class before the baptism of their child. The class is offered the first Sunday of each month following the 10:00 AM Mass.

### MARRIAGE

Please contact the office at least six months prior to the wedding date. The diocese requires Marriage Prep.

### VISITS TO THE HOMEBOUND AND SICK, ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please call the office to request home or hospital visitation.

### RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION

RCIA is the process of formation offered to those who seek to become Catholic. For information, please call the office.

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## By Faith She Believed; by Faith, Conceived

Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.  
—Luke 1:28

The first excerpt is from a homily by St Augustine (d. 430) in which he says the Blessed Mother is more blessed in her discipleship than her motherhood. The second is from St Bede the Venerable's (d. 735) commentary on Mary's praise of God, her "Magnificat" (Luke 1:46-55).



The IMMACULATE CONCEPTION is the title of the Blessed Virgin as sinless from her first moment of existence. In the words of Pope Pius IX's solemn definition, made in 1854:

"The most holy Virgin Mary was, in the first moment of her conception, by a unique gift of grace and privilege of almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ the Redeemer of mankind, preserved free from all stain of original sin."

This means that since the first moment of her human existence the mother of Jesus was preserved from the common defect of estrangement from God, which humanity in general inherits through the sin of Adam. Her freedom from sin was an unmerited gift of God or special grace, and an exception to the law, or privilege, which no other created person has received. Neither the Greek nor Latin Fathers explicitly taught the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, but they professed it implicitly in two fundamental ways. Mary, they said, was most perfect in purity of morals and holiness of life. St Ephrem (d. 373) addressed Christ and Mary with the words, "You and Your mother are the only one who are totally beautiful in every way. For in You, O Lord, there is no stain, and in Your mother no stain." Mary was described as the antithesis of Eve. Again in Ephrem, "Mary and Eve [were] two people without guilt. Later one became the cause of our death, the

other cause of our life." While implicit in the early writers, the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION had to be clarified before becoming explicit dogma. Main credit for this goes to the Franciscan John Duns Scotus (d. 1308), who introduced the idea of pre-redemption in order to reconcile Mary's freedom from original sin with her conception before the coming of Christ.

STRETCHING out his hand over his disciples, the Lord Christ declared: Here are my mother and my brothers; anyone who does the will of my Father who sent me is my brother and sister and my mother. I would urge you to ponder these words. Did the Virgin Mary, who believed by faith and conceived by faith, who was the chosen one from whom our Savior was born among men, who was created by Christ before Christ was created in her—did she not do the will of the Father? Indeed the blessed Mary certainly did the Father's will, and so it was for her a greater thing to have been Christ's disciple than to have been his mother, and she was more blessed in her discipleship than in her motherhood. Hers was the happiness of first bearing in her womb him whom she would obey as her master.

Now listen and see if the words of Scripture do not agree with what I have said. The Lord was passing by and crowds were following him. His miracles gave proof of divine power. and a woman cried out: Happy is the womb that bore you, blessed is that womb! But the Lord, not wishing people to seek happiness in a purely physical relationship, replied: More blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it. Mary heard God's word and kept it, and so she is blessed. She kept God's truth in her mind, a nobler thing than carrying his body in her womb. The truth and the body were both Christ: he was kept in Mary's mind insofar as he is truth, he was carried in her womb insofar as he is man; but what is kept in the mind is of a higher order than what is carried in the womb.

The Virgin Mary is both holy and blessed, and yet the Church is greater than she. Mary is a part of the Church, a member of the Church, a holy, an eminent—the most eminent—member, but still only a member of the entire body. The body undoubtedly is greater than she, one of its members. This body has the Lord for its head, and head and body together make up the whole Christ. In other words, our head is divine—our head is God.

Now, beloved, give me your whole attention, for you also are members of Christ; you also are the body of Christ. Consider how you yourselves can be among those of whom the Lord said: Here are my mother and my brothers. Do you wonder how

you can be the mother of Christ? He himself said: Whoever hears and fulfils the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and my sister and my mother. As for our being the brothers and sisters of Christ, we can understand this because although there is only one inheritance and Christ is the only Son, his mercy would not allow him to remain alone. It was his wish that we too should be heirs of the Father, and co-heirs with himself.

Now having said that all of you are brothers of Christ, shall I not dare to call you his mother? Much less would I dare to deny his own words. Tell me how Mary became the mother of Christ, if it was not by giving birth to the members of Christ? You, to whom I am speaking, are the members of Christ. Of whom were you born? "Of Mother Church," I hear the reply of your hearts. You became sons of this mother at your baptism, you came to birth then as members of Christ. Now you in your turn must draw to the font of baptism as many as you possibly can. You became sons when you were born there yourselves, and now by bringing others to birth in the same way, you have it in your power to become the mothers of Christ.

*MY soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my savior.* With these words Mary first acknowledges the special gifts she has been given. Then she recalls God's universal favors, bestowed unceasingly on the human race. When a man devotes all his thoughts to the praise and service of the Lord, he proclaims God's greatness. His observance of God's commands, moreover, shows that he has God's power and greatness always at heart. His spirit rejoices in God his savior and delights in the mere recollection of his creator who gives him hope for eternal salvation. These words are often for all God's creations, but especially for the Mother of God. She alone was chosen, and she burned with spiritual love for the son she so joyously conceived. Above all other saints, she alone could truly rejoice in Jesus, her savior, for she knew that he who was the source of eternal salvation would be born in time in her body, in one person both her own son and her Lord.

*For the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.* Mary attributes nothing to her own merits. She refers all her greatness to the gift of the one whose essence is power and whose nature is greatness, for he fills with greatness and strength the small and the weak who believe in him. She did well to add: *and holy is his name*, to warn those who heard, and indeed all who would receive his words, that they must believe and call upon his name. For they too could share in everlasting holiness and true salvation according to the words of the prophet: and it will come to pass,

that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. This is the name she spoke of earlier: *and my spirit rejoices in God my savior*. Therefore it is an excellent and fruitful custom of holy Church that we should sing Mary's hymn at the time of evening prayer. By meditating upon the incarnation, our devotion is kindled, and by remembering the example of God's Mother, we are encouraged to lead a life of virtue.

### WEEKLY CALENDAR

- Dec 4, SUNDAY** — 2nd Week of Advent  
 8:00 AM | Sunday Mass  
 10:00 AM | Sunday Mass  
 6:00 PM | Sunday Mass  
 7:00 PM | Adoration
- Dec 5, MONDAY**  
 12:15 PM | Daily Mass
- Dec 6, TUESDAY**  
 8:00 AM | Red Cross Blood Drive  
 7:00 AM | Scouts Meeting
- Dec 7, WEDNESDAY** — St Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church  
 9:30 AM | Knitting Group (meets every other Wednesday)  
 10:00 AM | Faith Sharing  
 10:30 AM | "Mary: A Biblical Walk with the Blessed Mother"  
 12:15 PM | Daily Mass  
 5:30 PM | \*Holy Day Vigil Mass  
 7:00 PM | "Mary: A Biblical Walk with the Blessed Mother"
- Dec 8, THURSDAY** — IMMACULATE CONCEPTION (Holy Day of Obligation)  
 12:15 PM | \*Holy Day Mass  
 7:00 PM | \*Holy Day Mass w/ Confession following
- Dec 9, FIRST FRIDAY**  
 10:00 AM | Food Pantry  
 12:15 PM | Daily Mass w/ Adoration
- Dec 10, SATURDAY**  
 8:30 AM | Men's Group  
 9:00 AM | Divine Mercy Cenacle (1st/3rd Sat)  
 9:30 AM | Widow's Group (2nd Sat of month)  
 4:00 PM | Confession (until 5:00 PM)  
 5:30 PM | Anticipatory Sunday Mass

### MASS INTENTIONS

- Dec 3 (Sat), 5:30 PM     Maureen McInnis (req. by Mark & Joanne Kenna)  
 Dec 4 (Sun), 8:00 AM     St John Neumann Parishioners  
 Dec 4, 10:00 AM     Gary Loughran (req. by Kathy Hopkins)  
 Dec 5 (Mon), 12:15 PM     Claude Long (req. by Dan Long)  
 Dec 7 (Wed), 12:15 PM     Frank & Mary Kebe (req. by Dan Long)  
 Dec 8 (Thu), 12:15 PM     Norbert Higgins (req. by John &

- Dec 9 (Fri), 12:15 PM     Mary Mann)  
 Anthony & Helen Kebe (req. by Dan Long)  
 Dec 10 (Sat), 5:30 PM     Paul LeBlanc (req. by Marc & Joanne McKenna)  
 Dec 11 (Sun), 8:00 AM     Lee Ray - LIVING INTENTION (req. by Linda Ray)  
 Dec 11, 10:00 AM     Stephaun Jones (req. by Margaret & Bill O'Neill); Annie Ivers (req. by Pete Maresco)

The Code of Canon Law confirms the practice of offering Mass(es) for particular intentions is ancient: "The Christian faithful who give an offering to apply the Mass for their intention contribute to the good of the Church and by that offering share its concern to support its ministers and works" (945 §2).

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Holy Day of Obligation

- 7 Dec, Vigil Mass ..... 5:30 PM  
 8 Dec, Holy Day Masses ..... 12:15 and 7:00 PM

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Lk 1:46-55).

#### ADVENT WREATH BLESSING

The following prayer is repeated each day. The purple candles are lit the 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays of Advent, the pink candle is lit the 3rd Sunday—Gaudete Sunday—of Advent.

- V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.  
 R/. *Who made heaven and earth.*
- V. O God, by whose Word all things are sanctified, pour forth Your blessing upon this wreath and grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ and may receive from You abundant graces. We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
 R/. *Amen.*
- V. O Lord, stir up Thy might, we beg Thee, and come, That by Thy protection we may deserve to be rescued from the threatening dangers of our sins and saved by Thy deliverance. Through Christ our Lord.  
 R/. *Amen.*

DEANERY PENANCE SERVICE

11 Dec, 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

MOVED TO:

St Joseph the Worker Parish  
(777 W Hollis St, Nashua)

**PARISH** *online*

Sunday Mass is live streamed at 10:00 AM on  
YOUTUBE.COM > Search for: "SJN  
Merrimack NH Mass"

For monthly parish updates, subscribe via  
FLOCKNOTES by going to:

<https://SJNMERRIMACK.flocknote.com>

— or texting —

"SJNMERRIMACK" to 84576  
(message/data rates may apply)

INSTAGRAM: [instagram.com/sjnmerrimack](https://www.instagram.com/sjnmerrimack)

FACEBOOK (for daily Mass):  
[facebook.com/St John Neumann-Merrimack](https://www.facebook.com/StJohnNeumannMerrimack)

THURSDAY WOMEN'S GROUP

During the season of ADVENT, the Thursday Morning Women's Group will be reading and discussing the Advent devotional, "Peace Has a Name" by Blessed is She. The group meets on Thursdays at 10:00 AM (Dec 1, 8, 15, and 22). We welcome all women in the parish to join us. The devotional can be purchased at [blessedishe.net](http://blessedishe.net). Both a paperback and an electronic copy are available. TO REGISTER OR FOR ANY QUESTIONS, please contact Claire Bryson at [cbryson@sjnh.org](mailto:cbryson@sjnh.org).



MARY: A BIBLICAL WALK WITH  
THE MOTHER OF GOD

Offered twice each Wednesday: 10:30 AM and again at 7:00 PM. "Mary: A Biblical Walk with the Mother of God" is a video-based eight week series hosted by Cheri Andersen. For more information on this study see <[ASCENSIONPRESS.COM](http://ASCENSIONPRESS.COM)> or contact Cheri at: [candersen@sjnh.org](mailto:candersen@sjnh.org).

CHOIR REHEARSALS

The SEASONAL CHOIR, in preparation for Christmas Eve Mass, meets every Tuesday 7:00-8:45 PM until Christmas.

The CHILDREN'S CHOIR (all children from Kindergarten through 6th Grade) will meet Sunday

mornings starting December 4, 9:00-9:45 AM.

### PRAYER LINE MINISTRY

To add someone to the prayer line, please contact Teri at the parish office: (603) 880-4689, [tschmitt@sjnnh.org](mailto:tschmitt@sjnnh.org). Please pray for:

Tracie, Maureen, Don, Kim, Tim, Sam, Max, Jess, Rebecca, Daphne, Lynne, Jerry, Barbera, Elaine's family, Heather & Brandon, Olive, Liz, Diane & Jean, Jack & family & friends, Greta, Judy, Marianne & Rick, Milly, Joe, Lisa, Bill Mark, Shelley, Alane, Roberta, Ginny, Ed, Samantha, Jahaira, Jerry, Barbara, Jen P., Patty, and Adele.

### ONLINE *giving*

St John Neumann Parish offers ONLINE GIVING for families to easily give one-time as well as recurring donations. You can make a secure donation via Electronic Check or Debit/Credit Card by visiting the parish website <[SJNNH.ORG](http://SJNNH.ORG)> and scrolling to the bottom of the homepage and clicking on <ONLINE-DOANATION>.

<https://sjnnh.org/online-donation>

### SJN Staff

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CAROL YETTO

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CAROL HOPFENSPIRGER and EVELYN VERBECK

Outreach & Food Pantry  
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DIANE BONENFANT

Sacristan

KATHY HOPKINS

Day Away (Thursday)  
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PARISH COUNCIL

Keith Faucher (President)  
[parishcouncil@sjnnh.org](mailto:parishcouncil@sjnnh.org)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Bob Fregault (Chairman)

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Leo Bobek, Grand Knight  
[kofc@sjnnh.org](mailto:kofc@sjnnh.org)