

**The purpose of Advent is to help us prepare for Christmas.** One can't understand the message of Christmas unless we are familiar with at least the broad outlines of the history of salvation. The Advent liturgy relives in a microcosmic way the history of Israel, viewing it through the eyes of Christian faith. It shows that all of that history was pointing and leading towards Jesus. He was the one who fulfilled the messianic prophecies.

Advent takes us back in time so that we may appreciate the greatness of what we are heirs to. We are the heirs to the promises God made to the prophets. Advent helps us to appreciate the great blessings God has given us in Christ.

Today's First Reading points to the first coming of Christ. It says that the Messiah will be descended from the stock of David, and his reign will be marked by wisdom, justice and integrity.

The Gospel deals with the Second Coming of Christ. The early Christians believed that the Second Coming was near, and would be preceded by cosmic signs. The disciples are urged to await the Lord's coming with confidence, vigilance and prayer.

How to prepare for the Second Coming of Christ is also the topic of the Second Reading.



**Don't forget to mark your calendars for Deacon Jim's Parish Potluck Celebration** on Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in the KC Hall / Parish Life Center. This is a good time to meet others in our parish family. Bring your favorite dish to share: homemade or picked up! All parishioners are invited and encouraged to attend. Questions? Call Beth McMackin at 228-324-4188.



**A Baptism Class** will be held in the Rectory on Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Any parent with a child for baptism must attend this class prior to scheduling a baptism date. Godparents are also encouraged to attend. Class lasts a little over one hour. Baptisms are scheduled each month on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday immediately after the 9:00 a.m. Mass. Please call the Rectory with information on the child prior to attending the class.

When parents have their children baptized they indicate their desire to have their children grow up and live as children of God and brothers or sisters of Jesus, and be guided by the Holy Spirit. Through birth a child is given to parents; through baptism a child is given to God. At baptism the parents acknowledge that their parenthood is a participation in God's parenthood that all fatherhood and motherhood comes from God. Thus baptism frees the parents from a sense of owning their children. Children belong to God and are given to the parents to love and care for in God's name. It is the parents' vocation to welcome their children as honored guests in their home and bring them to the physical, emotional, and spiritual freedom that enables them to leave the home and become parents themselves. Baptism reminds parents of this vocation and sets children on the path of freedom.



**Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup> is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a Holy Day of Obligation.** This is the Patronal Feast of the USA and is never dispensed from. The Vigil Mass will be held on Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. Masses on Saturday will be held at 8:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.



**"Are we ready to receive Him? Before the birth of Jesus, his parents asked for a simple dwelling place, but there was none. If Mary and Joseph were looking for a home for Jesus, would they choose...your heart and all it holds? Let us pray that we shall be able to welcome Jesus at Christmas..."** --St. Teresa of Calcutta.

Bring your gift before The Blessed Sacrament this Advent. Take time to prepare your gift...it is the only gift Jesus desires...the gift of your heart, a home willing and open. It is yours to give. Aren't the best birthdays the ones when we get what we really want?

"Jesus asks nothing of you except to come be with him". --St. Teresa of Calcutta

**Altar Society Members for next week**  
**Mary Ann Bounds, Linda Denehie & Lois Ravera**

## MASSES FOR THE WEEK

MONDAY DECEMBER 3

Isaiah 2:1-5; Matthew 8:5-11

6:30 am Dr. Malcolm Latour

8:15 am Ms. Jean Hindmarch

TUESDAY DECEMBER 4

Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 10:21-24

6:30 am Int. Mr. Holt Foushee

8:15 am Ms. Lorreta Cloyd

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 5

Isaiah 25:6-10a; Matthew 15:29-37

6:30 am Mr. Edward G. Dietrick, Jr.

8:15 am Ms. Shan Hudlow

THURSDAY DECEMBER 6

Isaiah 26:1-6; Matthew 7:21, 24-27

6:30 am Special Intention

8:15 am Ms. Cara Kostmayer

FRIDAY DECEMBER 7

Isaiah 29:17-24; Matthew 9:27-31

6:30 am Int. Ms. Marge Galle

8:15 am Ms. Ann C. Allen

Genesis 3:9-15, 20; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12; Luke 1:26-38

6:00 pm Int. Mr. Ron McClellan

SATURDAY DECEMBER 8

8:15 am Mr. Hunter Grantham

11:00 am Mr. William A. Staehle, Sr.

4:00 pm Ms. Monica Goretski

SUNDAY DECEMBER 9

Baruch 5:1-9; Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11; Luke 3:1-6

7:30 am Ms. Melissa Roberts Lee

9:00 am Congregation

11:30 am Mr. Tommy Jones

5:30 pm Albert and Eunice Misko

## WEEKLY OFFERING

Sunday Collection.....\$10,796.33

Thanksgiving Collection.....\$ 302.25

May God Bless You for your generous and faithful support.



**Your prayers are requested for the repose of the soul of Adrienne Cutburth,** niece of Betty (Dennis) Richardson of this parish, who passed away November 24<sup>th</sup> in The Woodlands, Texas.

We extend our sympathy to the family and promise them a remembrance in our prayers. May God grant her eternal peace.



**Pray for Our Parishioners and Friends:** Rita Allen, Regina Papania Bell, Chris Bellman, Anthony David Belson, Elaine Belson, Glen Bosarge, Mercedes Bosarge, Carole Bourgeois, Sybil Burchinal, Carol Lee Cantin, Sally Fero Conklin, Pat Cronin, Breanne Dalton, Gina Dasher, Marjorie DuBois, Betty Dugan,

Jackie Endt, Marshall Fayard, Ron Fournier, Carmen Gaethe, Walter Gary, Sandra Grantham, Danielle Gundlach, Doris Haynes, Mary Jo & Ron Hoogstra, Most Reverend Joseph L. Howze, Melissa James, Anastasia Pitalo Jurich, Andre Kaufman, Otis Kaufman, John Kiernan, Harby Kreeger, Daisie Laborde, Jacob Latil, Erik Marcussen, Bob Mayer, Bernie and Phyllis McGinley, Maurice Michaud, Edna Migués, Leonard Nécaise, Peggy and Edward Nécaise, Chandra Nicholson, Shirley & Travis Norman, Edwin O'Connor III, Teresa O'Connor, Judy Penton, Gerard Rowan, Joyleen Seymour, Stan Stanton, Virginia Thompson, Ann Tootle, Randy Trahan, Dolores Trenouth, Edna Trochesset, Angela Troclair, Ted and Clara Ursu, Ashley Vickers, Jane Walker and Cooper Williams.

## Religious Education News

Deacon Jim Gunkel – 872-2652; [dcjim@osstalphonsus.org](mailto:dcjim@osstalphonsus.org)

Janie Sema – 228-217-1392; [jsema@osstalphonsus.org](mailto:jsema@osstalphonsus.org)

Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade: Sunday, 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Edge: Sunday, 4:00 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.

9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade - High School Youth: Sunday 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Dec 4: Potluck Celebration with Parish, 6:30 p.m., KC Hall

Dec 6: RCIA – Blessed Mother, Parish Hall Meeting Room, 6:00 p.m.

Dec 9: Religious Education Class for all Youth Programs (times above)  
 Adult Study Class, 10:15 a.m.

Children's Church, 11:30 a.m. Mass for 3-6 year olds



The Board and Staff of "The Lord Is My Help" cordially invites all volunteers to their annual "Volunteer Appreciation Christmas Party" on Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. at The Lord Is My Help. Refreshments will be served.



The Lord Is My Help needs volunteers to pack take-out lunches from 9:15 - 10:30 a.m. and/or to serve lunch from 11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (no cooking involved) during the week of December 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>. If you are able to volunteer your time on any of these days at either/both of the times, please call Norma Williams at 875-2636. Any help would be greatly appreciated.



**Advent Mission: Charge, Challenge, Choice**

December 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. each night. Blessed Francis Seelos Church, 360 Lameuse Street in Biloxi. Presented by Fr. Roy Lee, PhD. All are invited.



**You are invited to see and purchase handmade religious articles made by the Sisters of St. Elisabeth Convent (Belarus) the weekend of December 15<sup>th</sup>/16.** The Sisterhood of St. Elisabeth was founded in 1996 and their missionary began in

National Mental Hospital located not far from the Convent. The Sisters take care of mentally challenged children and adults. In recent years a shelter and house of Labor for former drug and alcohol addicted people was organized twenty miles away from the Convent. A lot of homeless, struggling and lost people get a chance for a new start in life to find God. In order to help these people, some workshops were organized on the premises of the Convent where vulnerable people have a possibility to express themselves in the form of art for God, working together with nuns and sisters, making icons, crosses, crucifixes, wood carvings, embroidered and ceramic gifts, rosaries and vestments. All these goods are made with love and prayer and bring blessings to their owners.



**Envelopes are in the pews for anyone wishing to make a donation to the decorating of the Church for Christmas in Honor Of or in Memory Of a loved one.**

When complete, envelopes may be placed in the collection basket or brought to the Rectory. **PLEASE PRINT NAMES CLEARLY ON THE ENVELOPE.**

Donations will be accepted through December 16<sup>th</sup>.



**Our Penance Service for Advent will be held in the Church on Monday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**

A number of local priests will be in attendance that night to expedite the waiting time. Please make the reception of the Sacrament part of your spiritual preparation for Christmas.

**Other local Penance Service schedules:**

Sacred Heart, D'Iberville – Tuesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

St. Elizabeth Seton – Wednesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m.

Our Lady of Fatima, Biloxi – Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

## ST. ALPHONSUS SCHOOL

Dec 7: Children's Mass with Bishop Kihneman 8:15 a.m.

## ST. PATRICK HIGH SCHOOL

Dec 2: ACT Workshop, Science, 12:00 p.m.

Swim Team Mass (Nativity) 5:30 p.m. and Banquet

Dec 3: Christmas Band Concert 6:00 p.m. / Christmas Cantata 7:00 p.m.

Dec 5: Senior Retreat 8:00 a.m.

Dec 6: Mass 9:40 a.m.

Dec 8: ACT 8:00 a.m.

**ADVENT REFLECTIONS – preparing for the birth of our Savior.**

Prepare for Christmas like never before. Get FORMED Daily Reflections for You and Your Whole Family. How will you prepare for Christmas? Enrich your Advent with daily reflections for you and your kids sent directly to your inbox! Walk with Dr. Tim Gray on a journey of renewal to ready your heart for the coming of Christ! Plus, add children's reflections to your daily email, and Herald Entertainment's beloved *Brother Francis* will help your kids get ready for Christmas with joyful songs and valuable lessons.

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**St. Alphonsus Church App - If you have either an iPhone or Android smart phone** you can download the app by texting **App** to phone number **88202**, or by visiting [myparishapp.com](http://myparishapp.com).

Stay connected with our parish throughout the week with instant notifications regarding our parish life and an easy-to-access event calendar as well as many more great features such as daily Mass readings, Catholic news, prayers and prayer reminders, **quick access to our weekly bulletin, Church website (osstalphonsus.org) and FORMED.**



**You are invited** to come join the Knights of Columbus Council 5654 in the St. Alphonsus Adoration Chapel each Wednesday from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. to pray for Religious Vocations.

## REFLECTION

**Life is fleeting**

The hill flowers fade, but will bloom again next year. But we never get back our youth. Life is a fragile gift which we enjoy only briefly; our life is like the warming of oneself in the sun. We live in a flash of light; before we know it, evening comes and night falls. But the very fleetingness of life makes it all the more precious. Lord, may your gentle and sure light guide us on the unfolding road, so that we may walk with confidence towards the light that never fades and the life that never ends.



**Parishioner Registration:** When planning a baptism, marriage, or to obtain subsidized tuition rates for our Catholic Schools, you must be able to demonstrate that you are a practicing Catholic and that you do attend Mass.

It is the Church, not just this parish, which insists that signs of good faith commitment be present on these occasions. Using envelopes helps maintain a record of contributions and Mass attendance. Parish registration forms may be obtained in the Vestibule of the Church or at the Parish Office during regular office hours.