



St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2024

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 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m.,
3:00 p.m. (Spanish/English)

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

Parish Office Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



Capital Campaign Update



For more information about the Capital Campaign, you are invited to see the updates displayed on the television screen in the gathering area! You may also use this QR Code to review the progress through the St. Vincent de Paul Parish website.



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

Father Rick and the St. Vincent de Paul Parish Staff



1913 Ritter Drive • Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701
573-335-7667 • Fax 573-335-0034 • www.svcape.com

Serving the Catholic Community since April 9, 1836

• **Mass Intentions** •

Monday, December 23 St. John of Kanty

6:30 am Harold Werner ☩

Tuesday, December 24

6:30 am Ola Mae Diebold ☩

4:00 pm Peace in the World

6:00 pm Raymond and Geneva Viox ☩

11:00 pm Living and Deceased Members of the
Cantoni and VanGennip Families

Wednesday, December 25

The Nativity of the Lord

9:00 am Pat Tlapek ☩

11:00 am Laurie Caldwell ☩
(Bilingual)

Thursday, December 26 St. Stephen

6:30 am Mary Louise de Garcia ☩

Friday, December 27 St. John

6:30 am Norma Buerck ☩

Saturday, December 28

The Holy Innocents

6:30 am Frank Bucher ☩

5:00 pm Bessie Grojean ☩

Sunday, December 29

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

8:00 am Kurt Heischmidt (living)

10:00 am Henry Azuma ☩

3:00 pm Living and Deceased Members of the
(Bilingual) Scott Joseph Tygett Family

• **Prayer Requests** •

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

**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 (sizes newborn and 0-3 months), socks (newborn), baby wash and lotion, baby bottles (5 and 8 oz.) and brushes, diapers (all sizes).

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, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.) at 105 Church Street. Your generosity is appreciated.

The Gospel today tells of the Virgin Mary, pregnant herself, hurrying off to help her cousin Elizabeth. The model of good stewardship, she who had given herself to bear the Savior gave her time and love to others as well.

Confessions before Christmas

“Prepare the Way of Lord” by making a good Confession! This is the best gift you can give to yourself and your family for Christmas. Confessions will be offered on the hour on Sunday and Monday. “On the hour” means that the priest will be in the confessional starting at the top of the hour and remain there for 10 minutes. If no one is there, the priest will leave and return at the next hour. Below are the times for confessions.

Sunday, December 22 • 4:00, 5:00, 6:00, 7:00 p.m.

Monday, December 23 • 3:00, 4:00, 5:00, 6:00, 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve - Tuesday, December 24

Christmas Vigil Mass

4:00 p.m. • 6:00 p.m.

Midnight Mass

11:00 p.m.

Christmas Day - Wednesday, December 25

9:00 a.m. • 11:00 a.m. (Bilingual)

On Christmas, all parishes of the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau will conduct a 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 Eve, Tuesday, December 31

5:00 p.m.

New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1

8:00 a.m. • 10:00 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.

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!

May He Rest in Peace

Sympathy is extended to the family of **Edward Burt**, a member of the St. Vincent Parish family.

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



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, 151 foster children and numerous Whole Health Outreach children/teens will be able to enjoy Christmas. *More than 600 gifts were collected including a number of bicycles!*



Coming Soon 33 Days to Eucharistic Glory

Parish-Wide Consecration to the Eucharist

- simple
- one virtue
- easy
- one prayer
- inspiring
- ten minutes

“Those who believe don’t leave”

Matthew Kelly, Dynamic Catholic

sponsored by the

St. Vincent de Paul Parish Discipleship Committee

National Shrine Named Sacred Pilgrimage Site for Jubilee Year of Hope

The Archdiocese of St. Louis has designated the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in Perryville, Missouri, as a Sacred Pilgrimage Site for Pope Francis’ Jubilee Year of Hope. You are invited to attend a special Mass at the National Shrine on **Sunday, December 29, at 11:00 a.m.** The Jubilee Year of Hope begins December 24, 2024, and continues through January 6, 2026.

When making a solemn, prayerful visit to the National Shrine and/or any designated sacred site, the faithful can obtain a Jubilee Indulgence:

- by participation in Holy Mass or another liturgical service such as Morning or Evening Prayer or acts of piety such as Stations of the Cross, praying the Rosary, or visits to the Blessed Sacrament;
- and there, for a suitable period of time, engage in Eucharistic adoration and meditation, concluding with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith from Mass, and a prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

For more information, please contact the Miraculous Medal office at 1-800-264-6279 or e-mail ammfather@amm.org.



Camp Re-NEW-All registration is open! All youth currently in grades 4-8 are invited to register for a week of fun and faith-filled activities at the diocesan summer camp, Camp Re-New-All. Registration is also open for staff (high school and adult). Some age groups fill quickly so early registration is recommended to secure your desired date. You may register at https://dioscg.formstack.com/forms/camp_re_new_all. Information can be found on the bulletin board in the gathering area. You may also download the Camp brochure for more info (<https://dioscg.org/wp-content/uploads/2025-Camp-Brochure.pdf>).

• The Week Ahead •

Monday, December 23

3:00 pm / 4:00 pm / 5:00 pm / 6:00 pm
7:00 pm Reconciliation (on the hour)

Tuesday, December 24

Wednesday, December 25

Merry Christmas!!!

Thursday, December 26

5:00 pm Centering Prayer

Friday, December 27

Saturday, December 28

9:00 am Maxine’s Shareable Wearables
(9:00 am - 12:00 noon)

3:30 pm Reconciliation

6:00 pm Vincent’s Vittles

Sunday, December 29

• 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 28/29, 2024

1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28
1 John 3:1-2, 21-24
Luke 2:41-52

In observance of Christmas, the parish office will be closed Tuesday, December 24, Wednesday, December 25, and Thursday, December 26.

Readings - December 22, 2024

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

Collection - December 15, 2024

Collection	\$ 15,479.50
E-Tithing	\$ 38,857.84
Total	\$ 54,337.34
Weekly Budget	\$ 35,000.00
Difference (7-1-24 to 12-15-24)	\$ 24,810.74

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

Deacon Robbie Huff

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

Deacon Mark Kiblinger

Coordinator of Stewardship and OCIA
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

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lennykuper@notredamecape.org / 573-335-7667

Jeffrey Lloyd, Maintenance Supervisor

jllloyd@svparish.com / 573-335-7667

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

Conference Table Needed

St. Vincent de Paul School is looking for a conference table that would seat 10-12 people. If you have a used table that you would like to donate or sell at a reduced rate, please call the school office at 573-334-9594 or email kglastetter@svcape.eduk12.net.

Vincent's Vittles

The next Vincent's Vittles meal will be on **Saturday, December 28**. Plan to attend and invite a friend! If you, as an individual or group, would like to help with this rewarding community meal, please contact Deacon Mark.

MOScholars Tax Credits

Did you know you can direct up to half of your annual state income taxes to be used for scholarships for children to attend Catholic schools - all at no cost to you? When you write a check to the **Bright Futures Fund** of the MOScholars Scholarship Program for the amount of your reserved tax credits, you help fund scholarships for children to attend Catholic schools in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, many of whom may not have been otherwise able to attend. You are diverting your tax dollars *you already owe* to the state to help students have **BRIGHT FUTURES!** Follow these easy steps:

1. Go to The Bright Futures Fund Website at <https://www.brightfuturesfund.org> and click "Reserve Your Tax Credits Here."
2. Estimate Your Tax Liability based on what you paid last year. Fill out all fields for the MOScholars Tax Credit Reservation System.
3. Choose Bright Futures Fund from the EAO (Educational Assistance Organization) drop down menu.
4. Reserve Your Tax Credit Amount by December 31, 2024. You will receive an Email from the Missouri State Treasurer's office. Print and save your confirmation number. You will receive a 100% tax credit for 50% of your tax obligation.
5. Write a check to The Bright Futures Fund for the amount of tax credits reserved. Mail your check by December 31, 2024, to: Bright Futures Fund, PO Box 419037, Kansas City, MO 64141. After verification from the state, you will receive an Email receipt. Include the receipt and a MO-TC form with your state income tax filing. (For the current MO-TC form, visit the Bright Futures Fund Website or search MO-TC at <https://dor.mo.gov/forms/>).

Taizé Prayer Service

A Taizé service, meditative prayer with simple prayer-chants, will be held on **Sunday, January 5, at 6:00 p.m. in the Church**. Enjoy an evening of simple chants, a variety of musical instruments, prayer, candlelight, scripture, silence, and peace ... everything you need to get your heart ready to celebrate the Feast of Epiphany! Come together to pray during this Christmas season. All are welcome!



Due to the Taizé Prayer Service being on Sunday, January 5, Take Back Sunday with the Rosary will not take place.

Magnify 90

**A Spiritual Exercise for Women
January 20 - April 20, 2025**

This 90-day journey asks women to foster a deeper relationship with God and others. Through prayer, spiritual readings, mortifications, and offerings we can link arms as desert sisters, and set the world ablaze with Christ's light by being the saints we were created to be! We hope you'll join us! Simply scan the QR Code to register. For more information visit www.mag90.com or contact Melanie Diebold (melaniecowell@gmail.com), Laura Enderle (lenderle@staangels.eduk12.net) Stacey Welter (swelter.4christ@gmail.com), Alicia Schumer (arsachse@yahoo.com), Leah Shrum (director@optionsforwomenceape.com), or Rachael Bremer (rachaelbremer@stmarycape.org).

Register by using the QR code or the following link: <https://forms.gle/jd6sLPAtAGwfi3a6>.





Diocesan Youth Conference

- March 29-30, 2025
 - West Plains, MO
 - 7th - 12th grades
 - Register by **Jan 10**
 - \$50 deposit due **Jan 10**
 - Total Cost: \$100-150
- **financial assistance available for StV & DioSCG parishioners****

2025 Radiant DYC

REGISTER NOW



"Look to him and be radiant,"

Psalm 34: 6-8



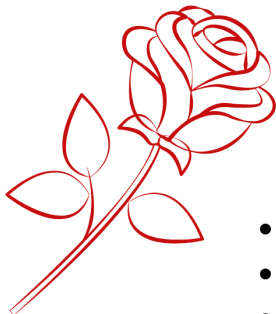
All married couples and religious who previously took part in a **Worldwide Marriage Encounter** weekend are invited to a community meeting on the **third Sunday of each month from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.** at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 316 S. Spanish. If planning to attend, RSVP to Alicia Schumer at 573-225-8776.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter presents weekend experiences for married couples to rekindle romance, enhance meaningful communication, and deepen and renew commitment. Sign up now as space is limited. For more information or to apply, go to wwme.org, or call Terry and Eric Engholm at 314-649-7317. Upcoming dates include ...

- **January 31 - February 2, 2025, St. Peter's**
- **April 4 - 6, 2025, St. Peter's**
- **June 13 - 15, 2025, St. Peter's**

Do you know?

St. Vincent Parish has a Grief Support Ministry



Have you lost a loved one? Are you feeling alone in your grief? Join a small group of people to share your story and get support.

- faith-based
- 8 sessions
- confidentiality
- peer support
- comfortable environment

for more information:

Call parish office @ 573.335.7667 and a member of our support team will reach out to you.

Congratulations to ...

Gene and Marilyn Peters
as they celebrate their
62nd wedding anniversary.



Please continue to pray
for all married couples and
those preparing for marriage.

Job Openings

St. Vincent de Paul Parish is seeking a friendly and enthusiastic minister for the position of **Parish Social Media Coordinator**. As a Social Media Coordinator, you will help in promoting the Parish's mission of "Loving Jesus, Serving Jesus and Sharing Jesus with others". Responsibilities include: 1) Create and maintain engaging content for various social media platforms, including written posts, images, and videos. 2) Monitor comments, messages, and inquiries on parish social media channels and work with parish staff on responding. 3) Assist in planning live events in Church, i.e. Mass. 4) Assist with keeping parish website current and up-to-date. This ministry requires 10 hours of work each week and will be paid an hourly wage. Applicant must complete Virtus training and a background check. For information, please contact Father Rick Jones at the parish office by email stvcapadre@gmail.com or 573-335-7667.

St. Vincent de Paul School is currently seeking a **full-time custodian** for the current school year. Hours are 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Monday - Friday. Applicant must complete Virtus training and a background check. For an application or more info, please contact St. Vincent de Paul Parish office at 573-335-7667.

St. Vincent de Paul School is hiring **after-school care workers**. Applicant must complete Virtus training and a background check. Interested candidates should contact the school office for an application at 573-334-9594 or email kglastetter@svcape.eduk12.net.

Christmas Cards for Priests, Sisters, Deacons, and Seminarians

As you write your Christmas cards this year, remember the priests, sisters, deacons, and seminarians who served St. Vincent de Paul Parish in the past.

Father David Baunach

St. Eustachius Parish
200 W. Fourth Street
Portageville, MO 63873

Sister Theresa Davey, OSU

2520 Saint James Rd.
Springfield, IL 62707-9736

Father David Hulshof

c/o Francis and Sally Hulshof
1011 County Highway 419
Portageville, MO 63873

Father Rahab Isidor

St. Lawrence Parish
PO Box 311
Monett, MO 65708

Sister Susan Kienzler, OSU

9308 Sutton Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63144

Father Charles Prost, CM

St. Catherine Laboure Parish
9740 Sappington Road
St. Louis, MO 63128

Father Milton Ryan, CM

Holy Trinity Parish
3826 Gilbert Avenue
Dallas, TX 75219

Father Joseph Stoverink

Sacred Heart Parish
1609 N. Summit Avenue
Springfield, MO 65803

Father Brian Straus

St. Peter the Apostle Parish
812 S. Pearl Avenue
Joplin, MO 64801

Father Alexander Sutachan

St. Michael the Archangel Parish
304 W. Main Street
Fredericktown, MO 63645

Father Derek Swanson, CM

St. Vincent de Paul Parish
1010 W. Webster Avenue
Chicago, IL 60614



Attention: Catholic Men

You are invited to the Southeast Missouri



Thursday, January 23 • 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
St. Francis Xavier • Sikeston, Missouri

An evening of Adoration, Confession, and a Manly Meal with discussion
To plan for food, please RSVP to SEMOCatholicManNight@gmail.com,
or "SEMO Catholic Man Night" on Facebook or text 573-275-5214.

You Are Invited

Diocesan Wedding Anniversary Celebrations

Sunday, Feb. 9, 2025 - 1:30 PM
St. Agnes Cathedral, Springfield

Sunday, Feb. 16, 2025 - 1:30 PM
St. Mary Cathedral, Cape Girardeau



For couples celebrating their
1st, 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th, 30th,
35th, 40th, 45th, 50th, or
50+ anniversary anytime during 2025.

Join Bishop Edward M. Rice
for the celebration of Holy Mass
followed by a reception with
hors d'oeuvres, cake, and punch.



So that we may properly prepare,
we ask that couples RSVP
by January 31, 2025.
Family members are welcome!

RSVP by scanning the QR
code on the right, going to
the Family Life page on the
diocesan website:
www.diocsg.org
or calling (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 or call 335-7667. A parish registration form is available at <http://www.svcape.com/Parish/>.

Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

- 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.
- Please change my address to the one shown above.
- I would like to sign up for Faith Direct.
- I would like to learn more about the Catholic faith.

Prepare the Way

O Emmanuel

Monday, December 23

Today's antiphon is "O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord our God!" With the end of Advent near, pray with the song "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," and if you are able, go to Mass today. Ask God to help you see that he is coming to save us. Consider how you, like Zechariah, might speak blessing God. *Today's readings: Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Psalm 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14; Luke 1:57-66.*

Sing the Goodness of the Lord

Tuesday, December 24

Today we hear the Canticle of Zechariah in the Gospel. Like the Canticle of Mary, this hymn proclaims the greatness of the Lord. Zechariah's praise of God speaks of the Lord's mercy, guidance, and salvation. Apart from the inevitable chaos of preparing for tomorrow's celebrations, write a canticle of praise. Remember to "worship him without fear!" *Today's readings: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Psalm 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29; Luke 1:67-79.*

The Nativity of the Lord

Wednesday, December 25

Alleluia! "A light has shone," today a Savior is born for us! Amidst the darkness and constant pull of worldly desires, rest in abundant joy knowing that the "Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace" reigns and sustains, "both now and forever." Resolve to proclaim this good news during Christmas Time. How can you "announce his salvation" and tell of "his wondrous deeds"? Consider sending mail to family and friends, baking Christmas cookies for someone who is homebound, or serving at a shelter. *Today's readings: Vigil: Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 (2a); Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Matthew 1:1-25. Midnight: Isaiah 9:1-6; Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14. Dawn: Isaiah 62:11-12; Psalm 97:1, 6, 11-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:15-20. Day: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 (3c); Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18.*

St. Stephen, Martyr

Thursday, December 26

The Church celebrate the witness of St. Stephen, who was chosen by the community of disciples to share Jesus' teachings. St. Stephen was stoned for "working great wonders and signs among the people." Read the account of his witness and martyrdom in Acts 6-7:60. Pray for the courage to model yourself after this saint's discipleship. *Today's readings: Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59; Psalm 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17; Matthew 10:17-22.*

St. John, Apostle and Evangelist

Friday, December 27

Today we celebrate the Feast of St. John, apostle and evangelist. From this saint, we hear that the faithful are to share the Good News, or to evangelize "so that you too may have fellowship ... with the Father and with his Son." The work of evangelization is done in community: in today's Gospel, Mary Magdalene and two disciples share the news of the resurrection of the Lord. With whom do you share the call to evangelize? Say a prayer for that person and consider reaching out in gratitude for the partnership. *Today's readings: 1 John 1:1-4; Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12; John 20:1a and 2-8.*

Feast of the Holy Innocents

Saturday, December 28

Just as the angel told Joseph in the dream, King Herod searched for Jesus "to destroy him." Mary and Joseph take Jesus and flee, seeking refuge and safety. Today, on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, we honor the first martyrs: the children massacred in Bethlehem by King Herod as he searched for baby Jesus. If there is a pantry or community center near you, donate baby supplies, such as diapers or baby food. Say a prayer for those who are persecuted, for refugees, migrants, and displaced persons seeking safety. *Today's readings: 1 John 1:5-2:2; Psalm 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8; Matthew 2:13-18.*

Sunday, December 22

Leaping for Joy

Today's readings: Micah 5:1-4a; Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45.

Just before today's Gospel, the angel Gabriel tells Mary that she will "bear a son" (Luke 1:31). As confirmation of the pregnancy, Gabriel says that Elizabeth, is also pregnant. Since Elizabeth is past childbearing age, Gabriel implies that if Elizabeth is pregnant, Mary can be as well: "for nothing will be impossible for God" (1:37). Finally, when Elizabeth greets Mary, we hear that she is blessed because she "believed that what was spoken ... by the Lord would be fulfilled."

This fulfillment is proclaimed in the first reading as Micah shares his prophecy of salvation: "From you shall come forth for me / one who is to be ruler in Israel / ... / his greatness / shall reach to the ends of the earth; / he shall be peace." The Letter to the Hebrews tells of Jesus' sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins, for as is sung in the refrain of the responsorial psalm, "we shall be saved."

Knowing this, Elizabeth exclaims, "the infant in my womb leaped for joy" the moment she heard Mary's greeting. Overcome by the Holy Spirit, mother and son anticipated the coming of the Lord. As we enter the final week of Advent, how can you ready yourself so that you, too, can leap for joy when the Lord approaches?

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