

The prophet Zephaniah, writing in the seventh century BC, bids Jerusalem to rejoice because salvation is near (First Reading). God stands in her midst and will deliver her from her enemies. God is portrayed, not only as a king and warrior, but also as a loving bridegroom, who steadfastly loves his unworthy and unfaithful bride.

The theme of joy is even more emphatic in the Second Reading. Paul calls on the Philippians to rejoice because the Lord is near. (Paul was thinking about the Second Coming, which he believed was near). So there is no need to worry. If they need anything, they are to pray for it, and the peace of God will be with them.

The theme of the nearness of the Lord is also at the heart of the Gospel. John the Baptist tells the people what they must do in order to prepare for the Lord's coming and to escape his searching judgement. At the same time he makes it clear that he is subordinate to Jesus.

Mass Schedule

Penance Services

Monday, Dec 17: St. Alphonsus, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec 19: St. Elizabeth Seton, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec 20: Our Lady of Fatima – Biloxi, 7:00 p.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

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. (English)
Spanish Mass: 2:00 p.m.

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Monday, December 31: 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 1: 9:00 a.m.; 11:00 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. (English)
Spanish Mass: 2:00 p.m.

please join us All are invited to come join us as we Pray for the Sick on Friday, December 21st from 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. in the Church. This will be an hour of Adoration, Rosary, Prayer and Music. Confession will be available if needed.

Anointing of the Sick An Anointing of the Sick will take place on Saturday, December 22nd at 3:30 p.m. (before the 4:00 p.m. Mass) in the Church. This is for all elderly parishioners, anyone with an illness, or parishioners with elderly or homebound family members that may wish to receive this Sacrament.

Altar Society The Altar Society will decorate the Church for Christmas on Monday, December 24th after the 8:15 a.m. Mass. Anyone wishing to help is asked to please meet in the Church.

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

MONDAY DECEMBER 17

Genesis 49:2, 8-10; Matthew 1:1-17

6:30 am Ella and Simon Gilbert

8:15 am Ms. Connie Seymour

TUESDAY DECEMBER 18

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

6:30 am Ms. Margaret Guice

8:15 am Int. Ms. Jackie Endt

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 19

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

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

8:15 am Special Intention

THURSDAY DECEMBER 20

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

6:30 am Mr. Edgar Guice

8:15 am Int. Tim and Gwen Noble

FRIDAY DECEMBER 21

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

6:30 am Ms. Inez Danise

8:15 am Mr. Eddie Hire

SATURDAY DECEMBER 22

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

8:15 am Miss Catherine Luminais

SUNDAY DECEMBER 23

Micah 5:1-4a; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45

7:30 am Mr. Richard "Dick" Porterfield

9:00 am Int. Marshall and Shannon Fayard

11:30 am Int. Ms. Judith Anderson

5:30 pm Congregation


WEEKLY OFFERING

Sunday Collection.....\$10,005.32


Holy Day – Immaculate Conception Collection..\$ 3,525.44

SVDP Community Pharmacy Collection.....\$ 2,938.01

May God Bless You for your generous and faithful support.

 Your prayers are requested for the repose of the soul of Judy Catchot, sister-in-law of Mike and Lucy Catchot of this parish, who passed away December 8th.

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, LaJuan Fowler, Carmen Gaethe, Walter Gary, Sandra Grantham, Danielle Gundlach, Doris Haynes, Mary Jo and 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, Marie Meyers, Maurice Michaud, Edna Miguez, Leonard Necaize, Peggy and Edward Necaize, Chandra Nicholson, Shirley and Travis Norman, Edwin O'Connor III, Teresa O'Connor, Judy Penton, Gerard Rowan, Joyleen Seymour, Raymond Spicuzza, 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

Janie Sema – 228-217-1392; jsema@osstalphonsus.org

Kindergarten – 5th Grade: Sunday, 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

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

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

Dec 20: No RCIA

Dec 23: No Religious Education Class for all Youth Programs
No Adult Study Class / No Children's Church



“For John Paul, the question is not whether Jesus is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, but rather whether Catholics are truly present to God in their midst!...”

‘...Let Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament speak to your hearts. It is He who is the true answer of life that you seek. He stays here with us: He is God with us. Seek Him without tiring, welcome Him without reserve, love Him without interruption: today, tomorrow, forever.’”

--Saint John Paul the Great: His Five Loves, by Jason Evert

May we strive to be truly present to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament as we sit before Him in adoration and thanksgiving for His Coming down from Heaven to dwell with us.

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



2019 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 31st. The directory will be available in February 2019. To get your copy, send a \$10 check to: Gulf Pine Catholic, 1790 Popps Ferry Rd, Biloxi, MS 39532.



The annual Mass for Deceased Irish Priest will take place on January 8, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 720 East Beach Blvd. Bishop Roger Morin will be the principal celebrant. The homilist will be former St. Thomas pastor Fr. Louis Lohan, who is retired and living on his farm in Ireland. A reception will follow in the community center. All are invited.



A Special Parish Prayer Book is located on the south side of the Vestibule of the Church (front entrance). Anyone desiring prayers for any intention is requested to enter their intention on the Parish Prayer Book and they will be remembered in the Prayers of the Faithful at all weekend Masses.



Radio Maria - a Catholic Radio right here in Ocean Springs! You can listen to it on your radio at FM 88.1; livestream it on your computer at radiomaria.us; download the free app onto your smartphone; or by calling 1-712-832-8065. There are many good programs from inspirational Catholic speakers, programs about history, prayer, care giving, finding a job, Marian apparitions, conversion stories, and many others! Plus there is great music. Let us be grateful to God for this sublime gift to us, for His mercies endure forever! Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer. (Romans 12:12)

ST. ALPHONSUS SCHOOL

Dec 18: Christmas Program 1st-5th, 6:00 p.m.

Dec 20: Children's Mass 8:15 a.m. / 12:00 Dismissal - no aftercare

ST. PATRICK HIGH SCHOOL

Dec 17-19: Midterm Exams



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.



Come shop the newest collection of Christmas gifts now available. The Bookstore and Gift Shop is open Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. and after each of the weekend Masses.



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.



St. Alphonsus is happy to provide contribution envelopes for our Parishioners who would like to use them. If you are not receiving envelopes and would like to, or if you are receiving envelopes and would like to discontinue receiving them, please email (stals@cablone.net) or call the office (875-5419) and we will make the necessary adjustments to the mailing list.



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.

A copy of the weekly Church bulletin may be found on the "myParish" phone app and also on our parish website at "osstalphonsus.org".



Mass for Family and Friends: You can have Masses offered for the Intention of family and friends as well as for the deceased. Mass cards are available at the Parish Office during regular business hours. The donation for each Mass is \$10.00.

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

REFLECTION

Joy

There is a clear note of joy in today's liturgy. Joy is a blend of laughter and tears. It consists in having a love affair with life. It is having a heart aglow with warmth for all one's companions on the road of life. It is looking for the happiness that comes in small packages, knowing that big packages are few and far between. It is making the most of the present, enjoying what is at hand right now. Joy is love bubbling over into life. And it can coexist with pain. Joy is the flag we fly when Christ, the Prince of Peace, has taken up residence in our hearts.

Pray for Vocations