

In the First Reading, the writer (a post-exilic prophet) declares that he has been sent by God to usher in the age of salvation for Jerusalem and all God's people. Jesus used this prophecy to announce the program of his own ministry.

The subject of the Gospel is the same as that of last Sunday: the witness of John the Baptist to Jesus. John summons all to faith in Jesus. He declares that he himself is not the light, and tells the people that unbeknownst to them the light (Jesus) is already present among them.

In the Second Reading Paul takes a very practical line, telling the Thessalonians how they should live as they await the second coming of Christ.



The Altar Society will decorate the Church for Christmas on Saturday, December 23rd, after the 8:15 a.m. Mass and Sunday, December 24th, at 1:00 p.m. Anyone wishing to help is asked to please meet in the Church on either/both days.



The Parish Office will be closed Friday, December 22nd, Monday, December 25th, Tuesday, December 26th and Monday, January 1st.

Mass Schedule

4th Sunday of Advent

Saturday, Dec. 23: Vigil 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 24: 7:30 a.m.; 9:00 a.m.; 11:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve

4:00 p.m. – Mass for families with small children
Children's Choir

6:00 p.m. – Mass with Contemporary Christmas Music

8:30 p.m. – Hispanic Mass

11:00 p.m. – Midnight Mass

Traditional "Adult Choir" Christmas Music

Prelude Music 10:30 p.m., Mass at 11:00 p.m.

Christmas Day: 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.



Pray for Our Parishioners and Friends: Glen Bosarge, Mercedes Bosarge, Quinn Boudreaux, Carole Bourgeois, Gregory Brou, Valerie Brou, Clarence Brown, Sybil Burchinal, Sally Fero Conklin, Pat Cronin, Gina

Dasher, Betty Dugan, Tyler Eldridge, Marthann Ello, Jackie Endt, Jeremy Forehand, Loretta Foster, Nora Foster, Joey Fountain, Carmen Gaethe, Doris Haynes, Ron Hoogstra, Margaret Betty Horton, Lucia Hourihan, Most Reverend Joseph L. Howze, Earline Huster, Tommy Jones, Theresa Jones, Clarence Jordan, Anastasia Pitalo Jurich, Andre Kaufman, Audrey King, Ann Eleece Kouns, Jeff Kouns, Daisie Laborde, John Langan, Nathaniel LaSalle, Catherine Lawrence, Bob Mayer, Bernie and Phyllis McGinley, Mary Mendenhall, Patricia Merlau, Edna Miguez, Eunice Misko, Margaret Murray, Leonard Necaie, Peggy and Edward Necaie, Chandra Nicholson, Travis Norman, Charley Nowel, Luke Nudson, Edwin O'Connor, III, Henry Parker, Judy Penton, Amy Petitjean, Anna Raley, Brenda Sargent, Karen Skrmetta Smith, Joe Souza, Edna Spell, Dani Stafford, Rust Stallings, Stan Stanton, Gertie Templet, Sharon Tilmon, Dolores Trenouth, Ted and Clara Ursu, Ashley Vickers and Jane Walker.

If someone in your family is in need of prayer, please contact the parish office to have their name placed on the list. We will keep the name on for at least two months unless otherwise notified.

Altar Society Members for next week are
Kay Brochard and Norma Williams

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

MONDAY DECEMBER 18

Jeremiah 23:5-8; Matthew 1:18-25

6:30 am Ellen and Simon Gilbert

8:15 am Ms. Iris Holloway

TUESDAY DECEMBER 19

Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a; Luke 1:5-25

6:30 am Mr. Ken Reiling

8:15 am Vivian and Carroll Blanchard

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 20

Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38

6:30 am Mr. Smokey Hill

8:15 am Mr. Eduard van Thiel

THURSDAY DECEMBER 21

Song of Songs 2:8-14; Luke 1:39-45

6:30 am Mr. Richard Porterfield

8:15 am Mr. Eddie Hire

FRIDAY DECEMBER 22

1 Samuel 1:24-28; Luke 1:46-56

6:30 am Ms. Brandy Lesso Hebert

8:15 am Mr. Vern Cole, Sr.

Mr. Vern "Larry" Cole, Jr.

SATURDAY DECEMBER 23

Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Luke 1:57-66

8:15 am Ms. JoAnn Wavra

Mr. Harry Leaghty

4:00 pm Mr. Bobby Beaugez

SUNDAY DECEMBER 24

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

7:30 am Dr. Henry N. Pitre

9:00 am Cyril and Miek Laan

11:30 am Mr. Alson Young

DECEMBER 24 - CHRISTMAS VIGIL

Isaiah 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Matthew 1:1-25

4:00 pm Mr. Kenneth Jones

6:00 pm Mr. Matthew Peresich Lyons

Isaiah 9:1-6; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14

11:00 pm Congregation

DECEMBER 25 – CHRISTMAS DAY

Isaiah 62:11-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:15-20

9:00 am Deacon Gregory Miller

Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18

5:30 pm Ms. Alice Hire

WEEKLY OFFERING

Sunday Collection.....\$10,972.95

Immaculate Conception Collection.....\$ 2,862.80

SVDP Community Pharmacy Collection.....\$ 2,462.05

May God Bless You for your generous and faithful support.



Your prayers are requested for the repose of the soul of **George Gogas**, grandfather of Steven (Karen) Futch of this parish, who passed away December 4th in Haverhill, Massachusetts and **Katie Swanson**, a member of our parish family, who passed away December 8th.

We extend our sympathy to both families and promise them a remembrance in our prayers. May God grant them eternal peace.

Religious Education News

Pat Cronin – 872-2652; pcronin@cablone.net; www.stal.cc

Dec 18: New Wine, Parish Hall, 6:00 p.m.

Dec 21: No RCIA

Dec 24: No Religious Education / Adult Study Class / Children's Church

Family and Youth Calendar

Jane Sema 228-217-1392 jsema@osstalphonus.org

As we build our youth programs we are looking for young adults and parents to help with activities for our youth. If you are interested in helping us build a **DYNAMIC YOUTH PROGRAM** contact Jane Sema at 228-217-1392.

Parent & Child Prayer and Fellowship

Come and join our group as we study The Saints. The group meets on the second and fourth Wednesday (will not meet December 27), from September through May, in the Family and Youth office in back of the Parish Hall.



A Penance Service will be held at Our Lady of Fatima on Monday, December 18th at 7:00 p.m. If you have not already done so – please make the reception of the Sacrament part of your spiritual preparation for Christmas.



Still need Christmas decorations or gifts? We invite you to come see our collection of decorations and gifts available at the Bookstore and Gift Shop. We will be open this weekend after each of the Masses and on Tuesday, December 20th from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. The bookstore will close for the Christmas holidays beginning Thursday, December 22nd and will reopen on Thursday, January 4th.



The St. Alphonsus Knights of Columbus are now selling tickets for a "10 week" drawing for \$10.00 each. Each week, for nine weeks, a ticket will be drawn for \$50.00. The "winning" ticket then goes back into the "barrel" until the last week when a \$500.00, \$200.00, and \$100.00 winner will be pulled. First drawing will be February 18, 2018. For tickets contact Carl Brochard, 228-327-0066 or Chuck Nannery, 228-875-0267. All proceeds will benefit the Seminarian Education Fund.



You are invited to join us in praying the Liturgy of the Hours before the 8:15 a.m. Mass (Monday – Friday) beginning at 7:45 a.m. in the Church.



At St. Alphonsus Church we are pursuing opportunities to foster a stronger parish life and better engage the New Evangelization. As part of these efforts - St. Alphonsus Church has its own app for Apple and Android phones.

Our app will allow us to send you useful and important messages throughout the week regarding our parish life and events, and allow you to reply to messages or RSVP for events (if applicable). There will be no need for parishioners with smart phones to remember to silence their phones before Mass. The app will send you a reminder to silence your phone 20 minutes before the Mass you select. Many more great features will be a help to all of us, such as daily Mass readings, Catholic news, prayers and prayer reminders, as well as quick access to our weekly bulletin, Church website (osstalphonus.org) and FORMED. Download the app by texting **App** to phone number **88202**, or by visiting myparishapp.com.

As you plan upcoming vacations, visit www.MassTimes.org for Mass times and locations for the areas you will be visiting.

ST. ALPHONSUS SCHOOL

Dec 18: Christmas Program 6:00 p.m.

Dec 19: Children's Mass 8:15 a.m. / Noon Dismissal

Dec 20-22: No School – Christmas Holidays

ST. PATRICK HIGH SCHOOL

Dec 18-19: Midterm Exams

Dec 20-22: No School – Christmas Holidays



2018 Diocesan Directory: The Gulf Pine Catholic publishes an annual diocesan directory with detailed information about our diocese, its priests, religious, laity, parishes, schools, ministries, councils and organizations. Deadline for orders is December 30th. The directory will be available in February 2018. To get your copy, send a \$10 check to: Gulf Pine Catholic, 1790 Pops Ferry Rd, Biloxi, MS 39532.



Kelsey Gunkel (daughter of Deacon Jim & Toni Gunkel) has been accepted to serve as a volunteer with NET (National Evangelization Teams) Ministries in 2018. Net is a peer-to-peer Catholic youth ministry organization that encourages young

people to love Jesus and embrace the Church. Kelsey will serve on a team with NET Ministries in Australia from January – November 2018. This is not government funded, therefore Kelsey is responsible for raising \$7,200 (of the \$13,000 needed for each missionary) prior to beginning her ministry. If you would like to help Kelsey reach her goal, you may donate at netministries.com/au/sponsorship – this link goes directly to the Sponsorship Page where you will be able to insert Kelsey's name. If you have any further questions or wish to know more about this mission work, you may contact Kelsey directly at 228-219-1155 or kelsey.gunkel@gmail.com.



Young Adults (ages 19-35) are invited to join the Young Adult Bible Study on Monday nights from 7:00-8:00 p.m. at the ACE House (506 Jackson Avenue – next door to the School). Never been in a bible study before? No worries! This is a great opportunity for you to grow in faith and fellowship. For more information call Kat Peek at 225-223-3574.



Hospital Stays: Because of privacy concerns, it is increasingly difficult to find out who is in the hospital. Many parishioners can be there for an entire week (or more), yet their names never appear on the "Clergy List" that we get to see. This seems to happen especially to those who are admitted through the Emergency Room. Consequently we are reminding you that if you or a family member is going to be in the hospital and wish to be visited or receive communion while there, please call the Rectory at your earliest convenience.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Your prayers are requested for the deceased priests who have ministered in the diocese, especially those who have died around this time of year:

Reverend Msgr. Gregory Kennedy, December 1, 1986

Reverend John Joseph O'Reilly, December 5, 1989

Reverend Remigius A. Kozak, December 18, 2013

Reverend Msgr. John T. Martin, December 20, 1978

Websites that may be good for people with problems, addictions, etc:
www.americanaddictioncenters.org; www.narcononcolorado.org;
www.al-anon.org; www.catholicsdivorce.com;
www.cancersupportcommunity.org; www.rachelsvineyard.org;
www.catholicmenconquerporn.com; www.yourbrainonporn.com