

**4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**December 22, 2024**

**Very Rev. Robert Glasgow, V.F.**  
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**MASS SCHEDULE**

Saturday (Anticipatory) ..... 5:30 PM  
 Sunday ..... 8:00 AM  
 Sunday ..... 10:00 AM  
 Sunday ..... 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.

**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.

**ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION**

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

**THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**

Good news and great joy to all the world:  
 Today is born the savior, Christ the Lord! —Luke 2:10

The excerpt below is from one of Pope St Leo the Great's (d. 461) Christmas homilies.

All Share in the Joy of Christmas

OUR SAVIOR was born today: let us be glad! For there is no proper place for sadness, when we keep the birthday of the Life, which destroys the fear of mortality and brings to us the joy of promised eternity. No one is kept from sharing in this happiness.

There is for all one common measure of joy, because as our Lord the destroyer of sin and death finds none free from charge, so is He come to free us all. Let the saint exult in that he draws near to victory. Let the sinner be glad in that he is invited to pardon. Let the gentile take courage in that he is called to life. For the Son of God in the fullness of time

which the inscrutable depth of the Divine counsel has determined, has taken on him the nature of man, thereby to reconcile it to its Author: in order that the inventor of death, the devil, might be conquered through that (nature) which he had conquered. And in this conflict undertaken for us, the fight was fought on great and wondrous principles of fairness; for the Almighty Lord enters the lists with His savage foe not in His own majesty but in our humility, opposing him with the same form and the same nature, which shares indeed our mortality, though it is free from all sin. Truly foreign to this nativity is



THE NATIVITY  
 by Simone dei Crocifissi (d. 1399)



that which we read of all others, no one is clean from stain, not even the infant who has lived but one day upon earth (Job 19:4). Nothing therefore of the lust of the flesh has passed into that peerless nativity, nothing of the law of sin has entered. A royal Virgin of the stem of David is chosen, to be impregnated with the sacred seed and to conceive the Divinely-human offspring in mind first and then in body. And lest in ignorance of the heavenly counsel she should tremble at so strange a result, she learns from converse with the angel that what is to be wrought in her is of the Holy Ghost. Nor does she believe it loss of honor that she is soon to be the Mother of God. For why should she be in despair over the novelty of such conception, to whom the power of the most High has promised to effect it. Her implicit faith is confirmed also by the attestation of a precursory miracle, and Elizabeth receives unexpected fertility: in order that there might be no doubt that He who had given conception to the barren, would give it even to a virgin.

The Mystery of the Incarnation Is a Fitting Theme for Joy  
Both to Angels and to Men

Therefore the Word of God, Himself God, the Son of God who in the beginning was with God, "through whom all things were made and without whom was nothing made" (John 1:1-3), with the purpose of delivering man from eternal death, became man: so bending Himself to take on Him our humility without decrease in His own majesty, that remaining what He was and assuming what He was not, He might unite the true form of a slave to that form in which He is equal to God the Father, and join both natures together by such a compact that the lower should not be swallowed up in its exaltation nor the higher impaired by its new associate. Without detriment therefore to the properties of either substance which then came together in one person, majesty took on humility, strength weakness, eternity mortality: and for the paying off of the debt, belonging to our condition, inviolable nature was united with passible [i.e., capable of suffering] nature, and true God and true man were combined to form one Lord, so that, as suited the needs of our case, one and the same Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, could both die with the one and rise again with the other.

Rightly therefore did the birth of our Salvation impart no corruption to the Virgin's purity, because the bearing of the Truth was the keeping of honor. Such then beloved was the nativity which became the Power of God and the Wisdom of God even Christ, whereby He might be one with us in manhood and surpass us in Godhead. For unless He were true God, He would not bring us a remedy, unless He were true Man, He would not give us an example. Therefore the exulting angel's song when the Lord was born is this, Glory to God in the Highest, and their message, "Peace on earth to men of good will" (Luke 2:14). For they see that the heavenly Jerusalem is being built up out of all the nations of the world: and over that indescribable work of the Divine love how ought the humbleness of men to rejoice, when the joy of the lofty angels is so great?

Christians Must Live So as to Be Worthy of So Great a Gift

Let us then, dearly beloved, give thanks to God the Father, through His Son, in the Holy Spirit, Who for His great mercy, wherewith He has loved us, has had pity on us: and when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together in Christ (Eph 2:4-5), that we might be in Him a new creation and a new production. Let us put off then the old man with his deeds: and having obtained a share in the birth of Christ let us renounce the works of the flesh. Christian, acknowledge your dignity, and becoming a partner in the Divine nature, refuse to return to the old baseness by degenerate conduct. Remember the Head and the Body of which you are a member. Recollect that you were rescued from the power of darkness and brought out into God's light and kingdom. By the mystery of Baptism you were made the temple of the Holy Ghost: do not put such a denizen to flight from you by base acts, and subject yourself once more to the devil's thralldom: because your purchase money is the blood of Christ, because He shall judge you in truth Who ransomed you in mercy, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

The formal announcement of the NATIVITY OF THE LORD [Roman Martyrology] is read or sung before the start of the Christmas Masses:

**T**ODAY, the twenty-fifth day of December, unknown ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth and then formed man and woman in his own image.

Several thousand years after the flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant.

Twenty-one centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah; thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt.

Eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the Judges; one thousand years from the anointing of David as king; in the sixty-fifth week according to the prophecy of Daniel.

In the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome.

The forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus; the whole world being at peace, JESUS CHRIST, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming, being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and nine months having passed since his conception, was born in Bethlehem of Judea of the Virgin Mary.

Today is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

### WEEKLY CALENDAR

#### Dec 22, SUNDAY — 4th Week of Advent

8:00 AM | Sunday Mass  
10:00 AM | Sunday Mass  
11:00 AM | Order of Christian Initiation  
6:00 PM | Sunday Mass  
7:00 PM | Eucharistic Adoration

#### Dec 23, MONDAY

12:15 AM | Daily Mass  
6:15 PM | Monday Women's Group

#### Dec 24, TUESDAY – Nativity of the Lord

4:00 PM | Christmas Eve "Children's" Mass  
7:00 PM | Christmas Eve Mass  
10:00 PM | Christmas Eve "Midnight" Mass

#### Dec 18, WEDNESDAY — Nativity of the Lord

10:00 AM | Christmas Day Mass

#### Dec 19, THURSDAY — Parish Offices Closed

9:00 AM | \*No Day Away  
12:15 AM | \*No Daily Mass

#### Dec 20, FRIDAY — Parish Offices Closed

10:00 AM | \*No Food Pantry  
12:15 PM | \*No Daily Mass

#### Dec 21, SATURDAY

8:30 AM | Men's Group  
9:30 AM | Widow's Group (2nd Sat of month)  
4:00 PM | Confession (until 5:00 PM)  
5:30 PM | Anticipatory Sunday Mass

### OFFERING

8 Dec '24 (2nd Sunday Advent): \$5,552.00  
15 Dec '24 (3rd Sunday Advent):  
POSTED ON BB OUTSIDE OF FRONT OFFICE  
THANK YOU for your generosity!

### MASS INTENTIONS

Dec 21 (Sat), 5:30 PM	James Gallagher (req. by Tom & Cynthia Sullivan)
Dec 22 (Sun), 8:00 AM	Thomas Brands (req. by Maureen Mooney)
Dec 22, 10:00 AM	Gordon Nickerson - 10th Anniv. (req. by Carol Yetto)
Dec 22, 6:00 PM	The Silva Family (req. by Edviges Silva)
Dec 23 (Mon), 12:15 PM	Mike Vincent + Elizabeth Lennon - LIVING INTENTION (req. by Lee & Linda Ray)
Dec 24 (Tue), 4:00 PM	Eugene Mooney (req. by the Roy Family)
Dec 24, 7:00 PM	Pat Davis + Ginny Early + Diane Bonenfant (req. by Monday Night's Faith Sharing Group)
Dec 24, 10:00 PM	Joan Luke (req. by Ellie)
Dec 25 (Wed), 12:15 PM	Lee Ray - LIVING INTENTION (req. by Linda Ray)

Dec 21 (Sat), 5:30 PM	John Wenz (req. by Mark & Joanne Kenna)
Dec 22 (Sun), 8:00 AM	Denis Veillieux (req. by family)
Dec 22, 10:00 AM	Ryan Lennon - LIVING INTENTION (req. by Linda Ray)
Dec 22, 6:00 PM	SJN Parishioners

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

#### Holy Day of Obligation NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Christmas Eve Masses  
(24 Dec, Tue)  
4:00, 7:00 and 10:00 PM

Christmas Day Mass  
(25 Dec, Wed)  
10:00 AM



#### Holy Day of Obligation MARY MOTHER OF GOD

Vigil Mass  
(31 Dec, Tue)  
5:30 PM

Holy Day Mass  
(1 Jan 2025, Wed)  
10:00 AM

### 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 of Advent [Gaudete Sunday].

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.*

### ON CHRISTMAS

The word "CHRISTMAS" comes from the late Old English phrase Cristes Maesse, which means "Christ's Mass" or "the Mass of Christ".

CHRISTMAS is one of the most important days of the Church year, second only to Easter itself. Celebrating the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is the culmination of the mystery of the incarnation, the feast of God becoming flesh [Latin "in carne" meaning "enfleshment"]. It is a uniquely Christian teaching, the Divine choosing to become one of us. Because of this belief, God is not only Transcendent, but also wholly Immanent, Emmanuel (God-with-us). While remaining Transcendent (meaning we must rise above our present condition to reach Him), He is at the same time Immanent (meaning He is with us as we rise toward Him). Every Eucharist is like CHRISTMAS where the bread and wine are transformed into His flesh, His Body and Blood, and, in a sense, He is born anew on the altar.

The liturgical season of CHRISTMAS begins with the vigil Masses on CHRISTMAS Eve and concludes on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. During this season, we celebrate the birth of Christ into our world and into our hearts and reflect on the gift of salvation that is born with him, including the fact that he was born to die for us.

### CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

THANKS to everyone for supporting our St John Neuman tradition of making Christmas a little brighter for area families-in-need by donating a GIFT CARD. They were distributed along with Food Baskets to families served by our SJN FOOD PANTRY. To quote St Peter Chrysologus, "The poor stretch forth their hands, but God receives what is offered." God bless!

### PRAYER LINE

To add someone PARISH PRAYER LINE please

contact Teri at the parish office: (603) 880-4689,  
[tschmitt@sjnnh.org](mailto:tschmitt@sjnnh.org). PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Youth volunteers and students—past, present, & future. Participants in our Grief Share group. Stephanie. Tony. Keith. Ginny. John. Barbara. Avery. Jarrod. Paul. Soul of Chris. Thanksgiving for David and Rebecca. Joey. Heather. Angela. Mark & Sharon. Susan. Jen. Joyce. Thomas. Mark. Soul of Basil. Maureen. Fred. Julie. Miriam's Son. Joey. Adriana. Angela. Jim. Laura. Nancy. Avila. Tim. Thanksgiving for Brynleigh. Bernie. Lucy. Brendan. Taylor. Cindy. Dan & Dan, Jr.; Doug & Pat. Souls of Ruby, Gerry & Arthur. Soul of Rita. Rhonda & Dale. Pam. Stronger Families. Holy Souls in purgatory. Family and friends who have fallen away from the faith. For vocations. Clergy of the diocese. For all of our parishioners and their needs.

### PARISH *online*

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

<https://SJNMERRIMACK.flocknote.com>  
Or, by texting "SJNMERRIMACK" to 84576  
(message/data rates may apply)

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FINANCE COMMITTEE – Bob Fregault (Chairman)

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS – Arvid Skogsholm (Grand Knight)  
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