



ST. JOHN VIANNEY CATHOLIC CHURCH

DECEMBER 18, 2022

Christmas Masses

Saturday Vigil: 5:00 pm
Midnight Mass
Sunday: 8:30 am

Weekday Masses

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri: 8:00 am
Wednesday: 6:00 pm

Reconciliation

Saturday: 4:15-4:45 pm
Wednesday: 5:15-5:30 pm
or by appointment

Catholic Faith Formation (CFF)

Sunday: 9:30-11 am

Parish Office

Location: 902 St. John Drive
in the Activity Center
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 229
Sherman, IL 62684
Email: parish@sjv.dio.org
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Office Hours: Monday-Friday
8:30 am—1:30 pm

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217-650-9276

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Lori Saathoff
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Find us online at <https://sjvsherman.org>



<http://facebook.com/sjvchurchsherman>

Fourth Sunday of ADVENT YEAR A



“She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” - Mt. 1:21

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

PARISH MINISTRIES CONTACT INFORMATION

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Nancy Barrett
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Tribunal Advocate:

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Joseph's righteousness our role model

Dearest brothers and sisters, on this 4th Sunday of Advent, the Gospel of Matthew tells us about the events that preceded Jesus's birth, which were from the point of view of St. Joseph, the betrothed husband of the Virgin Mary. Of course, Joseph and Mary were living in Nazareth but they did not live together yet because the marriage ceremony was still to take place. He was bewildered on realizing that Mary was pregnant, but instead of defending himself and demanding his rights, Joseph opts for a solution that represents an enormous sacrifice for him. And the Gospel says: "Because he was a just man and did not want to accuse her publicly, he decided to send her away quietly" (1:19). Here, Joseph wants to do God's will and resolves, indeed with deep sorrow, to part with Mary in secret.

We should meditate on these words to understand the trial that Joseph endured in the days that preceded Jesus' birth, and especially when he was told in a dream: "Joseph, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:20). Moreover, the Gospel manifests to us all of Joseph's greatness of soul. He was

pursuing a good plan for his life but God had another design for him, a greater mission. He was a man who always listened to God's voice, profoundly sensitive to his hidden will, a man attentive to the messages that came to him from the depths of his heart and from above. He did not persist in pursuing his own plan for his life, he did not allow rancor to poison his soul, but was ready to place himself at the service of the thing that was presented to him in a disconcerting way. And it was in this way that he was a righteous man. He did not hate and he did not allow rancor to poison his soul. How often does hatred or antipathy and even rancor too, poison our souls? And this is bad for us. Joseph never permits this to happen: he is a good example of this. And in this way Joseph became freer and greater. Accepting himself according to God's plan, Joseph finds himself completely, beyond himself. This freedom he has to give up what belongs to him, the ownership of his own life, and this total interior availability to God's will, grab our attention and show us the way. Let us prepare ourselves to celebrate Christmas contemplating Mary and

Joseph: Mary, the woman who is full of grace, who had the courage to entrust herself totally to the Word of God; Joseph, the faithful and just man who preferred to believe the Lord rather than listen to the voices of human doubt and pride. Let us travel with them toward Bethlehem. Let's go to meet the expected King to be born! Amen.

CHRISTMAS CONFESSIONS: Although we have done our Advent Penance services last Sunday, if you still have the need for confession before Christmas, know that I am available for that after each Mass or by appointment.

CHRISTMAS DONATIONS/GIFTS: As my annual vacation in Nigeria with my family approaches, during which we will have the burial and funeral ceremonies of my late Grandma, Grace Azuka, may I begin to appreciate all your support to me, including your Christmas gifts to me. I will still have some more time to do this later. May God continue to bless you for your generosity. Thank you all.

GOOD WISHES: Are you still reading your blue booklet for the Advent and Christmas? Get ready for the Christmas Masses: 5 p.m. on December 24; 12 midnight and 8:30 a.m. on December 25. Come with your families and friends. The events will be great. Best wishes to you all as we wrap up our Advent and ride on to the Christmas joy!

Praying for God's abiding joy and favors upon you and yours in the week ahead! Merry Christmas and a joy-filled New Year to you all, in advance! With my love and care.

FR. FREDDIE MBIERE



Fr. Freddie with Santa at the SJV Cookie Walk!

Lighting of the Advent Candles. Amy and Tom Schutzbach lit the candles at the 5 p.m. Saturday Mass; Connor Ausmus lit the candles at the 8:30 Sunday Mass for the third week of Advent .



Music rehearsals for 5 pm Christmas Eve Mass

Singer and Instrumental rehearsals will be at 10:45-11:15 am Sunday, Dec. 18; and 6-7:30 pm on Monday, Dec. 19. Please contact Lori with any questions (217) 553-0216 or Isaathoff@sjv.dio.org.



Cookie Walk !

The St. John Vianney Activity Center was filled to the brim with people buying cookies and other goodies on Dec. 10 at the SJV Women's Society Annual Cookie Walk.

Collection for Catholic Children's Home December 25

For the past 143 years, the Catholic Children's Home (CCH) in Alton has served as a beacon of hope for thousands of children in need of safe harbor and a place to call home. The CCH continues this mission by meeting the emotional, social, academic and basic material needs of all the children sent for residential care or special education services. This includes an innovative program designed to serve the needs of children with immense challenges of autism.

The children served by the CCH have been chronically abused, designated "unmanageable" by their schools or simply have no home. They are some of the most vulnerable in our society. The holiday season is a particularly difficult time for these youths as many of them are without a family. Those who have a family are often lacking the special care they need. Please keep these children in your prayers throughout this holy season of Advent and Christmas.

In the spirit of Christ's love for all children, please be generous in your support of the work of the Catholic Children's Home.

St. John Vianney WEEKLY PARISH OFFERING December 10 & 11, 2022

Sunday Envelopes	\$	2,781.00
Loose Donations	\$	836.00
WeShare	\$	565.00
Total	\$	3,346.00
Weekly Budget	\$	4,788.46
Capital Improvements	\$	350.00
Religious Retirement	\$	818.00
Christmas Flowers	\$	60.00
Christmas Offering	\$	125.00
Immaculate Conception	\$	118.00

WeShare, our online donation tool, makes your giving more convenient. Getting started is easy. Just type in <https://www.wesharegiving.org/app/giving/WeShare-1975>

Thank you for your generous support of our parish needs and those of the greater Church.

Please consider remembering St. John Vianney Parish in your will



Christmas Masses

Christmas Eve, December 24, 5 pm
Midnight Mass
Christmas Day, December 25, 8:30 am

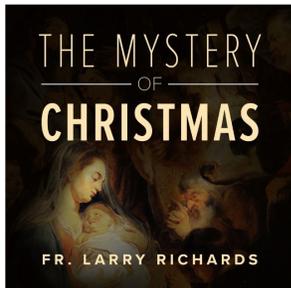
Mass INTENTIONS

Ministry SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, DEC. 17 VIGIL MASS	Rosemary Schildgen †
SUNDAY, DEC. 18 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	For the People (Pro Populo)
MONDAY, DEC. 19	Evelyn Sweeney †
TUESDAY, DEC. 20	David Allen Johnson †
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 21 <i>St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church</i>	Deceased members of the SJV Women's Society †
THURSDAY, DEC. 22	Merle Davis †
FRIDAY, DEC. 23 <i>St. John of Kanty, Priest</i>	Glenn Allison †
SATURDAY, DEC. 24 VIGIL MASS	Nancy Saathoff †
SUNDAY, DEC. 25 MIDNIGHT MASS	Merle Davis Family †
SUNDAY, DEC. 25 CHRISTMAS	Tim Sullivan †

	THIS WEEKEND	NEXT WEEKEND
Saturday 5:00 pm	December 17	December 24
Lector	John Ausmus	Dan Blentlinger
Eucharistic Minister	Deacon Andy	Deacon Andy
Server	Avery Glasgow	Avery Glasgow
Sacristan	Deacon Andy	Deacon Andy
Midnight Mass		December 25
Lector		Carol Shehorn
Eucharistic Minister		Barbara Doud
Server		
Sacristan		Cliff Shehorn
Sunday 8:30 am	December 18	December 25
Lector	LaDonna Rowden	Tom Henderson
Eucharistic Minister	Deacon Andy	Valerie Henderson
Server	Austin Grebner Ethan Grebner	Allison O'Neill Samantha O'Neill
Sacristan	Deacon Andy	Deacon Andy

FORMED THE CATHOLIC FAITH.
ON DEMAND.



The Mystery of Christmas by Fr. Larry Richards

In this talk, Fr. Larry Richards reminds us that in the mystery of Christmas, God gives humanity his greatest gift: his Son.

St. John Vianney has a FORMED subscription!

Visit formed.org/signup and type in 62684

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION
Wednesday, Dec. 21
† 7 am to 6 pm †
Rosary at 5:30 pm
Mass at 6 pm

ALL ARE INVITED
Sundays after the 8:30 am Mass
No gathering / formation December 25 and January 1

THE GOSPEL FOR ALL AGES

BE A PART OF BUILDING THE ST. JOHN VIANNEY FAMILY

Faith FORMATION SJV

Coffee • Conversation • Community

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

“TO YOU GOD ENTRUSTED HIS ONLY SON;
IN YOU MARY PLACED HER TRUST;
WITH YOU CHRIST BECAME MAN.
OBTAIN FOR US GRACE, MERCY
AND COURAGE. AMEN.”

- POPE FRANCIS

No session DEC. 21 AND 28

Next Session: Wednesday, Jan. 4

Adult FAITH ENRICHMENT

6:45 pm
in the
Activity
Center

St. Joseph the Steward

St. Joseph is one of the greatest examples of stewardship we have in the Gospels. Here is a man who understands care and reverence for the property of God, a man chosen to be steward over the very life and breath of God's Son and Spouse.

Joseph was mindful. He recognized what belonged to God. When he understood that Mary was to be the mother of God, he was not jealous or bitter. He did not presume to claim ownership over her.

Joseph was prayerful. He accepted the opportunity to be in relationship with God, even if it was in a radical and unexpected way. How many of us would trust a crazy dream we have where an angel tells us our fiancée is carrying the Son of God? Well, those of us who are already profoundly connected to God through prayer. Joseph was open to receiving God, and so he was open to the truth in a way many of us would not have been.

Joseph was gracious. Even before he had full understanding of the situation, he was unwilling to expose Mary to shame. He did not give himself over to feelings of betrayal.

Joseph was committed. He persevered. The Lord had no shortage of strange and even dangerous-sounding tasks for Joseph, but he submitted to each one.

Joseph was accountable. When he awoke from his dream, "he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him, and took his wife into his home."

Joseph was a man entrusted with many gifts, and he gave of them wisely. Let us pray that we have the grace to follow in his example.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

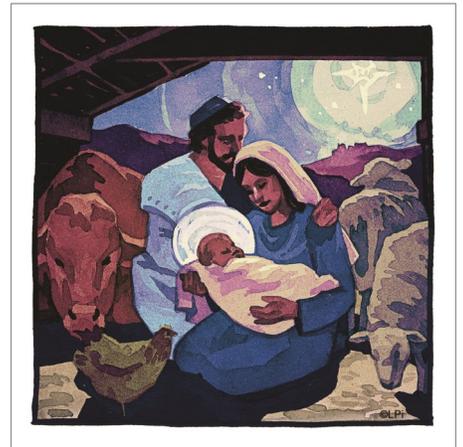
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FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The Lord
has not
forgotten us

The "inn" is not what you think it was...

The Christmas story is very familiar to many of us, but growing up certain images can cloud our view of what actually happened over 2,000 years ago. In particular, there is a common narrative that depicts **Joseph pounding on doors trying to find a place where Mary can give birth to Jesus**. The owner of the local motel slams the door in Joseph's face, saying that there is "no vacancy." Then Joseph finally finds a stable where animals are kept and brings Mary to the humble place, just in time before Jesus is born. While it is an engaging story, it doesn't match-up with the biblical account and the original Greek text.



Luke sets the stage, "And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was **no place for them in the inn**" (Luke 2:7). The last word in that passage, "inn," is what usually fosters the narratives as described above. However, the English word is not a full translation of the Greek.

The word used in the original text is best understood as a "**guest room**," not a type of commercial inn used for travelers. Even more to the point, very few women would want to give birth in a type of public motel. Inns at that time did not have a good reputation and Mary would have wanted privacy for such an intimate event.

Furthermore, a close reading of the text reveals that Joseph and Mary had been in Bethlehem for a few days before her giving birth. According to Luke, the holy couple were already staying in Bethlehem when Mary went into labor. In other words, they weren't rushing to find somewhere to stay on Christmas Eve, but looking for a proper place with enough space and privacy for the birthing process.

A typical Judean house of that day consisted of an area near the door, often with a dirt floor, where the family's animals were kept at night—so they wouldn't be stolen or preyed upon, and so their body heat could help warm the home on cool nights. Typically, the lower area near the door had a manger for food and/or water for the animals. Another description explains how, "houses in Bethlehem and its vicinity often had caves at the back of the house where they kept their prized ox or beast of burden, lest it be stolen. The guest room was in the front of the house, the animal shelter in the back." So instead of subjecting the other guests of the home to the delivery of a child, Mary gave birth in a more private area where the animals were kept and laid Jesus in the feeding trough that was there. Jesus was prophetically born in a feeding trough as He became our "Bread of Life." Indeed, Bethlehem means "House of Bread."

Each one of us is an innkeeper who decides if there is room for Jesus.

INSPIRATION FOR THE WEEK

"God is with us." This is the one constant in the unpredictability of life. The particulars of our lives can change, not only instantly but dramatically. People experiencing a time of peace can easily find themselves at war. Times of prosperity can rapidly become times of want. Our vision for the future can be destroyed, and our securities placed in jeopardy. These final days of Advent allow us to make final preparations. The true safety and security we seek can only come from God. The rest, harmony, and peacefulness we desire are found in God alone. How do we know this to be true? God Himself gave us a sign: Emmanuel, God with us. Do not be afraid, and do not be unbelieving. Hold fast to what God has done in giving us His only begotten Son. We do not have to anxiously attempt to control life's unpredictability. All we need to do is make sure that our hearts are in the proper place and seeking the right things! ©LPI