

4th

Sunday
OF ADVENT



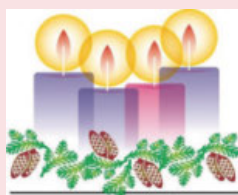
**Our Lady of Mt.
Carmel and Our Lady of
Loreto Parish
PRAYER FOR PARISH
SPIRITUAL RENEWAL**



Lord God, You love us with an everlasting love, and You choose us to share Your love with others. We ask that You rekindle in our hearts a new spirit of faith, of prayer and of reconciliation. Inspire us to search out and find ways of bringing one another closer to You. We pray for all who form our parish community, that we remain faithful to Your teaching, that we remain steadfast in our prayer, both personal and communal, that together with You and the Holy Spirit, our parish may be renewed and transformed. All this we ask in the name of Jesus and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Please cut out and pray daily.

4th Sunday of Advent



"The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.

And coming to her, he said, 'Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.' But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.'

"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. But Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?' And the angel said to her in reply, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God....for nothing will be impossible for God.' Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her."

Today is the last Sunday of the Advent season. Christmas is coming! Jesus is on his way!

We have had weeks to prepare for this momentous occasion, and now we are on the very verge of its arrival.

Much as Mary anticipated the birth of her child, we wait in hopeful expectation as Christians looking forward to being reunited with our Savior. Let us remember this as we enter into our Christmas Eve gatherings and festivities. As we join with family and friends to share in the good things of this life, may we carry with us the joy of knowing that even better things lie in store for us who welcome the infant Jesus into our hearts and homes.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Friends,

As we gather with our loved ones this Christmas, may we not lose sight of why we celebrate this special day. Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, became human for each and every one of us. Let us also remember His Mother Mary, who is our Mother too, and thank her for saying her "yes" to becoming the Mother of God's Son. In doing so she opened up for us the way to salvation, freedom from sin and the gift of eternal life. A blessed Christmas to all!

Buon natale!
Monsignor Pedone

**PARISHES OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED
ON CHRISTMAS DAY AND ON
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26TH.
THERE WILL BE NO MORNING MASS ON
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26TH.
MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

ADULT CONFIRMATION

The Diocese is again offering an opportunity for adults over the age of 18 who would like to be confirmed. The ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, February 4, 2024, at 3:00 PM at Saint Paul Cathedral with Bishop McManus as celebrant. Please see Monsignor Pedone or Deacon Pegg for more information.

**BUILDING ON OUR FAITH, BUILDING
ON OUR FUTURE**

Over the next few weeks, you will be hearing about the upcoming *Building on Our Faith, Building on Our Future* Program at Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Our Lady of Loreto Parish. This effort is very important as we move forward with the mission and vision of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Our Lady of Loreto Parish. We, as a parish family, have changed so many lives in our community! In order to continue our mission and ministries, we encourage all parishioners to spend time in prayer and discussion with your family reflecting on the work we do. Our special Commitment Weekend will be celebrated on January 20 & 21. If you have any questions regarding the *Building on Our Faith, Building on Our Future* Program, please feel free to contact the parish office.

Christmas Giving Trees

**Thank You!! Thank You!!
Thank You!!**

**Because of your kindness and generosity,
many children will have a brighter and
happier Christmas this year.**



The Nativity of the Lord

The word "NATIVITY" comes from the Latin word "nativis" meaning birth. Over the years the word nativity has taken on the meaning of the account of the birth of Jesus Christ.



Today the Church celebrates the Birth of Jesus Christ, the first day in the octave of Christmas. Throughout Advent the Church longed ardently for the coming of our Savior. Today she celebrates His birth with unrestrained joy.

"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

The Son of God became man to give us a share in that divine life which is eternally His in the Blessed Trinity. Christmas time begins on December 24 with the first Vespers of the feast and ends on the feast of the Baptism of Christ. White vestments reappear in our churches as a sign of joy.

The Christmas feast is a festival full of joy. The Eternal Word has become Man and dwells among us. The purpose of the Christmas feast is beautifully expressed in the **Preface of the Nativity:**

"For by the mystery of the Word made flesh the light of Thy glory hath shone anew upon the eyes of our mind; so that while we acknowledge Him, a God seen by men, we may be drawn by Him to the love of things unseen."

**Joy to the world, the Lord has come,
let earth receive her King!!!**



*May the miracle of Christ's birth
bring joy to you and yours this
Blessed Season!*

*Merry Christmas
from
Msgr. Pedone, Deacon Don
and all the staff from our parish.*

A LETTER FROM BISHOP McMANUS

Christmas 2023

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." (Romans 15:13)

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth involve a disparate group of people---the sinless virgin, the upright Joseph, an indifferent innkeeper, Jewish shepherds, pagan magi, the ruthless Herod, incurious scribes, and murderous soldiers. Among this radically varied group, there was one thing in common. They were all ---each one of them---loved by God. They were each the reason Christ was born. To each He would call. For each He died.

What was true that long ago night in Bethlehem remains true this day in our world. God loves each one of us. He loves those in the pews each week, twice a year or not at all. He loves those who have just come from the confessional and those who have not yet made it there. He loves those who acknowledge and worship Him and those who do not recognize Him and are far off.

Jesus Christ is the one savior of the world. He loves us all and He calls us all. As people whose freedom God respects, our response is critical. It determines if we find peace in this life and in the next. His peace is a gift. We do not earn it. We can only accept it. We accept it by believing in Him and what He has revealed, by striving to follow Him with our lives, and, by our repentance, accepting His freely offered, limitless mercy for our failures.

I pray that, whatever our situation and circumstance this Christmas, we may all be deeply moved by the wondrous love of God who so loved the world that He sent His Son as our Savior. May we turn anew to Jesus Christ, find a welcome place in His Church, and with it the joy, peace and hope God intends for us all.

With every prayerful best wish for a Merry Christmas, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester

**Each of us is an Inn keeper
who decides if there is room for Jesus.**

RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY

The Respect Life Ministry would like to wish Msgr. Steve, Deacon Don, the parish staff and all parishioners a Blessed and Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year! We thank you for all of your support on Mother's Day, Father's Day and at the Italian Festival. These donations allow us to provide funds and services to our parish and local charities in our diocese.

May God Bless you all!
Barbara & Joe, Debbie & Matt, Angela & Mark, Elaine, Judy, Louise, Maria, Michele & Bill, Alessandra & Dave, Santina and Donna

Financial Stewardship

For the week ending December 17, 2023

Due to the Christmas holiday this bulletin was submitted to the printer before this past weekend's collection. Those totals will appear in next weekend's bulletin.

Thank you for your continued generosity.

We have had some requests from parishioners who contribute online, monthly, quarterly or otherwise to provide a listing of upcoming collections. So, going forward we will now publish this information in the bulletin each week. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Lisa at lisaolmc@gmail.com or 508-753-5001.

December 1, 2023	Maintenance Fund
December 1, 2023	Christmas Flowers
December 3, 2023	Weekly Offering
December 8, 2023	Immaculate Conception
December 10, 2023	Religious Retirement Fund
December 10, 2023	Weekly Offering
December 17, 2023	Fuel Offering
December 17, 2023	Weekly Offering
December 24, 2023	Weekly Offering
December 25, 2023	Christmas Offering
December 31, 2023	Weekly Offering

Ministry Assignments Dec. 30-Jan. 1December 30 @ 4:00 pm

Lector – Joe Godek

Ministers – Sue Cozzolino, Pat Solitro & Brian Le

December 31 @ 8 am

Lector - Joe Sama

Ministers—Joe Sama

December 31 @ 10:30 am

Lector—Juanita Pignataro

Ministers - Debbie & Gerry Woods

January 1—New Year's Day @ 10:30 am

Lector—Maria Sciannameo

Ministers—Elizabeth Santley & Pat Solitro

Please arrange for a substitute if you cannot fulfill your assignment. Thank you for the good work that you do!

If a substitution is made, please contact Julie so the announcement sheets will be correct.

MEAT RAFFLE

A meat raffle will be taking place on **January 7, 2024** at 1:00 PM at the 4th and 1 Club, 7 Muskego St., Worcester, MA. This fundraiser will help support our Italian Festival that will be taking place on August 15th through the August 18th 2024. The donation for each table will be \$200. We will accept donations for a partial table as well. We will be having 6 different meat tables during the event, as well as a 50/50 raffle, a lottery raffle, and more. Sponsorship forms are available at the Parish Center or by calling the office at 508-753-5001.

RECIPES AND REMEMBRANCES

The Italian Festival Committee will be reprinting the *Recipes and Remembrances* cookbook in the spring. If you were unable to get one or would like to order more please contact the parish office at 508-753-5001. We are hoping to have them available in April or May.

KNIGHT OF COLUMBUS MUSEUM

We are planning a trip to the Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Center (formerly known as the Knights of Columbus Museum) on Sunday, January 14. More details will follow soon.

If you are interested, please contact Joan D'Argenis at joan_dargenis@yahoo.com or call the parish office at 508-753-5001.

Upcoming Events

Golden Years (every Tuesday)

Knights of Columbus Meeting—7 pm
(every 3rd Wednesday) All men of the Parish are welcome to attend.

“At the Foot of the Cross” - 6:30 pm -last Wednesday of the month (check with the office)

Dec. 24—Christmas Eve Mass @ 4:00 pmDec. 25—Christmas Day Masses @ 8:00 am and 10:30 amJan. 1—New Year's Day—Mass @ 10:30 am

Jan. 6—Bottle & Can Drive...American Heritage Girls Troop 0716....in Our Lady of Loreto parking Lot...9 am—Noon.

Jan. 6—Handbell Concert @ St. Anne 's in Shrewsbury (See article)

Jan. 7—Meat Raffle

Jan. 19—March for Life in Washington, DC

Jan. 26—Worcester Railers Catholic Schools Night (See article)

God has his own time.We are just impatient.

“The poorest person in the world is not the one without money. It is the one without God.”

MASS INTENTIONS



Saturday, December 23, 2023—4:00 p.m.

The Fenuccio and Guerra Families by Anna Fenuccio

Anna Washburn by Daughter

Sunday, December 24, 2023—8:00 a.m.

Parishioners Intentions

Sunday, December 24, 2023—10:30 a.m.

John and James O'Brien by Family

Giovanna, Adelina & Martino Palladino by Family

Sunday, December 24, 2023—4:00 p.m.

Salvatore Meringolo (Birthday Remembrance) by Children

Joseph & Katherine Riggieri and Joseph Riggieri Jr. by daughter and sister Dolores

Monday, December 25, 2023—8:00 a.m.

The People of the Parish

Monday, December 25, 2023—10:30 a.m.

Deacon Gerald Montiverdi by Wife and Family

Cyndee and Stephen Barlow by best friend Dolores

Tuesday, December 26, 2023—NO MASS

Wednesday, December 27, 2023—7:00 a.m.

Adolfo Ortiz Sr. and Adolfo Ortiz Jr. by the Ortiz Family

Barbara Domiano, Robert Domiano Sr. and Robert Domiano Jr. by Mr. and Mrs. Michael Cianci

Thursday, December 28, 2023—7:00 a.m.

Peter and Viola Griffin by Family

Saturday, December 30, 2023—4:00 p.m.

Parishioners Intentions

Sunday, December 31, 2023—8:00 a.m.

The Sick of the Parish

Sunday, December 31, 2023—10:30 a.m.

Joseph Tufano (45th Anniversary) and **Deceased Members of the Tufano Family** by Julie Tufano

Domenic Mercurio Sr. by Family



Please pray for the sick of our parish: Francis Caffone, Donna Grasseschi, Lori Blackwell, Matteo Fiore, Patrick Loconto, Frank "Butch" Rano, Sylvia Pusateri, Thelma Ortiz, Cynthia Pedone, Roland Dionne, Sue Cozzolino, Paul Locantore, Ann Servidio, Joseph Vancelette, Madelyn Martin, Ann Marie Verdolino, Charlene Swalec, Lorrie Tufano, Maxwell Mitchell, Lynn Wagner, Carol Youngstrom, Rudy Aromando, Richard Sharameta, Cindy Worthington, Beverly DeMarco, George Burton, Charlotte O'Mara, Renate Perry, Angela Vizzo, Jacob Rivera, Stephanie Berthiaume Cowie, Fulvia D'Amico, Isabella Gamble, Melissa Totaro, Nancy Meringolo, Veronika Montiverdi, Nancy Molinari, Joyce Molinari, Lillian Pascarelli, Lisa Cianci, Tina Donahue, Dolores Pellegrino and John Latino. May the Lord give them strength, courage and healing.

THIS WEEK OUR SANCTUARY LAMPS ARE DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF:

Deacon Gerald Montiverdi

By Wife and Family

Robert Piltzecker

By wife Theresa

Mary Gabriel

By granddaughter, Barbara



A Christmas Letter from Jesus....

When you look for me at Christmas, you won't need a special star.

I'm no longer in Bethlehem, I'm right here where you are.

You may not be aware of me amid the celebrations.

You'll have to look beyond the stores and all the decorations.

But if you take a moment from your list of things to do, to close your eyes, and say a prayer, I'm waiting here for you.

You're the one I want to be with.

You're the reason that I came!

And you'll find me in the stillness, where I'm whispering your name.

Worcester Railers Catholic Schools Night...Jan. 26

Do you like hockey? How about the Worcester Railers vs. the Norfolk Admirals? If you are interested, Catholic Schools Night is January 26. Tickets will be available at a discounted group rate and would range from \$14-\$22 per ticket based on where you sit. Call Brendan Walsh @ 508-365-1756 for more information.



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

Sunday, Dec 24, 2023

An embarrassment of riches

Every so many years, we experience this happy collision of observances: the last Sunday of Advent blossoms into Christmas Eve in a single day. Which means next week, the Feast of the Holy Family will roll into the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God by nightfall. It's a mad scramble for presiders, preachers, choirs, and liturgists to keep up with the whole, holy mess of these occasions. Parishioners too will be obliged to untangle the remarkable Mass schedule this landslide of liturgies creates. Consider it a cheerful reminder that liturgy gathers us into mysteries that are not finite but everlasting.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

TODAY'S READINGS: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38 (11). *"Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God."*

Monday, Dec 25, 2023

The wonder of it all

In the early church, Christmas was actually not a major feast, but over the centuries it grew in importance, and Saint Francis of Assisi catapulted its popularity in 1223 by creating the first nativity scene in a cave with live animals. Christmas Midnight Mass was celebrated there and it was a huge hit with the whole town. The tradition of the Christmas crèche was born. Francis loved Christmas, considering it the "Feast of Feasts," because God chose to take the humble form of a poor baby. Let the wonder of the Incarnation imbue your day.

SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)

TODAY'S READINGS: Vigil: Isaiah 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Matthew 1:1-25 (13); Night: Isaiah 9:1-6; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 (14); Dawn: Isaiah 62:11-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:15-20 (15); Day: Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18 (16). *"For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord."*

Tuesday, Dec 26, 2023

For the love of Saint Stephen

On this second day of Christmas, consider words about true love—and Saint Stephen—from Saint Fulgentius, a North African bishop of the sixth century: "Love was Stephen's weapon by which he gained every battle, and so won the crown signified by his name. His love of God kept him from yielding to the ferocious mob; his love for his neighbor made him pray for those who were stoning him." Celebrate the Christmas octave with the same steadfast love the first Christian martyr showed his persecutors.

FEAST OF STEPHEN, FIRST MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Matthew 10:17-22 (696). *"They could not withstand the wisdom and the spirit with which he spoke."*

Wednesday, Dec 27, 2023

Through thick and thin

Beloved! That's what we know about today's saint—John the apostle is the "disciple whom Jesus loved." John was the last apostle to leave Jesus at the cross and one of the first to discover his Resurrection on Easter Sunday. He earned the title of evangelist by writing the fourth gospel (likely with help from his followers). His account of Jesus' life has a more spiritual and mysterious air than those of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. But that doesn't mean he's otherworldly—after all, John is the patron saint of loyalty and friendships. Honor him today by visiting with a friend.

FEAST OF JOHN, APOSTLE, EVANGELIST

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 John 1:1-4; John 20:1a, 2-8 (697). *"What we have seen and heard we proclaim now to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us."*

Thursday, Dec 28, 2023

Mortal consequences

Amid the Christmas festivities, today the church has a somber reminder of the infants in the vicinity of Bethlehem who were slaughtered by King Herod in his fruitless effort to destroy Jesus. They were "collateral damage" that paved the way for Christianity, a faith that confesses to protecting the most vulnerable. In honor of the Holy Innocents, we might consider the many innocents who die prematurely because of lack of healthcare, pollution that results in disease, and isolation that leads to early death. Strive to be a force for life.

FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 John 1:5—2:2; Matthew 2:13-18 (698). *"God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all."*

Friday, Dec 29, 2023

The Catholic bucket list

Gift-giving at Christmastime is a common custom. Whether it's at home under a lit tree or at the secret Santa party at work, it's fun to give and receive. "Experience" gifts are becoming more a part of this custom: tickets to see a ballgame, an art class, a hiking trip. Experience gifts can be given any time, and we can even treat ourselves. Since it's the season of Christmas, let's think of Catholic experiences that we'd enjoy and create a kind of "Catholic bucket list." See the pope? Run a food pantry? Visit Assisi? Take a scripture class? Spend the rest of the Christmas season creating your own list.

FIFTH DAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 John 2:3-11; Luke 2:22-35 (202). *"It had been revealed to [Simeon] by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord."*

Saturday, Dec 30, 2023

What is the purpose of life?

This age-old question has as many answers as there are questioners. For Catholics though, there is one simple answer: love. But when is love ever simple? Deep love can be complicated and even gut-wrenchingly hard. It can bring pain, longing, disquiet, questioning, loneliness, and sacrifice. Yet, "The pain that comes from deep love makes your love ever more fruitful," writes Henri Nouwen. Love is our purpose, and we join with those celebrating Kwanzaa who are reflecting this day on the principle of Nia, that is, purpose.

SIXTH DAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 John 2:12-17; Luke 2:36-40 (203). *"Whoever does the will of God remains forever."*

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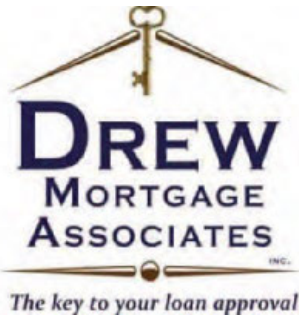
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