



Saint **AMBROSE**
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
ROOTED IN CHRIST

518-785-1351 • 347 Old Loudon Road, | Latham, New York 12110 • www.stambroselatham.com

MASS TIMES: SATURDAY 4PM, SUNDAY 9AM & 11AM, MONDAY-THURSDAY 12:10PM

ONE MIGHTIER
THAN I IS
COMING.

— MARK 1:7A —

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

I have friends who are foster parents. They describe how they might get a phone call out of nowhere looking to place a child in their care. They could come from any number of difficult situations, and as foster parents, they'd have to scramble to welcome this child (maybe more than one) into their home.

I marvel at that, especially in light of what I wrote last week in comparing Advent to the birth of my own children. With them, I had the luxury of waiting. Foster families open their lives up to the totally unexpected. One friend and her husband have ended up adopting several of the foster kids that came into their care. It's really remarkable...life throws you a crisis and you turn it into a family.

Last week, our readings were about waiting: waiting for the hidden God, waiting for the second coming of Jesus, and things that can only be met with anticipation. The Gospel begged a question...yes we wait, but what if God actually shows up? What then? I'm not one for surprises. I get really bad anxiety. It feels like waiting outside of the principal's office as a kid. The unexpected makes me nauseous.

Of course surprises can cut two ways. On one hand we could get a sudden phone call that a loved one just died. On the other hand, we can walk unwittingly into our own surprise birthday party. Not all surprises are bad. Just like bad news can drench us in anxiety and sadness, good news can fill us with peals of joy. I remember one of the best surprises of my life happened when I was in graduate school. I was living in Ohio, and my girlfriend (and eventual wife) still lived back home, eight hours away. I was missing her terribly and we were talking to each other on the phone like we normally would. As we were talking, I told her that I was going to get a burrito at a Moe's that was a half-hour from school. We stayed on the phone and I drove up to the restaurant, got out, and went to open the door, only to find it locked. I was just about to bellow out my frustration into the phone when she wrapped me in a hug from behind. Unbeknownst to me, she had made the eight hour drive just to surprise me. She kept me on the phone so she'd know where to find me. It was awesome and not knowing ahead of time made it all the more special.

Our readings this Sunday are all about surprises. We are left wondering if God's surprise is going to be good news or bad news. I think the answer to that depends on your perspective. As a parent, I know that my arrival home can seem like good news or bad news to my kids depending on what I'm walking into. So let's look at the readings.

The first is a favorite passage from the 40th chapter of Isaiah. Many people living in the kingdom of Judah were deported to the land of Babylon and

had lived there for 50-some-odd years. Given their foreign policy of Babylon, they really had no grounds for hope that they'd ever go back to their homes. Then something funny happens: The Persians conquer the Babylonians and institute their own foreign policy, which not only sent exiles back to their ancestral homes, but did so with provisions to rebuild what had been lost. The exile had happened because of the people's sinfulness, but now Isaiah says *"Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem. . . she has received from the hand of the LORD double for all her sin"* (Is 40:1-2). God has surprised his people with the great gift of return and restoration, and it wasn't quite expected. It was bad news for the Babylonians, but good news for the Jews.

The second reading, from Second Peter, presents to us a vision of the end. As I've mentioned before, we do well not to neglect biblical apocalyptic because it really is a major backdrop to the New Testament. Peter relates an ominous warning that soon all things will be passing away, and that until then we wait. Like the prophets before him, he speaks of the coming *"day of God"* (3:12) and that right now should be a time where we get our lives in order. This might seem like bad news if you're living life one way, yet I think the faithful see this coming differently. What are we expecting? *"We await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. . . be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, at peace"* (3:13-14). This day of surprise is God's way of making things more like they were before sin and the Fall. While the imagery is scary, it's God's way of saying "eventually I'm going to make everything okay", like demolishing a dilapidated home as a precursor to building a new one.

This leaves us with the Gospel reading and with the image of John the Baptist. John the Baptist, himself a quite unexpected prophet, attracted a movement that led to many people of all kinds of backgrounds turning away from their sins and receiving forgiveness. If that wasn't big enough, he tells us that someone greater is coming. While John baptizes with water, *"he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit"* (Mk 1:8). In other words, God is going to surprise us with his son Jesus and he's coming with a greater gift: the Holy Spirit.

You really can't chart when God is going to show up, but I'm fairly confident that it's always good news to those who love him and try to honor him with their lives. Somehow, even if things are really bad, or even if they get worse, he will make things right. We might find ourselves surprised into his family, receiving his blessing, and experiencing true joy.

-Tom Acemoglu

DECEMBER 10, 2023

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday 9:00am-4:00pm

Sunday Before & After the Masses
in the Parish Center Lobby.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Website: stambroselatham.com

Facebook: @stambrosechurch

Email: salatham@rcda.org

YouTube: youtube.com/c/StAmbroseMedia

*Are you receiving text and email
notifications from St. Ambrose?
Text the word **ambrose** to 84576
to opt in.*

Mom's Group



Join us the first Sunday of each
month from 9:50AM -10:50AM
in room 307

Next Meeting: January 7th

Contact Darlene at 518-496-1886
for more information.

AFTERNOON OF REFLECTION

The Evangelization team of Holy Trinity invites you to
an Advent Afternoon of Reflection on Sunday,
December 17, 2023 at 2 pm in church.

During this busy time, give yourself an hour of peace
and join us for music, prayer and benediction.

St. Ambrose, Latham, New York

What if the greatest gift we could give
was peace of mind for somebody else?

Help us assist every person who calls
our parish in crisis. Look for the flyer at
the church entrances, or call the parish
office for more details.

Be the Gift

**Due to the high cost of postage,
starting in January, we'll be sending
large receipt donations via email.
Please call the office to make sure our
records are up to date. If there is no
email on file you will receive your
receipt in the mail as always.**

Fearfully & Wonderfully Made

Sundays from
9:50a - 10:50a
in the Chapel
(Dec 10 & 17, Jan 7 & 14)

WANT TO STAY UP TO DATE ON ADULT LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES? Contact Tom at
thomas.acemoglu@rcda.org or join at
<https://stambroselatham.flocknote.com/AdultFaithFormat/>



**The Latham-Colonie
Knights of Columbus
Bob Church Memorial
Dinner**

**Saturday December 16th, 2023
328 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, N.Y. 12110**

**"Take Out" and "Dine- In" options available!
Serving from 4pm to 8pm.**

**Menu: Beef Entree, Dessert, Coffee and Tea
Donation: \$25 per person. Reservations
Requested: Call 518-783-0572.**

**Proceeds benefit Bob Church Memorial
Fund/Community Maternity Services, Albany,
N.Y.**

**Looking forward to going to a
Midnight Mass for Christmas?
Celebrate with Father Sam Bellafiore
at St. Michael's Church in Cohoes at
Midnight on Christmas Eve. All are
welcome to attend. Please direct any
questions to the St. Michael's parish
office by calling (518)-237-5151.**

FRIENDS IN FAITH

Would you like an opportunity to become better acquainted with fellow parishioners? What about giving back to our parish family by planning future events for parishioners of all ages? Friends in Faith will meet to gather your ideas for future social and hospitality events.

FRIENDS IN FAITH meetings are scheduled every Tuesday, and are held in the parish center.

Call Mary Kay for more information
(518-366-9741)

Blue CHRISTMAS Prayer Service

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH @ 3:00PM
OUR LADY OF VICTORY CHURCH
55 NORTH LAKE AVENUE
TROY, NY 12180**

Join us and bring a friend. This candlelight service of hope and comfort, acknowledges the difficulties many of us face... a loss or hardship such as death, an illness, a financial concern, loss of a job, an addiction, depression...or other reasons that makes celebrating Christmas a struggle. In the midst of our pain and sadness, there is the promise and comfort of the Lord. Come in person or watch the live stream.

Mary's Circle of Love


We meet the 3rd Thursday of each month from 10:00am-11:30am at the Northern Pass Apartment and Condo Community, 62 Santanoni Dr, Cohoes. Our mission is to grow spiritually by sharing our faith stories. We pray, laugh, and share food as we journey with each other. Please reach out to Mary Kay (518-366-9741) or Marion (518-785-1992) for details.

ALATEEN MEETINGS

Alateen is for young people whose lives have been affected by someone's drinking. The teens learn that they are not alone and discover ways of coping with their situation. The healing begins by meeting and sharing with other young people. Meetings are held weekly, on Sunday, at St. Edward the Confessor, 569 Clifton Park Center Rd, Clifton Park at 4pm. Any questions can be directed to: cmc.afg.123@gmail.com

DECEMBER 10, 2023

St. Ambrose, Latham, New York



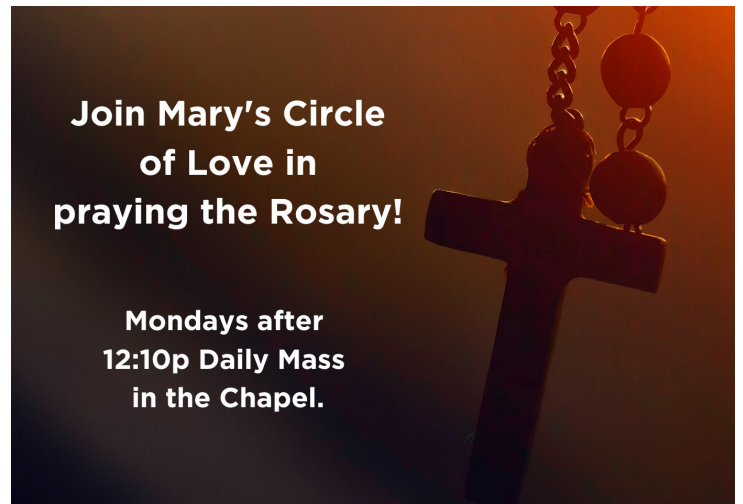
**KIERAN'S
LIGHT**

CATHOLIC LGBTQIA+
MINISTRY

CONTACT FOR DETAILS:
robyn.spateholts@rcda.org

Kieran's Light is a ministry rooted in love, welcome, and respect for the LGBTQIA+ community, their family, friends, and loved ones. Jesus calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves and it is in that spirit that this ministry is founded.

The poster features a rainbow border and a row of five identical icons at the bottom. Each icon depicts a heart with a rainbow gradient, a black candle in the center, and the text 'WE ARE CHRISTIAN & GAY' and 'WE ARE GAY & CHRISTIAN' around the heart.



**Join Mary's Circle
of Love in
praying the Rosary!**

**Mondays after
12:10p Daily Mass
in the Chapel.**

The poster features a dark background with a large, dark cross and a rosary chain on the right side.

MUSIC IN THE CHURCH BY BILL HAYES

Creator of the Stars of Night

This Advent hymn is from the 7th to the 9th century, is a plainsong, or chant. Plainsong hymns represent some of the older selections in the United Methodist Hymnal. The texts often come from devotional as well as liturgical sources. Historically, plainsong was the province of the choir only. This distinctive style was sung in monastic settings by monks who observed the offices of daily prayer. Originally the rhythm is free in style, unaccompanied, sung in Latin and performed with the melody only.

In comparison, popular medieval music (e.g. "Comfort, Comfort O my people") was quite rhythmic. It was often used for dance—accompanied by a variety of percussion, string and wind instruments—and made use of vernacular languages as well as Latin, sung in parts. In addition, women could participate in medieval folk songs, while plainsong was historically sung by all-male choirs.

- 1) *Creator of the stars of night,, Your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, Redeemer of us all,, We pray You, hear us when we
call.*
- 2) *When this old world drew on toward night., You came, but
not in splendor bright. Not as a monarch, but the child, Of
Mary, blameless mother mild.*
- 3) *At Your great name, O Jesus, now, All knees must bend, all
hearts must bow; All things on earth with one accord. Like
those in heaven, shall call You Lord.*

DECEMBER 10, 2023

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, December 9th — 4pm

Fr. Kelly

Lucille Lonczak
Gerald Yarter
Corinne Bombard
Dorothy Lasky
William Hutchings
Madeline Dombrosky

Sunday, December 10th — 9am

Fr. Kelly

John J. Kardas
Donald Lebentritt
Helen Richmond
John Clementi
Bob Unkle

Sunday, December 10th — 11am

Fr. Kelly

Margaret H. Maher
Deceased Members of the Mele Family
Steven G. Alix
Paola & Giuseppe Sposito
Thomas & Ruby Alaxanian Sr.

Monday, December 11th — 12:10pm

Fr. Kelly

Bishop Emeritus Howard Hubbard
Patrick McDonough, Sr.

Tuesday, December 12th — 12:10pm

Fr. Kelly

The People of St. Ambrose

Wednesday, December 13th — 12:10pm

Fr. Kelly

Charles & Martha Romand

Thursday, December 14th — 12:10pm

Fr. Kelly

Patricia Murphy

St Ambrose, Pray for us!

WHO'S PRESIDING NEXT WEEKEND?

Saturday, December 16th — 4pm

Fr. Kelly

Sunday, December 17th — 9am & 11am

Fr. Kelly

FR. BRIAN KELLY, PASTOR

OFFERTORY

Current Year

Previous Year

11/26/2023:

11/27/2022:

\$12,477.00

\$13,900.50



ONLINE GIVING

Always forgetting
your envelopes?
Switch to online giving:
stambroselatham.com/egiving

**Night
of
Praise**

**Meeting
Christ in the
Cradle,
Eucharist, &
Cross**

**Thursday
January 4th
6pm**

HAILEY'S CORNER



Some might
say it is
impossible to
see faith or
faithfulness. I
disagree. Look
no further than
the mirror, my
friends!