

FOURTH SUNDAY

OF

Advent

Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord.
May it be done to me
according to your word.

Luke 1:38



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gift-giving to American children for a hundred years or so. In other places, perhaps more attentive to our Christian tradition, there are different gift-bearers. In Greece, Saint Basil delivers the presents on his feast day, December 31, and makes sure everyone is sprinkled with holy water. The Baby Jesus is in charge elsewhere, called the *Christkind* in Austria and Belgium, *El Niño Jesús* in Columbia, and *Le Petit Jesus* in France, where he shares his duties with *Père Noël*. In the Czech Republic almost everyone is atheist, but *Ježíšek*, the infant Jesus, brings gifts to one and all. In Poland the “Star Man” is said to bring the gifts, although often he turns out to be the village priest in disguise. Saint Nicholas, not his Americanized cousin, is the giver in Holland, where he wears a bishop’s miter, and in Russia, where he wears a bishop’s crown. Soviet Russia tried to dethrone Saint Nicholas and promote Grandfather Frost, but no one was much fooled by this attempt to squeeze religion out of Christ’s birth. One country has a saintly woman in charge of the gifts, Saint Lucy, honored in Sweden on December 13, when children serve their parents breakfast in bed, and others awake to news that they have been nominated for a Nobel Prize. Some children have a second round of gifts on Epiphany, when the magi assume the gift-giving duties. In general, the gifts of Christmas are simple pleasures, not great heaps of treasures. Once upon a time, a new pair of socks or an orange was enough for us. No matter what gifts we receive, all of them are to point us to the true gift, and the true giver.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

GOD’S PROMISE

The lengthy passage from Samuel is a wonderful exposition of God’s promise to the house of David: that his throne would forever be gloriously occupied by his descendants. Hidden in the mystery of the prophecy is the promise of the Savior, the Messiah, Son of God and Son of David. The prophet Nathan, speaking in God’s name, poetically turns around David’s plan to build a house for God, and announces God’s plan to build a “house,” that is, a dynasty for David. From this house of David will come the Messiah, the Christ, not in kingly splendor as David ruled, but as a humble man, destined to rule forever and over all. When God gives a gift, it’s amazing what we are given—so different from what we ever could have imagined.

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TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

Children of the parish are somewhat focused on Santa Claus these days, who is keeping an eye on who’s naughty and who’s nice. Santa Claus, with his heavenly patron Saint Nicholas, has been more or less in charge of



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MASSES CELEBRATED

DURING THE WEEK

ARE HELD

IN THE CHURCH

SATURDAY — DECEMBER 23

4:15 — 4:45pm Confessions

5:00 — Olczyk and Zaskowski families req. by Mary Olczyk and for The People of St. Luke Parish

SUNDAY — DECEMBER 24 — CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00pm — Breinig & Neff families req. by Mary Breinig and for Sally Hunter req. by her family

6:00 — Herbert Bowe req. by Patrick & Kathleen Elder

MONDAY — DECEMBER 25 — CHRISTMAS

8:30am — The People of St. Luke Parish

11:00 — Joseph Catalano req. by his wife Jennie and family

TUESDAY — DECEMBER 26

Mass will not be celebrated today

WEDNESDAY — DECEMBER 27

Mass will not be celebrated today

THURSDAY — DECEMBER 28

Mass will not be celebrated today

FRIDAY — DECEMBER 29

Mass will not be celebrated today

SATURDAY — DECEMBER 30

4:15 — 4:45pm Confessions

5:00 — The Intentions of the Celebrant

SUNDAY — DECEMBER 31 — NEW YEAR'S EVE

8:30am — The Intentions of the Celebrant

11:00 — The People of St. Luke Parish

5:00pm — The Intentions of the Celebrant



Please pray for the sick in our parish especially, Pat Angelo, Marge Austin, Yecenia Bosley, Angela D'Ambrosio, Disabled Vets, Angel Faulkner, Neal Hunter, Dominick Liberio, Tom McGuire, Terri Miceli, Audrey Race, John Rossi, and Chris Rubino.

Please remember our beloved dead, especially Angel Luis and the men and women who have given their lives for our country.



December 17, 2017

REG. CHURCH SUPPORT

163 SUN. ENVELOPE CONTRIBUTIONS = \$4,027.00

LOOSE CONTRIBUTIONS = \$ 339.75

TOTAL COLLECTION = \$4,366.75

AVERAGE CONTRIBUTION = \$ 26.79

FAITH COMMITMENT = \$ 425.00

FINANCIAL FREEDOM = \$ 330.00

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS = \$ 155.00

Thank you so much for your on-going generous financial support of St. Luke Parish! Every amount contributed helps, so we respectfully ask that you continue to regularly use your church support envelopes. It is your generosity that allows us to do what we do. Please give as your financial needs allow.

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — I will fix a place for my people. I will plant them so that they may dwell in their place without further disturbance (2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16).

Second Reading — To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory forever and ever (Romans 16:25-27).

Gospel — Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word (Luke 1:26-38).

The English translation of the Psalm Responses from *Lectionary for Mass* © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5; Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27-29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Mt 1:1-25 [18-25]
During the Night: Is 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-3, 11-13; Ti 2:11-14; Lk 2:1-14
Dawn: Is 62:11-12; Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12; Ti 3:4-7; Lk 2:15-20
Day: Is 52:7-10; Ps 98:1-6; Heb 1:1-6; Jn 1:1-18 [1-5, 9-14]

Tuesday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Ps 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc, 17; Mt 10:17-22

Wednesday: 1 Jn 1:1-4; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; Jn 20:1a, 2-8

Thursday: 1 Jn 1:5 — 2:2; Ps 124:2-5, 7cd-8; Mt 2:13-18

Friday: 1 Jn 2:3-11; Ps 96:1-3, 5b-6; Lk 2:22-35

Saturday: 1 Jn 2:12-17; Ps 96:7-10; Lk 2:36-40

Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3; Ps 128: 1-5 or Ps 105:1-6, 8-9; Col 3:12-21 [12-17] or Hb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19; Lk 2:22-40 [22, 39-40]

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Secret no more. What may have seemed a big secret, is made know over time by spending time with God (prayer and quiet) and faithful activity (mercy works). As with Blessed Mary long ago, the Holy Spirit is doing something in me, calling me to something important. Can I name it? Will I say "yes" to it after prayer as Mary did?

- What does God want me to say or do?
- How will the Holy Spirit help?
- Will I do it?

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RAMBLINGS

The Religious Education Office staff would like to wish all of our families and volunteers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with wonder and awe! May you find the peace of the Christ Child in the New Year.



Important RE Dates

January 7th, 2018 — RE class 9:40-10:50
January 14th, 2018 — RE class 9:40-10:50 and Children's Mass at 11:00
January 21st, 2018 — RE class 9:40-10:50

Generations of Faith

January 31st or February 2nd, 2018 — 6:00-8:00pm. A light dinner will be served. Every Religious Ed Family is expected to attend one of these sessions.

CCW THANKS YOU

CCW would like to thank all those that participated in the blood drive. Thanks to all of you we made our goal! We had 20 pints donated!

A special thank you to Jerry for all the help setting up and breaking down, and to Donna for assisting the drive. Our lucky cash card winner was Clara McKinney.

CHILDREN TO CHILDREN TOY DRIVE

St. Luke CCW would like to extend our appreciation for everyone's support and donations for the 2017 Annual Children to Children Toy Drive.

We collected a record 20 LARGE 33 gallon bags of toys to share with children in our local Carol Stream area. The turnout for the wrapping and pizza party was wonderful. Approximately 25 people assisted to help wrap gifts! Also, a big "THANK YOU" to all the volunteers who helped out with this event. Everyone's outstanding generosity is very much appreciated.

JERICHO REMODELING

For those of you who were at church on the weekend of December 2nd & 3rd you heard about our plans to remodel Jericho.

Joe Marks has done a lot of research for this project. But he needs help.

We are looking for ideas, people to bounce things off of, people who might have “connections” to purchase materials or have materials donated. Or even if you have questions as to what is going to happen.

Please consider helping Joe with this project which is going to start in June 2018.

You can contact Joe Marks at 630/653-5797 or call the parish office.

JOYFUL AGAIN! WIDOWED MINISTRY PROGRAM

If you've been widowed, you know that it feels as though a part of your heart has been torn out.

If you haven't been widowed, you can't understand how long it takes for a widowed friend of yours or co-worker to get back to “normal” after the death of his or her mate.

Becoming widowed means E V E R Y minute of your life has changed. It takes some time for you to adjust to and handle the stress that all of this constant change creates.

That is why newly widowed people seem “not their usual self”. Being widowed throws who Y O U are out of balance. Short temper, short memory, short concentration – all are signs of always refocusing and adjusting to all the changes in your mind and spirit.

When the time does come that you make a conscious decision to find hope in your life and you want to try to find some joy in your life, the Joyful Again! Widowed retreat is there to help.

For more than 30 years this retreat weekend for widowed men and women has been gently guiding the newly widowed through their grief journey and into the next part of living the life God wants for them.

The Joyful Again! Program works in conjunction with and complimentary to existing programs that address the grief immediately after a death. But more to the point, Joyful Again! is there months (and even years) afterward, helping widowed people resolve ongoing grief or helping them over a place where they seem stuck. We also help them look back on what they've been through as they now prepare to move on with their lives.

This ecumenical weekend program is healing, transitional and supportive – depending on where people are in their personal journey through the loss.

Often, attendees are surprised at how understanding our staff is. This shouldn't be surprising though. Each staff member has also been widowed. They have walked the walk.

During the 2 days of the retreat, films, quiet reflection time and small group discussions are included. We enable participants to process their loss and continue to heal while still treasuring their memories.

Over the years our program has served thousands. Having originated in the Chicago area, Joyful Again! now has several chapters around the country.

Information regarding Joyful Again! Widowed Ministry Program can be obtained by contacting us at 1/708-354-7211, joyfulagain7211@gmail.com or www.joyfulagain.org.

JOYFUL AGAIN!



Retreat/workshop for widowed men/women

The Joyful Again! program brings understanding and hope to help you on your new life's journey. “I felt welcome.”

“Found hope.” “Am more at peace.”

Upcoming Dates: **March 3rd & 4th** and **April 21st & 22nd**

For more information contact us at Joyful Again! Widowed Ministry at: Email: joyfulagain7211@gmail.com
Phone; **708-354-7211**/Website:www.joyfulagain.org
(Short video on website) Register early, space is limited.