



# St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

## Parish Mission

We are one Church: loving Jesus, serving Jesus, and sharing Jesus.

## Parish Vision

We are a vibrant Catholic church serving a diverse community in a safe and welcoming environment where we care for all people along their faith journey.

## Core Values

Discipleship • Hospitality  
Service • Worship

## Weekend Masses

Saturday 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday 7:30, 9:00, 10:45 a.m.,  
3:00 p.m. (Spanish)

## Weekday Masses

Monday 6:30 a.m.  
Tuesday 6:30 a.m.  
Wednesday 6:30 a.m., 5:15 p.m.  
Thursday 6:30 a.m., 8:00 a.m.  
Friday 6:30 a.m., 8:00 a.m.  
First Friday 8:00 a.m.  
Saturday 6:30 a.m.

## Confessions

First Friday of month 12:00 noon  
Saturday 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.  
or by appointment

Fourth Sunday of Advent • December 24, 2023  
The Nativity of the Lord • December 25, 2023

*Glory to God in the Highest*



*Generous God, you are the gracious giver of all gifts, on this holy Christmas Day come into our lives. Give us the riches of your poverty, show us the power of your weakness, and teach us the joy of your humility. Bless our homes and hearts as we celebrate the birth of your Son and join the angels in singing your praises now and forever. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



*W*ISHING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY  
A BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND A NEW YEAR  
FILLED WITH HAPPINESS AND PEACE!

*St. Vincent de Paul Parish Staff*

For today  
in the city of David  
a savior has been born  
for you who is *Christ*  
the Lord  
LUKE 2:11

1913 Ritter Drive • Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701  
573-335-7667 • Fax 573-335-0034 • [www.svcape.com](http://www.svcape.com)  
*Serving the Catholic Community since April 9, 1836*

## • Mass Intentions •

### Monday, December 25

The Nativity of the Lord

9:00 am Living and Deceased Members  
of the Tony Biondini Family

11:00 am Living and Deceased Members  
(Bilingual) of the Aceves Alaniz Family

### Tuesday, December 26 St. Stephen

6:30 am Jim and Carol Welter ☩

### Wednesday, December 27 St. John

6:30 am Bessie Grojean ☩

5:15 pm Living and Deceased Members  
of the Natale and Cassie Barbara Family

### Thursday, December 28

The Holy Innocents

6:30 am Frank Bucher ☩

8:00 am No Mass

### Friday, December 29 St. Thomas Becket

6:30 am Kurt Heischmidt (living)

8:00 am No Mass

### Saturday, December 30

6:30 am Ann Cantoni/Nathan Wibbenmeyer ☩

5:00 pm Living and Deceased Members  
of the McMeel and Davis Families

### Sunday, December 31

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

7:30 am Living and Deceased Members  
of the Anita Worl Family

9:00 am St. Vincent de Paul Parish Family

10:45 am Pat Brase ☩

3:00 pm Aceves Alaniz Family  
(Bilingual)

## • Prayer Requests •

Please remember the sick, the hospitalized, and those who care for them. Pray also for homebound St. Vincent parishioners.

*The faithful are reminded that there is an obligation of Mass attendance attached to both the Fourth Sunday of Advent (Sunday, December 24) as well as the Christmas Mass (since Christmas itself is a Holy Day of Obligation). In short, a person cannot attend Mass on Sunday evening and have it fulfill the obligation for both Sunday and Christmas. The obligations are distinct from one another.*

## Coming Soon!!! Alpha #2

February 21 - May 8, 2024

[http://www.facebook.com/  
AlphaStVincent](http://www.facebook.com/AlphaStVincent)

*The shepherds who heard the joyous news from the angels on that first Christmas night and then hurried to find the infant Savior must surely have been changed by that experience. How has His coming changed your life?*

## Welcome Home!

One of the best things about the Christmas holiday is that it tends to bring families back together and to us here at St. Vincent de Paul, our Church family is no different. We are so grateful to God for leading you back home to us!

Whether this is your first time back to Church in one year or ten — or even your first time ever — know that you are always welcome here.

We are a typical family, a hospital for the broken and the hypocrite, run by broken hypocrites called to be saints. Join us!

## Christmas Mass Schedule

### Christmas Eve - Sunday, December 24

#### Christmas Vigil Mass

4:00 p.m. • 6:00 p.m.

#### Midnight Mass

11:00 p.m.

### Christmas Day - Monday, December 25

9:00 a.m. • 11:00 a.m. (Bilingual)

#### Please Note:

**Mass will not be celebrated at 3:00 p.m.  
on Sunday, December 24.**

*On Christmas, all parishes of the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau will be conducting a second collection to help fund the education of seminarians and help to meet the needs of retired priests. This is an opportunity to show gratitude for those who have and those who will serve the diocese. You are asked to use Faith Direct or the envelope in your envelope packet.*

## Mary, Mother of God Mass Schedule

### New Year's Day, Monday, January 1

6:30 a.m. • 9:00 a.m.

*The second collection taken up at Masses on Mary, Mother of God will benefit Care Portal, a platform bringing the needs of children and families in crisis to the attention of local churches and their parishioners.*

**A Note from Bishop Rice:** Please note that since **January 1** falls on Monday in 2024, it is **not** a Holy Day of Obligation, though it retains its liturgical rank as a Solemnity. While the faithful are not obligated to attend Mass on this day, they are still strongly encouraged to attend Holy Mass to celebrate this Mystery of Faith regarding the Blessed Virgin Mary.



## May They Rest in Peace

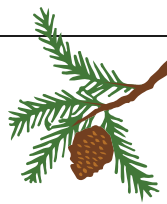
Sympathy is extended to the families of:

**Anthony Dall**, nephew of Les Wells;

**Ralph Barks**, father of Jennifer Parker; and

**Tom LeGrand**, a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Parish.

*May they and all the souls of the faithful departed,  
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.*



## Christmas Gifts for Birthright

If you wish to share with a Birthright baby during this Christmas season, gifts will be collected in the gathering area at all Christmas Masses. Most items collected will be used in layettes given to mothers just before their babies are born. Items needed include warm pajamas, outfits, and long sleeve onesies for boys and girls (sizes newborn and 0-3 months), socks (newborn), baby quilts, afghans, and fleece blankets. Birthright is also in need of baby wash and lotion, slow flow baby bottles (4 and 8 oz.), Similac Advance and Sensitive Formula, diapers (sizes newborn and 3), wipes, sanitary napkins, breastfeeding supplies (nursing pads and storage bags, lanolin nipple cream, shields, privacy covers, and nursing bras). Also needed are grooming kits, teething toys, board books, and newborn toys. New and gently used items needed include toddler clothing (18 months - 4T), maternity clothing (xs - 3xl), and belly bands. Office needs include stamps, copy paper, and someone to clear snow/ice at the Cape center.

Items may also be brought to the Cape Girardeau Birthright location at 2633 Hopper Road (Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon) or the Marble Hill location (Monday and Thursday, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.) at 105 Church Street. Your generosity is appreciated.

## Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Foster Care/Whole Health Outreach Christmas project. A special thank you goes to Debbie Baumgart, Julie Schuchardt, Jamie Shaffar, and those who wrapped gifts. Because of your generosity, 131 foster children and numerous Whole Health Outreach children/teens will be able to enjoy Christmas. *More than 600 gifts were collected including several bicycles!*

## New Assignment for Father Alex Sutachan

After 2½ years of being St. Vincent's Associate Pastor, Father Alex is taking on the challenge of being the new Administrator of St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church in Fredericktown. He begins his assignment on Wednesday, January 17, the Memorial of St. Anthony of the Desert. While Father Alex will be in Fredericktown on a full-time basis, you may continue to see Father Alex



in the parish from time to time because of his responsibilities as Chaplain at Notre Dame Regional High School. During these next six months, it will be time of transition for Father Alex as he begins his new assignment for the Diocese. In addition to this assignment, Bishop Rice has relieved Father Rick, Pastor, of the responsibilities as being the Administrator of St. Michael Parish. However, Father Rick will serve as "mentor" for Father Alex in his new adventure. May God continue to bless Father Alex in the good work he has begun as a priest!

*"Do not be afraid, for you have found favor with God."* Consider following Christ more closely as a priest, deacon, or religious. Contact Father Alex Sutachan at 573-335-7667 or email [fatheralex@svparish.com](mailto:fatheralex@svparish.com).

## • The Week Ahead •

**Monday, December 25**

*Merry Christmas!*

**Tuesday, December 26**

**Wednesday, December 27**

3:00 pm Divine Mercy Holy Hour

**Thursday, December 28**

9:00 am Maxine's Shareable Wearables  
(9:00 - 11:00 am)

**Friday, December 29**

**Saturday, December 30**

3:30 pm Reconciliation

6:00 pm Vincent's Vittles

**Sunday, December 31**

*In observance of the Christmas  
and New Year holidays,  
the parish office will be closed  
Monday, December 25,  
Tuesday, December 26,  
and Monday, January 1.*

## • Readings •

**Christmas (Vigil)**

Isaiah 62:1-5 • Acts 13:16-17, 22-25

Matthew 1:1-25

**Christmas (Night)**

Isaiah 9:1-6 • Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14

**Christmas (Day)**

Isaiah 52:7-10 • Hebrews 1:1-6

John 1:1-18

**December 30/31, 2023**

Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3

Hebrews 11:8, 11-12, 17-19

Luke 2:22-40

## Collection - December 17, 2023

Collection	\$ 50,679.06
E-Tithing	\$ 362.00
Total	\$ 51,041.06
Weekly Budget	\$ 34,200.00
Difference (7-1-23 to 12-17-23)	\$ 7,398.52

*Thank you for being good  
stewards of God's gifts!*

## • Contact Information •

### Parish Office

contactus@svparish.com / 573-335-7667

### Father Rick Jones, Pastor

Stvcapepadre@gmail.com / 573-335-7667

### Father Alex Sutachan

Associate Pastor/ Chaplain of NDRHS  
fatheralex@svparish.com / 573-335-7667

### Deacon Robbie Huff

Superintendent of Schools /Diocesan Chancellor  
Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau  
rhuff@dioscg.org / 573-335-7667

### Deacon Mark Kiblinger

Coordinator of Stewardship and RCIA  
mkiblinger@svparish.com / 573-335-7667

### Deacon Tony Peters

tpeters@svparish.com / 573-335-7667

### Deacon Thomas Schumer

Director of CCM, SEMO University  
thomas.schumer@semocatholic.org / 573-335-7667

### Tiffany Brey

Youth Ministry Coordinator  
stvcapeyouth@gmail.com / 573-335-7667

### Pamela Chambliss

Parish Office Receptionist  
pchambliss@svparish.com / 573-335-7667

### Kay Glastetter

Principal of St. Vincent DePaul Grade School  
kglastetter@svcape.eduk12.net  
573-334-9594

### Kathy Hotop Raines

Director of Religious Education  
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### Becky Kitchen

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### Lenny Kuper, Music Coordinator

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573-335-7667

### Jeffrey Lloyd, Maintenance Supervisor

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### Beverly McMeel

Accounting Clerk/Administrative Assistant  
bmcmeel@svparish.com / 573-335-7667

### Cheryl Oberhaus, Director of Parish Finance

coberhaus@svparish.com / 573-335-7667

### Gail Overbey, Mass Scheduler

goverbey@svparish.com / 573-335-7667

EXTEND MERCY TOWARDS OTHERS  
SO THAT THERE CAN BE NO ONE IN NEED  
WHOM YOU MEET WITHOUT HELPING.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

*Catholic calendars for the year 2024 are available in the gathering area. Thank you to Ford and Sons Funeral Home for making these calendars available.*

## Required Minimum Distributions

If you have reached the age of 70½ and have an IRA, there are tax advantages you may wish to consider. Gifts made to charitable organizations will not be treated as taxable income and may result in a substantial tax benefit. Please contact Cheryl Oberhaus at the parish office for more information.



Attention all youth  
in 6-12th grades, join us!

# EPIPHANY PARTY

Scan  
to RSVP

Questions: email Tiff @  
stvcapeyouth@gmail.com

Sat Jan 6th, 2024  
6:15 - 8:00 @ Old Convent  
Food Provided

## NDRHS Incoming Freshman Placement Test

The Notre Dame Regional High School Placement Test for the class of 2028 is scheduled for **Saturday, January 13, 2024**. This test is one of several criteria used to assess a student's current math abilities and assure student success in our mathematics curriculum.

Eighth graders interested in taking the exam should report to Notre Dame at 8:00 a.m. The event should conclude by 10:00 a.m. Students need to bring two #2 pencils and a calculator.

During the test, incoming freshman parents can enjoy coffee and donuts with the Home and School Board for the Morning Mingle. Principal Tim Garner will meet with parents about next steps toward enrollment.

Please register online at [www.notredamehighschool.org/placementtest/](http://www.notredamehighschool.org/placementtest/). If you cannot attend on this date, please contact the Counselors' Office at 573-335-6772, ext. 327 for the availability of future testing dates.

## Attention: Catholic Men

You are invited to the Southeast Missouri

**CATHOLIC MAN NIGHT**  
*Men Meeting Jesus*

**Wednesday, January 17, 2024 • 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.**

**St. John Henry Newman Center • Cape Girardeau, Missouri**  
An evening of Adoration, Confession, and a Manly Meal with discussion  
To plan for food, please RSVP to [SEMO Catholic Man Night@gmail.com](mailto:SEMO Catholic Man Night@gmail.com),  
or "SEMO Catholic Man Night" on Facebook or text 573-275-5214.

# Read and Understand the Bible with *The Bible in a Year* Podcast with Fr. Mike Schmitz!



“As cradle Catholics, we hear Scripture at Mass and occasionally in self study but never like this. *The Bible in a Year* brings it all together.”

—Ignacio G.

Join over 1 million Catholics  
listening to this podcast!

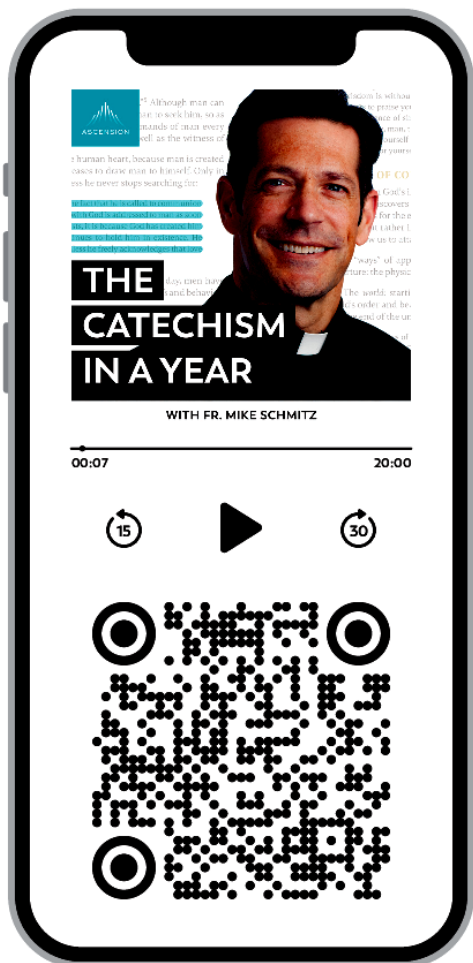
Listen free on the Ascension App!

Scan this QR code with your phone  
to download the Ascension App — the best  
place to listen to *The Bible in a Year*.





# Understand Your Catholic Faith with *The Catechism in a Year* Podcast with Fr. Mike Schmitz!



By listening to this podcast, Catholics will:

- Read the entire *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in 365 days
- Understand the essentials of the Catholic Faith and why they matter
- Transform their relationship with the Church that Christ founded

**Listen free on the Ascension App!**

Scan this QR code with your phone to download the Ascension App — the best place to listen to *The Catechism in a Year*.





All married couples and religious who previously took part in a Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend are invited to a community meeting on **Sunday, January 21, 2024, from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.** at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 316 S. Spanish Street, Cape Girardeau. If planning to attend, RSVP to Alicia Schumer at 573-225-8776. Please bring your dialogue journal.

**Worldwide Marriage Encounter** presents weekend experiences for married couples to rekindle romance, enhance meaningful communication, and deepen and renew commitment. Make a New Year's resolution to keep your marriage a priority. Sign up now as space is limited. For more information or to apply, go to [wwme.org](http://wwme.org), or call Terry and Eric Engholm at 314-649-7317.

Upcoming dates include ...

- **February 2-4, 2024 • St. Peters, Missouri**
- **March 15-17, 2024 • Drury Inn, Cape Girardeau, Missouri**
- **April 5-7, 2024 • St. Peters, Missouri**

## Notre Dame's Winter Extravaganza

Notre Dame Regional High School invites you to support the Winter Extravaganza presented by Saint Francis Healthcare System. The Extravaganza will take place on **January 27, 2024**, at the Drury Plaza Convention Center from 5:30 p.m. to 12:00 midnight. "Escape to the Mediterranean" is the theme and Dr. Zhivegas will be the entertainment! Dress is cocktail attire.

The gala supports Notre Dame's operations including the technology budget, ensuring faculty, staff and students stay equipped and current in a quickly-changing environment. Everyone in the school benefits from the funds raised! Notre Dame had a record-breaking year at the Winter Extravaganza in 2023 raising over \$130,000 gross. This year, the goal is to again raise \$130,000. With the support of parents, alumni and friends, this challenge can be met. Purchase tickets and sponsorships at [www.notredamehighschool.org/winter](http://www.notredamehighschool.org/winter).

## Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC)

Stay up to date in this new year by becoming a member of MOCAN – the Missouri Catholic Advocacy Network. MOCAN helps to advance the common good by protecting the unborn, assisting the poor, and promoting quality education for all school children. To become a member of MOCAN, go to [www.mocatholic.org/take-action/missouri-catholic-advocacy-network-mocan](http://www.mocatholic.org/take-action/missouri-catholic-advocacy-network-mocan) or to [www.mocatholic.org](http://www.mocatholic.org) for more information. This would be a good "New Year's Resolution" to start in 2024. Membership is free.

## Job Opportunities

St. Vincent de Paul School is accepting applications for a **part-time after school care worker**. Applicant must be a high school graduate. Contact the St. Vincent School office for an application. Please call 573-334-9595.

Notre Regional High School is seeking applicants for a **cook position** in the school's cafeteria. The position would be from 7:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. when school is in session. Pay is based on experience and skill level, and a benefits package is available. On the job training is available.

Email a resume, or arrange to pick up an application, by emailing Joan Dunning at [joandunning@notredamecape.org](mailto:joandunning@notredamecape.org).

## American Red Cross Blood Drive

**Wednesday, January 24, 2024  
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.**

**DePaul Center**

1919 Ritter Drive • Cape Girardeau

To schedule an appointment,  
call 1-800-REDCROSS  
(1-800-733-2767)  
or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org)  
and enter: StVincent

*Sponsored by  
St. Vincent de Paul Grade School*

## NDRHS Bowldog Bash

If you have spare time on Friday, February 2, come throw down some strikes at West Park Lanes for Notre Dame Booster Club's Bowldog Bash! This fun night is for teams of four bowlers ages 21+. The cost is \$50 per bowler and includes two games, shoes, food and drinks. The format is two games (best ball) and a roll off game for top teams. Only 22 lanes will be available!

Registration begins and food will be served at 6:00 p.m. Bowling begins at 6:30 p.m. Register by contacting Jeff Graviett at [jeffgraviett@notredamecape.org](mailto:jeffgraviett@notredamecape.org) or call 573-335-6772, ext. 116. This event is sponsored by the Notre Dame Booster Club. Thank you for supporting Notre Dame Athletics!



**TIME TO  
GROUP UP!**

**GATHER YOUR FRIENDS,  
FAMILY, NEIGHBORS**

**Eucharistic Revival  
Small Groups starting  
late January 2024**



**more info to follow**



brought to you by the  
Discipleship Committee

## Celebrating the Sacraments Celebrando los Sacramentos

**Marriage:** Please contact the parish office at least **six months** in advance. (If you have been married before, an annulment may need to be done first.)

**Matrimonio:** Por favor comuníquese con la oficina parroquial por lo menos con **seis meses** de antelación. (Si usted ha estado casado antes, una anulación del matrimonio puede necesitar ser hecha primero.)

...

**Baptism:** Your family needs to be registered in the parish for three months prior to the baptism. It is necessary to schedule baptismal preparation classes six weeks prior to your child's baptism. Taking the baptism class prior to birth is encouraged! Contact Deacon Mark at the parish office (573-335-7667).

**Bautismo:** Es un requisito ser inscritos en la parroquia por lo menos 3 meses antes de bautizar. También los padres tienen que celebrar la santa misa cada fin de semana. La clase de preparación para el bautismo para padres y padrinos es cada último lunes del mes. Favor de comunicarse con Padre Rick una semana antes al 573-335-7667.

...

**Anointing of the Sick:** If you are going to the hospital for a planned surgery, please call the parish office so this Sacrament can be celebrated with you.

**Unción de los enfermos:** Si usted va al hospital para una cirugía planificada, por favor llame a la oficina parroquial para que este Sacramento pueda ser celebrado con usted.

## Harvesting Our Tears grief support



- faith based
- 8 sessions
- peer support
- confidentiality

If you could use support in your grief journey, call Gerry Strohmeyer @ 573.270.3786 for more information

## Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Celebration

Preparations are underway for the annual Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Celebrations. The event includes a special Mass with Bishop Edward M. Rice, followed by a reception with light hors d'oeuvres, cake, and punch. Couples who will or have celebrated their **1st, 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th, 50th, or 50+** anniversary anytime during 2024 are cordially invited to attend with their families. These occasions enable us to celebrate and affirm the great gift of married love within our families and communities. Please make plans to attend!

### Mass will be celebrated at the following times and locations:

- Sun., Feb. 4, 2024, at 1:00 p.m., St. Mary Cathedral, Cape Girardeau
- Sat., Feb. 10, 2024, at 1:00 p.m., St. Agnes Cathedral, Springfield

Each couple will receive a Marriage Anniversary certificate from Bishop Rice. Those celebrating 25 or 50 years of marriage will receive an Episcopal Blessing and a special gift from the Bishop.

Couples are requested to pre-register for one of these two events so that food and gifts may be ordered in advance. Please register no later than January 19, 2024, by completing an online registration form at [www.dioscg.org](http://www.dioscg.org). For more info, contact the Office of Family Life at 417-866-0841.

## Welcome to St. Vincent de Paul

If you would like to register for the parish, change your address, or simply have questions, please fill out the form and place it in the collection basket. You may also mail it to the parish office at 1913 Ritter Drive, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701. Please feel free to contact parish office staff anytime during regular office hours, Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. You may email the parish office at [contactus@svparish](mailto:contactus@svparish) or call 335-7667. A parish registration form is available at <http://www.svcape.com/Parish/>.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I am new to Cape Girardeau.

☐ I am new to St. Vincent de Paul Parish.

☐ I have been attending St. Vincent Parish and would like to register as a member.

☐ I would like to learn more about the Catholic faith.

☐ Please change my address to the one shown above.

☐ I would like to register my child/children for Parish School of Religion.

☐ I would like to sign up for Faith Direct.



## This Week ...

### Christ is Born

**Monday, December 25**

Christmas Day is often filled with activity and goes by in the blink of an eye. Remember to pause and open your heart wide to Christ, who seeks a home there. Allow the light of a candle, the Christ figurine in your nativity scene, the circle of evergreen on your holiday wreath, and the shining eyes of children and the elderly to kindle your joy in the incarnation. *Today's readings: Christmas Vigil Mass: Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Matthew 1:1-25. Christmas Mass during the Night: Isaiah 9:1-6; Psalm 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14. Christmas Mass during the Day: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18*

### St. Stephen

**Tuesday, December 26**

Today we honor St. Stephen, the first Christian to die a martyr for his faith in Jesus. A deacon in the early Church, Stephen served the needs of widows and the poor. His eloquent preaching drew many to Christianity as well as the violent attention of those opposing the memory of Jesus. Advent proclaimed that God reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. We celebrate Stephen and other martyrs this week for their utmost faithfulness to Christ and passing into the eternal life of heaven. *Today's readings: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59; Psalm 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc, 17; Matthew 10:17-22.*

### St. John

**Wednesday, December 27**

Remembered as the beloved disciple, John gave the Church a Gospel, three epistles to the Christian community, and possibly the Book of Revelation. Stories recall that he lived a long life and in his later years, when he no longer had the stamina to preach, he routinely offered the most succinct homily, "My little children, love one another." With these pithy words, he relayed the most essential message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. *Today's readings: 1 John 1:1-4; Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; John 20:1a, 2-8.*

### The Holy Innocents

**Thursday, December 28**

Today's Scriptures return us to the events following the nativity of our Lord. Deeply threatened by the possible birth of the long-awaited messiah, King Herod ordered the murder of all boys under the age of two in Bethlehem and the surrounding region. This unimaginable scourge of innocent children has repeated itself over and over through the centuries and is a powerful reminder of our responsibility to protect life at every stage. *Today's readings: 1 John 1:5-2:2; Psalm 124: 2-3, 4-5, 7b-8; Matthew 2:13-18.*

### The Presentation in the Temple

**Friday, December 29**

Ever faithful to their Jewish traditions, Joseph and Mary brought the child Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem to be consecrated to God. Two holy elders, Simeon and Anna, recognized Jesus as the messiah. Their prophetic words proclaimed that all that had been foretold in the Scriptures would be manifest in the life of this tiny child. Joseph and Mary were amazed and returned home to raise Jesus in the faith of Judaism. *Today's readings: 1 John 2:3-11; Psalm 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6; Luke 2:22-35.*

### Relish the Days of Christmas

**Saturday, December 30**

While the secular world charges ahead, our Church invites us to linger in the Christmas season. Together we savor the miraculous early moments of Jesus' life and the stunning reception he received from shepherds, kings, and holy elders alike. His earthly parents courageously protected him and immediately began to pass on their faith and honor their religious tradition. Resist packing away the religious imagery just yet. Instead, keep the nativity scene prominent, light Christmas candles, and ponder along with Mary the unexpected graces poured upon us. *Today's readings: 1 John 2:12-17; Psalm 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10; Luke 2:36-40.*

**Sunday, December 24**

### Attend to God's Time

*Today's readings: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Psalm 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38.*

This year we dwell in the last week of Advent for only hours. Today's Scriptures put an exclamation mark on all the prophetic promises we recalled with the "O" Antiphons. As foretold in the Old Testament, and echoed in the words of the angel Gabriel, the savior will come through the line of King David and thus his house and kingdom shall endure forever.

For most households, these abbreviated final hours of Advent will be consumed with hurried preparations for Christmas. Even so, attend to God's time. Remember to light the fourth candle on the Advent wreath, adorn the household nativity scene, and listen to your Advent playlist once more while cleaning, baking, or traveling. Our Advent texts, songs, and traditions are ripe with promise. Christ is coming. A savior will be born. The light will overcome the darkness. God's faithfulness will endure forever.

**Room Mates**  
POOL & SPA  
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